

Dimensional Descent -

Chapter 2781: Popping

Leonel sat back lazily, reclining against a tree. He didn't even bother to go and check what was happening in the outside world. He knew that it was chaos, but it also had nothing to do with him.

For the first time in a while, he could actually relax. Well, the last time he had tried to relax he had gotten thrown into the midst of such a wild plot, but hopefully this time, that wouldn't happen again.

He had ended up helping the Spiritual Race out more than he desired. Flaura almost certainly had some dirt on them that he wasn't aware of, and because of him, they had wiggled out of that and even came out stronger as a result.

He didn't like it for the sheer reason they had slandered his wife. He didn't care about their reasons, but he would have to wait a while before he made them give him an explanation for that.

For that, it was fine to just lie here and recline, listening to the water wash against the stone.

The air smelt of spring, though it always did. It didn't have the particular saltiness of an ocean, but instead it was like an enormous fresh lake. It was almost like an office fresh paper smell, but not quite.

Leonel laughed to himself. He didn't know why he had suddenly thought of such a thing, he could admit that he was a bit weird in that respect. He had always loved the smell of books and freshly printed paper. It was just that Earth had moved away from that technology long ago and it was impossibly rare to get a chance to smell such a thing.

'I wonder...' Leonel's thought drifted.

There were still two main mysteries that he hadn't quite dealt with just now.

Aside from the Spiritual Race's secret, it was the hand problem. He felt that there was definitely some undercurrent related to it. Anastasia said it was a human hand, and he believed her, but it just felt... off.

Unfortunately, the anatomy between even people of the same race differed too much. Like, if a doctor of Earth were to cut Leonel open now, they would assume him to be an

alien of some sort. His heart was too large, it had extra chambers. He was made up of way too many cells, and his cells themselves had organelles not native to humans. Plus, there was a whole extra circulatory system inside of him that wasn't normal at all: that being his Nodal Pathways and Nodes.

When you factored in Lineage Factors, or different and odd techniques that different people might practice, or Ability Indexes, the variability even within a Race was far too much.

This was why Leonel couldn't just like at a hand and make assumptions about what Race it was mimicking. He hadn't studied enough bodies.

Aina might be able to tell with better certainty, but even she hadn't studied many humans to begin with. She might be able to help the owner of the hand improve before she could even get to the point of understanding what their Race was.

But that was just the first issue, the second was the Owlans.

From his perspective, he had forced the Owlans into this war, and at least from Minerva's reaction, this seemed to be so as well.

But the hands seemed to suggest that the Owlans had always been part of this plan.

This suggested that the Owlans were likely split or there was a secret cabal of them hidden in their ranks that was taking action, much like how Flaura was acting independently as well... or so it seemed.

The question was, then... if such a cabal existed why not rope in Minerva? She was already in the Ninth Dimension, she was exceptionally powerful, and she was obviously sympathetic to their cause.

Leonel grinned. "Now that's an interesting tidbit of information-"

"Look at you, talking to yourself. Have you gone insane, Leo?"

James plopped down beside Leonel.

"I spoke out for your sake," Leonel said with a laugh.

"As if I'd believe that, nutcase. We've got things to do."

"Like?"

"We're about to host a football game."

"Huh?" Leonel blinked in surprise.

"Yeah, we got a bunch of the kids together from the slayer lego or whatever you call it. We're indoctrinating them into the way of real football, not that soccer kicky thingy."

Leonel burst into laughter. Only James could mix up legion and lego.

"Okay, I'm in," Leonel hopped up, stretching.

"You're not allowed to play."

"Eh-" Leonel didn't know what to say.

"You're too competitive."

"Says who-"

"Says me. This is the little kiddie's first time, they have to love the game, not fear it. It's not time for you to appear yet. You're only allowed to coach."

Leonel shook his head. "Fine, fine."

James laughed and wrapped an arm around Leonel's neck, pulling him away.

The time was more fun than Leonel expected it to be. At first, he was disappointed that he didn't get to play, but soon he was so lost in the moment that he was grinning ear to ear.

Without the gap between men and women closed thanks to Force and Ability Indexes, the boys and girls played without restraint, and the variability that different abilities gave forced them to create new rules on the spot and even widen the range of the field by as much as a hundred times.

There was far more to leading a group of people than to just lord over them and provide them the chance to grow stronger. Leonel quickly realized that this was Joel's way of telling him that they needed to do things like this more often. Who else would be able to see through these things if not his right hand man?

Aina and her friends sat high in the stands created from Leonel's Earth Force, watching with happy smiles on their faces.

"So," Aina looked toward Yuri and Savahn, "when are you two going to start popping out babies?"

She blinked innocently while Yuri and Savahn looked like their tails had just been stepped on.

Chapter 2782: Remember

Leonel spent the next few weeks seemingly wasting his life away, but it was honestly the most fun that he had had in a long while. He didn't think about Flaura, or Goggles, or any number of things that he still had to do.

The world had essentially forgotten about him. There was too much going on.

The Dwarven Race was under a lot of scrutiny, the Cloud Race was facing suppression from all sides, Flaura's whereabouts were unknown, the war of the Owlans and Void Race was only ramping up even further as more and more factions became embroiled in the conflict...

And yet the young man that had triggered it all was lying down with his head in his wife's lap without a care in the world.

From time to time he would laugh about her grumbling and scheming to get her best friends pregnant. In fact, she had created three separate Force Pill formulas in just the last week to help them along.

One was able to improve their chances of getting pregnant to almost 100%.

The second was able to reduce the pain of birth to near negligible levels. In fact, it wasn't even a pain nullifier, it worked by loosening the muscles and flesh during birth and giving the baby a wide canal to just slip and slide down as they pleased.

The third was able to nurture their babies, maximizing their talents in the womb and ensuring that they grew up strong and prepared for the harsh world around them.

Unsurprisingly, Yuri and Savahn ran away with their tails between their legs.

The second pill especially felt like it was plucked right out of a horror movie. Too many embarrassing things could happen if everything just went loose down there. How could they even guarantee that it would all snap back as it should naturally?

Aina tried to assure them that it would. In fact, because there would be no rips or tears, the body would go back to normal with even greater ease. But the poor girl didn't seem to realize that this was just an excuse for her friends to escape her.

Leonel had a great time listening to and observing all this "conflict". Aina was practically in despair, watching her dreams crumble right before her eyes. Wouldn't this have been a cheat to an enormous family, how could this happen?

There was one day where Leonel almost lost his life though. He had the audacity to make the joke that if he had a few extra wives, this would fix everything.

Luckily for him, Aina was still in the Fourth Dimension so he was able to run away. If not, he might have really lost his member that day.

Time ticked by and soon, Leonel's thoughts finally drifted to work somewhat naturally.

Honestly, it wasn't exactly so. It was instead that he happened to run into a familiar couple. Simona and Eduardo.

The duo wasn't having too bad a time. They could go anywhere they wanted in the Segmented Cube despite being "prisoners", so they had partaken in some of the festivities, albeit off to the side.

What was especially funny about this was that Eduardo seemed to be fascinated by football.

Leonel didn't pay much attention to them at first until he recalled something.

The Godlens.

Honestly, it wasn't that Leonel didn't recall the family, it was more so that his plate was so full that they were probably near the bottom in terms of priority.

First there was the Gathering of Kingdoms, then the Gathering of Minds right afterward, and then came the attack of the Spirituals just when he wanted to relax.

Of course, even before that there was the situation with the Dream Pavilion Challenge Sequence, and then he got married right before the Gathering of Kingdoms. When did he have time to even spare the Godlens a thought?

That said, even though they were nearer the bottom of his list of priorities, he did have Anastasia check on them from time to time, and it could only be said that their movements were odd... or rather, they were the exact opposite of odd, which was precisely what made them so weird.

They were just going about their normal lives, according to Anastasia. Training, eating, drinking, banging, there was nothing out of the ordinary.

Leonel was almost certain that it wasn't that everyone was normal, but rather that Anastasia couldn't deduce what was wrong. But once again, he found them to be too low on his priority list to check personally.

The barrier that they had up now was no longer able to stop him after his Crafting breakthrough, anything created by King looked like a joke in his eyes now. But the question was if that was all they had.

The Cult had surprised Leonel. The Four Great Families had surprised him by somehow vanishing from thin air. The Godlens had also already surprised him once before just by virtue of the existence of [Finality], [Universe], and [Domain] as well.

Who knew if they had anything else in store for him this time around.

Leonel took a step out of the Segmented Cube and into the Vast Dream Pavilion.

"Hm?"

Leonel looked to the side to find Eamon. The latter had buried his head in a book and he was furiously reading it.

Leonel never thought that he would use such an adverb to describe reading, but that was exactly what was happening.

The young man's Dream Force was spiraling about wildly and even though he wasn't reading a real book, but rather a crystal that projected on, Leonel could practically hear the page turns. Every time, it was like a slap of wind was echoing through the world.

Leonel hesitated for a moment, but when Goggles' image came to mind, he pushed it down and stepped forward.

Eamon was startled away and looked up with red eyes.

"What's wrong?" Leonel asked.

Eamon smiled bitterly. "... Is it wrong to love someone who loves someone else?"

Chapter 2783: 521

Leonel's heart skipped a beat.

It wasn't a question that should have moved him very far from his original baseline at all. He should have been able to read from Eamon's expressions that it was something like this.

However, the problem was that this situation was too familiar.

In love with someone he shouldn't be? Wasn't that the woman he jokingly called Aina's mother-in-law all the time?

Leonel might not interact much with Eamon, but he had seen plenty from afar. He knew how much he cared about Cindra. But he also knew how much Cindra cared about Miel.

Much like he had ignored the oddities surrounding Goggles, he had ignored this one as well... because it was simply too uncanny.

Goggles had truly been in love with Rollan's wife back then. Something that probably came off as mostly a joke to everyone else was quite serious to him, or else he wouldn't have risked so much and even practically changed himself for her. Even if it meant that he wouldn't actually get to be with her.

And now Eamon was in love with someone that Leonel effectively thought of as Miel's woman. In some ways, he even thought of her as a quasi mother-in-law already.

Leonel forced himself to calm down.

He truly didn't care much about Goggles at all. The reason he had such a visceral reaction the first time, and now this time, was because Goggles was a representation of his father in his eyes. Not in type, and certainly not in ability, but he was a mirror that forced Leonel to look into it.

He could only logic his way out of the uncomfortable feelings.

First, Goggles had met Rollan's wife while she was already married, but Miel and Cindra had yet to even have a date together, let alone marry. Being able to see their feelings for one another because of Dream Force was a completely different beast compared to them actually acting on it. He couldn't expect that Eamon would be as sharp as he was, which was why he had taken so long to realize what was happening and that he had already lost the woman he loved.

Second, their reactions to this information was entirely different. Goggles always used to joke about it to the point that even Leonel didn't realize he was being serious until it was far too late. This caused Leonel to misjudge a character he thought he knew quite well.

As for Eamon, he showed his heart on his sleeve and had even told Leonel directly about what the problem was.

Goggles was too good at scheming and hiding his real thoughts while Eamon wasn't this sort of person at all.

Putting them in the same box was doing a disservice to Eamon, one he didn't deserve at all because none of this was his fault.

After thinking this far, Leonel calmed down and plopped down beside Eamon. He forced a smile and laughed somewhat self-deprecatingly.

"I'm honestly not the best person to ask for relationship advice," he finally said.

Eamon's gaze dimmed. He thought that Leonel was just saying that. He had such a beautiful wife, and there were clearly women throwing themselves at him all the time, how could he not know?

Leonel picked up on the subtle hints quite easily and his smile grew more bitter.

How could he even explain it? That his future self was so powerful that he fell in love without even understanding why he was in love?

Sometimes he even thought about if Aina really did love him at all, or if it was something his future self had done as well.

In a lot of ways, they were robbed of their story because of the way this world worked and it was hard to tease apart the truth from the fiction. He could only do his best to cherish his wife in the here and now.

Leonel sighed. "Do you know how many times I confessed to Aina?"

Eamon blinked, not quite understanding the odd question. Wasn't that something people normally did just once?

"No..." he said tentatively.

"521 times."

Eamon was speechless.

"She ran away every time and never gave me an answer. Then when I finally saw her again after the Metamorphosis descended, the first thing that girl did was rip the heart out of some guy's chest.

"I was under the impression this whole time that she was some shy girl who couldn't even say "NO" clearly. Come to find out she's some murdering psycho."

Eamon coughed, and before he could stop it, he burst into a fit of laughter. Leonel thought he would stop after a while, but he just kept going... and going... and going.

"Hey, hey. Don't you think you're laughing a little too hard?" Leonel asked, feeling somewhat aggrieved. He was really going through it back then, it felt like his whole world was flipped upside down.

Eamon snorted and wheezed as he tried to stifle his laughter, but it was nigh impossible. Nothing he did seemed to work.

Eventually, he managed to calm down and take deep breaths.

"... I really can't imagine it," Eamon said with a chuckle.

He really couldn't. Leonel looked good at everything, what do you mean confessing to the same woman 521 times? Didn't he know how to take a hint?

"You see why I can't give you advice now? I stumbled around with this stuff just like you, how am I supposed to tell?"

"What I can tell you, though, is this... don't waste time on a woman who doesn't love you, and don't hurt a woman who does. Do you understand?"

After his and Aina's breakup, Leonel learned that first lesson well, but the second... it took some maturing before he put some other things before his ego.

Aina had hurt him so he used logic as a shield to hurt her back. That was the crux of the issue. If not for how mature Aina had been about that situation, maybe they wouldn't even be together now...

Chapter 2784: Stand

"No relationship can work one-sidedly. You can follow your heart, but not to your detriment or to the detriment of the person willing to give you theirs," Leonel said with a solemn tone, his words hanging in the air.

Eamon fell into silence and nodded slowly.

The two just sat there in silence, and at some point tears began to flow from Eamon's eyes, but Leonel didn't leave.

The two sat there for a long while until Eamon's tears dried.

He wiped his cheeks and took a shuddering breath.

"... I know that I shouldn't like Cindra, or at least that's what she's told me. She said that she was forced to do a great many things to survive and get to where she is today, she's also much older than me, much wiser as well. In some ways she even raised me even though she was never my mother in a real sense.

"I knew that it was uncomfortable for her to see someone she had known as a little boy suddenly begin to pursue her like I did, and it was selfish on my part, I know that.

"... I will apologize to her and close this chapter. Maybe in another life."

Leonel smiled and patted Eamon's shoulder.

"Come with me, we're going somewhere cool."

Eamon blinked in surprise, not quite understanding what cool thing they were going to see. But when he finally laid eyes on it, he was truly speechless this time. It could be said that Leonel was one of a kind in the worst and best of senses.

To think his idea of somewhere cool was strolling into Godlen territory.

...

The two stood high above Godlen City, both standing on a platform formed by Leonel's Emulation Spatial Force.

Down below, people scurried about and did their business, but they couldn't seem to spot them at all. And this wasn't because of Leonel's actions.

"Interesting," Leonel said. "Do you see what the problem is?"

"If I was living in a city that was perpetually caged in, I wouldn't be so care free."

This one sentence by Eamon made Leonel look toward him with a flickering light in his eyes.

The current Eamon didn't seem to lack confidence or the ability to introspect at all. In fact, he looked thoughtful, a hint stoic, and even a touch handsome.

At first Leonel thought it was because he had just found a problem to focus on, but...

'It's both. Not only does he have a problem to focus on now, but he's also had a bit of a change in demeanor. This could greatly help his Dream Force in the future...'

The answer Eamon gave just now didn't have much detail, but between Dream Force experts, not many words needed to be exchanged to begin with. In fact, even if they spoke in intelligible syllables, so long as they still had their Dream Force, people around them would understand them perfectly.

What Eamon was saying was that the Godlens couldn't get away with caging their citizens in like this for what was approaching two years now already.

The only way their citizens could be so calm after so long was if they didn't realize that they were caged in the first place. Meaning, the reason they couldn't see Leonel and Eamon was because the skies perpetually looked completely normal to them.

It was both a defensive and illusion formation at the same time.

"This formation is very impressive," Eamon said, seemingly finished analyzing and looking toward Leonel.

Seeing that Leonel was already staring at him, Eamon blushed in embarrassment, wondering if he had said something wrong.

"You're right, it is," Leonel nodded. "The last time I came here, this formation wasn't nearly as good. It seems that they had other cards up their sleeve."

Leonel had already checked over the formation as well in the past, but it still wasn't this good back then. Something changed in the last year or so, it was unexpected.

Did they really gain the ability to improve this formation by this much in such a short time?

"Well, it doesn't really matter much," Leonel said with a smile.

With a wave of his hand, a spear manifested from Emulation Spatial Force and Scarlet Star Force.

The world trembled as Leonel's gaze sharpened. And he suddenly swung down with a single arm.

CRACK.

CHIII.

It was a sight akin to sparkling wine and fragmented glass. The shards of formation fell from the skies, raining down and startling the citizens below. They all looked up at once to find Leonel and Eamon lording over them.

Eamon was suddenly frozen after being ogled by so many, while Leonel laughed, patting him on the back as though to say get used to it.

"LEONEL!"

The familiar roar echoed over the city and a streaking beam of light cut through the air.

Leonel simply pointed his spear forward.

At that moment, Patriarch Godlen felt as though he had been locked onto by a beast. If he kept rushing up to collide with Leonel like he wanted to, he would end up skewered through.

He had gotten complacent in these last few days. The family was progressing well, there was relative peace, and no one had been able to bother them.

They had been worried about the Gathering of Kingdoms, but that oddly seemed to fizzle out without much change at all.

The only last worry on his chest was his daughter. He knew that she was still alive, but that was no real consolation. Who knew what she was going through?

The moment the man responsible appeared before him, his towering fury got the best of him. But Leonel's actual appearance made him feel as though a bucket of ice cold water had been poured over his head.

How had he grown so powerful in such a short time? Why was his aura so oppressive? And how had he destroyed a formation this powerful in a single strike?

Had Leonel used more than one, they would have sensed it. The fact he broke in so suddenly could only mean they never stood a chance in the first place.

Patriarch Godlen ground to a halt.

Did he even have the right to stand before this young man anymore?

Chapter 2785: Farce

Patriarch Godlen didn't know what to think or what to say. The family had grown so fast in recent years that he didn't think that Leonel would be a worry. His only personal hope was that he could save his daughter one day, but he also knew that it wasn't yet time to leave.

What he never expected was that there'd be a day when Leonel actually came to him instead of the other way around.

"Oh? Not fighting anymore?" Leonel blinked innocently.

The rage in the Patriarch's chest almost bubbled over. That toying expression reminded him of what Leonel had done to them the last time they saw him. Not only had he managed to steal their most important techniques, but he had even escaped right from under their noses as though their defenses were worth nothing at all.

They had been led by the nose by a mere Fifth Dimensional...

Patriarch Godlen froze. Why was Leonel still in the Fifth Dimension? No, it felt so much deeper despite the fact he was still in Tier 1... it didn't make any sense.

How could he know that the Leonel he knew was actually in the Third Dimension, not the Fifth? While this was truly the Fifth Dimension for Leonel...

The shock was enough to leave him crippled for a moment.

"Alright, since you don't want to fight, we don't have to. If I'm honest, I'm not really in a fighting sort of mood right now, and you're also not really worth my spear," Leonel spoke candidly. "I'm here for one reason and one reason only.

"Your Godlen family is a convenient jump off point. The human race is a collection of loose sand right now and I, quite frankly, don't have the patience to organize it all. The Cult is finished, the Four Great Families are gone, the Dream Pavilion is under my control.

"So honestly speaking, there's just you left."

Leonel raised his spear and rested it on his shoulder, his tone remaining casual.

That was right. The real reason he wasn't so eager to wipe out the Godlens was because honestly... he didn't really care much about what happened back then anymore. So much had happened since that pressing the Godlens down and forcing them to obey his orders was more than enough payback for him.

Ever since the demon emperor was killed in a single strike by Aina, they had been extremely quiet. They didn't even dare to venture toward the Human half of the Bubble, fearing what might happen again.

And aside from the Dream Force experts that Leonel was secretly nurturing, not to mention his own brothers and the other members of the Slayer Legion, he wasn't paying much attention to the rest of the Human Bubbles, but the situation wasn't good.

There was still relative anarchy anywhere the population was dense enough. Those that lived in the wilderness were better off, especially since the fusion of the Bubbles had completed, so the sporadic appearances of demon worlds around the Bubble had vanished, leaving them safer overall.

Essentially, cities like the ones the Olliidark's used to manage no longer acted as protections against Demons because those entrances had vanished.

Even so, the worst part of the situation was the areas where humans were the most densely populated. And the issue with that was that those also tended to be where the

most talented humans were too, so that only made the problem worse and more violent no matter how you looked at it.

The Godlens were the most useful tool he had to rein the human population in.

Patriarch Godlen slowly took deep breaths. By this point, the entire city had been alerted and several individuals began to rise up into the skies, including Eduardo's father and grandfather.

Leonel could sense how hostile they were, but he also didn't seem to care in the slightest. He let them gather up as though nothing at all could move him.

And then he saw her.

Simona's mother was a woman that was easy to forget. It wasn't because she wasn't beautiful, but because she was too reserved. It was hard to understand what she was thinking or what she was scheming.

Looking at her now though, even though he had planned to look away, Leonel's gaze couldn't help but narrow. There was something off about this woman, something that his improved Dream Force picked up on that he wasn't able to in the past.

'She's a Wise Star Order?'

Leonel's frown deepened. He ignored everyone else and continued staring intently at this woman.

No, she wasn't a Wise Star Order, but she was something similar, almost like Cindra who was a Snow Star Order, but she wasn't that either.

In fact, Leonel didn't feel that she was part of the Northern Star Lineage Factor at all, but part of something else entirely.

'Something else?'

Leonel's gaze flashed as he suddenly recalled something. The Constellation Families.

As a layman, Leonel didn't understand what was special about the Constellation Families. Other than finding it weird that the Morales took so long to form one when much weaker families already had them, he didn't really give it a second thought.

But after seeing much more of the world, if he went back and tried to retrofit those beliefs into this world... they didn't coincide at all.

He had yet to see a single other Race or family with a Constellation... so was it really so normal? Or was it the other way around?

If the Fawkes went to the Incomplete World to survive, then could it be that there were others like them, looking for the same chance at survival?

Was that what he was missing this entire time? Was it a mistake to give them such an opportunity to grow?

Leonel's lip curled. He raised his spear from his shoulder, and pointed it not toward Patriarch Godlen, but his wife.

"If I beat the strongest person here, we can skip this farce, right?"

Chapter 2786: Black.

Amynta's eyes narrowed. Her brother, Mauve, stepped forward.

"Kid, you're only arrogant more and more arrogant by the-"

Leonel's spear swung down, and for a moment the world seemed to be split in two.

Touching upon the Self State didn't just increase the strength of his created spears considerably, but it also brought his spear skill to an entirely different level.

There was already a thin veil between his path of the spear and his Crafting to begin with. Now, they were practically one, having reached an impossible to fathom level for most of those present.

Mauve's eyes widened. It felt like Leonel had already marked him for death, and the skies themselves had accepted. He could practically see the Northern Star looming over Leonel's shoulder.

Death.

That was all that was in store for him if this spear descended, and no one could react to it.

It was then that a light sigh rang out.

BANG!

A violet blade met the wave of silver, gold and red. They clashed in the skies, and most were sent flying in all directions, unable to maintain their footing in the air. The only one who seemed perfectly fine was Eamon who stood behind and to the left of Leonel. It was clear who had the upper hand in that strike, but it was hard to draw any real conclusions. Amynta had reacted later and was clearly reluctant to do so.

At that moment, the Pyius family Matriarch held a beautiful violet blade in her hands. The crafting could only be said to be absolutely exquisite and even Leonel was drawn to it immediately.

It wasn't a sword nor a saber, but it was rather a scythe with a blade that curled almost like a scorpion's tail.

The pole arm was a bit irregular, crafted from what looked like amethysts and diamonds. Without the blade, it would have looked reminiscent of a mage's staff. With the blade, it completed an otherworldly presence.

Leonel's gaze narrowed. This scythe was made by an exceptional craftsman. He had to admit that even he couldn't create such a good weapon, not right now.

But it wasn't just that.

There was a mysterious blade Force hanging in the air, one that was unique to the point this was the first time Leonel had ever sensed it.

He could only call it Scythe Force, but it was tinged with hints of a dense corrosive aura that seemed both with and against it. It was like Amynta had only half fused two different Forces into one.

And that was when it clicked for Leonel.

Right now, Drake was trying to create a Gun Force. It felt like Amynta was doing the same with Scythe Force. But this was still on another level.

Gun Force didn't exist in wider Existence, but Scythe Force seemed to, at least in part. Amynta was forcefully changing it to be more in line with her character.

'This woman is a genius... and exceptionally dangerous.'

Leonel's gaze sharpened and the two of them moved at once.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The others had yet to even recover, but when the shockwaves of Leonel and Amynta's battle reverberated, they realized that this wasn't something that they could get involved in.

Vivak, the Godlen Patriarch, was shocked as well. He knew that his wife was hiding secrets, she had disclosed them to him. But he didn't know the true extent of her power. This was the first time he was truly seeing it.

BANG! BANG! BANG! CLANG!

Leonel's gaze flickered as his pole arm clashed against Amynta's blade. There was actually a nick that threatened to spread and split his spear in two.

His figure flickered once again, space rippling. [Universe] and [Domain] descended, but to his surprise, he found a pair of domains countering his own.

'She comprehended [Universe] and [Domain] as well.'

Leonel was inwardly shocked once again. Weren't the Godlens unable to find anyone who could? Just how much was this woman hiding?

Amynta suddenly spun, her scythe curling through the air and forming tendrils of gorgeous violet blades. When they came together, they formed a lethal rose in the skies.

[Finality].

Leonel's heart skipped a beat.

'Shit.'

The rose suddenly exploded, a whirlwind-like storm of poisonous blades shooting toward Leonel.

They exploded with power, the scythes of Force expanding to double their size in an instant.

Leonel shook his head and sighed.

'Fine.'

She could use [Universe]. She could use [Domain]. She could even use [Finality].

But did she have as many Life State Forces as he did?

BANG!

The scythe blades shattered as a golden Spear Force erupted from Leonel's blade tip and his Dream Sovereignty robes descended. An aura of Destruction trembled and in that instant, Amynta found herself suppressed from all sides.

Leonel took a step forward and the space beneath his feet rippled as though he had just stepped onto a still lake. His aura continued to rise as the Stars within him roared to life.

Plumes of smoke came from the soles of his feet and the corners of his eyes, a fiendish grin spreading across his face.

Suddenly, his spear thrust out.

For a moment, his blade seemed to be the center of the world. Beautiful, untouchable. It was a stroke that left those that saw it both in awe and in fear.

Amynta felt her body tighten. She was truly restrained in every aspect. No matter what she did, she couldn't move a single inch.

Leonel had spoken, and he wanted her dead.

And that alone was enough for the universe.

The spear tip appeared before her throat and that was when she roared out.

Her robes burst and a tight, sleeveless bodysuit appeared. Her back was exposed to the world and the tattoo of a vicious black and violet scorpion was revealed.

Her wildly fluttering hair tied itself up into a tight and long ponytail that descended down her back. Its tip glistened with a silvery blade and it looked like she could use it to attack whenever she so pleased. And the fact its length had become over two meters confirmed that point.

However, Leonel hardly paid attention to any of this.

He was looking at the sky that had turned almost entirely black.

Chapter 2787: Balance

There, high in the skies, the only points of light were flickering stars. It was a gorgeous sight that only became more so after the silvery points of light became an array of violet instead.

They connected, one after another, the contrast of the black skies against the violet making the lights almost seem piercing, as though every time one star connected to the next, and then the next, it was another dagger right through the heart. And yet, rather than pain, it was akin to a resonant bell through the body, like your very soul was acknowledging the beauty of what was being seen.

And then the shape solidified.

A sculpture of transparent, violet starlight trembled in the skies, taking the shape of a scorpion.

A pillar of light descended from the skies, falling atop of Amynta's head and pushing Leonel even further away.

Leonel watched this scene silently, a frown creeping up on his face. He had never seen a Constellation used like this, at least not to this extent. It should be a technique, one that wasn't in the Godlen library but rather kept by Amynta personally. And it seemed like compared to her mastery of [Universe], [Domain] or [Finality], her understanding of this method was on a completely different level.

When the pillar of light vanished, Amynta's hair and eyes seemed to become several shades lighter, giving off their own light. Her long ponytail seemed to be dancing in the wind at first glance, but upon second inspection it was rather that it was wildly swaying, an abrupt, violent, yet controlled movement.

With a BANG! she shot forward, her scythe sweeping out from one direction and her tail piercing from another.

The attack left Leonel without any choice but to retreat. However, the moment he took a step back, there was a second attack, then a third. Pincer and scythe moved as one until suddenly Amynta's eyes became nothing more than orbs of violet. There were no pupils, no sclera, no distinct irises, just a smooth orb that pierced into the soul.

Leonel quickly realized that this wasn't a trick of the mind. It was an ocular technique of some sort, and it seemed to attack his Dream Force, pressuring it and beginning to eat at the edges. It dulled his senses and some of his mental sharpness, and as time passed, it only became faster and faster.

It was clearly poison, but it was poison on a level beyond anything that Leonel had even considered in the past. It wasn't just capable of attacking the tangible, but its seeped through the Dimensions, even beginning to impact Leonel's real soul, amorphously and seemingly without meeting the slightest bit of resistance.

Leonel's brows shot up and he felt that this situation was quickly getting out of his control. However, panic wasn't his first reaction. In fact, if it wasn't for the change to his Dream Force path, he wouldn't have had a change in expression at all.

He didn't have to dismiss his opponent, he could respect them.

But that didn't mean he had to fear them.

Leonel's spear spun in his hands the rotation countering both scythe and pincer at once, he took a step forward and his aura erupted, with a roar, the earth of the Godlen city trembled. Towering pillars of earth formed then were crushed by a mysterious force as though a God had reached down and formed it like clay.

BOOM! BOOM!

Leonel's exchange with Amynta never came to a stop. Scythe, spear and pincer danced in the skies, each collision sending out a wave of destruction in all directions.

From Leonel's half everything that came across his Destruction Sovereignty crumbled to ash, corroding from the outside in.

From Amynta's half, everything that came across her poisonous Force crumbled to dust, corroding from the inside out.

Amynta saw the enormous meteors forming in the skies, but she could do nothing to stop their formation. Her hands were completely tied down by Leonel.

However, she wasn't worried.

If Leonel planned to use the citizens to threaten her, she was entirely unmoved. At the same time, those meteors were far too large to attack her while they were in the midst of this battle. Leonel would end up harming himself as well.

That was until the meteors shrunk by half.

And then by another half.

And then by half again.

The space around the once enormous meteors shook and quaked as the force to compress them became larger and larger.

Amynta's gaze trembled, or as much as they could in its current condition. She didn't understand how anyone could have this much control over Earth Force, and she feared what the result of such an action would be even more.

Auspicious Air suddenly bloomed from Leonel. Deep within his Ethereal Glabella, a poisonous Force tried to assault the core of his mind, but a fluttering wind caused his Mana Core to glow.

The bronze leaves on the glorious tree shone brighter and brighter until the meteors compressed once more. From over 50 meters in diameter, the meteors had become not even half a meter. They looked as black as the night sky above them and yet still stood out in the darkness, shaking the space around them.

Leonel took a single step back, dodging out of the way of the coming pincer of Amynta's hair and parrying her scythe with a swift motion.

And then the two once-meteors rocketed forward. They followed the trajectory of Leonel's spear, somehow both blunt and sharp at once.

By this point, Leonel's spear was littered with nicks and cuts. If not for continuously reforming it, it would have long since collapsed, but when the meteors descended, everything changed.

One of the meteors began to glow a fierce white light and the other glowed a dull black. They balanced into a form of yin and yang, the Auspicious Air around Leonel doubling and then doubling once more.

When the ball of black finally descended, everything that was in its path was severed and Amynta was blown back so fast and hard that her body caught fire.

Chapter 2788: Two New

Leonel stood high in the skies, his Auspicious Air emanating stronger and stronger waves as a white and black ball circulated around him. In that moment, it looked as though the skies had become painted in bronze, almost erasing the darkness brought by the Constellation that was high up above them all. Leonel's expression was calm.

Quite frankly, what he had just done was entirely on a whim, but the flexibility that came with the Mage Core in his Ethereal Glabella in combination with his ability to create Natural Force Arts could only be said to be on an entirely different level.

He had tapped into the Earth Force of his Mage Core and synced it with the formation of a Natural Force Art that played on his own body. At this moment, his body was a perfect fusion of the Dark and Light halves of the Northern Star Lineage Factor, and as such, it could be said to only exist because it was likewise in perfect balance.

When he condensed so much earth and baptized it beneath this unique Force Art, it was like he was molding it into an entirely separate existence.

The push and pull of yin and yang could almost be used like a perpetual motion machine, explosively increasing his own strength and lowering the strength of his enemy at the same time.

"Interesting..."

Quite frankly, Leonel didn't think too much about it. He had only taken some inspiration from the way Cindra used Light Force and began to think about these matters more from the perspective of someone from Earth.

The result was outside his expectations.

He ignored the beaten and ragged Amynta, raising a palm and allowing the two orbs to hover over his hand. They orbited around one another. He could feel a strong pulling attraction coming from the black orb, and from the white, he felt a strong repelling force.

Right now, they were restrained, but if he nudged them with his Earth Force a bit...

"The power is mine to wield."

BOOM!

The ground beneath Ryu's feet suddenly exploded, a pit that reached into a depth of over a hundred meters forming and the building that had once been there was flattened to nothingness.

Leonel's gaze flickered. All he had done was activate the white orb a bit and direct the repelling force downward, and yet this was what happened.

If he had used the black orb instead, did that mean that the building would have rushed at him instead?

"That's fascinating."

The ground quivered with newfound strength under his command.

"This is the power I possess."

This was most definitely the product of the Natural Force Arts. Leonel found that it couldn't just change the range to which he could control Force external to him, but it could even change its character somewhat.

By every metric, this was just normal Earth Force from the normal ground. It would be ranked at the bottom of all Earth Forces. And yet, here it was exuding a might far beyond its own.

Leonel's Morales Lineage Factor only allowed him to wield relatively normal Earth Forces, but he had practically just created two new Earth Forces right now that could probably rank favorably amongst the top 20 at the very worst. In fact, they had much more potential than that.

"But it also only worked so well because of the template I used, that being my own body. I probably couldn't just randomly come up with ideas and change Forces to my whims. Not without thoroughly understanding them first, that is."

Under the balance of push and pull, a strong force field formed around Leonel. At this point, it was unlikely that anyone here could even penetrate these defenses.

"Shall we put an end to this?"

At that moment, Amynta finally managed to struggle to her feet, only for the black ball to pulse.

She was ripped up by a mysterious force, her body shooting through the air and suddenly stopping before Leonel.

The orbs rotating around Leonel began to rotate around her instead and she was completely trapped. Even a twitch of her fingers was nigh impossible in such a state.

Vivak's eyes went bloodshot, but there was such a strong force field around them that he couldn't even close the distance.

"Enough! Release her!"

"Alright, that's about enough, right?" Leonel smiled as though he hadn't just come out of a heated battle.

Well, it was heated in the eyes of everyone else, but to him it was mostly just a good sparring session. He didn't use his Divine Armor because he simply didn't need to at all.

Amynta was strong, sure... but she was only strong in comparison to a Human.

In her defense, her strength actually wasn't very far from the Emberheart and Moonstone Lords... if it was taken into account that she was still in the Eighth Dimension, that is.

If she broke into the Ninth Dimension, she may be able to give them a good battle. But in practice, she was still inferior to them, and Leonel for that matter.

However, this wasn't to say that she was helpless.

From what Leonel could tell, Amynta had sacrificed a lot to achieve this. She had spent a long time in the Incomplete Worlds and had likely ruined her greatest potential.

As for the reason why... Leonel could already see it.

The Constellation Family Bloodlines.

During their battle, he had been using his Internal Sight to thoroughly check the city and he quickly found out why it was that everything seemed normal.

That was because the largest changes weren't external, they were internal.

He could sense that many had gained the Bloodlines of the 12 Constellation Families, and they were slowly growing used to their new power.

Amynta was never meant to be their figurehead. She had given up this right so that she could plant seeds.

In the future, so long as the children Leonel was observing grew up...

"They will be formidable."

They would become far more powerful than even Amynta.

However, Leonel was also smart enough to understand exactly how all of this happened.

"Now... Can you tell me how many lives you sacrificed to make this possible?"

Chapter 2789: Revenge

Amynta's heart lurched when she heard this, but her lips were sealed, both by design and by her will. However, Leonel didn't really need to hear the answer, he already knew it. In this regard, Amynta and his grandfather weren't all that different.

Leonel had many thoughts about where his grandfather might be and what he was doing now. There was no reason for him to have been gone so long, it didn't make any sense, especially considering the time dilation between the regions.

However, seeing how far Amynta had gone to revive the Constellation Families, he had a guess.

When Leonel left, the Fawkes family barely had any members. Other than himself, who was already barely considered a Fawkes to begin with, there were only his grandfather, his mother and his uncle.

Whatever was causing his grandfather to drag his feet so much almost certainly had to do with the revival of the Fawkes. And as for how he would do it... would it be much different than what Amynta had done?

Leonel had known for a long time what kind of man his grandfather was. Emperor Gervaise Fawkes would take the path that suited him best.

He had personally handpicked Leonel's grandmother to be his wife for reasons that likely weren't purely out of love... if there was any love to begin with.

He hadn't hesitated to all the deaths of billions of his own citizens to ensure that Earth wasn't overrun by Invalids.

He had no qualms about manipulating his own grandsons to do his bidding, throwing them directly into the line of fire as he sat back on his throne.

And yet, Leonel couldn't say that he hated his grandfather very much anymore. In fact, as time passed, Leonel found himself cozying up to the old man, thinking of him as a real grandfather rather than the caricature of one.

Part of that was because he no longer had the right or the moral high ground to denounce his grandfather's actions. He was no longer that naive teenage boy.

Another part was the fact he could feel that though his grandfather's actions were cruel in the eyes of many, in a lot of ways he wasn't unlike Leonel...

Morality was too subjective. There were too many moving parts, too many differing opinions, so the two men, grandfather and grandson, did the only thing they could do...

Put their families first and foremost.

Leonel had a feeling that the day his grandfather appeared once more, there would be hell to pay.

What kind of painful existence was it to endure being the last of your kind? At one point, he was the only Fawkes that remained in the entire world... how much rage was buried in his heart?

Leonel shook his head and sighed. Then, he waved a hand.

The ball of yin and yang vanished and, caught off guard, Amynta practically plummeted from the skies. Without her Constellation active, she couldn't fly on her own so she could only quickly take out a flying treasure once more before she hit the ground.

"Alright, I'm not really interested in all of this. Like I said, you're useful to me. So are you going to cooperate? Or not?"

Leonel looked into Amynta's eyes. She still seemed to be a bit shell-shocked, not quite understanding what was going on. But when she heard Leonel's words, she looked toward him as well.

Her lips parted but no words came out.

Just when Vivak was about to speak and refuse, Amynta nodded.

"We accept."

She spoke so softly it sounded almost like a light breeze. However, everyone here was an expert, they most certainly heard her clearly.

At the end of the day her thoughts could be summarized in a single phrase...

At least Leonel was human.

With Amynta's words, everything went quite smoothly. After one battle, her prestige amongst the Godlens rose to an entirely different level and it could be said that she was their de facto leader at this point.

Strength weighed too heavily in a world like this one, and Amynta was the wife of their Patriarch to begin with. It was easy to accept her.

Like this, they began to make plans to corral the rest of the human population under one banner and Leonel got the chance to be lazy again.

After a couple weeks, Leonel realized that things would stabilize, so he had a meeting with Amynta and Vivak once more.

Standing in the Godlen Patriarch's office, Leonel waved a hand and burst into a fit of laughter.

Simona and Eduardo appeared, their lips locked together. They were so passionate that they didn't even realize the scenery changed at first.

When they both looked up because of Leonel's outburst, they flushed as red as tomatoes.

Leonel had had Anastasia double check to make sure the two were decent, and when she told him about their current state, he chose to play a little prank.

Watching their faces twist in horror, especially when Eduardo realized both Simona's mother and father were here, Leonel was having the time of his life.

Eamon, who stood to the side, covered his mouth to stop himself as well. He had been shadowing Leonel for the past month or so and had learned a lot, both in terms of Crafting and more neutrally in terms of Leonel's personality.

He was hard to get a read on most times, but from time to time he would do something like this that would make him want to grin ear to ear.

"Mother, father!" Simona spoke after clearing her throat, sending several glares toward Leonel. If she could eat him alive, she would.

Amynta had a light smile on her face while Vivak's expression was rapidly changing colors.

Regardless, their lack of response left her feeling like a piece of meat on a hot skillet.

"Woo, that's funny. Consider this to be my last bit of revenge, Vivak," Leonel said after wiping the tears from his eyes.

Chapter 2790: Shut Up

Vivak had tried to kill Leonel and his cousin in the past. That wasn't something that could be easily forgiven, but this time, Leonel had chosen to let things slide.

After the change to his Dream Force Path, Leonel was always making conscious efforts to find a balance between doing what was smart and what was right.

Throwing his wife in the line of fire for him was a step too far, however him taking an insult on the chin was not.

He had to Respect the world he was in and realize that he couldn't do everything alone. He had to lean on others when given the opportunity to.

If he acted on impulse and just slaughtered the entire upper echelon of the Godlen family, what then?

Well, he'd have to find people to replace those leaders, or he'd have to do it himself. He wouldn't have the heart of the people and who knew how many would choose to act like Goggles did? And what could the remaining Godlens who chose to bury a grudge deep within their hearts, waiting for the perfect time to strike?

Acting as he pleased felt good in the moment, but it was ultimately never the best thing to do.

He would have to settle for making this father uncomfortable and forcing him to sit with his inferiority. As for the rest, it would come in due time.

Sometimes, it was enough to take a win at face value and not chase for more.

"Alright, let's go Eamon. You've been working hard, you should take a rest."

Eamon smiled. "All of this is fun. I've never cared about much other than Crafting, and since I've decided to move on from other things, this will always be what's more important to me."

Leonel looked over toward him and nodded.

It was good to have a purpose in life, it could help drive you. But he had seen enough from his future self to know that that alone wasn't nearly enough.

However, just telling Eamon that wouldn't change anything. He had to show him.

The two returned to the Dream Pavilion and the Segmented Cube, enjoying another round of bonding. Leonel allowed Eamon to get acquainted with everyone before he slipped away.

Leonel soon found a familiar young man, still swinging a sword. His long black hair cascaded down his back and despite the speed with which he was swinging the thick, wooden sword, there wasn't even the slightest whistle of wind following its stroke.

"Still not going to join?" Leonel spoke out.

Amery was startled, and when he saw that it was Leonel, his gaze was filled with a hidden gloominess.

The last time Leonel came here, he couldn't sneak up on him. In fact, he had noticed Leonel immediately. But now...

How was this possible? He never missed a single second of training and he was constantly chasing perfection. How could Leonel still improve so much faster than himself?

He looked down at his sword and closed his eyes.

Swinging a sword alone wasn't enough. He needed battle, he needed blood, he wanted to leave and go off on his own adventures...

But was that even possible anymore?

Even if he set aside whether Leonel would allow him such a chance, what would he do as a human in that cruel world? Would he be able to succeed in much of anything? Or would he end up as some bastard's slave the moment he stepped into the wrong neighborhood?

"Soon, the Human Bubbles will stabilize and they'll need help bringing the Demon Bubbles into subservience. That will be a good chance for you to hone your skill. I will let you know when the time comes."

Leonel turned and left.

Whether it was Kira or Noah, both of them had begun integrating much more. The last person he was worried about was his cousin, Fifth Nova. He was maybe even more reclusive than Amery, but just as he was about to check on him, his eyes narrowed.

Leonel stepped out of the Segmented Cube, finding faces that were both familiar and unfamiliar in the skies.

Among them, there was a particularly wizard-like man, one that Leonel remembered pointing out.

Gemmes.

These were none other than the Dream Force experts that had escaped when the Challenge Sequence began, feeling that it would be a hopeless cause.

These cowards had actually taken more than two years to muster up the courage to come back, something that was amusing in and of itself. But it was even funnier when you realized that if not for all the large movements the Godlens were making, they still wouldn't have dared to come.

In the minds of these cowards, it was so far out of the possibility of reason for Leonel to have won, that there was almost certainly something they were missing. Most probably thought the Dream Pavilion had already been taken over by another Race, it was just that this Race didn't care enough to interact with the rest of the Human Worlds, and why would they? The Dream Pavilion alone was practically a whole world. They didn't need to step outside.

At most, the fact there was no news only made them wonder, but not enough to actually risk themselves by coming back.

But then the Gathering of Kingdoms happened and there was oddly still no culling waiting for them. That was a second oddity that made them pause.

And then, finally, there was the Gathering of Minds and the actions of the Godlens. Only then did they finally gather up their balls and return.

To their surprise, there really was no one but humans here, many of whom they didn't recognize because Leonel had only recently recruited them, but this was still firmly a human stronghold.

Gemmes was the first to notice Leonel's arrival. He stood high in the air above Leonel and frowned. He still didn't understand what was going on here.

"Who is the current-"

Leonel picked at his ears. "Shut up."

Chapter 2791: Hammer

Gemmes was immediately caught off guard by Leonel's interruption. He was asking for who the current Pavilion Head was, how dare Leonel treat him like this?

There wasn't a single fiber of his being that believed that all of this was done by Leonel. In fact, he was more inclined to believe that Clarence's mad plan had succeeded and he managed to enter the Life State.

He had seen Leonel in the Gathering of Minds, but the scope of these people's understanding was far too limited. They feared the other Races, but they didn't know to what extent they should fear them. To them, Leonel was just facing off against other members of the younger generation, wouldn't they be able to defeat them just the same?

And because they had escaped from the Dream Pavilion, they hadn't been able to watch the Challenge Sequence, so they had no idea what happened in this respect.

They had spent their entire lives protected by a formation, how could they know the extent to which that formation had protected them? How could they know that even the younger generation of the Mortal Races could slaughter them, let alone the younger generation of Demi-Gods or above.

When Gemmes saw Leonel, he still acted with the demeanor of an elder, and because he knew Leonel had lost the Life Tablet, he was even more confident.

What chance did Leonel stand against him without it? He was still a member of the Dream Pavilion, a Deputy at that. He could certainly mobilize much more of its strength than Leonel could. It could be said that this was a guaranteed victory in his eyes.

Thinking to this point, he pressed down his fury and maintained his elder-like demeanor.

"I will give you one more chance. Where-"

BANG!

Leonel slapped out with a palm and rather than being sent flying, a wave of Dream Force took shape and slammed Gemmes into the ground.

The old wizard-looking man coughed up a mouthful of blood, feeling as though all the bones in his body had been shattered at a single given time.

The other Deputies and lesser members froze. What had they just seen?

Leonel took a step forward and appeared before Gemmes. He squatted down and picked up the old man by his hair, forcing him to look into his eyes.

"Do you really think that you have the right to speak here?" Leonel asked in a calm tone.

The fear in Gemmes' eyes was practically palpable. For a moment it looked like he was about to piss himself... until that was exactly what happened.

Leonel shook his head. He found it hard to believe that someone so old could still exhibit such pathetic control over themselves.

But when he thought about it, things were always like that. Age was never the best gauge of someone's maturity, and it was often the oldest individuals who became the most immature, especially when they received pushback from someone they deemed to be less experienced and less worthy than themselves.

"You left the Dream Pavilion when it needed you most, and now you're coming back... for what exactly? Are you even necessary?"

BANG!

Gemmes' head exploded into a rain of blood.

A violet glowing bloomed in Leonel's eyes and his soul was forced into a ball before it could dissipate.

These people were useless to him, but Leonel had some thoughts recently.

[Assimilate] was what he had used to help Tolliver gain the talent of an Infinity Beast. Of course, he had to rely on the energy from an entire Vital Star, but he had succeeded nonetheless.

But what if he did the same on a smaller scale?

These old bastards were useless to him. They were people who would turncoat at a flip of a hat.

It would have been one thing if they had other things to rely on, but not only were they cowardly, they were also fools.

What did they think was going to happen after they escaped from here? They didn't even try to leave the Human Bubble because they feared the Inbetween Worlds. After all, not everyone could practically ignore Anarchic Force of a certain level like Leonel could.

So their plan was essentially to hide away in Bubble and hope they weren't found? For the rest of their days?

They were not only incredibly selfish, but they were so controlled by their own fear that they couldn't even make rational decisions...

This was a reason Leonel didn't plan on letting them live, but there was another reason as well...

And that was because he suddenly had a very big distaste for betrayals. He had always known that betrayal was bad, but not in his eyes it wasn't just bad...

It was the worst sort of sin, and these people deserved to pay dearly for it.

Their bodies exploded one after another and Leonel never bothered to blink even a single time. He didn't give a damn.

They fell to their knees, pleading, hoping, praying, and it still changed nothing.

In just a brief instant of time that must have felt like an eternity to them as their lives played out before their eyes, Leonel killed them all, grabbing hold of their souls and controlling each and every one.

With a wave of his hand, the blood disappeared as though it had never been there and Leonel entered the Segmented Cube once again.

Quiet fell on the Dream Pavilion.

...

Leonel walked through the Segmented Cube's world, his steps light as he entered the region of his Fifth cousin's territory.

CLANG! CLANG! CLINK!

Leonel soon laid eyes on Ramon laboring over a flame. He wasn't using his Metal Spirit to Craft, but was instead forging like an olden days' blacksmith, something that Leonel didn't expect to see.

He lived in a simple cabin, but he had turned its entire surroundings in a forge. The heat was so great that it seemed that the forest would be burnt to ash.

Standing over an anvil, he hammered away.

Chapter 2792: All Roads Lead to Rome

'Interesting...' Leonel thought.

The Morales obviously had their own ways of teaching forging, but Leonel didn't believe that this was one of them. This should be something that Ramon had come up with on his own.

From Leonel's understanding, in their generation, Ramon's talent in forging was only beneath his own. And even then, he could close the gap much more if he had had the training of Leonel's father.

However, unlike Eamon, he still had much less room to grow. After all, Eamon was self-taught, but even if Ramon's teachings weren't as good as Leonel's own, he still had the Morales family.

The issue was, obviously, that the standard of the Morales family was beneath even the Human Bubbles, let alone the rest of Existence.

Leonel watched silently and didn't interrupt Rowan. He continued to hammer away at what looked like the tip of a blade, a spear blade to be most accurate.

It was glowing a fiery red beneath the heat, and with each strike, incremental changes would be made.

Leonel couldn't help but recall the Barbarian Race youth. Was this part of what Rowan was trying to tap into?

Rowan wasn't ignoring Leonel. Instead, he truly seemed so engrossed that he had forgotten everything else. From the raise of the hammer, to the swift downward stroke, to the recalibration for the next blow, it was all perfect.

Rowan suddenly picked up the blade with a pair of tongs and rushed it to a tempering station, dipping it in and taking it out. He squinted, looking for warps in the blade.

After a while, he shook his head and tossed the blade away. It was only then that Leonel noticed a scrap pile filled with seemingly identical blades.

Rowan turned to return to his cabin, maybe for a short rest, but when he saw Leonel he was startled for a moment before nodding in greeting.

As per usual, the young man was quiet and reserved.

"What are you trying to accomplish?" Leonel asked.

At first, Rowan thought that Leonel wanted to question his methods and he was a little bit peeved. However, seeing the patience in Leonel's eyes, Rowan realized that he didn't mean it like that and felt a bit embarrassed.

These days, he was much too sensitive.

He didn't interact with very many people anymore, and he didn't feel like it was necessary to either. After losing his wife, it felt like the truest waste of time to interact with the world.

What would he gain from it?

But that didn't mean that he felt that snapping at others was the right thing to do. Hadn't Leonel lost people as well? He had watched his own father die before him.

"I... lack talent in combat. I am trying a new method," Rowan said softly.

Leonel could tell that Rowan didn't really want to talk. He was just trying to be polite by answering his question, but even then he had only answered with the shortest phrases he could, not really wanting to get into it.

Even so, Leonel nodded, seemingly understanding. He went to the scrap pile and picked up the recently finished blade.

"Wait, it's-"

Leonel's fingers didn't seem to notice. There wasn't even the slightest sizzle.

Although the blade had just been dipped in water, it was still incredibly hot. These were temperatures scaled to the Seventh Dimension, so it could be imagined how terrible they were. If this blade was placed on Third Dimensional Earth, it would have triggered a drought, in the worst case, it would have burned through the entire atmosphere and left them vulnerable to the elements of the universe.

Yet, Leonel picked it up as though it was just another bit of cool metal.

"I see. You're trying to understand the way of the spear in a completely different way."

Rowan's eyes widened in shock.

He assumed that Leonel would think he was just trying to get some physical labor in, but to think that he would see through him so thoroughly.

"Crafting spears is a good method of understanding the. Here," Leonel took off his Spear Domain Ring and tossed it to Rowan. "Whenever you can construct a spear

without it being destroyed by this ring, you know that you would have taken the first step."

Leonel had long since been keeping the Spear Domain Ring out of pure habit. In practice, it was now completely worthless to him. In fact, he had been having some thoughts about improving it...

But he was saving it for the construction of his Sixth Dimensional Divine Armor.

Rowan caught the ring, his eyes sparkling.

Leonel ignored him for a moment, observing the spear blade for a long while in silence. Rowan was actually already close, but Leonel realized the reason he had yet to take that final step was actually because he was trying to accomplish something far greater.

Each one of these spear blades was made from a slightly different material, but Rowan was trying to hammer them all the same way.

This path was incredibly profound. He was trying to find his own true spear... if he succeeded, he would become a Spear Sovereign without a doubt, and one that was even more powerful than Leonel's own.

Leonel hadn't put nearly as much thought into his path of the Spear, but Rowan had given him inspiration.

Essentially, Rowan was picking slightly different materials every time and trying to construct the exact same spear...

Didn't this sound familiar?

Rather than relying on the materials to dictate the product, he was forcing the materials to conform...

Wasn't this the Self Path?

Of course, it was precisely because he was so ambitious that he couldn't take that step. But it was admirable nonetheless.

He felt his combat talent was lacking, so he was using what he was talented in to improve in other areas.

'All roads lead to Rome,' Leonel thought silently. Suddenly, he could feel his Forces being elevated by a mysterious force, almost as though they all wanted to break through at once.

Chapter 2793: Decided

Leonel calmed the restlessness in his body. It wasn't that he didn't feel that this was an interesting path, it was just more so that he didn't feel it was appropriate for all of his Forces to follow it.

If he stripped away his Forces of what made them unique and forced them all to conform to his own thoughts, then would they even still be the Forces he had come to know?

That said, this path... it was perfect for a Weapon Force you had to mold into your own image. The catch was that Leonel still wasn't sure of exactly that path he wanted to take.

Right now, whether it was his Bow Force or Spear Force, they were more amorphous than not. But that was the nature of the path he had taken to improve them.

Being able to use artistic conception to bolster the strength of his Weapon Forces was excellent, but that also made them lack an identity at the same time. It could be said that the only reason they were Sovereign Forces to him was because he had great talent and... because they were still at the Life State.

Fifth Nova made him realize something. If his Weapon Forces stayed the same as they were now, would they still be able to remain Sovereign Forces when he entered the Creation State?

That still wasn't certain, and that was a problem.

Ramon, though, seemed to understand his path quite well. It was just that he couldn't take that last step just yet.

Even so, he had managed to find a method of honing himself that even Leonel was impressed by.

Ramon had promised himself to not be weak anymore. The next time he had to protect someone he cared about, he wouldn't have to stand behind them any longer. He would be able to protect them instead.

And he took that extremely seriously.

Leonel only spoke to Ramon for a short time before he slowly strolled away. It wasn't that he didn't want to spend more time with this cousin of his, but rather that he felt it was inappropriate to do so.

He could feel that Ramon was still a bit withdrawn. If he tried to force a relationship just because he wanted to, it would have the opposite effect.

Plus... his thoughts were swimming with Ramon's Spear Force.

'I miss it...' Leonel thought to himself.

The sudden thought came out of nowhere, but it was his own so Leonel obviously knew exactly what he was talking about. That was, of course, his old path of Dream Sovereignty.

He liked not fearing anything, not thinking twice before he acted, moving about on a whim and cutting down those that left a feeling of distaste in his mouth.

For the sake of his father, his wife, his friends and what remained of his family, he had taken a different path...

But only he knew just how much it ate him up inside.

Every time he had to lose on purpose just to further a goal, it felt like there was a knife twisting in his gut. It made him feel so uncomfortable that it was hard to put into words.

And honestly, he hated that feeling. Not the losing part, but the fact losing actually managed to hurt him so much.

It was so childish.

Why did he care so much about winning? He couldn't blame it on his future self anymore, he was gone even if a small part of his influence lingered. This was all him.

Hating to lose was one thing, but why did he hate it so much even if he knew it would lead to a bigger victory in the end? It was like he was unwilling to compromise. It was impossible to describe that as anything other than childish.

He had no intention of going back to the person he had been before. He had worked too hard to get here... but a small piece of it...

Leonel had come to understand something else.

Forcing himself to do something was fine, but if it compromised his own faculties, his own forward progress, it would be more detrimental than not.

His Dream Force's path right now was perfect. It was an homage to his father and it would help him keep the most people alive. That was what he wanted.

But what about himself? What had he done for Leonel Morales?

As in all things, there had to be balance in life. But if he couldn't change his Dream Force Sovereignty, then what should he do?

Leonel walked aimlessly, raising a palm to face the sky and allowing golden strands of Bow and Spear Force to circulate in the air. They chased around one another like wisps of wind, growing faster and faster.

He had never really thought about why he was so good at using Bow Force, but now that he understood so much about Weapon Forces, it seemed almost too obvious.

What was the job of a bowman?

In olden Earth, they probably just relied on numbers, sending out large volleys into enemy ranks and just hoping that they'd hit something...

But what about in this world?

A bowman sat back, they analyzed, they targeted threats and they controlled the battlefield from a bird's eye view. It was the kind of Weapon Force that was perfectly in line with Leonel's character, the loftiness, the precision, the intelligence required...

The Dominance that was necessary.

An odd pulse began to take form on Leonel's wrists. Soon, they both became bands of gold, but it was the ornament in the center that was special.

One had a perfect spear ready to pierce through the skies.

The other had a curved bow ready to shoot down stars.

They looked like a pair of illusory bracelets on Leonel's wrists, and if he was paying attention, he would have noticed that they were enhanced versions of the Domain Rings.

He had decided what his path would be.

Chapter 2794: Matters

His Dream Force would dictate his state of mind, it would be the intelligence that guided his actions and it would protect him from overextending himself and making foolish decisions.

However, when his Dream Force had decided that it was time to battle, that there was no other option but to cut down his enemy, another part of his would make itself known.

A Sovereignty amongst Sovereignities.

An air of otherworldly confidence to have a spear that could pierce through anything, a bow that could shoot down anything.

The golden bracelets around Leonel's wrists grew to the point they looked like halos hovering around his arms. At the same time, they began to gain small freckles of violet as though they had been tainted by Leonel's King's Might.

The world shook and vibrated wildly as Leonel Spear and Bow Force skyrocketed, taking one step forward after another until the both of them were firmly at the Quasi Creation State.

And with the auras of their Sovereignty...

BANG! CRACK!

The world fissured and shattered around Leonel. His will was so strong that even the appearance of his Bow and Spear Force seemed to want to collapse everything.

Anastasia suddenly appeared above Leonel, her face in a panic. But when she saw that it was Leonel, she relaxed somewhat.

She wasn't sure what to do. If this continued, it would be pretty back. But at the same time, Leonel was in a bit of a daze and he didn't seem to realize what he was doing.

Just as she was about to make a decision, Aina appeared in a flash of black lightning as well. She had sensed something odd going on as well. She even thought that Leonel was in danger.

When she saw the halo-like bracelets around his wrists, her gaze couldn't help but flicker. What powerful Weapon Forces... but they were also mixed in with something else.

It was like they had suffered the brunt of Leonel's frustration and were forced to endure it even though they were on the verge of completely collapsing.

Aina had never seen those symbols before, but how could she not have seen Leonel's Spear and Bow Domain Rings before?

Both were shaped exactly like that, an incomplete ring with a miniature weapon hovering between its unfinished loop. It couldn't be a coincidence that this phenomena was identical to that. In a lot of ways, it reminded Aina of her Manifestation, but she didn't quite understand why.

Aina stepped forward, weathering the storm as a droplet of blood trickled down the corner of her lip to place a hand on Leonel's shoulder. Then, the two vanished.

Anastasia patted her chest with her little hand, still not understanding.

Her world was so sturdy. Although Leonel was excellent, even a Ninth Dimensional Demi-God shouldn't be able to cause this scene. It didn't make any sense.

...

The moment Leonel and Aina appeared out in the real world, there was a violent upswell. The skies seemed to connect with the earth and the entirety of the Human Bubble began to tremble wildly.

Suddenly, the halo-like bracelets around Leonel's wrists solidified and it looked as though one could reach out and touch them as though they had been formed of the most shimmering brass. It was then that the flecks of violet also solidified, giving them a violet-gold look.

It suddenly became obvious why Leonel had caused such a commotion inside of the Segmented Cube. Whatever was happening now, there was a need for Leonel to resonate with something in the outside world. It wasn't Leonel's strength causing this, but rather whatever he was communicating with.

...

Deep in an unknown corner of Existence, an ancient ground trembled.

At the center of it, an enormous sword of stone was pierced into the ground. It was impossible to tell the size of such a weapon, even a scale of hundreds of kilometers wasn't adequate.

From afar, it looked fine, but at that moment, a leaf fluttered over from an unknown location. The moment it reached a certain change, golden blade lights manifested and shredded it to pieces. In an instant, the leaf was cut apart so many times that by the time the blade lights vanished, there was nothing left but a floating mass of atoms, completely invisible to the naked eye.

On the opposite side of this towering sword there was a rod pierced into the ground. It was just as tall, just as mighty... but any spear master worth their salt could tell that it was a spear at first glance.

The ground around it was perfectly smooth and when a rush of wind kicked up a pebble into its vicinity, a replaying of what occurred in the sword's domain was recreated.

This piece of land silently floated through the outer reaches of Existence.

...

Leonel roared, a wild sphere of Bow and Spear Force forming around him. They seemed to clash, his body becoming a battlefield.

"Pipe down!" He roared.

The bracelets on his wrists cracked, only to be quickly filled by more violet. His will forcefully suppressed them, pulling them into submission as his aura continued to soar.

Flaura coughed up a mouthful of blood, wiping it with a sleeve. A dangerous light flashed in her gaze as she stepped over a corpse, vanishing into the distance.

Every time she dealt with a situation like this, a great amount of rage would billow up. Just to survive, she was being forced to progress much faster than she wanted, scaling the Dimensions without solidifying her foundation like she wanted.

This was the worst sort of sin to her. This would almost certainly limit her future potential, but if she was dead, there would be no future in the first place.

'It should be here,' she thought to herself.

At that moment, an Invalid appeared before Flaura, but she showed not the slightest hint of fear.

"I have information you might be interested in."

The Invalid stared blankly, not responding. But Flaura expected this. Even Variant Invalids were all fools, let alone an Invalid.

"Take it and give it to someone who matters."

She handed something over and then vanished.

Chapter 2795: Vague

Leonel didn't know what was going on. It was in one part because he didn't understand, and another part because it was difficult to think at all.

"He rarely found his mind being overloaded by anything, but at the moment it felt like that was truly what was happening. There were too many sensations, so many sparks going off in his mind that he couldn't do anything but stand there. He didn't have the mental capacity left to even control his body, let alone pay attention to any sensory information coming in from his surroundings."

"He didn't hear Anastasia's voice or his wife's. He found it difficult to pay attention to anything but the Big Bang echoing through his mind."

"He felt like his body was being stretched through both the past, the present and the future, as though he was forming a will that surpassed it all."

"He didn't know how long it lasted, but all he could think of as he came down from that high was how disappointed he was. He felt like he had opened a gate to unprecedented power, and yet instead of being able to take advantage of it, it was locked away in his body because his Dimension was far too weak."

"It was a good thing. If the true extent of this power remained while he lacked the ability to withstand its might, his body would implode."

"However, he still didn't like it. It was hard seeing power you had rightfully earned slip away from you."

"Leonel's eyes slowly came into focus. He went from a person who was all of paralyzed, blind and deaf to someone whose senses nearly overloaded him in the next instant."

"The world felt so bright, so clear... so malleable."

"He vaguely saw the bracelets around his arm and wrists before they slowly faded away, and his first thought was much like Aina's. They looked identical to the Spear and Bow Domain rings."

"They were partially complete rings, almost as though someone had cut a small piece of them. In that missing portion, there was the hovering piece of a weapon. It was a gorgeous piece of craftsmanship that only seemed stronger in this form."

"Even though they were slowly fading, Leonel found that even as they did so, lifting his arms was actually so difficult, almost as though succeeding in doing so would allow him the ability to destroy the world."

"If he could barely lift his arms in this state, then what about when they were fully formed before? How had he even managed to stay on his two legs?"

"What happened...?"

"The last thing he remembered was solidifying his Weapon Force Paths, or specifically, his Sovereignty, but..."

"The moment Leonel thought about his Weapon Forces, the skies rumbled again and the fading bracelet shuddered, reversing the process of fading and slowly becoming more corporeal."

"Leonel's focus and mind, along with his Forces, seemed to be quickly draining away all at once. In just a few seconds, he was completely depleted and the bracelets winked out of existence."

"He collapsed, his vision turning black. He vaguely caught sight of Aina catching him before his head hit the ground."

"Leonel groggily opened his eyes. A mind-splitting migraine threatened to crack his skull in two as he struggled to sit up."

"But before he could, Aina pressed a palm to his chest, holding him down."

"'What the hell happened?' Leonel muttered."

"'I should be asking you that,' Aina said with a hint of exasperation."

"Leonel chuckled. 'You're the Five Star Health Professional, how about you diagnose me?'"

"Aina rolled her eyes and gave Leonel a flick on the forehead that felt like a bomb going off in his head."

"He groaned. '... Domestic... abuse...'"

"Aina shook her head."

"'I don't know. All I know is that those bracelets looked like your weapon rings and also felt a little bit like my Manifestation at the same time... but my Manifestation relies on my Lineage Factor at least in part. This doesn't seem to be the same all.'"

"Leonel frowned. It seemed that he would have to have another talk with the Godlen family."

"But if Aina was correct about the rest of it, didn't that mean that it was a Dharma of some kind?"

"They said that when one entered the Creation State, there was nothing beyond. However, there were levels of refinement within."

"A normal Creation State was already excellent. But, a Creation State that formed a Dharma was on another level. A Creation State that formed an Idol was even beyond that."

"Leonel didn't know many details outside of this as he had only vaguely heard it in passing thanks to Anastasia. But he was certain that there were also other matters to consider as well. He just didn't know what those matters were just yet."

"All Leonel knew was that he had really gotten screwed over this time."

"He didn't actually believe that the main strain on his body was the fact he had apparently awakened a Dharma or whatever it was. The main issue was that he had awakened two."

"His Bow and Spear Force didn't seem to want to coexist anymore, and they were trying to force him to pick one or the other."

"This had never happened before and he wasn't sure why... The only explanation he had was that it had to do with his path."

"He had chosen a path of absolute Supremacy... so how could there be two absolute Supremacies in the same body? Wasn't that a contradiction you couldn't ignore?"

"However, Leonel had still managed to force them into submission."

"He didn't care what they thought. The Supremacy in his body wasn't the Forces, it was himself. They were just conduits through which he could exhibit his might, not his might itself."

"That seemed to have forced his Weapon Forces into a more quiet state. But this seemed to only be a temporary solution."

"As for why that was... Leonel had only a vague guess about this as well."

Chapter 2796: Idol

"If Leonel was correct, then the reason this was only a temporary solution was that his control wasn't there yet. The ability he had awakened was so powerful that it wasn't yet his place to truly control them. It could be said that he was only strong enough to give it a temporary patch.

However, the main problem should just be using both of them at the same time. That wasn't something that he did too rarely, but it also wasn't something that his entire battle style relied on. So long as he avoided it, he shouldn't end up in the same situation again.

Regardless, this should mostly be a good thing. Whatever breakthrough he had had just now, even if it caused problems in the future, would only help him.

Eventually, Leonel had enough strength to get up and Aina finally allowed him to do so as well. Then, he made his way to the Godlens. He had some questions.

Vivak and Amynta didn't expect Leonel to suddenly visit so soon after the last time. A part of them was still worried that everything would come crumbling down once again, but they were thinking too much.

When Leonel asked his question, they were taken aback and looked toward one another.

Where did the symbol for the Domain Ring come from?

Now that they thought about it, Leonel was indeed from an Incomplete World. There were many things that powerhouses of even their worlds didn't know about, let alone someone like Leonel.

"... I don't have the full story either," Vivak said. "I can only say that in the past, beasts ruled everything. They were more powerful in all aspects and far more adept at Force Manipulation.

"While humanoids understood Force Manipulation to some extent, beasts were born with innate understandings and instincts that humans couldn't replicate on a large scale.

"If you took 100 people from a human family and 100 beasts from a single clan, the curve for a human's Force Manipulation would be a normal distribution, but for a beast clan, it would be highly skewed.

"Of course, when the entire beast population was taken into account, that was still a normal distribution. But when you were talking about individual bloodlines and bloodline types, this was where it changed.

"This was where the ruling Class of beasts came from and it was also where the God Beasts were born.

"It could be said that the humanoids were at a huge disadvantage during this period. There was little they could do to combat this...

"Until the first humanoid learned how to create Weapon Forces."

Leonel's brows rose. He realized at that moment that he had guessed a lot of this. He had even realized already that it was possible to construct Weapon Forces from far simpler Forces, creating specific doctrines.

Weapon Forces were a unique category amongst Forces and they were very uniquely human.

Little Blackstar, for example, couldn't use Weapon Forces, and neither could any of the beasts that Leonel had come across in his life.

Well, it was hard to say if they couldn't, or if their talent was just a double-edged sword.

Beasts were born with an innate understanding of one or more Forces. It could be said that any Forces outside of these one or few were impossible for them to learn. Little Blackstar wouldn't be running around wielding Light Force anytime soon and almost certainly never. Since Weapon Forces were created, there was no way for Beasts to use them as a result.

In that case, if you took this to the logical conclusion there was one obvious question...

Who created the first Weapon Forces?

And that seemed to be what Vivak was answering.

"It could be said that though the change wasn't immediate, the creation of Weapon Forces gave humanoids a chance to tip the scales in their favor. This is because although Weapon Force, in part, relies on affinity, there's also a huge component of personal freedom and personality to it as well.

"Weapon Forces allowed humanoids the flexibility of anchoring at least one of their Forces to their personal tastes, and this was a huge game-changer.

"If one had to give just one reason the humanoids were able to supplant the God Beasts, it was because of this.

"Make no mistake about it. Even after the God Beasts of Creation and the God Beasts of Destruction fell, humanoids were still absolutely no match for the other God Beasts until this change allowed them."

Leonel's eyes narrowed. This was interesting for a very specific reason...

The Pluto didn't seem like the type of Race to use Weapon Forces at all. Their bodies were so powerful, their blood so precious, that it seemed a waste for them to rely on weapons at all...

But then again, wouldn't Fist Force and other things of the like fall firmly into this category as well?

He didn't have the whole picture just yet, of course. So it was hard to tell how true his statement was.

'Interesting...'

"That's a nice story, but you still haven't told me where the symbol comes from," Leonel replied.

Vivak nodded. "After the creation of Weapon Forces, there eventually came to be those who reached the Impetus State, then the Life State, then the Creation State... and eventually: they formed Idols.

"I only know this from reading our records, but Idols are meant to be unique existences. Even if two people form an Idol from the same Force, the path cannot be the same.

"The main problem is that with Weapon Forces in specific... there's some clashing that can occur because of this.

"Weapon Forces are both innately unique and innately universal at the same time. So when an Idol is challenged, it holds a completely different weight.

"At any given time, there can only be one Idol of a Weapon at a time... and every few generations there will be a battle to decide the outcome."

Chapter 2797: Fury

Leonel's didn't expect this kind of response. A battle to decide who would become the Idol of a generation? But if this was the explanation, then... why did he already feel like he was one?

It felt odd...

What Leonel didn't know was that the Phenomena he caused was sensed by the Gods.

The Idol Battlefield was a location that moved without rhyme or reason, and it was impossible to keep tabs on it in the long term.

It could be said that the only reason this battle only took place once every few generations was because all the time in between was spent finding exactly where it was.

It was hard for even the Gods to understand exactly what the Idol Battlefield was all about and why it was formed in the first place. The stories were so old and had grown so muddled that it was difficult to place a finger on exactly where their origins lay and what was truth from fiction.

All they knew was that the Idol Battlefield always disappeared after its winners were crowned and it only appeared again when there were a sufficient number of candidates prepared to do battle once more.

But even now, the Idol Battlefield seemed far more agitated than usual. It was much too far away from the normal reaches of Existence for anyone other than the most powerful to feasibly travel to it, and yet it was making such a commotion.

This was the first time they had found the battlefield before it was within their range. It traveled through a vast nothingness, the regions of Existence that the Northern Star had already rendered to not even a memory.

For it to suddenly throw such a tantrum...

What could have happened?

Even without understanding, many Weapon Masters began to sharpen their weapons, readying themselves for a battle of ages.

According to its former speed, the Idol Battlefield should have taken hundreds more years to reach them once again. But with how agitated it was now, would its speed still be the same?

In as little as a decade at most, or even sooner, it was very likely that it would rear its head once more and the bloodshed would be legendary.

With this anomaly happening, who dared to say that this event would be the same as the others? Who was to say that there wasn't some added specialness to this event this time around?

**

After getting the information he wanted from the Godlens, Leonel returned to the Dream Pavilion. He looked toward a few snow globes that hid the soul kernels from the former Dream Pavilion Deputies.

He had originally wanted to give one to Ramon. But he both ended up getting distracted and felt that it was no longer necessary... at least not for Ramon.

Ramon was following his own path and Leonel didn't want to interfere with it. Plus, it was hard to say how effective all of this would be.

Leonel's original plan was to use them like Forgetful Orbs.

With [Assimilate], Leone was able to give souls more permanency by anchoring them to an object. Depending on how he used it, he could force one of many effects.

First, he could increase the talent or the soul; he could increase the talent of the object, or... he could create something that could enhance a third party.

The first two were guaranteed, it was just that the last one was little more than speculation on Leonel's part. He actually wasn't sure if this was possible at all, but he had a good feeling that it was. There was no reason for it not to be.

Actually, ever since he stepped a half-foot into the Self Path, he had had this idea.

His father was only adept at using his own Self as a conduit for his Crafting. But as a descendant of the Fawkes, couldn't Leonel do more than that?

If he could take and control the souls of others, didn't that mean that he could use their "Self" as a conduit instead.

In that case, his Self Path would be even more potent.

As Leonel was lost in thought, his gaze suddenly sharpened as he stood up abruptly. A dense killing intent exuded from his gaze as he suddenly bolted.

Within the Segmented Cube, Aina frowned as she sensed the change in Leonel's mood. However, when she saw what was being reflected in his mind, her mood too took a turn for the worse.

What was happening here?

...

BOOM!

Leonel left booming concentric circles in the air as he ripped through the wind that stood in his path. His foot steps were so powerful that even the steps that he formed from his Emulation Spatial Force shattered as he rumbled forward.

By the time he was approaching his destination, his eyes were a fiery shade of red.

He descended from the skies.

Without even a single word, he fell like a meteor, a spear appearing in his hands.

BOOM!

When he hit the ground, the earth rippled out in waves. Large numbers of enemies were wiped out left and right, leaving nothing but motes of light in their wake as they were wiped from the face of the world.

There was only one Race of beings that would cause such a thing upon their deaths.

Invalids.

A large crack had appeared in the Human Bubble. Out from the Inbetween World, large numbers of Invalids surged out.

The mindless Zombies stumbled out. Many of them seemed even weaker than the first Invalids to appear on Earth, but many more reminded Leonel of the B-, A-, and S-grade Invalids that he had used to fear so much. Except this time, they were an existence that could threaten even his current self.

There was a reason Leonel was so absolutely furious.

There was only one reason these Invalids were here, and their target couldn't be anyone other than his wife.

Someone was targeting him and he had a pretty good idea of who it was.

It seemed that they had taken his mercy as kindness, not realizing that they had just moved their death date up.

Leonel roared, billowing smoke of destruction coming from the soles of his feet and the corner of his eyes.

Chapter 2798: Now?

Leonel's spear moved like the wind. Suddenly, billowing tendrils of foggy silver-blue light came off of him in waves. From certain angles, it even seemed as though he was a blue star letting off waves of solar flares, his furious momentum rising to another level.

[Star Fusion].

He became even faster, his lungs expanding and the beats of his heart sending rippling waves through space. Just his heartbeat alone sounded like a war drum, echoing through the air and even sending the weaker Invalids flying while directly shattering the even weaker once to nothing but motes of light.

Every time one of these Invalids came after his wife, he was reminded of that day back on Earth. By that point in their relationship, Leonel had already accepted that the Aina he knew and Aina he had come to know after the Metamorphosis weren't really his wife. Instead, they were a combination of the two.

His wife could be very shy sometimes, but she could also be very demanding. She could be very soft spoken, but she could also be a mass murderer.

However, the one thing that she never was... was fearful.

That was an emotion he had never sensed from her until the Puppet Master appeared. That day, she was paralyzed, not just by his power, but also by an attack on her heart and her psyche.

He understood his wife maybe even better than he understood himself, no... he almost certainly did.

Family was something deeply personal to her.

Battle was something also deeply personal to her.

And yet, the Puppet Master had wanted to take away both.

He had the ability to freeze her body, ripping away her ability to defend herself, and all the training that she had put her heart and soul into had become worthless in a single instant of time.

She wanted a family. She had been stripped of that right by the Brazinger family, so she had always promised herself that when things settled down and she could find a man that she trusted, she hoped to build a large family with him, five, ten, even twenty kids if it came to it...

And yet, the Puppet Master had wanted to commandeer even that, stripping her of her right to build her family in her image, and trying to turn her into some sort of breeding farm for the Invalids.

Regardless of which it was, it hit Aina hard, and even to this day, when she met Invalids, Leonel could sense hints of that past echoing through her heart.

It wasn't just for selfish reasons that he hated the fact he had sent Aina off to send that letter back when they were trapped in the cult, it was also because he knew that she would have to likely face the one creature she didn't want to face the most...

A Variant Invalid.

All of those memories and thoughts came bubbling up once again the moment Leonel saw this hoard. He was so furious that he didn't think of anything other than slaughter.

After he killed one, he wanted to kill another, then another.

He didn't know fatigue, his mind didn't even have a metric for stamina at the moment.

He wanted them all dead.

Even their commanders weren't spared. The Variant Invalids that were all directing them couldn't last even a single strike beneath his blade.

The plumes of Destruction were so potent, so violent, that at a certain point the entire region around Leonel became nothing more than a death zone.

His Absolute Domain's presence seemed to fuse into his Destruction World, manifesting at once and shattering the very existence of Invalids that were far too weak that stepped into his range.

By some unknown point, Leonel had slaughtered his way all the way through the army and had even made it to the crack in the Human Bubble.

Waves upon waves of Invalids were still making their way in, only to be stopped by a destructive spear that knew no limit.

His spear tip vanished, dancing through the wind.

He tapped into his Spear Domain Lineage Factor, or rather its mutated form, for the first time in a long while. And this time, they erupted with strength that was unprecedented in the past.

Time and space distorted beneath his blade. Even without the slightest hint of Spear Force fused into his attack, his skill had reached an entirely different level, so much so that Auspicious Air began to form and gather on its own, resonating with his spear stances and blessing his attack.

A foggy air of dense, ancient bronze began to dance with the dense billowing blue and the smokey black coming from his Destruction Sovereignty.

He was simply a lethal killing machine, no thing could stop him as he stepped out into the Inbetween World, his fury agitating even the liquid Anarchic Force in the region.

Leonel unleashed a roar and his hair danced in its violet hues.

[Star Fusion: Combustion].

The beautiful blues became a furious red. His body emitted waves of steam as he swept his spear cross.

Time and space couldn't limit him in the slightest, it seemed that enemies fell even before his blade swept by them and even more fell long after it had already passed.

The devastation knew no bounds. Somehow, rather than calming after entering the Inbetween World, it was as though another hidden beast within him had been released.

If it wasn't for the fact that Invalids left no skin and bone behind when they died, it could be said that they would have already been swimming in an ocean of blood.

None of them understood the kind of a fury a husband could tap into when protecting his wife. Not a single one of them understood that they hadn't just touched on Leonel's reverse scale, but instead on the very core of his existence.

When he was merely an ant of the Dimensional Verse, he had dropped a city from the sky in rage.

What did they think he was going to do now?

Chapter 2799: Bull, Peacock, Apex

In the far-off distance, a trio of gazes flickered, not quite understanding what they were witnessing. They stood near the back of the Invalid army, but they could clearly feel every change.

In truth, the formation of Invalids only ever came from Incomplete Worlds. Complete Worlds didn't have to contest with Sub-Dimensional Zones or Metamorphosises, so it could be said that any Invalids that were here were the product of Incomplete Worlds that hadn't managed to get rid of them in time and had thus been taken over by them.

There were actually quite a number of such worlds, and over the years, these Invalids had spread out and claimed Complete Worlds for themselves as well.

Variant Invalids were extremely talented existences, no less so than Sparks, and on the highest end they were comparable even to God Childes.

Even so, they had to remain low-key because there were too few of them...

The problem was that a Blood Sovereign was too great of a strategic resource. They were far too rare and even in the entire Invalid Empire, there were only a handful. The number didn't even reach double digits.

It was impossible, then, for them to give up this sort of opportunity. So, in a rare moment, they had actually brought out a decent number of warriors.

In truth, they had thought that it was far too much. Did they even need this much for a mere Human Bubble? This could be said to be the most convenient Blood Sovereign they would ever pick up, right?

So what was this situation?

Leonel seemed to be single-handedly crushing their army of tens of thousands. Granted, most of them were weaklings. After all, Invalids were Invalids for a reason,

they were made up of people who failed to awaken their Ability Indexes. It wasn't until they became Variant Invalids that they were a true danger to the world.

But even so, the weakest was in the Seventh Dimension. How could a Fifth Dimensional existence like Leonel possibly destroy so many of them and with such ease? Was he truly such an outrageous monster?

Among these three was a familiar figure...

Apex.

He also happened to be the unhappiest of the bunch. He was the one who found Aina's leg, he was the one searching for the location of the Human Bubble all this time, and this should have been his to benefit from alone.

Instead, they had ended up in a situation where Aina's half-digested leg had instead become proof that allowed this mobilization. If not for him, there would have been a more careful and long-drawn-out investigation to ensure that the information they had received was true.

But because he had been covertly trying to find the location of the Human Bubble, when the organization mobilized their true experts to begin investigating as well, his own efforts had been uncovered.

Due to that, he was summoned and then reprimanded for hiding such information for his own selfish motives.

But obviously, since he was here, the reprimanding couldn't have been so bad.

The Invalids didn't have such scruples when they did things, and their concept of "betrayal" was very loose. Plus, given who his master was, it was impossible for him to be truly punished in the deepest sense of the word.

So in the end, here he was.

All that said, he was actually getting a sick, twisted satisfaction out of watching the army be wiped out like this. How dare they take his cattle from him? It was worse than taking meat from his mouth.

"We should go. The elders won't be happy if we actually lose the entire army. Some of them had a chance at becoming Variants in the future."

"Bullshit. This trash wouldn't be able to accomplish anything."

Beside Apex, there was a man simply known as Bull. He was the second to speak and he was the burliest of them all. Muscles and veins bulged across his body and his skin

had a bronze-silverish sheen to it that made him look like a polished metal rather than a human.

The other was known as Peacock. He was the slenderest of them all and there was a crown of feathers in his hair. He had a handsome countenance, and one would expect him to be dressed elegantly, but instead he was dressed like a village chieftain, a beast skin skirt wrapping around his waist.

If one looked to Peacock's back, you would find a dense pattern of tattoos fluttering with an array of greens, violets, and pinks...

Not much unlike a Peacock's feathers.

"Then you take the punishment, then," Peacock sneered.

"You want to go up so badly, then go. No one is stopping you, little penis."

Peacock's white orbs flashed with rage. Bull's play on his name never failed to fill him with fury.

Suddenly, the tattoos on his back glowed and a feather whipped out at Bull's back, sending him flying overhead and toward the battlefield.

"YOU BASTARD!" Bull roared out.

Unfortunately, he couldn't fly. In fact, even though that could fly would have a hard time of it in the Inbetween Worlds to begin with.

Without a choice, he could only continue on his trajectory.

Leonel looked up.

The depths of his eyes looked like a bottomless abyss. They should have been a beautiful pair of irises, one painted by delicate lines of pale violet, like the explosion of a star concentrated into a dot.

And yet, that beauty seemed nothing short of maleficent at this very moment.

Looking at the man barreling through the skies, the behemoth that stood at nearly three meters tall and had a body formed from a mountain of metals, he looked entirely unmoved.

Meeting this gaze in close proximity for the first time, Bull felt his heart freeze over.

There was a Variant Invalid. He didn't feel emotions. The only thing that drove him was a fierce need for survival, a constant drive to evolve.

And at the moment, it was like all of that had vanished.

He just wanted to run.

And that was when the spear thrust out.

Chapter 2800: Die

Bull punched out. He had no choice. Fear or not, if he wanted to survive there was no other choice.

CLANG! BANG!

The result was out of Bull's expectations. Despite the heart-shuddering amounts of fear he had felt, the clash was fairly even. He managed to protect himself, falling back and maintaining his balance.

But then it crashed into him all at once.

[Domain].

[Universe].

Leonel expressionlessly took a step forward, his aura skyrocketing.

His spear thrust out again as beneath the weight of the two combined Domains, the Invalids in the surroundings were crushed.

For dozens of kilometers, the only one who seemed capable of withstanding Leonel's pressure was Bull himself.

And even then, it was only barely.

"Die," Leonel said lightly.

The world shifted and twisted. In that moment, Bull could have sworn that he saw the Anarchic Force grow even more agitated.

A spear more beautiful than any he had ever seen in his life appeared before his brows.

He tried to protect himself. But it was worthless.

[Finality].

PCHU!

The spear split his skull.

Bull opened his mouth to say something, but with a twist of his wrist, Leonel shattered his head into a rain of blood and gore that quickly became motes of light.

"Stay the fuck away from me."

Leonel waved a hand and the huge surge of light that wanted to enter his body was swatted away, crushed and vaporized beneath his World of Destruction.

Leonel took a step forward and then another.

Peacock and Apex's eyes widened, not expecting Bull to die so unceremoniously. Was this even possible?

Bull was a Variant Invalid genius, a man who had quite some favor and was in the deep reaches of the Seventh Dimension.

It was much harder for Variant Invalids to progress than other Races despite their talent, so the value of one Seventh Dimensional existence meant profoundly more to them than it did to any other Race.

And yet, one had died, just like that.

A swirl of Destructive smoke rose from Leonel's body, forming a pillar that pierced the black skies above and seemed to cast the world into further darkness.

His spear swiped out and another large wave of Invalids were torn to pieces.

Again, and again, and again, until he was already well within range of the duo that remained.

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The Human Bubble was in another uproar. The cracking of the barrier wasn't something that could be ignored, but once again, much like the last time, it was as though it had just all fizzled out without any backlash. No one knew that there was a man fighting an enraged battle in the Inbetween World.

In the Godlen Compound, Amynta had had much the same reaction as everyone else, and unlike them she knew that it was Invalids that had suddenly appeared.

But when she saw Leonel's true strength, she was doubly shaken.

It became clear to her in that instant that if Leonel had wanted her to die, she would truly be dead and there was nothing she could do about it.

'The Human Race is still... far too weak...' a flash of determination sharpened her gaze.

If there was this first wave of Invalids now, even if Leonel fixed it, there would be another and then another. Without the barrier of protection, and without the ability to exchange for another from the Dream Pavilion, the situation would only grow worse.

There was no doubt that this was just a precursor to a much larger issue. Would they ever have peace? Would they ever stop sending Invalids? What were they even here for to begin with?

The only path forward was to grow stronger.

**

Minerva stood high in the skies. Blood dripped from her in waves, she had lost an arm and a leg on opposite sides of her body and her wings barely looked recognizable beneath the torn flesh and rain of crimson.

But none of that mattered to her.

Beneath her feet was the unrecognizable body of a Void Race member. A true Void Race member.

The battle had been waged for months, and it could be said that the two had long since forgotten what they were fighting for and even whose side they were on.

None of that mattered to them, the only thing that did was the opponent right before their eyes.

And in the end, it was Minerva who came out on top.

She lifted her head to the skies and unleashed a mighty roar. There was nothing delicate about it at all.

Her Dream Force shattered the barrier to the Creation State and her aura continued to grow. Her wounds were visibly sealing beneath the might and soon the naked body of a woman with beauty beyond words had appeared high in the skies. Even the scars on her face had vanished, while her clothes had long since been ravaged to nothing by the long, drawn-out battle.

Even with the support of the Dream Pavilion, and being two Dimensions above this Void Race genius, it had actually taken so much to claim victory.

However, just the same, her hands moved to her face and she viciously claws downward, destroying her countenance once more.

This time, she didn't stop there, raking her fingers over her skin and shredding herself apart until she was almost unrecognizable.

These wounds were nothing more than flesh wounds, completely unable to impede her battle prowess. If anything they made her feel good.

Her beauty had been nothing more than annoyance all her life.

But from today forth, they wouldn't know her as Minerva, the gorgeous empress, they would know her as Minerva, the Warrior Empress.

She wasn't an Owlán, she was a Minerva. She had met a God and slayed one. She had trampled one beneath her feet and she would do it again, and again, as many times as she needed to finally return her Race to the pinnacle it deserved.

Her aura flourished and a wild change occurred once more...

But this time inside of her.