

Dimensional Descent

Chapter 2821: Sneak In

People would likely call Leonel ridiculous if they knew what he was thinking. But this was what he felt from the bottom of his heart.

The Sea Gods weren't as imposing, and their blood certainly wasn't as potent, but the feeling and momentum they gave him was similar to a miniature Pluto Race.

It wasn't just because they shared the same blue-tinted skin, but it was something deeper.

Even though they were just standing there and talking, their presences alone exuded a great deal of might. Leonel could hear their heartbeats synchronizing like waves, the thrumming enough to make a Third Dimensional existence's eardrums burst.

'They didn't send their powerhouses, but it honestly doesn't seem like they need to. This sort of status quo had remained for a long while. I wonder why the Sea Gods haven't just ended it. The humans almost certainly have something that's making them hesitant. Either that or they're trying to bait out something else.'

Now Leonel was wondering how to get in.

Right now, the land was in an odd situation.

At the center of the several armies there was a city. The trouble was that the city took up practically a tenth the size of the entire planet. It was absolutely huge.

'Well, it takes up ten percent now...'

Usually a capital city of a Domain would take up an entire planet, if not an entire solar system or network of planets. It wasn't normal for one to be so... reserved.

Obviously, they had been forced to retreat back to this point.

The good news was that the city walls were tall, and the protective Force Arts were excellent by the metrics that Leonel had seen of this world at least, but that was pretty much where all the good news stopped.

For one, it looked like the Sea Gods were turning the city into an island. The ground that did remain was sloshy and waterlogged, but there were already large segments that had flowing quasi-rivers and lakes.

This would be bad even if the water was fresh. After all, there was only so much water plants could intake. Any more and they would all die.

But it was even worse that all this water was salt water.

Leonel didn't know where the Sea Gods were pumping this water in from, but it was devastating for the ecosystem.

The second issue was that just because the Sea Gods weren't attacking, didn't mean that they weren't pressuring the humans in some way. There was only so long food could last, only so long unrest could be suppressed, only so long before the last human empire crumbled beneath its own weight...

Both figuratively and literally.

Which led to the third problem. The city would probably begin to sink at some point or another. The foundation it was built upon wasn't designed to withstand this odd rush of water.

And even if the Force Art managed to protect it somehow, succeeding in something that it wasn't designed to do in the first place, who was to say that the water level wouldn't just keep rising until it covered the whole city?

Even if the Force Art protected the city from the water spilling in, what would happen if it continued to rise? What would the citizens feel like they were entirely submerged in water? What if they were buried so far that sunlight couldn't reach them? What would it feel like to be plunged into a perpetual darkness?

These tactics by the Sea Gods seemed designed to break their spirits. They didn't seem to just want to kill all the humans, they wanted to crush them until there was nothing at all left.

What was even more interesting than all of this was that security was lax, almost too lax.

Leonel had been caught by Sixth Dimensional Oryx on the Ancient Battlefield, and yet here he had managed to slink his way all the way to the capital without being stopped.

It seemed the Sea Gods almost wanted humans to be able to sneak back to this location.

Was it as simple as a trap to deal with them all at once? Or was it related to what he had learned about their partial Cloud Race ancestry?

Leonel stood in a tree in the far off distance, the salty waters lapping at its trunk. He closed his eyes for a moment, wondering how best to go about this.

There were too many variables in this Incomplete World. Without laying his eyes on the situation, it was impossible to plan ahead of time. And even now that he could see it, he knew it wasn't the whole picture, so that was its own problem. He was so worried about this that he had no choice but to place Aina in the Segmented Cube.

'Alright. First, I'll just have to sneak into the city. Then we can take it from there.'

He was tempted to hide in the waters, but if he was correct, this was the worst option available to him. The Sea Gods should have a huge advantage in detecting things in the water.

So he took an unconventional approach, avoiding the waters entirely.

Emulation Spatial Force sparkled around him, but more was a deterrence. The main character became his Light Force.

He refracted the surrounding light at a quick pace.

The trouble with using Light Force or Emulation Spatial Force to hide yourself was that there were too many perspectives to consider. So long as you were a bit off in the eyes of just one person, it might be enough for you to investigate.

Second, Leonel didn't want to impersonate the Sea Gods for now. For one, this was supposedly something the humans were capable of, so they would be on guard and have prepared measures against it. And second, how would he justify sneaking into the city if he was one of them?

Like this, Leonel inched closer to the city walls. Now, he had another problem to face.

Chapter 2822: Talk

The path forward was easy. Once again, the Sea Gods didn't seem to have any fail-safes, nor were they vigilant. They seemed to almost be inviting him to enter the city.

Now the trouble was exactly how should he do that?

The Force Art was comically easy for Leonel to decipher, and he had already found several weak points. But there was a difference between breaking a Force Art, entering without anyone knowing, and even further entering without compromising it.

These were three levels of difficulty, with the last being the most difficult.

Entering without alerting anyone and also leaving the Force art in the same state he had gotten it in took a bit of time. But Leonel was prepared enough to do this.

He leapt up and onto the city walls, latching onto locations that deftly dodged the detection modules. Finding the flaw he was targeting, he pressed a hand against it. His Emulation Spatial Force spread and soon the Force Art was subtly changed.

He slipped right through.

At the moment, Leonel covered the planet in his Internal Sight. Although there was a risk that there was someone from the Demi-Gods or Gods hidden in the army, he felt the risk was worth it.

For one, covering a single planet with Internal Sight wasn't impossible in an Incomplete World and they wouldn't necessarily assume he had come from elsewhere. After all, Anastasia could cover the entire universe.

Second, the information that he could get back from doing this was far more important. Plus, this was why he had waited to slip into the city first.

'No one noticed.' Leonel said after a while.

This should have been obvious to him, but for some reason, the Sea Gods just made him feel like there was more to them than met the eyes.

'Am I being too cautious?'

Leonel frowned, and he touched down into the city.

He shook his head, feeling that he should trust his senses, but also feeling that he had no reason to justify such thoughts, either.

Leonel turned his attention to the city.

It was well built, but there was nothing too special about it. The most interesting thing was the fact that it carried the feel of a Spiritual city, having a huge overlap between greenery and residential buildings.

It was the same as the outside. According to his estimations, the entire planet had certainly once been a city, and yet there had still been so many trees and vegetation around.

It was clear to him that there were certain reverberations across spacetime that caused certain things to appear again and again. Much of the architecture back on Earth was one-to-one comparison to things he had seen in wider Existence. The apartment buildings and compounds in Godlen City were the perfect example.

It was an interesting phenomenon that Leonel didn't quite understand.

It made sense that the same sort of Races would appear again and again across the Incomplete Worlds. There were certain characteristics that evolution would always favor when the net was cast wide enough. It was still a bit difficult to accept, but it was within his range of tolerances.

The fact that architecture was so well replicated, though, left him curious.

'These humans are also a bit different.'

Leonel had kept his invisibility activated as he slipped through the city and he noticed that these humans were indeed slightly off kilter from the humans he knew.

They looked normal except for the fact that some of them had hair dancing with runes and others had opaque eyes of foggy whiteness that almost made Leonel mistake them as Invalids for a moment. But no, in reality, these were just novel manifestations of the Cloud Race's Cloud Figure.

The Cloud Figure was the bundle of white fog and runes that acted as the Cloud Race's hair. Many of their best abilities came directly as a result of this evolutionary quirk.

'But this is still odd. Spirituals tend to mate with humans a lot, but what could have happened here for humans and the Cloud Race to practically create an entirely new Race of humanoids?'

Leonel silently observed the city for three days. He wasn't in a rush to make a move because if he was correct, this place would have to be where his campaign started from.

Right now, he wasn't in competition with this world, he was in competition with the two that bought the information before him.

According to his estimates, if one wanted the best way to conquer this Incomplete World, that would obviously be to turn the Sea Gods into a puppet.

If Leonel tried to do the same, he would find himself on his back foot without room to maneuver. There was a good chance that the two groups had already taken a piece of that pie. If he tried to triple dip, he would end up getting exposed and crushed.

That was exactly why he had to do exactly what no one could expect. He would turn the humans of this world into its overlords.

And this time, he wouldn't disappear halfway through.

The weight of what happened to the Morales still loomed heavy on his conscience. He wouldn't allow it to happen again.

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Leonel's figure flickered, slipping into what could only be described as an imperial chamber. It was lavish and well furnished, and in the center of it all, an old man slept in the midst of silk pillows and covers of lavender.

The emperor tossed and turned, sleep not coming to him. Suddenly, his eyes snapped open, only to find Leonel sitting in a chair at the foot of his bed.

The emperor's heart practically beat out of his chest as he stood on the bed, ready for battle. But the soft pliability of the mattress made it difficult to get a firm base.

His breathing slowed as he regained his wits, staring at Leonel deeply. If this man wanted to kill him, he would surely be dead already.

"Calm now?" Leonel asked. "Good. We have some stuff to talk about."

Chapter 2823: Frog

"Who are you?"

Emperor Fleeting Cloud didn't relax his guard entirely. He didn't bother to raise the alarm. Something told him that not only would he fail, but even if, by some miracle, it all worked out, the Human Race would just end up suffering even more devastating losses.

What surprised him the most was that this boy seemed to also be a human as well. But this ironically put him more on edge.

If the Human Race had someone so powerful, would they even be in this situation?

Leonel smiled and didn't rush the Emperor. However, he also didn't seem to have any intention of explaining himself so swiftly either.

In Leonel's views, although he was quite sure that the two parties that arrived before him were likely involved with the Sea God Race, or at least one of the other two Races that weren't on the verge of collapse, it wasn't a 100% certain.

It was also possible that this Emperor was a spy set by another party, placed here to make the wrong choices at the right times to speed up the collapse of the empire.

Of course, this was a slim possibility, which was why Leonel had appeared so boldly, anyway. But that didn't mean that he would be casual about everything else.

Right now, the two parties knew that a third party had bought the information as well, but they didn't know who had done so.

The fact Leonel was a human could act as a nice smokescreen at the right time if it turned out that this man was a spy for another party.

This was also why Leonel didn't just directly kill him and turn him into a puppet. That might alert an enemy of his plans.

That said, he had observed this Empire in silence for three days. He was being overly cautious only because he only had this one chance and couldn't afford to mess it up, but he was still fairly certain that the Emperor was trustworthy.

At the end of the day, the Emperor was a man that had ruled over trillions at one point in his life. Though his empire had crumbled, he had lived a long life and was more well-adjusted than most.

In the end, he calmed and took a step down from his bed. At the very least, he could have more solid footing like this.

"Good." Leonel smiled. "I have a question for you, then. How much do you want this empire of yours to survive?"

Emperor Fleeting Cloud's pupils constricted into pinholes. They trembled like a faint light in the void.

"What do you mean by this?"

"Don't I mean exactly what I've said?"

The Emperor fell into silence before taking a breath.

"If the Sea God Race has come here just to taunt this old man, feeling free to do so. But I will die on my feet, as will the rest of my empire. Humans are not cowards."

Leonel's pale violet eyes burned for a moment before they focused.

"Humans, huh? Not the Cloud Race?"

The Emperor frowned. Leonel could feel his visceral distaste for this, and it amused him and intrigued him at once.

It seemed that these Humans truly disliked the Cloud Race for some reason.

"We are the Human Race."

The Emperor didn't explain anything further, but this was enough for Leonel to confirm something.

This man wasn't a spy, and if he was, he wasn't aware of it. This wasn't the reaction of a man who had lost pride in his Race.

But now Leonel was curious about the history between these two Races. How was the Human Race both so integrated with the genes of the Cloud Race, and yet so hateful of them at the same time?

"Good. Then I will ask you again. Do you want your empire to survive?"

Emperor Fleeting Cloud took a deep breath, realizing that Leonel was likely not from the Sea God Race.

"Of course I want my Empire to survive. Without Fleeting Cloud, humans will have no home. We will become slaves and never have the right to raise our heads up again."

Leonel nodded slowly. The emperor also spoke like he had no idea there were Humans outside of this Incomplete World. That was another plus.

"Then I can give you an opportunity. However, if you're going to grasp it, it will depend on you."

"Who are you?" He couldn't help but ask this question once again.

Leonel grinned. "Just a human."

"I don't believe you."

"Well, you don't really have much of a choice, now do you?"

"I've already said it. I would rather-."

"Die, then."

Leonel sat there, smiling. He reclined in the chair, but an overwhelming suppression descended. His King's Might took shape and a fluttering violet fog became the long, winding body of a dragon.

It wrapped around Leonel's body, a powerful head leaning over his shoulder.

It opened its mouth and roared.

To the world, it was entirely silent, but to the Emperor, it felt like he was caught in a storm, a beast descending from a swirling cloud of lightning to open its maw right in his face.

He felt small. Like a human looking up to the surface from the bottom of the ocean, like a man staring at the stars in the depths of space, like a child seeing the wider world for the first time.

Fear gripped him to an existential level, and he fell to his knees.

Tears of blood began to fall from his eyes as veins popped across his face.

The difference between himself and Leonel couldn't have been clearer at that moment.

What the old man didn't know was that until Leonel flung himself free of a bit more of the Regulator's suppression, a battle with an Eighth Dimensional Overlord like this old man would take quite a bit of effort though he felt he would win in the end.

However, this Emperor no longer felt this way.

Right now, he was a frog at the bottom of a well.

Chapter 2824: Disturbance

Emperor Fleeting Cloud gasped for breath like a fish out of water. The instant the suppression vanished, his muscles loosened. If not for a last bout of strength, and the fact his body was exceptionally clean as an Eighth Dimensional expert, he might have even lost control of his bowels.

After awakening his King's Might Lineage Factor once more, Leonel had begun finding other ways to maximize it.

It had to be remembered that [Arise], [Breathe], and [Assimilate] were just the three most powerful and feared methods of the Lineage Factor. There were still dozens of other methods, including [Emperor's Gaze] which Leonel had used quite often in the past, and this much more powerful method.

Leonel's own mother's Emperor's Might manifested like a Dragon. In the past, Leonel had assumed that this was just Alienor's preference.

What he didn't know was that the Dragon's Might in legend was actually a bastardization of Emperor's Might. The mythologies of Earth had twisted the true origins.

In reality, [Emperor's Might], the technique, not the Lineage Factor, was placed among the second tier abilities of Emperor's Might. It was created by observing the Celestial Storm Race, a powerhouse amongst God Beasts.

The thing was that the Celestial Storm Race didn't have "Dragon's Might". It was a conception created by the Fawkes for a beast that seemed capable of ruling the skies.

This legend then became lost in translation, and Dragon's Might eventually became something that human fantasy writers often used as a foundational ability of the mythical creature... when in reality it was something manifested by the Fawkes alone.

This wasn't the only technique created based on the God Beasts. In fact, there were four in total. Although the Fawkes never managed to replicate anything for the Void Beasts or Infinity Beasts, they had done so for the four Celestial God Beasts.

And this was just one of them.

"Not killing yourself?" Leonel asked curiously.

He gazed down at the man that had fallen to his knees. The Emperor was heaving as though trying to empty his stomach, but there was nothing left in there. He hadn't been in an eating mood in the last several weeks, so he hacked and wheezed nothing but stomach acid and air.

It took him a long while before he managed to calm down.

The dragon around Leonel dissipated and vanished into plumes of violet smoke.

The best part of these abilities weren't their strength, but rather the fact that according to what he had come to understand about their history, unless you were well informed in the Emperor's Might Lineage Factor, these four Celestial abilities wouldn't be recognizable.

"There's no need to be excessively foolish." Leonel spoke lightly. "If I wanted to kill you, you'd be dead. If I wanted to destroy the entire rest of the human race, I would do so."

"If you want to accuse me of using you for something, you should first figure out your position and second figure out what I could possibly want from you."

Leonel stood to his feet.

"Now, do you want to win this war or not?"

The Emperor looked up, his eyes red with both unwillingness and fear. But in the end, he pressed it down. There was no other choice in this matter and no other steps to take.

"... Yes."

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Talon scratched his ass, a bit annoyed by the fact that he had been brought here. But these folks were way too powerful for him to snub his nose at... yet.

He had spent the last several months in his Crafting lab and had hardly made any attempts to train at all. Even so, he had still improved by leaps and bounds.

It could be said that his loss to Leonel had truly lit a fire under him, and he was more than a little annoyed that he had to come to an Incomplete World of all places now.

Who didn't know that Incomplete Worlds had limited laws that made progress nigh impossible? Plus, he was already in the Seventh Dimension, so even with the methods they had, the backlash he would receive for entering would be harsh.

He shook his head and crossed the barrier.

The red Samoan-like tattoos across his body erupted as the black chain lashed out. He hissed beneath the pain, but after his Dimension fell to the Sixth, everything stabilized.

'Not bad, all things considered. Too bad I look like a walking dead.'

All his tattoos had been covered in chains, his bronzed skin had paled, and his large belly had shrunk. In fact, it wasn't just his belly.

He had gone from a fairly rotund man to a sack of bones in his estimations. Though... what was a sack of bones to him was, in reality, shredded beyond compare to most others. His body was even more vascular than Leonel's own.

Shaking his head, he took out a talisman and tore it. A portal appeared before him that he stepped into.

When he appeared on the other side, he saw one of the most beautiful women he had ever seen in his life.

She was enormous, at five meters tall, but that didn't stop the Barbarian Race youth's eyes from almost popping out of his sockets.

He pursed his lips together, whistling. She was a big woman, but that also made that soft mounds of delicate blue pop out all the more.

Her long gown clung to her waist and down her thighs, looking almost like a mermaid's tail.

At that moment, the Sea Goddess looked down at Talon, her gaze calm. She didn't seem to notice Talon's heated gaze at all, but Talon himself frowned.

Where was this pressure coming from? Why would he feel pressure from an Incomplete World Race?

He had been sent here, but he really didn't know much about what was going on. At this point, he might as well be a child being directed by his elders.

"Alright lady, I was sent here to help you. What do you want me to do?"

The Sea Goddess didn't reply immediately, her sharp ears twitching. She took a graceful step and returned to her throne, taking a seat and looking down at Talon.

"There's an odd disturbance in the waters." She said softly.

Talon's heart skipped a beat. Was this a Sea Goddess, or a siren? How could a voice be so beautiful?

"I believe there is someone interfering with the fate of the humans. Go and ensure that they fall."

Only then did Talon understand. "Disturbance in the waters" should be a saying of the Sea Gods.

But what disturbance could she be referring to?

Chapter 2825: Shit Shit Shit

Leonel's approach to war hadn't changed much over the years, only because he never officially learned battle tactics. What he was good at was understanding people and guessing how they would react before even they were aware.

In a situation like this one, where he had limited understanding of the parties involved and the environments the battle would take place on, relying on cleverness was a hard pass.

Rather than spending time wracking his brain to find clever schemes, the best path forward was absolute power.

But that was a problem in and of itself.

Not only was his power limited due to the Regulator, even if it wasn't, he didn't have the luxury of just suddenly going all out to defend the Sea Gods, because that would expose him much earlier than he wanted.

To make matters worse, he couldn't rely on the humans either because they were much too weak. If they had absolute power to rely on, they would have used it already and they wouldn't be in this situation to begin with.

This meant one thing: Leonel not only had to find a method of using strength to overwhelm his enemies, at least the very least until he had gathered enough information to use cleverness. He also had to somehow do so while keeping it within an acceptable range.

If he pushed it too far, it would be obvious that one of the participants in this race to claim the Sea God Incomplete World had taken the side of the humans.

And if he didn't go hard enough... well, that result was obvious. The humans would be finished.

Threading this needle would probably be one of the hardest things that Leonel had ever done, but there was really only one path forward.

He had to rely on the strengths the humans did have, maximize them, and ride the wave to victory.

By the time his enemies realized he was here, it would be too late.

What Leonel didn't know was that his oddity had been sensed before he even had a chance to do anything.

He hadn't realized that the reason the Sea Gods were so lax wasn't because they were baiting the humans to return. Even if he was on his way back the security would have been just as easy to get through.

The real reason they were so relaxed was because they had an infallible confidence in Wise Sea Order.

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"How many days are we going to spend like this? We should just storm this city already. What's the point of all this?"

A Sea God grumbled.

He was young to begin with, as were pretty much all of them. Just sitting around like this instead of acting was really grating on his nerves.

"Maybe Sashae is feeling just as bored. Who knows, she might actually accept your advances tonight."

A round of jeering echoed as the young Sea God rolled his eyes. These guys weren't being serious at all, but that didn't stop him from standing up.

"Ho, there he goes again."

"Don't come back in a puddle of your tears this time. The ocean is salty enough."

"We'll clear out the camp for you. Out of respect, we'll let you rub one out in silence tonight. The blue balls can't be healthy."

The young Sea God held up a pair of middle fingers, his tongue flicking out of his mouth in what looked like an even more obscene jester. Clearly, this was unique to the Sea Gods.

He strode out of their small group with confident strides that grew less so the closer he got to a group of fairy-like voices. Unfortunately, he knew that his friends were watching him, so he couldn't back out now. He's never hear the end of it.

When the ladies noticed him approaching, their chatter died down into whispers and giggling.

In the center of their little entourage, there was a young woman who looked indifferent to all things. Even when she smiled and nodded, it felt like she was fluttering off in a distance place.

The young Sea God coughed.

"Fairy Sashae, might I speak to you in private for a moment?"

"BOO!" One of the fiercer Sea Goddess interjected. "Say what you want to say right here. Don't be a coward!"

The young Sea God's eye twitched.

'You fucking bitch. Why don't you go confess to someone you like and see how confident you are then?'

Even after he had this thought, he didn't look toward the fierce Sea Goddess. Knowing her, rather than confessing, she'd probably drag him out of bed by the balls. So maybe that wasn't the best example.

The young Sea God cleared his throat again and looked toward Sashae for an answer.

"Okay."

To his surprise, the young Sea Goddess stood and walked toward him.

Soon, they were walking away. Let alone the ladies, even the young Sea God's friends, were in shock. Their ruckus had died down, and they watched them disappear with open mouths.

Even the young Sea God himself felt like he was watching all this happen from the sky. His soul had left his body, and he was completely on autopilot.

He almost didn't realize that it was Sashae who was following him until they had long left the encampment.

"Are you going to make me walk much further?"

There seemed to be a hint of a smile in her voice that almost made him faint.

The young Sea God froze and finally remembered that he was the man in this situation. No, he was the one who invited her, but he hadn't thought he'd get this far. He knew nothing about this planet. Where the hell was he even going?

He quickly looked around, and his heart leapt into his throat.

There was nothing romantic about this place at all, and the sun was still too high in the skies for the atmosphere to be ambiguous. It just felt...

Awkward.

'Shit, shit, shit. What the hell do I say?'

Chapter 2826: Freshwater

"You are Rae, correct?" Sashae asked.

Rae felt like collapsing. He was such an idiot, he actually let her speak first. Now she feels like she needs to help carry him through a conversation. What a nightmare.

"Yes, thanks for remem-I mean, I'm happy you remembered, not that you have a bad memory-"

Rae stopped talking. What the hell was he saying? Did he forget how language worked? Why wasn't his brain cooperating with him?

He was in the Sixth dimension. His thought speed should be enough to keep things flowing. So why did it feel like he spent an eternity thinking of absolutely nothing?

Just say something! Anything!

"Our names end in the same characters!" Rae suddenly sputtered out.

He slapped a hand to his forehead. What the hell was that?!

Sashae raised a hand to her soft lips and giggled. It was the first time Rae had heard her laugh, and it left him in a complete daze.

Enough that he didn't react at all when her arm suddenly went through his chest.

Rae's eyes opened wide, not expecting this at all. He couldn't believe it. He had such a bright future, but he lost it all by chasing a girl?

The feelings of betrayal didn't even have a chance to settle in. By the time he would have thought of it, his consciousness had long faded.

Sashae watched indifferently as his body collapsed.

She saw the last look in his eyes as well, and it only made her more indifferent. There was shock, but there was no pain, that sort of heart wrenching pain that one might experience when a loved one stabbed you in the back.

Clearly, he was just like the rest, lusting after her beauty and wanting to take her as their own without having a single inkling about the real her.

It was not only pathetic, it was insulting.

Killing such a man, she wouldn't feel any guilt at all. He wasn't worthy of such a thing.

Sashae waved a hand, and an orb appeared in her hand. She threw it out, and a portal appeared.

Out from this portal, the skin and bone Talon appeared. Though he seemed a bit better than earlier, he still hadn't recovered to 100% and likely never would for as long as he was in this place.

But it was enough.

"This is who you'll be replacing," Sashae said softly.

Talon shook his head. All of this bullshit was entirely unnecessary, but his elders insisted he kept a low profile. It was so annoying, though he understood why.

Two unknown characters had bought the information after them, and the odds they were Gods were high. So they had no choice but to take caution.

"Who is this?"

"Someone who tried to confess to me. It's more convenient this way. Instead of returning to his group of friends where you can be easily exposed, just stay by my side."

"Hoho." Talon chuckled, stroking his chin.

He actually quite like Barbarian Race women. They had a lot of meat on the bone and that was his favorite kind of woman.

But after seeing Wise Sea Order, he had an itch that he really wanted to scratch. Unfortunately, he felt too much danger coming from that woman, but this one...

Maybe pretending to be someone else wouldn't be so bad after all.

Sashae ignored Talon's gaze. She reached down and the pools of water around them converged, dissolving Rae's body. Then she pushed the waters toward Talon.

Talon raised an eyebrow, but didn't resist. It seemed that this woman was quite powerful as well, and her methods were mysterious. He had never seen a Water Force capable of such things, but that didn't mean they didn't exist.

Talon soon looked identical to Rae in every way, shape and form.

"Let's go." Sashae said.

Talon reached over to hook his arm around her waist, but his wrist was caught.

Sashae looked over with a calm gaze.

"What? I'm just acting." Talon said righteously.

"Don't." Sashae let go of his wrist and continued to walk forward. "I am a reserved woman. Suddenly coming back with a man I hardly know in such a touchy matter will raise more suspicion than not. You may remain beside me. You may also speak to me in an attempt to draw more of my attention, but you may not touch me."

"Do not ruin the plan, or else it won't be me you're answering to."

Talon shook his head.

He was a mighty Demi-God and now a Mortal was lecturing him. He swore that when he got a hold of those uncles of his and his Dimension reached theirs, he would be sure to teach them all a lesson.

"I better be getting paid well for this," he grumbled.

The duo returned to the large encampment, and many questioning gazes landed on them. When these gazes saw Sashae bring Rae back to her group, they grew wide.

"Son of a bitch. No way he did it..."

Leonel wasn't aware of what had just happened. He hadn't been using his Internal Sight to scan the Sea God army much for fear that they might have spies from Complete Worlds within it that could detect him.

Ironically, he had been proven correct this time.

But that didn't change what he needed to do.

The first and most obvious thing he could take advantage of was the Force Art that controlled the city, so he did that.

He didn't increase its power by much. Instead, he changed its function slightly.

The Sea Gods wanted to flood this world with water for some reason, so he had to stop them from doing that.

He reversed the function of the large formation and helped it quickly turn the water that touched it into water vapor.

The trouble with this was that it would soon begin to rain, and quite heavily at that.

But that was precisely where the second part of Leonel's plan kicked in.

Why were the Sea Gods more fond of salt water than freshwater?

Chapter 2827: Water

Leonel had noticed the peculiarity of the salt water in the region instantly. However, he originally thought that it was just a method of warfare.

Even so, this explanation wasn't enough.

Salting the land seemed to be a bridge too far. Ostensibly, if the Sea Gods wanted to kill off the Human Race, they wouldn't be doing so just for the sake of it. Unless they were genocidal maniacs, there had to be a purpose.

That purpose should be their land, or else what was the point? But then why would they destroy this land at the same time?

If Leonel took a step back, then he might be able to assign the blame to this method to whoever might or might not be controlling the Sea Gods in the shadows. Maybe they were more interested in going scorched earth just to deal with this matter.

But that didn't feel like it made sense either.

The point of using an Incomplete World as currency was the resources you could gain from it. Taking an Eighth Dimensional world like this one and just running one of its best planets into the ground simply didn't make any sense, even if they were trying to capitalize on some fast money.

When you thought about the fact the Sea Gods certainly had the capital to just brute force their way in and destroy what remained of the Human Race, it made even less sense.

Why take this slow, methodical approach if they didn't have to? Especially when everything else was taken into account.

There was no Water Force in existence that was naturally salty either, so it made even less sense.

Back when Leonel was still living in the Dimensional Verse, he had made a great breakthrough in his Earth Force, one that helped him link some of his comprehension with Life Force as well. In fact, even to this day, it helped him quite a bit with strengthening his Metal Body.

That breakthrough, of course, was related to the minerals in his body, the realization that things like sodium, or magnesium, or potassium, or any other of the various chemicals and minerals the body used to stay in its top condition, were just different applications of Earth Force.

Leonel didn't know much about marine biology, but what he did know was that while there was a Venn diagram of creatures that needed water to survive, and there was some overlap as a result, the diagram certainly wasn't a circle.

Simply put, not all freshwater creatures could survive in saltwater. And likewise, there were many saltwater creatures that would die if transferred to freshwater.

What was interesting, though, was that after gaining control of Force and evolving through the Dimensions, such limitations shouldn't impact even regular fish, let alone a race as mighty as the Sea Gods.

So why?

Truthfully, Leonel didn't have an answer. But he would find out soon enough.

In the meantime, he'd just have to brute force it.

...

Thunder rolled through the skies, and the Sea Gods looked up.

Sashae couldn't help but frown.

Rain was a natural occurrence and it shouldn't have drawn any attention whatsoever. They were all in the Fifth Dimension at worst. Even if they were in the Fourth, it wouldn't be a huge matter.

But the problem was that it didn't make sense for rain to appear here.

All the moisture should be under their control, pumping these lands full of salty water until soon the entire planet would be submerged.

For it to be raining now didn't make any sense.

While Leonel expected them to eventually feel that something was wrong, he hadn't expected one of them to pick up on it so quickly. It could only be said that Sashae was quite sharp.

But that was the good thing about a brute force method...

It didn't matter.

The first droplets of rain began to fall, and soon it became a heavy downpour. Aside from Sashae, who had a frowning expression, everyone else didn't react much to this change. Only Talon picked up on the change and leaned over to whisper in her ear.

"What's wrong?"

Sashae frowned and leaned away. Though it looked like she just swayed for a moment before standing.

She walked over to a puddle and dipped her hand into it. She pulled it back and then licked her finger.

It was still salty, but...

Her gaze sharpened.

The water should be gradually getting more salty, so why had it regressed?

She looked up into the skies again. What was happening? Did the humans have such capabilities? Or was it that they were far too lax?

Her mother had felt that there was a disturbance in this area, but what was it? Was it the cause of this?

Many who were observing Sashae's actions subconsciously repeated her actions, trying to see what was wrong, but in the end, they got nothing out of it. It was just normal, salty water.

If it was anyone else who did this, they'd think that they were insane. But Sashae had such a high place in all their hearts that they didn't have such thoughts at all.

"Prepare to attack. Within an hour, we march."

Sashae's voice called out.

...

The mobilization of the Sea Gods couldn't escape the humans, no matter how incompetent they were. There were guards on high alert at all times, and everyone was on edge about what the Sea Gods might or might not be doing.

When Leonel learned of this, he was quite taken aback as well.

'So soon?'

Emperor Fleeting Cloud felt no small bit of discomfort when he saw Leonel's reaction. He had just put the life and death of his Empire in this man's hands.

Everything was calm before, but the moment Leonel took action, the Sea Gods had had enough of waiting? Who would believe that this was a coincidence?

Had Leonel just sped up their race toward annihilation?

Leonel shook his head, smiling.

Wasn't this the exact reason that he knew plotting and scheming would be useless? It seemed that not only did he not have enough information, the Sea Gods also had someone of exceptional intelligence leading them as well.

"It will be fine. Organize your armies and bring your strongest commander here to see me."

...

It wasn't long before Emperor Fleeting Cloud had brought his best commander over, a man who had flowing blond hair and looked much more like a model than a warrior. He looked to be about in his thirties and he had a full beard brimming with what looked like Light Force, but felt completely like something else.

Both his flowing hair and beard had the same flickering runes that fluttered around him like butterflies. He looked far more deity-like than man.

Well, his looks were one thing. His strength, however, was another.

Leonel felt that he was stronger than the Emperor, which was good. But he didn't give him nearly the same pressure the Sea Gods did.

"This is him?" Leonel asked, looking toward the Emperor.

"Yes. This is my best commander, General Mayweather."

General Mayweather looked a bit confused, not sure of what was going on. But when he saw Leonel suddenly morph before him to become a mirror image of him.

"Give me your armor."

"What?" A dangerous aura began to emit from the General, but it was the Emperor that held up a hand.

"Enough."

"Your Imperial Majesty, this..."

"This is our last chance. Just do as he says."

General Mayweather had no idea what was going on, and he was even less inclined to follow through with Emperor Fleeting Cloud's commands.

Even though he was respectful to the Emperor, who didn't know that he didn't have to be? He was the strongest expert of their Empire, a true Overlord. Why would he-?

ROAR!

A familiar dragon appeared, coiling around Mayweather's body. The difference was that, unlike the Emperor, the man didn't collapse.

Mayweather had seen too many battles while the Emperor was long past his prime. Plus, the Emperor's mind had been chipped away as the stress of the fall of his Empire weighed heavily on his soul.

However, that didn't mean that it had no effect.

The General felt his body stiffen and his Force flow freeze. His mind went blank for a moment, and by the time it recovered, he realized that he would have died ten times over on a real battlefield.

"Enough of the bullshit. There's no time for this. Hurry up."

Every one of Leonel's words reverberated in the General's very bones and he found himself stripping down his armor before he realized it.

Leonel took the armor and shook his head. He would have preferred to build an identical one himself, but there was no time. It could be said that whoever was leading the Sea Gods was decisive enough.

"You will remain here."

BOOM!

The city suddenly began to quake.

The Sea Gods had just begun their assault, but they were quickly finding that the Force Art they thought they could easily crush had become far sturdier than they expected.

What they didn't know was that they had the heavy minerals in their "water" to thank for that.

Leonel strolled out with heavy steps, a serious glint in his eye.

He didn't feel happy about the success of his formation. This situation just felt that it was getting trickier and trickier by the minute.

Chapter 2828: Alone

Leonel walked across the city walls. Heavy rain pelted down like an aggravated assault. It rebounded off of his golden armor, shattering in the air almost like tiny orbs of glass.

The moment the Sea Gods began their attack, he no longer bothered to hide the purpose of the formation.

The minerals and salts were quickly soaked into the Force Art, strengthening it. At the same time, the rain above became so heavy that the world was practically wreathed in darkness. It felt like there was hardly a difference between standing in this rain and being submerged in the depths of the ocean.

Quickly, the waters that were soaked up from the ground were replenished by an even heavier rain. All at once, the formations of the Sea Gods were co-opted and aggressively commandeered.

The application of Crafting that Leonel was using here was far beyond the imagination of even most Demi-God Crafters. It was likely that only hidden masters of the Owlans and Dream Asuras could match up to him in terms of raw theory and creativity.

Of course, they most definitely had far greater strength and the capability to Craft far stronger Crafts as a result. Unfortunately, Leonel couldn't yet fully divorce what he could Craft from his own strength or that of Little Tolliver's.

Essentially, to make an overly complicated matter simple, he had begun to use the protective Force Arts of the Fleeting Cloud Empire like a human's body.

The minerals were being used up, and the water was being consumed and expelled. It was an application of the Self Path that was truly extraordinary. He had managed to change many of the fundamental tenets that helped the Force Art to run without actually changing its foundation at all.

However, it wasn't enough... not just yet.

For one, in this rain, his greatest strength, his Fire Force, was handicapped. The concentration of Water Force in the region was so high that the use of practically any other element was nigh impossible. Even if it was a Lightning Force, with how heavy the rain was, unless your control was excellent, you'd likely end up electrocuting your own companions.

That said, Leonel couldn't use his hallmark Forces in this place, not unless he could be sure to kill anyone who saw it. So this wasn't as big of a deal to him.

The larger issue was something else entirely.

Not only were the Sea Gods still fiercely attacking the formation and seemed capable of breaking it-at least in part-very soon, Leonel had yet to see any obvious effects of his plan.

'Was I wrong?' Leonel's eyes narrowed as he scanned the battlefield. 'No, I can't be wrong.'

Leonel didn't conclude this because he was so overconfident in himself. The real reason he was certain was because the best proof was right before him.

How could it be so coincidental? Would the Sea Gods really attack the instant it started raining just because?

Logically, the odds of that were much lower. It just meant that the benefits weren't as obvious just yet.

But that made sense. If the weakness of the Sea Gods was so blatantly obvious, then it would have been used against them long ago.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

"Commander! What should we do?!"

Leonel looked over. "Is the army prepared?"

"Yes, I've done as you said. Everyone is organized behind the city gates, but-."

Leonel waved a hand. "Follow me."

He knew what his lieutenant wanted to say. Leonel had had them all gather up behind just a single city gate. In fact, he had cleared out large portions of the city, turning this northern face into a battleground. He had gone as far to even level several buildings in the region.

But in the minds of others, this was a foolish decision. Unfortunately for them, that was because they didn't understand the changes Leonel had made to the Force Art.

They believed that if the formation was cracked and failed, the entire city would be open to attack. Many would fly over the walls and attack from different points. They might even separate their armies and attack from all four gates at once.

Because the Sea Gods had already surrounded the city, it would be even more difficult.

The Sea Gods were clearly operating on this assumption as well. They weren't attacking from several points despite surrounding the city. Instead, they had concentrated all of their attack on a singular point, a point that happened to be right in front of the gate Leonel had asked them all to gather behind.

A normal formation would certainly shatter completely after a single point was breached. Leonel's, however, would not do this.

Any fracture would be localized, and any hole created would be singular.

Not only that, but as it absorbed more of the salts and minerals that the Sea Gods were still trying to pump into the environment, it would heal itself.

The best part was that whatever shattered pieces were taken from this region would directly be used to strengthen the other regions. Meaning, breaking it apart here would make it harder to do the same in other regions.

Leonel couldn't explain all of this to these people. Not only was he unaware of whether the other side had Dream Force experts or not, reassuring everyone of such a thing was a waste of his time.

That was why he needed this commander's prestige.

They would listen because they had to, and for no other reason.

Leonel stood before the armor and flipped over a palm. In it, a golden halberd appeared, shimmering with a bright light beneath the darkened skies.

His mind was completely consumed by another thought. He didn't care how they felt about his plan, they would see his thought process soon enough.

What was grating on him was the fact that even after observing the army below, he couldn't figure out who their commander was.

They had blended in far too well, and it was as though the Sea Gods had gone the extra mile to ensure that they couldn't be spotted.

'But to even go as far as to not even have a figurehead... why? If they didn't want to expose themselves, shouldn't they have propped up a fake leader, at the very least? And why send a bunch of young men and women? Where are their real experts?'

All of this pointed to one conclusion.

He had been right all along. One of his enemies, his real enemies in this excursion, was already here.

Were they a Demi-God or a God?

BOOM!

"OPEN THE GATES!" Leonel roared, pointing his halberd forward.

The command shocked many more, but they followed it nonetheless. They were all disciplined soldiers.

A command should be followed, no matter what. Even if it meant rushing through the gates of hell.

Leonel stomped a foot and the city quaked.

With a boom, he shot forward. The rain formed a bullet around his speeding form, his body becoming akin to a projectile as he drew first blood.

The Sea Gods were taken aback, both by the fact the Force Art didn't collapse entirely and the fact the gates had opened just like that.

They were disorganized, having prepared themselves for another siege after the Force Art fell. How could they expect the humans to suddenly have such a weird-acting formation, and to even give up their best advantage so quickly?

Even Talon had never seen a formation that acted like this one, let alone the others.

It just didn't make sense. A Force Art was built upon each fundamental rune used to build it. When one shattered, the whole thing should.

How had...

It didn't matter.

With a single sweep of his halberd, Leonel had already killed as many as three dozen.

The valiance of his actions seemed to be the only tonic the warriors of the Fleeting Cloud Empire needed to forget their doubts and charge after them.

"HOLD THE LINE!" Leonel roared again.

His voice resonated like a bell, echoing even beneath the harsh pitter-patter of the rain.

Since he couldn't find the leader through normal means, he would either have to force them out or force them to retreat.

The tip of his halberd trembled, and droplets of rain seemed to freeze around it.

He thrust out dozens of times in quick succession, forming an impenetrable barrier that covered the large hole in the formation. In that moment, he seemed to have become the new body of the Force Art.

He never hesitated once, though he was using an unfamiliar weapon. His time with the Spear Domain Ring had taught him that the form of a spear simply didn't matter.

It could be the crooked branch that became his first spear. It could be the double headed Duality Spear that he missed even to this day. It could even be a trident that wore the scales of a sapphire dragon, a spear he had used many times before.

In his hands, anything could be a spear so long as he willed it to be so.

And beneath his will, anything could be his Domain.

The rain suddenly froze around Leonel in a sphere as his avalanche of spear strikes descended.

One strike.

One kill.

Droplets of rain became as lethal as heavenly blades, slicing apart the tough, gigantic bodies of the Sea Gods as though they weren't there at all.

His body thrummed with life, and he seemed to comprehend something.

No, it was something that he had always had but had not truly understood until this moment.

The answer had been right in front of him. The Domains of the Spears changed so frequently, without limitations or purpose. He had dealt with spears that could change the laws of physics to ones that wielded water as though it were a God.

Did he have to comprehend Water Force to refine this Realm?

Or could he rely on his Spear alone?

Chapter 2829: Shook

"Who is this man?"

Talon's gaze sharpened. Such halberd skills shouldn't appear in this world. But then again, the Sea Gods were far more powerful than they should be as well. Was this why his uncles were so obsessed with this place? There had to be something special about it.

Sashae's eyes narrowed as well. What Leonel was doing now was something that a single Sea God should have been able to do to the human army. Instead, there was an odd reversal where a mere human Overlord was capable of all of this?

Even she felt palpitations looking at the strokes of that halberd. There didn't seem to be any Halberd Force on it, and yet it was more masterful than any other halberd master she had seen.

The people of her Race were all tyrannically large. The number that wielded halberds wasn't small in the slightest, so she had seen her fair share... but this...

...

Every step forward, Leonel took reaped another three lives. His halberd seemed to teleport, warping space and time and elevating beyond normal realms of reasoning.

Just as blood would spurt from the throat of one Sea God and another would be watching in shock, the latter would suddenly find a hole in the middle of their foreheads, completely oblivious to how it had happened, even to the moment of their deaths.

Life seemed like nothing but a pawn in Leonel's palm. He swept and thrust, cut and slashed. His movements were without the slightest wasted energy, simple in their beauty and unadorned in their splendor. And yet it was precisely this that made it all so beautiful.

Light radiated off of him in waves. In the darkness and the heavy rain, only he seemed to exist.

And the soldiers to his back fed off of his energy.

With Leonel taking the bulk of the pressure, they challenged the Sea Gods in pairs of two and three, ripping their armies apart.

...

"This can't continue. I'm going."

"Stop, we-."

"That's enough."

Talon's cheery gaze and casual smile vanished in the blink of an eye. He looked down on Sashae from a taller height, the oppressive aura of not only a Demi-God, but a genius confident in his strength shining forth.

"I've let you order me around for a long while now, but you'd benefit from remembering your place. I'm here under the orders of my uncles, not you. Your pitiful little Incomplete World is nothing in my eyes, and if not for the suppression of your Regular, I could wipe out your entire Race with a snap of my fingers."

"Don't piss me off anymore."

Sashae was taken aback, not expecting Talon to have such a side to him.

It was honestly rare for Talon to snap like he had, but the last several months of his life had truly been too oppressive.

He had lost to Leonel in front of so many eyes. He lost to a human, of all things.

The world might have forgotten Leonel, but how could he? How could he not know what dirty tricks were played to suppress him? They could trick others, but could they trick themselves?

Leonel had been the very best candidate present, and there was no comparison at all.

That matter had been grating on his soul ever since the Gathering of Minds ended. But worse than that was the reaction of his Race.

They had never wanted him to become a Crafter in the first place. They were warriors first and foremost. Having to listen to those old fogies harass him about spending more time on his training just made him recall those same events again and again.

It was infuriating.

Now, he had been shipped off to this world when he would much rather be Crafting, forced to play babysitter to this woman who clearly thought far too highly of herself, and she wanted him to wait around?

There was something about this halberd wielding man that really pissed him off, too.

He couldn't help but recall another memory of Leonel, one that grated on his soul just as much...

~

Leonel chuckled. "That's a shame."

Talon frowned. "What is a shame?"

"If you had chosen to use your fists, you might stand a chance. In a battle of Crafting? Even if a God descended, they would lose."

~

Recalling those words, Talon's fury erupted like a volcano. His aura alone forced Sashae a step back.

His legs bent and he launched himself into the air.

It looked as though he was soaring through the air until he suddenly started to plummet.

Thunder clapped in the skies and a twin pair of hammers appeared in Talon's hand. One was recognizable as his Crafting hammer, but the second was obscenely large, having a head that was half the size of a normal adult male and a pole arm that stood at two meters.

Both weapons expanded instantly to accommodate his new size.

The moment Leonel saw the first hammer, his heart skipped a beat.

Even in disguise, he knew who this person was immediately. It was a simple flaw, and probably one Talon didn't even consider as one, but how could Leonel miss it? Even if it was just the expanding hammers alone, Leonel would have still picked up on it.

Still falling through the air, Talon's body bent like a bow, stretching both of his hammers backward as he unleashed a mighty roar.

Thunder clapped in the skies, and bolts of lightning descended, striking his hammers.

One long, the other short, they formed an odd rhythm between the two of them that shook the world.

"DIE!"

Leonel's pupils constricted. His halberd shook in his hand, glowing a fiercer golden light. He took that opportunity to flood it Emulation Spatial Force that was entirely imperceptible. The Dream Force aspect was far too good at concealing.

He thrust upward, his gaze sharpening to the max.

BOOM!

The world shook, the planet feeling as though it would collapse on itself.

Chapter 2830: Recognize

Two spheres fought fiercely in the air, one from below and the other from above. Arcs of lightning radiated from the latter and a cool, blue bombardment of rain came from the former.

Both armies were blasted apart, and the hole within the formation cracked further beneath the might of their reverberation. The two felt their arms tremble into a retreat.

Leonel took a step back that shattered the land and nearly caused the foundation of the city walls to crumble.

Talon's hammers nearly flew from his hands and he was forced to flip through the air backward, landing so heavily that the Sea God army was forced into another round of retreat. Neither seemed willing to let this pause last for long. They took a beeline right for one another, one wreathed in lightning and the other dancing with mother nature's tears.

Leonel's halberd arched through the air, his expression unmoved and his gaze ice cold. He looked right into Talon's eyes, and despite the height difference, they seemed to be on equal footing.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Their blows were furious, their arms moving in a blur and their bodies shifting through the space as though it wasn't an obstacle, as though they could bend, twist, and shorten it to their hearts' content. That was until Leonel suddenly did the opposite. His Domain seemed to solidify, and Talon needed twice as much effort to travel just as far.

Talon retaliated, his will expanding and his hammers glowing with the might of a blunt Weapon Force. He shattered much of the strength of Leonel's Domain, rushing in with a rain of lightning. Arcs of gold sparked and danced, turning the ground to ash everywhere it touched.

The world around them seemed like one painted by a master. Bolts cut right through harsh hails of water, and droplets sparkled beneath their luminescence. Leonel felt this the most clearly. His heart thrummed and his halberd hummed. He grasped the imagery and made it his own, and at that moment, his halberd seemed to embody the image.

Storm.

Talon's lightning felt like it was no longer his own. It was stripped from his control and wrapped around Leonel's halberd as though he was the one who wielded Thor's hammer. The skies rippled and flood dragons roared, snaking through the dark cumulonimbus clouds as though swimming through the ocean. The flood dragons grew horns and solidified, becoming mighty eastern dragons that trembled with the movement of Leonel's spear.

The Domain seemed to quickly expand as Leonel's will latched onto more and more. Quickly, Talon found himself on his back foot as Leonel began to overwhelm him. Every strike of his halberd was subtle in its own way, the Universal Force around his body

reacting in kind. Sometimes it was fierce, sometimes it lulled, slowing the pace of the battle, and then it might suddenly erupt in a furious barrage.

Leonel's halberd thrust through the air, piercing out dozens of times. It moved so quickly that he seemed to form a net through the skies as inescapable as the droplets of rain. Talon's body was instantly riddled with wounds, and he was forced backward. A mouthful of blood sputtered from his lips, and he looked down at himself as though he was disgusted.

"Who are you?" Talon growled, meeting Leonel's eyes.

Leonel raised his halberd and slammed it into the ground. At that moment, though, for a brief instant, all the rain in the world seemed to freeze.

"I am General Mayweather of the Fleeting Cloud Empire!"

His roar resonated and the human army froze before it roared out. The noise was deafening and at that moment, even the Sea Gods that had only taken this as a casual excursion found their morale dampening.

"Those that seek to harm the citizens of his Imperial Majesty's Empire will suffer beneath my blade. Step forward!"

Leonel's voice echoed louder than even the thunder above. No one noticed that the snaking lightning dragons in the skies suddenly gained a purplish hue in their reflective pupils. At that moment, an oppressive might descended and washed over them all, including Talon.

To Leonel's surprise, Talon immediately looked up in the skies as though he had pinpointed the problem already. A spark of lightning echoed through Leonel's Dreamscape. It quickly connected several memories, starting from how Talon had managed to avoid the trap he sprung on Somnus to Apex's battle style. It all clicked.

'Clairvoyance? Omnipotence? A bastardization of both?'

Leonel's gaze narrowed.

'In that case.'

ROAR! ROAR! ROAR!

The dragons no longer hid themselves. They descended, their bodies sending sparking waves of lightning in all directions. In contrast to their golden bodies, their eyes were like polished sapphire gems. In that moment, Leonel combined his King's Might, aspects of the Luxnix family Force Arts, and his Spear Domain all into one.

The Sea God army collapsed to their knees and Talon felt himself being completely suppressed. Leonel raised his halberd and pointed it at him. The rage bubbling in Talon's heart boiled over. Did this human really think that he was his better? If it wasn't because he couldn't reveal his Barbarian heritage just yet. The fury rose to Talon's head, and he was just about to go all out when a graceful figure appeared.

Sashae's silhouette swayed, and the world trembled. Leonel felt like his dragons might collapse any moment now, but none of that was more shocking than what he saw next. A tablet appeared in Sashae's hand, radiating a golden color. A pulse came from it and Leonel's Domain was directly blown apart. He took a step back and his heart lurched before he suppressed it.

Sashae took a step forward, her aura continuing to grow. With every step, the pressure on Leonel increased further and further until it seemed that he was the one who would be forced to his knees. His thoughts were spinning, trying to understand who this person was and what their relationship to Talon might be, when his mind went entirely blank. This wasn't because of Sashae's strength, but rather because of her first words to him.

"Do you think that I cannot recognize an Envoy of the God Beasts when I see one?"

BOOM!

Chapter 2831: Protect Me

Leonel's gaze narrowed as he took a stabilizing step backward. His expression remained indifferent, as though he hadn't registered Sashae's words at all. Taking a moment, he focused his senses on the inside of his body, trying to understand what was happening. Then it clicked.

After he realized the danger his Northern Star Lineage Factors posed, Leonel had changed his approach to using them. From abilities that were largely soul based, he changed them to pure physical abilities.

It was thanks to this that he was able to raise the standard of his being to Demi-God so quickly. Without it, his evolution might have not happened at all.

Through his process, he had gotten Aina's help. His own methods were too crude, so she created a line of pills that could help to systematically change his body and increase the power of its foundation.

He still hadn't completed this process yet, but he was already at the standard of a Demi-God. So it could be said that there was still quite some room for improvement in the future.

However, this left an obvious problem he hadn't considered.

Wasn't making the Northern Star Lineage Factor more in line with his body than his soul make him more beast than human? And if that was the case, then didn't that mean that the Wise Tablets could be used to suppress him much the same way he used them to suppress the beasts in the Challenge Sequence?

All of this was beside the point. Because even in comparison to a suppression like this, wasn't the fact this woman had a Golden Tablet the most pressing matter here?

He had suspected something from the moment he heard the name Wise Sea Order. Because he was using translation through his Dream Force, it was a sequence of words that hit much harder. The only way it could be translated like that in his mind was if the connection between the two was incredibly strong.

But he still didn't expect a Golden Tablet.

He had already gotten his own Silver Tablet through mysterious means. Golden Tablets were incredibly rare as only one Life Tablet existed for each stream.

The idea that a random race in an incomplete world could have one...

But then again, hadn't his own Silver Tablet appeared randomly? He still didn't know how it had found its way into that zone.

Even now, Leonel had no idea that Nilrem had purposely implanted the Silver Tablet into the Valiant Heart Zone to teach Leonel the value of life.

If not for Nilrem, Leonel would have never got a second chance to revive Goggles and the others. In which case, he would have never felt the separation between him and a man he once called a close friend, or the weight of Goggles' betrayal.

But even being ignorant of all this, Leonel still felt that it was inconceivable. That was because his own universe at least had remnants of the Luxnix and Fawkes, former pillars of the Human Race. It had even been attacked by a true Envoy of Destruction.

Did this world have any of that?

Leonel still knew too little to confirm, but everything he knew told him that this was a firm no.

Stabilizing his footing, Leonel stood firmly.

Sashae's gaze flickered and her face suddenly considerably paled.

Even Leonel could only use the Life Tablet of all things to suppress the other beasts for a few seconds back during the Challenge Sequence. The more powerful they were, the more aggressive the cost to his Dream Force was.

But here, there were several factors to take into account.

First, this wasn't the Dream World. Meaning, manifesting Dream Force and forcing it to act was far more difficult. In the Dream World, the location the Challenge Sequence took place in, Leonel could even create weapons and effect change in the environment from his Dream Force.

However, out here, he could only rely on his Emulation Spatial Force to do that. Without the environment of the Dream World, Dream Force wasn't nearly so tangible.

Second, who did Sashae think she was, exactly? She gave Leonel a bit of pressure, but that was because he was suppressed.

There were certainly some secrets to the Sea Gods that made him curious, but it wasn't yet to the point he thought of them as the Gods they deemed themselves as.

Leonel's Dream Force was in the Higher Life State, and he was a Sovereign on top of that. It might as well have been a Quasi Creation State Force as a result in the eyes of most.

She was in the Seventh Dimension, her entire life had been spent in an Incomplete World, who was she to try to suppress him with a Tablet?

Leonel didn't even need to expose one of his own tablets at all, while Sashae's mistake had already resulted in her Dream Force being drained to the final drop.

In this state, her mind was woozy and she couldn't even stand up straight, let alone battle.

This wasn't even the worst part. She had speculations, but she had no proof.

Even if an Envoy managed to find some roundabout method of taking a human form, how would they possibly be as skillful with a weapon as Leonel was?

Weapon Forces weren't Forces that beasts could wield.

On its face, her conclusion was ridiculous.

However, Leonel didn't make fun of her for it. Now, he was certain that this was the decisive woman behind the actions of the Sea Gods.

And as expected, just as he was about to make a move to end this battle after his body was wrestled back into his control, Sashae made yet another decisive decision.

"RETREAT!"

She turned to Talon. "Protect me."

The sudden command took the Sea Gods off guard, but Leonel realized why she made this choice.

This could be considered to be a complete loss.

However, would Leonel let them leave so easily?

His halberd trembled and the dragons in the sky roared once more.

Chapter 2832: Seal

The carnage that Leonel unleashed wasn't small in the slightest. The Sea Gods fell by the dozens and showed not the slightest bit of prejudice.

The young Sea Gods that had come thinking that this would be an easy method to flex their strength and enrich themselves were horrified.

They quickly fled to their flying ships, but could only look horrified when Leonel took a step into the air. Dragons followed the flow of his halberd and he destroyed them all, one after another. The devastating war machines that could destroy even planets found itself suppressed.

Leonel didn't even have to overwhelm it with power. He targeted their weaknesses one after another.

When he was killing the youths, his halberd was tyrannical, wide-sweeping and seemingly endless.

When he targeted the ships, it became pinpoint, sliding between flaws in their Force Arts and panels in their metal bodies. Then, they would explode, out.

The humans couldn't even follow Leonel.

From start to finish, Leonel didn't try to stop Talon and Sashae.

For one, he was sure that he couldn't, at least not without revealing more than he wanted to just yet.

Second, Sashae definitely had trump cards remaining.

The fact she decisively ordered a retreat even though she knew it would cost her devastating losses spoke volumes.

Leonel couldn't help but recall the fact they had only sent their younger generation forward. They were clearly planning something deeper.

That said, Leonel was also certain that he had found a counter for them. If not for the rain, he didn't believe that Sashae would have given up so soon.

It was just that for now, he wasn't sure exactly what that weakness was.

Sashae had left so decisively that he didn't get a chance to find out... and something told him that even if he captured a few Sea Gods to experiment on, it would be useless.

This woman had proven herself to be intelligent. If it would be exposed one way or another, why retreat?

Even if she wanted to minimize casualties, retreating like this was the antithesis of that. She should have done so more systematically rather than basically throwing everyone to the wolves.

Though he thought this, Leonel still captured several Sea God youths.

Accounting for how smart someone was happened to be easy, in his opinion.

Accounting for someone's stupidity was another matter entirely.

Even if he had his deductions, he would definitely triple check them.

He only had one chance at this.

"FUCK!"

Talon's furious roar almost shattered their flying ship. If not for runes lighting up to stop the sequence right before it went over its threshold capacity, this really would have happened.

He turned toward Sashae with a furious pair of red eyes. His disguise had already shattered beneath his anger, revealing a lanky body suppressed by chains. He had lost so much of his fat that his

Every time his tattoos glowed, the chains would lash out, lacerating his skin. But he didn't seem to notice.

If not for the fact Sashae had brought out that tablet, he would have never listened to her order to retreat.

His uncles didn't tell him about anything going on, but he knew a Wise Tablet when he saw one. Seeing a non-human wield it was even more shocking.

It was only because of this that he had suppressed his fury. In fact, any other Barbarian Race member in his position would have already lashed out.

Talon had been suppressed for almost a year now. All he thought about was that loss again and again, and yet the moment he got to unleash once more, he actually lost again.

Even a normal person would be infuriated by this, let alone a genius of the Barbarian Race. A true Demi-God.

"Why did you make such a decision?" Talon growled.

Sashae felt a great deal of danger at that moment.

In truth, her pride had taken two blows back to back. First Talon snapped at her and then Leonel shrugged off her trump card as though she were nothing more than a fool.

Facing Talon's gaze, she realized that she was truly nothing but an ant in the eyes of these two young men. It was a blow that hit her hard, but it was a testament to her character that her pale expression quickly returned to normal.

Her heartbeat slowed to an even cadence and met Talon's gaze.

"There was no other choice. If the rainfall continued, it wouldn't just be the normal warriors that died, it would be us who fell."

Talon frowned. "Me?"

"No. But I would die. Me and some of the most important of our race."

"Why?"

"I cannot tell you that."

"Don't test my patience."

Talon's deep growl reverberated through the ship and it seemed even more dangerous than his earlier, much louder roar.

Sashae trembled, but she forced herself to calm down once more.

"Even if you threaten me, I cannot tell you. I have a seal on me. If I try to speak about such matters, I will die. If you want to know, ask my mother. But I am not certain that she could tell you either. She may be sealed as well, though I have never asked."

Talon's eyes narrowed. He could tell that Sashae wasn't lying.

"Then how do you know in the first place if you assume everyone is sealed?"

"I understand innately. I cannot say more than that."

Talon shifted his gaze to the ring on her finger.

"That tablet. Where did you get it?"

"My mother sent it here and said it would be useful. Unfortunately, it failed nonetheless."

"Is that man really an Envoy?"

"I..."

Sashae took a breath and exhaled.

"I truly do not know. He had no reaction when I spoke, but it didn't feel like he would have reacted to anything at that moment. He's a seasoned warrior, and he's likely trained himself to not listen to anything an opponent says, in case there's some mental trickery at work. At the same time... the Tablet didn't respond the way I thought it would... I truly don't know... Likely, only my mother knows for sure."

Leonel stood over a table. By his side, Aina was dissecting the corpse of a Sea God. This wasn't his expertise. He wouldn't even know where to start. And it was clear that Aina wasn't very familiar with this process, either.

But then she said something that shook Leonel to his core.

Flashes of lightning echoed in his Dreamscape.

"... So that's why..."

Chapter 2833: Counter

Leonel honestly didn't expect himself to just figure it out. If he was that confident, he would have just done this from the very beginning without wasting his time thinking about so many other methods.

However, what he didn't expect was that he was more intelligent than he assumed himself to be. This was rare for him, honestly. Usually, he erred on the side of overconfidence. Maybe this was part of the changes brought about by his new Dream Force Sovereignty Path.

But Leonel didn't think it was so simple. It wasn't really that he had underestimated himself. Rather, he just happened to have the exact set of information he needed to deduce exactly what was before him.

In a lot of ways, this was a huge coincidence.

If he were to describe the weak of the Sea Gods in a single line, it would be as follows.

They were trying to replace the function of Earth Force and had failed to do so perfectly.

As such, they had a weakness that they carried around with them. Ironically, it was a weakness that hurt the absolute strongest of them the most.

When Leonel first broke through to the Life State with his Dream Force, it was because he had comprehended the function Earth Force served on all worlds.

It was an anchor, an existence that allowed all other surrounding Forces to gather and use its stability as a foundation to lean on.

This was never more obvious than it was in Incomplete Worlds.

Why was the vastness of space bereft of Force? Why did Force only accumulate on Planets?

This was an open secret that not many could deduce. Even Leonel had taken many years before he finally put two and two together. And it was only after succeeding that he could finally use Earth Force to its full potential.

The only unfortunate part was that Leonel didn't have any methods of maximizing his use of Earth Force right now, aside from his Metal Body. When it came to actually using and executing with Earth Force, it was crude at best, which was why it had sat on the back burner for many of his battles.

He had had thoughts of exchanging for a technique from the Life Tablet for a long while now. It had been a very long time since he did so, and since he gained the Tablet, he had accumulated a large number of points.

It was just that he was truly too busy, and one thing after another seemed to come up constantly.

What he didn't expect was to suddenly run into such a thing. Because the weight of this discovery might carry into the future for him in ways that he couldn't see just yet.

If he was correct, then he was fairly certain that he had about 80% of the story at the very least.

In a distance past, the Sea Gods were likely naturally a Race with his Water Force affinity. However, as they grew, they likely also felt that this was a limitation.

The ocean had a great amount of Water Force in it, but it was a lot like neutral Force in the way that it functioned.

Unless it was a special lake or river, or one put a lot of effort into purifying and barring off a region, the ocean was just a huge amalgamation of countless different types of Water Force.

Plus, even if they were a Race with great affinity for just one element, they were still humanoids and not beasts. That meant that they were often born with Ability Indexes and other affinities that couldn't be properly used in the water.

In order to combat this, at least in Leonel's speculation, the Sea Gods wanted to turn their oceans into a replica of earth.

Essentially, they wanted a method of binding other Forces and attracting it to the ocean, much like planets could act as anchors for Forces as well.

Surprisingly, they succeeded.

Unfortunately, it came at a price.

It was likely that an abundance of freshwater weakened them greatly, but not in an obvious way. Their bodies were fine, but their Force control became skewed wildly.

To make a complicated matter simple, while they had succeeded in replicating the function Earth Force served on planets, they had failed to replicate an identical function.

The way Forces interacted when dissolved into Water was much different from the way it reacted naturally in the air.

They had cultivated methods to produce good effects when in the presence of saltwater, but by extension they lost the ability to do the same in a normal environment.

There was an obvious reason, too.

Earth Force acted as an anchor for other Forces, true. But these other Forces weren't diffused into the earth. Instead, they just settled down across its surface.

The method the Sea Gods used obviously required the Force to be inside the water, or else how would they remain underwater? It was completely necessary.

In the end, they ended up handicapping themselves.

This was a huge weakness, almost inconceivably so. That meant that without saltwater, the strongest of the Sea Gods couldn't even begin to exhibit their true strength.

They would have to attempt to terraform a planet like they did here, or they would have to carry around large reserves that they could immediately deploy into a Domain of some sort.

But this only made Leonel grin. That was because the other reason he had figured this out so quickly was precisely because of his first major breakthrough in Earth Force. That breakthrough being the importance of Earth Force in the body, and its relation to minerals and vital metals that kept one in good health.

Wasn't the sea of the Sea Gods a perfect one-to-one relationship with this concept?

The salt was only part of the equation. In all likelihood, the ocean was pumped full of all sorts of other minerals as well.

So what would happen if Leonel countered it with his Earth Force?

Chapter 2834: Easy

When Leonel had this thought, he almost visibly relaxed. Everything in this Incomplete World had felt like another mystery ready to take a bite out of his neck. He had been prepared to face off against Gods if need be, but running into the Sea Gods was ironically a blow.

It felt like this Incomplete World was far larger than he knew. Even with all his preparation, he had come into this assuming that the natives of this world would be the easy part, come to find out they were a variable in and of themselves.

But now, not only had he found a devastating weakness of the strongest of them, he had also exposed one of the parties as well.

The Barbarian Race.

He hadn't said anything, but how could he not recognize Talon? Talon likely didn't expect that he was standing across from Leonel, or else he wouldn't have so casually taken out such an identifying weapon.

As for the fact that Sashae had pegged him as an Envoy, he wasn't worried in the slightest.

First, this might actually be a positive thing, not a negative. The deeper they thought his waters ran, the more chances he would have to take advantage of their ignorance. When the time came, he could even directly counter Sashae's tablet at just the right time to deal a death blow. After all, how could the Golden Tablet suppress him while he was in possession of the Life Tablet?

Second, he was fairly certain that Sashae was just taking a shot in the dark. She had no certainty whatsoever.

Basically, whether she believed it or not, Leonel would have the leg up. After all, they had never seen his face and had no idea who he was. Even Emperor Fleeting Cloud had no idea. He would never take the risk of exposing his real face to such a man.

That said... that didn't mean that Leonel didn't still have issues to deal with.

The first was the most obvious, and that was how the hell did they get their hands on a Golden Tablet?

The second was also fairly close to the forefront of his mind, and that was that if the Barbarian Race was the second party involved in this world, who was the third?

And the third issue was a problem he would have to deal with right now.

He had repelled the enemy for now, so what should he do with the Fleeting Cloud Empire? What should his next steps be?

Leonel lost himself in thought for a moment before he felt there was only one real path forward for now.

Their numbers were too few. Getting human territory back was useless if he couldn't have humans fill them.

That was the first and most pressing need.

Then, he would need to blueprint a Craft that could give his own natural ability to counter the Sea Gods to the warriors of the Human Race.

If he could do that, he would really turn the tables.

And he already had a few ideas.

**Not even a day after the Sea Gods retreated, Leonel began implementing his plans.

His victory made everything much easier. Even if the Emperor still had his doubts, he had no choice but to listen to Leonel directly.

The only reason the Emperor might fight back against Leonel now was if he was worried about keeping his leadership position in the future.

If Leonel saw any signs of such a thing, he would just kill the man directly.

At this point, he was less worried about being exposed because he had already laid a foundation.

Without the Sea Gods interfering, the changes he was able to make to their protective Force Art could only be said to be godly in and of itself. In fact, the formation no longer just protected the city, it enveloped the entire planet.

No one would be able to take a step forward without Leonel's input, and he had the Sea Gods to thank for making it so easy.

The flying ships of this Incomplete World were a bit different from what he was used to in the Dimensional Verse, but what would be escaped was the importance of a core of power.

Leonel had struck down dozens of these ships with ease, and using a few of their power sources to power the protective Force Art was as easy as breathing.

The best part was that the Sea Gods gave him further inspiration.

Using concepts he had grasped from their unique sea water, he was able to create a Force Art that drew Force toward it and acted as an anchor as well.

As such, the more time passed, the stronger the Force Art would become.

Even after this, Leonel still wasn't finished with the scraps of the fallen flying ships.

He reconstructed them, creating many much smaller and countless times more powerful ships. With his current skill in Crafting, he wasn't even very worried about the Barbarian Race on this front.

The Barbarian Race wasn't a Race of Crafters. It could be said that Talon was a complete anomaly, and even he wasn't a match for Leonel almost a year ago now, let alone currently. Leonel had stepped into the threshold of the Self Path. Truthfully, if they were restricted to Crafting something of the same Dimension, even Minerva couldn't match up to him.

In just three days, Leonel revamped the entire Empire until it was completely unrecognizable.

He did nothing about their forms of government or things of the like because he didn't care. He didn't come here to rule these people. He needed their warriors and nothing else.

This was where Anastasia took center stage.

After creating a blueprint, the little World Spirit had a field day. He mass produced millions of armors and weapons that could counter the strength of the Sea Gods.

When he was satisfied, Leonel took his fleet of ships and went on the attack.

The goal?

To return the entire Human Domain to its rightful owners.

And quite frankly, it was almost too easy.

Not even half a month later, all invaders had been expelled and forced to retreat to the Ancient Battlefield.

Chapter 2835: Interesting

It was too easy. So much so that it was difficult to take pride in any of it at all. And Leonel didn't feel that he should.

The people of these Incomplete Worlds were too inferior to what Leonel had already experienced in the outside world. The fact they didn't stand a chance didn't surprise him. His Crafts were orders of magnitude stronger than their own. His strength was even more exaggerated by comparison. His schemes were somehow even more suffocating than for no other reason than the fact he found manipulating their Dream Force to be far too easy.

The only worry Leonel had was that this sort of speedy reversal was practically putting a target on his forehead, screaming to the mountain tops that he was likely one of the three who had bought the information.

But after doing a cost-benefit analysis, he felt that biding his time too much would only be a detriment to him. He only had three years, and a month of that was already gone.

Not only did he need to deal with his enemies, but he also needed to comprehend the foundations of this world and even beyond that, he needed to find a method of raising it to the God Realm. He had a pretty good idea that clearing all its Zones would give him the outcome he needed. But he had to give himself enough buffer to actually check if that was true or not.

Plus, even with his strength clearing so many Zones would take a very long time.

This also didn't consider a very specific anomaly that occurred when a Zone failed to be cleared. Leonel had never run into these Zones back in the Dimensional Zone, but he had always been warned that if a Zone wasn't cleared, it could swallow a world up.

What he didn't know was what would happen once that occurred. The Dimensional Verse didn't seem to have any documented events of the like. But that didn't mean that this world didn't.

If a Sub-Dimensional Zone ended up swallowing a world up, or even multiple Zones, who knew what might happen?

At that point, it wouldn't be smart of Leonel to continue to be complacent. These mutated Zones were likely to be dangerous even to him.

But it was necessary for him to close them if he wanted hope of his Incomplete World reaching his standards.

This aside, there was another reason that Leonel wasn't too worried about exposing himself, and that was because of Sashae and her words.

If they found out he was a human, that was a bad thing. But... if they thought that he was an Envoy... That was a different ball game entirely.

They would be playing right into his hands.

Once the Sea Gods were pushed out of the Human Domain, Leonel began to push forward with his next plan.

As he had said, he hadn't come here with the intention to rule, so none of the steps he took were for future stability, in any way, shape, or form.

Instead, after freeing the humans that had been in captivity in their own native homeland, he began to recruit them. He was building a larger and larger army, plundering the resources of the various planets and other deposits he found with the help of Anastasia.

He outfitted them all with armors that could counter the Sea Gods perfectly and was resistant to Anarchic Force. Then he marched into the Ancient Battlefield.

The battle took mere days, but soon, the Human Race had not only reclaimed its piece of the Ancient Battlefield, but it had also forcefully snatched that of the others.

It was only after this was accomplished that Leonel vanished. No one knew where he went, but the Human Race was more stable and powerful than it had ever been. And at least for the time being, no one had any intentions of starting internal strife.

Not just yet, anyway.

Leonel had indeed disappeared, and he had gone right to the Oryx Domain. He had only spent a short time in this place, but he understood quite well.

After interacting with three of the four main Races here, he felt that the Oryx had the lowest odds of being controlled by some outside power. And that included even the Humans that he had just liberated.

Their overall actions were the most... normal.

Leonel wasn't making this conclusion just based on his own personal experience, but also the records of the Human Race.

That said, this wasn't really enough to suddenly abandon the Human Domain and come here. There was another reason for that.

And it was linked to the hatred the Human Race had for the Cloud Race.

After reading their history, Leonel found out that the Cloud Race that had once existed in this Incomplete World was incredibly cruel. The current Human Domain was once the Cloud Domain, and the latter Race had enslaved the former.

Many of the humans only reluctantly had Cloud Race genes in their blood because their parents had had their wills crushed and their innocences forcefully taken.

They had all descended from bastard children of slaves. Now, they had to live with their unique quirks. So instead of claiming them as Cloud Race features, they claimed them to be Human.

Leonel understood the sentiment, and he quite respected them for it.

That said, it sounded like a fairytale.

The Human Race was far weaker than the Cloud Race, and the history showed that quite well. So how was it that the Human Race had not only managed to rise up from their oppression, but even destroy them and establish their own Empires as a replacement?

There was something missing here.

Of course, there was always a chance that their fanciful tales of heroes and heroines were true. But the odds were so slim that Leonel wouldn't have been on it.

That was when he stumbled onto an interesting tidbit.

Chapter 2836: Historian

It was a story by a particular great human historian, one that had written several books on the topic. In fact, many of the books that Leonel had read that told tales of those heroes and heroines were written by this man. This should have made Leonel take him less seriously. But even in a pile of trash, there was still some treasure to be gained by someone at some point.

The interesting thing about this particular book was that it talked of both a savior and the Cloud Race's own role in their demise. The way the story was woven made Leonel realize something quite profound.

Someone had definitely interfered.

But who? And why?

And how could they have taken part in this for so long?

What exactly was the purpose of crushing the Cloud Race and allowing the Human Race to survive and thrive in their stead?

When Leonel had this thought, he couldn't help but recall the Oryx.

The Oryx definitely had an odd origin as well. They had no business being a main Race of this world. Their populations, when they appeared in other Incomplete Worlds, were usually small and unassuming.

It didn't really make much sense that they would suddenly explode out in a boom like this.

And by extension, the Sea Gods were the same. Leonel wouldn't be surprised if there were small pockets of Sea Gods in other Incomplete Worlds as well. He had just never seen them in the Dimensional Verse.

That made him wonder. Would he be able to find information about the sudden rise of the Oryx and their savior as well?

Unsurprisingly, it took not even a few days for Leonel to find exactly that.

As it turned out, the Oryx did start as a small Race. They couldn't expand, not because of their talent, but because their fertility rates were too low.

Then, generations ago, much like the humans, there was a sudden change that allowed them to explode forth with maximal strength.

Was it a coincidence?

'Someone has been interfering in this Incomplete World for a very long time. Is it a fourth person, or...'

Leonel thought about what he would do if he had been in this person's position.

They had been setting things up in this Incomplete World for generations, and now information about its location was suddenly public information...

Well, if it was Leonel, there would really only be two options.

The first was more aggressive, and that was to buy one of the spots as a deterrence, marking your territory and telling others to not dare to make a move.

The second was more conservative, but it had a high upside as well. And that was to say and do absolutely nothing, getting ready to spring a trap on anyone who bought it.

However, this second option could be tossed away after the second person bought.

This was because after two people decided to take the plunge, they would already be wary against one another. It was difficult in that case for any surprise attacks to work at that point.

In that case, it would be best to be the third to buy, to act a deterrence for anyone who might be fourth.

It was highly unlikely that upon seeing three plunge into these waters that a fourth person would choose to make the same decision.

However, wasn't Leonel the third person to buy?

That meant that whoever this was had taken the first option, and they were the very first to buy.

And this tactic of aggression... happened to be very in line with the character of the Barbarian Race.

That said, Leonel was only about 20% confident in the fact that the original owners of this Incomplete World were members of the Barbarians.

The reason for this was because, as he had said before, the Barbarian Race wasn't one of Crafters. Something like curating Races, curating their improvement, and...

A flash of lightning ripped through Leonel's Dreamscape, and he froze.

He stood up, his gaze flickering with lights.

That was right. How could he neglect that point? The existence of Apex... wasn't it the biggest indicator?

The Barbarian Race was almost certainly the Race that had been here for the longest time, which meant that they were also the first to buy.

The question, then, was... who was the second?

It had to be a Race of people confident enough in their abilities to target this location even when someone else had already bought this information.

Leonel had already partially understood before, but this almost certainly meant that they had to be a Demi-God Race or greater.

And...

Leonel's gaze turned toward the Rapax Domain.

... They were almost certainly reining in control of the Rapax Race right this moment.

Leonel might not know who they were, but he knew that he would find out if he stepped into the Rapax Race.

It was time to find out.

...

Just days after entering the Oryx Race, Leonel left once again and entered the Rapax Domain.

He didn't try to disguise himself, remaining as a human. The only difference was that his hair had returned to its original brown to dirty blond color, and his eyes were once again a hazel.

He softened some of his features and made himself a bit chubbier. He also lowered his height of almost 6'10" to just barely 6' tall.

With the gruff beast skins he wore, he looked like a war-torn warrior.

The reason he had made this choice was because of the conversation he had had with the first Oryx he met in this place. Thanks to that, he knew that humans had been fleeing to Oryx territory for a long time, but that didn't mean that they weren't fleeing to Rapax territory as well. It was just less frequent.

The Rapax were crueler in terms of culture, so they were avoided.

But that was exactly why Leonel picked his current appearance.

This was the perfect disguise for his goals.

Chapter 2837: Event

Although the Human Domain had been liberated, not enough time had passed for the Human Race to fully return. News hadn't even quite spread anywhere but the highest echelons of the various races. It was perfectly natural for some humans to still think that their lives were hanging on by a thread.

As Leonel entered the dark region, his thoughts were spinning with one thought that he had yet to resolve. If the Barbarian Race had helped the Human Race rise up, why let them be destroyed? Why even participate in their destruction? And if their destruction was important to their plan, why let Leonel reclaim so much territory so easily?

Sashae and Talon hadn't even appeared again after their first disappearance.

That belied another question, and that was why were they propping up the humans, Oryx and Sea Gods all at once? What had they done that managed to create Barbarian Invalids?

Were they participating in the war as well? Were they on the side of the Fallen God Beasts and Owlans?

Leonel felt that the answer to these last few questions was no, but that also meant that these waters were far murkier than he assumed.

'This should be the product of the pressure the Gods are placing on the lesser races. How could there be no resentment at all? Sure, for now the Culling doesn't involve the Demi-Gods, but what about when they ran out of Mortal Races to kill? Wouldn't they move on to the Demi-Gods before they looked to themselves?

'If the Demi-Gods were smart, they would certainly be trying to find methods of saving themselves for the future. If the path toward Godhood meant experimenting with Invalids, then that was what they would do even if Invalids were far more hated than even the Fawkes had been.'

This explanation made sense to Leonel, and he felt there was a better than 90% chance that it was correct.

But this meant that he had started the fuse on something much larger than he expected.

If things continued like this... wouldn't the whole of Existence be embroiled in war soon?

Leonel's gaze became serious. It was even more important that he become as strong as possible as quickly as possible.

...

A city appeared before Leonel, if it could be called that.

The city walls were formed from the bones of enormous beasts, and the buildings inside seemed to all be constructed by similar materials. It felt more like a graveyard than a city.

By this point, he had come across several Rapax, but not one of them reacted very much.

As expected, the Rapax were the least likely to care. The real danger came from the violence of their culture.

They walked around with their steel covered, pill-shaped heads. Their metal tails whipped out behind them like a scorpion's, their digitigrade feet digging into the ground with every step.

They were intimidating creatures. Leonel had yet to run into any Rapax in the Complete Worlds, but they certainly existed. Many were ranked in the top 100 of the Gathering of Kingdoms, but they were ultimately still a Mortal Race as well.

When Leonel got to the city gates, though, a Rapax blocked his path.

Its pill-shaped head bent over, its maw opening wide to reveal a row of translucent teeth dripping with saliva.

"Scram, weakling."

BANG!

Its head exploded.

No one even saw how Leonel moved. In one moment, the Rapax was growling, in the next instant, it was dead.

Leonel kicked its corpse to the side and continued to stroll forward.

He knew why the Rapax guard had reacted like that. This was one of the more sacred cities of the Rapax. Even if it was a weak Rapax, it would have reacted the same.

All the Rapax knew were the weak versus the strong. Nothing else mattered to them.

And Leonel had proved his standing more than enough. In fact, he had already forgotten about the earlier encounter. He had suddenly remembered something about the Rapax that greatly interested him: their immunity to Internal Sight.

This was no longer a limitation to Leonel because he could sense and feel the Dream Plane. So the Rapax couldn't escape his senses anymore even if they wanted to.

But he had always been curious about this ability. It was an interesting chance to study this potentially.

After entering the city, Leonel didn't really have an aim. He just came to the largest city of the Rapax Domain in hopes of looking for some clues.

But since he had already entered with a bang, he should probably leave some impression of a powerful human.

The easy thing to do was envelop the city in his Internal Sight, then check on all the people who weren't immune in the same way.

But he wasn't quite sure if he should go so far just yet. Even if he wanted to play the role of arrogant Overlord, he needed at least some foundation first.

What he wanted to know was if he shone fiercely enough... would the power hidden in the dark approach him?

'Unlikely. I doubt a Demi-God, or God if I'm really unlucky, would feel the need to approach a weak human like me. Hm, I guess the best option is to see if there were any odd movements.

'News of what happened to the Human Domain should spread quite quickly. This will be the best chance to see how the Rapax read and react to this.

'From the perspective of this hidden party, this should be a clash between two of their competitors. Will they try to gang up on the Sea Gods along with me? Will they try to gear the Rapax for war and sit back? Will they maybe attack the more vulnerable humans and team up with the Sea Gods instead?'

The last one was probably the most likely, and Leonel had to be ready for that potential outcome.

'Oh?'

Leonel felt the ground rumbling, but it wasn't an earthquake. There was a ruckus coming from a coliseum of bone.

There seemed to be an event going on.

Chapter 2838: Joke

Leonel entered the event quite smoothly and found that the ruckus was being caused by a tournament of some sort. The shaking was from all the cheering in the surroundings... if you could call it that.

The Rapax had some of the most grating language Leonel had ever heard. Although the language of the Pluto was quite fierce, it felt more... cohesive, in a way.

The Pluto's language was like the roar of a dragon, but the language of the Rapax was like if an entire forest of animals began going at it at the same time.

It was a mixture of growls, shouts, and clicks. When it filled a stadium like this, it felt more like Leonel was in the middle of the wilds instead of an established society.

Leonel walked down the stairs, tuning out the ruckus until he got to a railing. The railing was stuffed full of Rapax wrestling for better position, but he directly pushed past, the strength of his body knocking them away and clearing space.

Finally, he got a clear look at the battle below, and to his surprise, it was actually a Rapax and a Sea God?

Leonel's eyes narrowed.

He had already walked around the city for a while. He had seen a lot of Rapax, but he hadn't seen a single existence that wasn't of their Race. Though he hadn't reacted much to it, he had been a bit worried about what that would mean for his own existence. But he still didn't panic.

Just judging from the reaction of the other Rapax to him, he knew that it wasn't a huge issue. Some looked at him curiously, but there was nothing else.

What Leonel didn't expect was that he would run into a Sea God here of all places.

'Interesting... is it an attempted infiltration? A coincidence? Something else?'

Viewing a race as a monolith would be a mistake. Leonel didn't want to overextend himself with false assumptions.

Not all members of the Sea Gods would be part of some grand master plot.

The battle below was intense.

The Rapax was a master of close combat, like most were. Its legs, arms and tail were all lethal weapons, each one creating a whirlwind of furious assaults.

The Sea God wielded a gorgeous blue saber. He was clearly at a slight disadvantage, but it was just as clear that the battle wouldn't be ending anytime soon.

The two were neck and neck. It was the kind of battle that could go on for hours, and the Rapax were loving every minute of it.

Leonel looked up, and his eyes narrowed.

Up above, there were sitting arrangements for those he assumed were the nobles of the Rapax. Much like the Rapax of the Dimensional Verse, they had specially colored runes on their pill-shaped heads.

However, this wasn't what Leonel cared about. What he did note was the fact there was a Sea God sitting amongst them. Two, in fact.

'What's going on?'

He was confused, thoroughly.

What was going on? He hadn't seen any information about the Rapax and Sea Gods being so close.

Could it be that the third party had chosen to side with the Barbarian Race, after all?

This was bad. Very bad.

Leonel hadn't relaxed after his battle with Talon. For one, he knew that Talon was likely even more suppressed than he was, not only because his Dimension was higher, but his Demi-God constitution was definitely of a higher tier. On top of that, he was also trying to hide his identity. The trifecta caused his strength to plummet.

It wasn't just this, but he also knew that Talon was likely just the tip of the iceberg.

As wealthy as Talon was, he couldn't afford to buy the information Leonel had. Not even remotely. He definitely had the backing of truly powerful Barbarians.

So, if he was dealing not just with the backer of a Demi-God Race, but one of an equally powerful Race, or maybe even more powerful one, on top of that...

Leonel's gaze became frighteningly cold.

He felt like someone was playing him, and he didn't know where the feeling was coming from. He didn't have enough information to confirm or deny it, but what he did know was that he couldn't allow things to continue like this.

Leonel continued to watch as the battle continued.

Eventually, the Sea God lost, and another battle began.

Once again, it was a Sea God and a Rapax.

It couldn't have been clearer that this was an exchange of some sort.

All the battles were close, and every time, it would come down to the last few moves.

The crowd was completely enamored by the spectacle.

Leonel continued to watch as the Rapax jostled around him. But he was like an immovable mountain. His feet were firmly rooted, and his arms were crossed over his chest.

Everyone that hit against him was sent stumbling the other direction, and eventually, there was a small, impenetrable circle formed around him as though the Rapax had all decided that he couldn't be messed with in any way.

His expression remained unreadable even at the point the climax of the battle began.

For the first time in the history of the coliseum, a pair of Overlords descended into battle.

Compared to the previous battles, they clearly weren't going all out, but the crowd was still excited beyond belief.

How often could they see such a thing? Even pinnacle Seventh Dimensional existences rarely appeared. Ordinary Eighth Dimensional experts were even more recluse. Where could they possibly have the chance to see such a battle? Even if they were holding back, it was a huge opportunity.

The battle continued for about ten minutes or so before the two came to a stop. They bowed respectfully and the crowd's cheers reached their pinnacle.

It was at this moment a voice echoed, one that seemed to suppress all the other voices in an instant, despite being gentle and soft.

"Is this a joke?"

Chapter 2839: Fake

Leonel's voice echoed with hues of disappointment. The number of eyes and senses that landed on him all at once felt endless, but he seemed unmoved by it all.

He stared down at the Overlords below and then the nobles above.

"I was told that the Rapax were a Race of warriors. When did they become so pathetic?"

Seas of eyes widened.

However, not all reacted in this way. The Rapax weren't a Race that liked to talk things out. Someone who was infuriated by Leonel's side immediately attacked.

Their tail snapped over in a fury, piercing through the air so fast that it left a whistle in its wake.

Without even looking at it, Leonel caught the tail by its shimmering blade as though he wasn't scared of it piercing his skin.

And he truly wasn't afraid.

The blade couldn't even leave a mark on his skin.

With a tug, the tail was ripped from its body.

In one swift motion, Leonel's wrist flicked out, and the blade soared.

Unlike the original attack, it didn't make a single sound, and yet it appeared before the Rapax in a single blink. In another, it tore its pill-shaped head in two.

The air seemed to freeze and solidify. Those that had been about to attack before hesitated.

The Rapax that Leonel had just killed wasn't particularly powerful, only in the Sixth Dimension. Even so, it felt like Leonel's methods were suffocating them. There was a deterrence in the air that they couldn't quite describe, like a solidified killing intent that formed a barrier they didn't dare to cross.

"I didn't expect the Rapax of all Races to set up this kind of farce."

The fact Leonel was speaking in their language made the words all the more clear, and that was despite the fact they didn't understand what he was trying to get at.

Even so, his show of strength was enough for them to listen. That was all the Rapax needed.

The Rapax were the one Race that likely wouldn't even care if they were ruled by another so long as their fist was large enough. They respected strength and nothing more.

But because of that, they were also quite simple-minded. In their opinions, no esteemed genius of the Rapax like the ones below would participate in a farce. So, it could only be that it was all real.

What they didn't know was that the farce here weren't the Rapax at all. It was the Sea Gods who were purposely holding back their strength to keep it even.

Ironically, the only "real" battle was the last one where the two Overlords only sparred.

But targeting the Sea Gods here wouldn't work. Plus, he didn't give a damn how the Sea Gods felt. He was already enemies with them.

Leonel shook his head and turned. He looked like he was about to directly leave.

The Rapax around him didn't dare to try to stop him.

At that moment, one of the noble Rapax stood.

"Stop."

Leonel looked back, his gaze flickering with disdain, before he turned back and continued to walk away.

BANG!

A Rapax landed before Leonel. This time, it was the Overlord.

It loomed menacingly, standing at over four meters tall. When it curled its body, looming over Leonel with all its mass and strength, the difference in their size was grating on the soul.

A smirk curled Leonel's lip.

"What? You want to pat hands a bit? Want to ask me to dance? Which one of us is going to lead and which is going to be along for the ride?"

Leonel's words were clearly a dig at the earlier "spar", and the old Rapax was instantly furious.

Its tail lashed out, but Leonel had already moved, taking a step back.

The tail slammed into the ground, shattering the entire bleacher area. Half the coliseum fell by a foot and would have collapsed if not for a peculiar coincidence.

"You can't even attack like you mean it," Leonel continued to sneer.

"Uncle, please stop for a moment." The noble above spoke again before turning his attention to the back of Leonel's head once more. "You've impugned on the dignity of the Rapax Race. Shouldn't you explain yourself?"

"Although it is not the Rapax way to gang up on a single person, it is also not the Rapax way to allow our honor to be smeared. We take are always willing to take on the full consequences of our actions. You're powerful, so I'm sure you're smart enough to understand what I mean."

The noble was surprisingly eloquent, and, of course, Leonel understood.

Essentially, he was saying that ganging up wasn't what they wanted to do, but they also had a culture of taking responsibility for both their actions and words. This latter culture was the reason why no one harmed Leonel after he killed the gate guard, or why no one seemed angry. He had just killed another Rapax.

The two that Leonel had killed were taking on the responsibility for their actions.

In this case, Leonel had insulted an entire Race. So, it was his responsibility to take on. It wasn't their fault that he had insulted so many of them at once. Since he wanted to talk so much, he would have to face all of their wrath. It was that simple.

"Show me your wrath, then. Do you think I'm afraid of a hoard of cowards?"

This time, even the noble frowned. It was hard to distinguish the expressions of a Rapax, but an excellent sign was the swaying of their tale and the subtle lengthening of their metal claws-both on their feet and hands.

The noble took a breath and exhaled slowly.

"I only want to ask you one thing. Why?"

The atmosphere seemed primed, so Leonel finally looked back toward the noble's box. When he saw the tight frown on the Sea God's face, his lip curled.

"Wasn't it clear to you? You're all warriors with thousands of battles under your belt. You wouldn't have entered the Fourth Dimension otherwise. You've been bathed in blood since birth.

"And none of you can recognize a faked battle when you see one?"

Chapter 2840: Confusion

The eloquent noble Rapax, Xenothrall, looked at Leonel with narrowed eyes.

"The warriors of the Rapax do not fake battles."

"Is that so?" Leonel sneered. He raised a finger and then pointed down toward the Overlord Sea God.

Just when everyone thought he was going to threaten the Sea Gods as well, several Force Arts appeared around him in quick succession. At that moment, the Sea Gods from the previous battles all appeared, one after another.

They looked around in confusion, not quite understanding how they had suddenly appeared here.

BANG!

Leonel leapt up and landed in the arena below.

"You. Fight me," Leonel said coldly.

He pointed at the Sixth Dimensional Sea God that fought in the first battle. He was indifferent and his tone didn't seem to assume it was a suggestion.

Xenothrall's frown deepened.

The Sea God noble by his side seemed to finally understand what was going to happen. He opened his mouth to say something, but it was then Leonel suddenly looked at him, his gaze flashing with a hidden purple light beneath the deep hazel.

"This isn't your place to speak. So I would suggest you shut your mouth, or I will kill you."

At that moment, the Sea God Overlord took this chance to take action. Insulting his liege was more than enough of a sin, and no one would look down on him for doing so.

Leonel grinned. These people were so easy to manipulate.

A pitch black spear suddenly appeared in Leonel's palm. When this spear appeared, the entire Rapax Domain seemed to tremble.

The Rapax fell into complete silence. Looking at that spear, they felt like something was calling out to them, as though the person standing before them wasn't a human, but rather one of their own clan.

It was a misunderstanding that Rapax didn't use weapons. Although the vast majority relied on close combat alone, this wasn't because they hated weapons or didn't have a deep weapon inheritance. It was rather because of all the Races, the Rapax had the most reverence for weapons. Period.

Because of this, they only allowed their most supreme of warriors to use weapons, and it took a lifetime of blood, sweat and tears to be acknowledged with the right to wield one.

It could be said that the Rapax had a reverence for the humanoids who created Weapon Forces that went beyond any other. In their culture, these were the true Gods of the world, and everyone else was inferior.

This black spear called out to something primal within them. Even having only seen it for a moment, they acknowledged it from the bottom of their hearts.

This spear, of course, was the very same one that the Rapax of his own Incomplete World had gifted Leonel.

Back then, just trying to catch it had completely shattered all the bones in his hand and arm. But now, it was as light as a feather.

At first, it looked no different from a rod. But quickly, it formed the blade of a glaive. The black fog took shape and let out a resonant blade howl. The skies split and a swirl of clouds began to quickly accelerate.

The world continued to shake as Leonel turned back to the Overlord and took a single step forward.

The Sea God Overlord pierced out with a trident and Leonel calmly thrust forward. He could feel the world resonating with him. It was as though the Rapax Domain was already prepared to be completely refined by him.

It was a shocking feeling, but Leonel didn't pay attention to it, neither did suppress the feeling. Even so, because he felt that his strength was about to skyrocket beyond the bounds of reason, he could only slow his attack even further.

To the eyes of the spectators, Leonel might as well have been a crawling snail compared to the Overlord. However, no one made a sound.

Their respect for Leonel had reached another depth. Unless they saw him die before their eyes, they seemed to always believe that he would definitely win.

Glaive and trident clashed.

Glaive Force sparkled in white on Leonel's blade, but it was entirely for show. Even with Glaive Force active, he was entirely able to ignore it.

He parried the trident with ease.

Sparks flew and rippling waves cut across the sand of the coliseum.

The surrounding youth of the Sea Gods were forced to unleash their strength to protect themselves. If they didn't, all of them would die.

Even so, many of the weaker ones were still shattered into a rain of blood.

The Overlord's expression became bloodshot when he saw this. He had definitely constrained his strength. He wouldn't be foolish enough to put the lives of these youths in danger. But Leonel's skills were beyond his expectation.

He could tell Leonel had done it on purpose, but there was nothing he could do about it except yell, retreat, and attack again.

Blasts continued to echo, and the duo left a trail of booms in their wake.

However, when Leonel saw that his point had been proven, he pulled out a little more strength.

His blade snuck through the gaps in the Overlord's defenses, striking through his chest.

BANG!

Both of them landed heavily on the ground. Leonel stood above him, a foot placed on his chest and his blade running through his chest.

He was calm and collected, his strength ringing true.

"Many years ago, I was given a great favor by an elder of your Rapax. He acknowledged my talent and chose to grant me his most precious possession. This spear has saved my life more than once.

"Today, I came here to finally repay that kindness. But the sights I've seen have greatly disappointed me. The Rapax shouldn't show weakness just for the chance to ally with others."

Confusion colored the faces of the Rapax. They wanted to believe Leonel, but how had he proven anything?

That was when Leonel pointed at the young Sea God geniuses and their eyes widened.