

Dimensional Descent

- Chapter 3041: Time

Chapter 3041: Time

Leonel sat in silence. The room he was in, if it could even be called that, was made of a grey fog. There was no obvious ceiling or walls, or even ground for that matter. It felt like he was stuck inside a rain cloud with no way to get out.

But this was exactly what he wanted.

In truth, this was probably the most difficult thing that he would have to do in his entire life. That was because the time dilation in this place was so great that even if he called for Anastasia now and she reacted immediately, it might still be a difference of several months.

But this was exactly the sort of time dilation he needed.

As he had said, he didn't have the time to waste on hoping that things would eventually work out like he might have done in the past, and this time, he only needed to suffer through pain.

"Show me what you have..." Leonel spoke lightly.

At that moment, he stopped suppressing his Spear and Bow Force. As expected, in that same instant, he was hit with a wave of pain.

If it had felt like getting hit by a truck as a mortal, he might have preferred that. But it was very different. Instead, it felt like his body was filled with a countless number of blades that were slowly tearing him apart.

His pores opened up, only for golden needles sharp enough to pierce through space to come rushing out as though they were beads of sweat.

Leonel sat in silence. Other than the fact his body had grown exceptionally pale, there was nothing else on his face that said he was experiencing a great horror.

Memories of his mother began to run through his mind. They weren't the same memories that someone else might remember at all...

Leonel's first memories weren't in the world at all, but rather in his mother's womb. He could hear her words soothing him, he could remember her care and affection, he could remember how she made his father turn off the music he liked for something that would help her son sleep better, he could remember how she would rub her belly every time he kicked and how she would protect him from discomfort as she slept.

He could remember the first time he looked into her eyes, the first little kiss on the forehead she had given him, he could remember her precise scent, the precise tone of her voice, the heartbreak she experienced when she realized she would have to leave him behind... and how they had been robbed of their short moments together because of the actions of the Luxnix family.

Softness toward family had taken something more precious from him than he could describe in words. They had forced him and his mother to separate when they should have been together.

He could feel that smoldering anger holding him together, and it became a different sort of pain that overwhelmed any other he was feeling.

He couldn't feel his Weapon Forces tearing his flesh and bone. He couldn't feel it assaulting his soul. He couldn't feel it needling through his very cells themselves as though they wanted to erase him down to the very last molecule.

Any of those feelings were completely overwhelmed by something else entirely.

It wasn't just a willingness to protect his family; it was a willingness to cull those who called him family but actually had ulterior motives.

He wouldn't allow the same thing that happened to him to happen to his and Aina's child. He wouldn't allow the mention of family to make his own life a living hell. He wouldn't allow anyone to stand in his path.

Every moment they had was so precious. As beautiful as these memories were, he could have had so many more... but he couldn't... and he would never have the chance to form new ones.

A single tear streaked down Leonel's cheek before it erupted into a blade light. The droplet left a blade mark down his face, but he didn't react to it in the slightest.

It continued to drill through his body again and again, and he lost track of time.

Minutes became hours, which became days. Days became weeks, and weeks became months, finally years.

In the outside world, maybe not even a few minutes had passed, and yet Leonel was suffering untold horrors.

Until now, he still hadn't brought out any of the materials that he had traded for. He was forcing his body to experience these horrors, forcing it to try and heal itself, all without relying on anything else.

This method was crude and violent, and it would take decades to show any sort of substantial improvement, all while undergoing the cruelest of tortures imaginable. On top of that, it would leave countless lingering issues behind. There would eventually come a point where his body would simply break down, unable to take even a single step forward any longer.

However, Leonel was more than willing to do this. He and Nilrem had both decided that this foundational process was necessary. It wasn't just about building tolerance, it was also about making the Weapon Force so ubiquitous in one's body that every subsequent step was possible.

On an unknown day, decades later, Leonel finally opened his murky eyes. They weren't murky due to fatigue, but because they had been completely blinded. At some point 20 years ago, his eyes could no longer keep up with the grueling torment. The flesh within them had practically corroded as though they were metal, no longer sending signals.

In fact, his eyes were the least of his problems. His organs were shutting down, his lower half didn't even work anymore, and his mind was beginning to display signs of Alzheimer's. None of this was due to age, but rather the grueling torment.

Having to constantly heal itself like this made Leonel, who should have still had many more years to live, look no different from an old man.

'It's time.'

Chapter 3042: CRACK.

Leonel separated his soul from his body. Right now, he couldn't trust his mind, not in the state that it was in. It was more taxing to rely on the soul alone without fleshly support, but it would have to be enough.

His soul had likewise aged like milk, but its robustness was still beyond that of his body despite having lost its core.

Leonel finally began to bring out the materials that he had prepared. But what was shocking was the fact that not a single one of them was designed to heal. It was as though he was planning on throwing his body away completely...

But although Nilrem had called him crazy, both of them decided that this was the only right path. Everything else was meaningless. Only if this succeeded would this be an appropriate path.

According to Nilrem, there could only be a 20% chance of success... However, Leonel had never acted with anything less than 100% assurance. If he didn't, how could he ever have left his wife with-child? Why would he do such a thing just to come here to die?

He would succeed. He wouldn't allow even the reaper itself to stop him. Even if a Death God descended to take his body away, he would pierce its brows with his spear.

A trembling might came off of Leonel's frail body. It looked as though he had lost much of his strength, and yet the sound of sharpening blades and whistling arrows echoed across the space. It sounded as though his Weapon Forces were stronger than they had ever been, despite the fact he couldn't comprehend in this space at all.

Leonel's plan was simple.

Weapon Forces were constructed of the most foundational laws in all of existence. Things like sharpness, swiftness, heaviness... these simple Forces were often neglected, but it was they that came together to form the Weapon Forces that so many humanoids used.

These small laws were everywhere.

Unlike other Forces, Weapon Forces didn't come from within one's body most of the time. Instead, it was a push of intention that caused those many smaller laws and Forces to come together to form these Weapon Forces in real time. Essentially, using Weapon Forces of any kind was almost always an external endeavor.

This was why there were no Spear Force Innate Nodes or things of the like. They were naturally things that came from the universe and had to be treated as such.

They could be granted to you for use much like Universal Force could be, but they weren't truly your own. In fact, most Weapon Forces had progenitors or those that would have far more of a say over a Weapon Force than you would simply by virtue of being the first.

If Leonel ever ran into the man or woman that created Spear Force or Bow Force, it would be out of luck no matter how overbearing his Weapon Force was. Even if he inherited their Idol, it would be like he was following the path of someone else once again.

Leonel had already made a promise that this would never happen. He had lost everything once before, and he had no intention of ever experiencing it again.

Although his Weapon Forces seemed like they would always be his just by virtue of how they worked and how their originators were certainly long dead, how could he ever confirm such a thing to be sure?

He had been thinking about it for a long while and he decided something simple.

The only way to ensure that this would never happen was if he could force the Weapon Forces to manifest from himself.

The easy way to do this was to use his Incomplete World, but then he would be handicapping himself. He still needed a great amount of energy to help them progress to a level where they could truly rival God Realm, and right now they were also limited by his Dimension.

For Leonel, who was used to having strength in his Weapon Forces that could rock worlds, this would be a step back, not a step forward.

Of course, Leonel was willing to take a step back if it was necessary. He knew that this was the moment that he could least afford to be impatient in. In such a mental state, it was easy for him to run down a path that he shouldn't, only to regret it later.

But that didn't mean that he should take a step back if he didn't have to. It also didn't mean that he couldn't take a step forward if it was available.

He had sat in this same spot for what must have been almost a century, suffering endless torment, just so that he would have a 20% chance of accomplishing this.

Leonel's Innate Nodes began to move, and out from his brain stem, a familiar Emulation Spatial Force Innate Node was ripped out.

He didn't flinch in the slightest, but what happened next was even more shocking.

CRACK.

He shattered it. Some mysterious power erupted, and his Emulation Spatial Force Innate Node practically crumbled to pieces.

But that still wasn't the end of it.

At the very same time, his Scarlet Star Force Innate Nodes manifested as well.

CRACK.

It shattered to pieces at the same time.

Emulation Spatial Force... it had been by Leonel's side for a long while. To Leonel, it had been known as an inferior Infinity Force all the while; it had potential, but it wasn't good enough.

Scarlet Star Force... it was one of the most powerful Forces in all of existence, but it was still one that could be trumped and superseded.

The shattered remnants of his Innate Nodes fluttered in the grey space, finally giving it the smallest hints of color as the hidden runes within began to move about in a pleasing rhythm.

One was the little brother to the strongest Force in all of existence, the other was such a strong Creation Force that it became known for its Destruction...

And now Leonel would use them to create something new.

Chapter 3043: Condense

There had never been a Weapon Force Innate Node before, but Leonel didn't just want to simply create one; he wanted his entire foundation to be rebuilt with his Weapon Forces as the core.

Even if he lost his strong Dream Force, even if his body was broken and shattered, even if his soul was ripped out of his body, he wanted to have access and control over his Weapon Forces.

No matter the situation, no matter the circumstances, he wanted to have the utmost control... control that no one could take from him.

This wasn't just a process of creating a new Innate Node; it was a process of making his Weapon Forces so synonymous with himself that even his Ability Index could control them as freely as he did his own body.

This was why he had put his body through so much torture. Right now, it was unlikely for anyone to be able to easily tell where his body stopped and his Weapon Forces began. Even his tears had become shimmering blades, let alone the rest of him.

His Weapon Forces had infiltrated his cells, learning how to coexist with them on an individual level. In fact, in that way, it could almost be said that not only was he creating an Innate Node and mutating his Ability Index, but with the changes to his body, he was building a new Lineage Factor as well.

This sort of blurred line between constitutions and where they originated from was exactly what Leonel was missing now. It was precisely this core and foundation of his very being that he needed to rebuild.

In the past, it had been his Dream Asura Bloodline, it was just that he hadn't been aware of it. It was what allowed all of his skills to consolidate and build up, maybe the greatest talent to be born in all of existence.

Even when he did realize that this was its role in his body, he had been entirely unwilling to use it because he knew that it was the machinations of that woman at play.

But now, things had changed. This time, he would be building his own foundational core. And though it wouldn't be nearly as strong as the core that the Demoness had managed to build after countless generations of planning on top of the destruction of more lives than he could count...

Leonel was confident that there would come a day when he stood even above what his enlightened self was capable of, and all of that would be built off the back of what he, Leonel Morales, had been able to do all on his own.

At that moment, Creation and Destruction Sovereignty began to form in the air. They separated and then formed four Sovereignities, both of which divided the world into two.

Half of Leonel's body seemed wreathed in Destruction so great that it bloomed into Creation.

The other half was wreathed in Creation so great that it descended into Destruction.

Then came Leonel's Spear and Bow Sovereignty.

Arrogant.

That was the one word that could be used to describe both of them. They somehow wanted for nothing and yet claimed everything to be theirs at the same time. Even sitting in the air like this, they clashed and rebounded against one another as though they couldn't stand to be in the same general vicinity.

Then they turned their attention toward Leonel, roaring into his mind as though forcing him to choose one or the other.

"You will be in my body. And my control won't be usurped by anyone... not even you..."

This was the first time Leonel had spoken in decades. His voice sounded like nails grating along a rusted surface, his throat having been ravaged by too many blades. Yet, it was powerful nonetheless.

He meant every word he spoke, and this time, in a shocking change, the two Sovereignties were actually forcefully suppressed.

Leonel had gained more in these years than just pain and suffering. He had already accomplished the first leg of his plan.

His Weapon Forces were so ubiquitous in his body now that his Ability Index could already control them as though they were an extension of his body. It wasn't yet perfect... but that was what the remainder of his plan would be.

"Condense."

King Alexandre's Ability Index thrummed, and Leonel's command took hold of the laws in this space.

The six Sovereignties were compressed, and then compressed again, being forced together into a condensed space.

They shrank down, bringing the Runes from his Innate Nodes with them. If at the start, they were like miniature exploded supernovae, right now they were trying to return to their usual size, forming two perfect Innate Nodes.

Things seemed to be going smoothly until Leonel coughed up a mouthful of blood.

The backlash was sudden and forceful, so much so that Leonel, who had planned everything out, wasn't ready for it.

His Weapon Forces were even more unruly than he thought they would be, and they had already begun rampaging around. At the same time, his body was too weak...

It seemed that that was the main problem. The plan would work if he was in top condition, but if he was in top condition, he wouldn't have been able to initiate things at all.

Even if he had brought healing treasures with him, that would have only reset all his progress. He needed his body to be in this state, and healing treasures would just expel what they thought were foreign from his body. That would have made him lose an entire near-century of work; how could he do that?

Leonel coughed up a mouthful of blood again, but this time, it came out in a way he had never seen before.

There were chunks of black as though he had just vomited instead, and as though that wasn't enough, the back end of his cough came out as a fog of crimson. His blood had actually evaporated.

Chapter 3044: DUDOOM.

The pain that Leonel had experienced in the last few decades had dulled considerably. His nerves were so fried that it was hard even to carry pain signals back to his brain.

However, right now, it seemed that he had returned to his first few years here. That much would have still been fine... if it wasn't for the fact that his body was in far worse condition than it had been back then.

Even so, the light of almost madness in Leonel's eyes didn't fade.

He had lost count of the number of times these same memories had flashed in his head. Every time he wanted to give in, to give up...

But he also realized that what he was trying to do right now couldn't be accomplished with determination alone. It just... wasn't enough.

A malevolent light flickered in Leonel's eyes. He didn't know if it was an illusion or a trick of the mind, but he could see a fluttering black robe suddenly appear before him.

The robe was riddled with holes, and when he craned his neck, he could see a bony skeletal hand holding a scythe to his neck.

Those empty eye sockets looked down at him, as though waiting patiently for those last few seconds to finally tick by.

Leonel's gaze spat fire at this figure. He clenched his mouth shut tightly, but the same crimson fog began coming from his nostrils.

His body was giving up on him. He had put it through too much, and the fact that it had lasted this long was already a miracle in and of itself. He simply couldn't take much more.

Bloody fog began to emit from Leonel's eyes, but veins didn't even pop across his body like they should. His body simply wasn't hydrated enough... or more accurately, no matter how much water he drank, his body simply didn't have the capacity to absorb it.

Leonel could feel his life wavering like a flickering candle. He weakly pulled an arm up to push the reaper's scythe away, but he passed through air, falling to the side.

Sparse, dry, white hair fell before his vision, but he couldn't even see it with his blind, murky eyes. This was the first time he had laid down in decades, and he simply wasn't sure if he had it in himself to get up.

'I do...' His thoughts were far stronger than his body.

'More... I need... more...' Leonel hadn't planned to do this at the start; it was far too risky. If this plan had a 20% chance, then this one likely didn't have a ten percent chance. But he gritted his teeth and moved forward nonetheless.

His Dream Sovereignty was suddenly added to the powder keg. Then came his Fire Sovereignty.

Of them all, his Fire Sovereignty was the most infantile, only recently formed. Throwing it into such a pack of wolves was only asking for it to be devoured.

But he did it nonetheless.

He let out a hoarse roar, his body trembling.

His bones began to snap, not due to power, but because they were too porous and fragile. He had suddenly landed on a shoulder that hadn't been through much more than pain in the last several years. The moment he tried to move, his arm snapped, and his tendon went with it.

However, this sort of pain was already something that no longer fazed him.

He focused on his Dream Sovereignty...

Respect and Persistence... Respect and Persistence... And Persistence... And Persistence... Persistence...

Leonel's hoarse roar became something far more sinister. It sounded like half a sob and another half a dragon's enraged cry.

His mind flashed, and all the pain he had experienced came to a head.

"FORM!"

BANG! All of his power was suddenly concentrated into two pinholes.

These weren't fully formed Innate Nodes. They were just the embryos of them. They had the Runes, but they lacked the substance.

This method came from none other than Leonel's father. This should be the state his kidney was left in after his Innate Node was taken as a child. His father used Earth's science to nurture his body over decades, allowing him the chance to regrow it.

Now, these two kernels were exactly in that state, waiting to be regrown. But it would only work if they were given the perfect environment... and after these decades of pain, Leonel's body was precisely in that perfect state.

He weakly inhaled, still feeling like his body was about to collapse into a pile of ash. Then, the resources he had brought began to be inhaled by him one after another.

His organs began to explode; several pieces of his body lost what flesh they had remaining, revealing the cracked bones beneath, but he continued to hold on.

Resource after resource flew into his body, or... what was left of it.

He was forced to use his Destruction and Creation Sovereignties to grind them down and then force them into his body.

At that moment, the strands of Spear and Bow Force that littered his body began to truly become one with him. Under the influence of the Innate Node seeds, it was like they had found a law of movement.

DUDOOM. DUDOOM. Leonel's heart suddenly began to beat.

His two Innate Node seeds traveled through his body, following through his veins, through the remnants of his organs, until they suddenly met at his heart and clashed.

The first clash echoed with the first heartbeat before they separated and began to roam through his body again, through his brain, his nervous system, even his Ethereal Glabella.

DUDOOM. DUDOOM. They clashed again before separating.

This time, they roamed deeper, entering the Dream Plane, then the Destruction World, and even soaring through his Inner World.

DUDOOM. DUDOOM. BOOM! This time, they stuck together forcefully, and Leonel's entire chest exploded. He lay there blankly, his cracked lips slowly parting.

"Anas... tasia..."

He spoke softly as his eyes dimmed.

He managed to speak out these words... but how many months would pass before the time dilation was broken?

Chapter 3045: Together

Leonel's body lay there, his chest cavity blasted open and his gaze vacant. It looked like he had completely died and was left with nothing more than a husk.

However, deep within his Ethereal Glabella, there was a change occurring.

His Mage Core had been completely overhauled.

After Leonel died and his mother was forced to resurrect him with her own life as an exchange, there were many things that he had to give up.

His Incomplete Worlds remained because they weren't technically physically tethered to his body but were rather in the separate Destruction World that he and his father had created.

Logically, if there was another Destruction Sovereign and they too comprehended how to use a Destruction World, they would be able to connect with Leonel's Destruction World much like all Shadow Sovereigns were connected.

This was all to say that, at least for this foundational method, Leonel was able to reconnect and re-establish his dominance over them and his Stars quite easily. The only thing he was lacking was a strong enough foundation and body to commune with them, as he had pretty much lost everything he had done to prepare for the use of [Final Destruction].

When it came to things like his Mage Core, however, they were gone. To make matters worse, his tree-shaped Mage Core had been created by his enlightened self, and he didn't have nearly the mental capacity now that was necessary to reconstruct it in the same way.

Luckily... he had no desire to do so.

Ever since he learned that the way of the Human Race was to take advantage of their fused soul, Leonel had been thinking about it. He never acted on these thoughts because his father's technique required their separation, and he would obviously follow the path his father had laid out for him.

But right now, he had actually gained a path toward doing both.

The Weapon Force Innate Nodes that he was creating would be the first of their kind, so why not create an Ethereal Glabella that was also the first of its kind?

SHIIIIING! SHIIIIING! SHIIIIING!

Blade auras began to whistle about. They cut the air apart as though they were as tangible as stone and as fragile as paper.

And then a beautiful scene began to take place.

The golden blade lights organized themselves into a coordinated dance. At first, this dance didn't seem to have a purpose, but then a Natural Force Art began to flow.

Leonel's mental capacity was far too weak right now, he knew that. Once he completed his new foundation and began to use his Weapon Forces to bring together and control his Dream Force talents under a single umbrella, it would get better, but it still wouldn't be as excellent as his true peak, the peak that only the schemes of the Demoness had allowed him to reach.

However, right now, they didn't need to be.

He had spent almost an entire century entirely immersed in the pain of his Weapon Forces. Comprehending outside Forces was impossible in a Time dilation, but that didn't mean that he couldn't further comprehend himself and what he stood for.

He understood his Weapon Forces so clearly and utterly now that they were truly no different from an extension of himself... that was the entire purpose of the pain that he had experienced. Right now, even his individual cells were bursting with the golden Sovereignty.

And now, as he completed the Spear Dance and Bow Dance he had formed so many times before, it was so much more fluid, so much more sharp...

The golden blade lights began to form gorgeous lotuses in the air, the others formed fluttering butterflies and soaring birds, while the last few formed an endless golden lake.

Soon, they began to be tinted by a touch of violet. It was only a hint, but the contrast between the pale lavender color and the gold made the entire scene feel not only just beautiful but also regal and holy.

DUDOOM! FOOOOOM!

There was a heart-stopping echo and then the rushing formation of a vacuum.

A gorgeous violet-gold Force Art took shape in the bottom of the violet-gold sea, and then another one took shape high in the skies.

They formed a vacuum between one another and then a tree almost exploded into existence.

It looked like an ancient cherry blossom, but this time its blossoms weren't cherry or pink at all. Instead, they were the very same golden-violet color.

When this took shape, everything in the world fell into silence.

The Weapon Force... it was a unique Force that could only be convened with form the outside world. It took shape based on the will of the soul and appeared only when it was needed most.

Leonel could see the obvious cycle more clearly now than maybe ever before...

The human soul was locked within the body and formed an anchor through the Dimensions. While many took it as a weakness, the technique that Leonel had scanned through several times over made him realize that it was actually a great strength as well.

So what would happen now that a Weapon Force that was meant to only find its roots in the outside was suddenly rooted into the body instead?

What would happen if that same Weapon Force was following a unique Sovereignty that was the representation of its owner's core being?

That was the crux of Leonel's path forward.

His soul would remain separated from his body, as that was what was necessary for his father's magnum opus to shock the world. However...

His Weapon Forces, their Sovereignties, and the new foundation of his talent would be rooted into his body, taking the place of the soul that no longer was.

And together, they would form a cycle not much unlike his Creation and Destruction Sovereignties.

His soul had once been rooted in his body and was no longer. His Weapon Forces had once been rooted in the universe and were no longer.

And together...

Chapter 3046: Back

DUDOOM! The perfect balance was struck, and right then, the carcass that seemed to encompass what remained of Leonel suddenly convulsed.

A spurt of blood shot out in all directions, but it was clear at a glance that this blood was only of the most foul sort.

Blood continued to be pushed and rushed out of Leonel's body, but every time this happened, his dull expression became ruddier, fuller, more healthy.

Runes began to swirl about, and it was then that the two seeds appeared once more.

Rather than taking shape in Leonel's kidneys like before, they took root in where his heart had once been.

It was then that the resources Leonel had swallowed finally began to play their largest role.

They rolled in from the surroundings, being poured into Leonel's body one step after another.

Leonel should have been overwhelmed; he should have been crushed beneath the might of all the energy that he was consuming.

But with every DUDOOM! It felt as though his slowly forming heart was taking all the volatile energy, shredding it apart into its simplest laws, and then sending it spiraling toward the rest of his weak body.

When these resources ran into his cells, the blade forces within would shred them apart even further, then take some for themselves before distributing it to the rest of the cell.

This process was recycled again and again, and there didn't seem to be an ounce of energy being wasted.

With every heartbeat, his body seemed to begin to reanimate itself.

And that was when it happened.

It was maybe the largest Innate Node that had ever taken shape in the world.

It was the size of two fists and it appeared right in the middle of Leonel's chest.

But as though that wasn't enough... it began to spread out veins and arteries, even replacing Leonel's Nodal Pathways with a network of runes.

It shimmered with a beautiful golden-violet color as it continued to greedily suck up the resources in the surroundings.

DUDOOM! DUDOOM! DUDOOM! This time, every time a heartbeat shook the world, Spear and Bow Force would casually manifest as though hearing the call of their master.

Sometimes this Spear and Bow Force would have a slight tinge of red, destroying everything in its path.

Sometimes it would be gold then red, leaving beautiful trails in its wake that healed the world.

Sometimes it would have a slightly silver-black tinge, causing space to react unpredictably, and sometimes it would have a violet hue that lorded over all the rest.

These different Weapon Forces had characteristics that shouldn't be natural at all.

They didn't even seem like just Spear Force or Bow Force any longer, but four completely new and different types of Forces.

This was the difference between a Weapon Force gathered from the surroundings and one that was curated by your very own self.

Leonel's body convulsed once again and two braces appeared on his arm.

His cells shimmered, and then thin points of light began to manifest from them.

These points of light formed a shield of skin that covered Leonel.

It seemed to want to do more, but there was no one directing it.

As it slowly faded away, Leonel's eyes suddenly regained their light with a sharp pulse of their own.

His pale-violet eyes had gained a ring of dark gold within them.

He took his first breath and the time-dilated world around him almost collapsed.

SHIING! SHIING! SHIING! SHIING! SHIING! Just Leonel's gaze alone shredded apart space.

It was as though he had casually created one of the world's strongest ocular techniques, and yet it was just a byproduct of his new body.

Leonel had used the foundation his Metal Synergy Lineage Factor had left behind and overhauled it, twisting and turning it until it could learn to use his Weapon Forces as the new foundation for his strength.

However, he didn't lose the characteristics of his Morales Lineage Factor either.

He could still reforge his Metal Body and Divine Armor in the future, and that was because, as was seen earlier, his Weapon Forces had gained the ability to fuse with and assimilate new Forces with ease.

This had been possible in the past.

Leonel had once fused his Scarlet Star Force and Spear Force before.

That was a foundation that the Spear Domain Lineage Factor allowed him.

Well, that and his grandfather's teachings.

But now it wasn't a simple fusion, nor did it need him to put in nearly as much effort as he would have in the past.

The reason fusion was so easy in the past was counterintuitively because his Force Manipulation was so weak.

The less of the Force's true self he understood, the easier it was to force them to weaken and combine.

But now, he wasn't just fusing... he was creating.

And destroying.

DUDOOM! The last of Leonel's chest finally closed up and he stood slowly.

His height wasn't as overbearing as it had been in the past.

He had gone from a man that was almost 6'10" to a man that stood at "only" 6'6", but he felt good.

That additional height had surely come from his Demon side as they tended to be quite large.

Many of them were even four or five meters tall, which was also why he grew so much in his enlightened form.

But now, he was completely and 100% human... And he had never felt better.

Leonel unleashed a roar just as the time dilation field dispersed.

It had been months since he called for Anastasia, but that was fine.

He had calculated it precisely for this moment.

A cyclone of Weapon Forces rose into the air and his individual cells shone with a golden light.

When his pores opened up and tiny strands of violet-gold Force manifested from them to form a skin, it looked as though small blades were swimming across his body.

The ring of gold in his pale violet eyes shone with the brightness of a star and his blood surged.

He was back.

Chapter 3047: Cunts

Leonel clenched his fists and his eyes practically pierced the clouds above.

He exhaled slowly, tears that were threatening to form being sliced into countless pieces before they could even take shape.

At that moment, his brothers appeared.

He didn't even get a chance to react before he was dogpiled.

"Shit!" "FUCK!" "WHAT THE HELL!" The lot of them were all riddled with holes.

If Leonel didn't pull back at the last moment, they really would have been completely skewered through.

This new Spear-Bow Body of his was deadly not just in defense, but it was an offensive constitution the likes of which had rarely been seen.

Leonel smiled.

"That's what all you bastards deserve.

What if I had been in the middle of a crucial breakthrough?" "Fuck your breakthrough, I want reparations.

Oh my god, my handsome face!" James, who had been among the first to pounce, was stuck closest to Leonel and couldn't pull away even if he wanted to.

The laughter echoed, and they all seemed to be relieved that Leonel wasn't in the same state he had been after his father died.

Even if he wasn't laughing and joking now, just his roar from earlier was enough to make that clear.

"You guys need to be more mature.

Don't you know you're going to be uncles soon?" "Huh?" "What?!" "When'd this happen?!" The reaction was fiercer than what Leonel expected, and he was hounded with questions.

"Fuck me, and here I thought you have bullets hidden down there." Milan clicked his tongue.

"Turns out it's all Aina.

You better not be shooting blanks, Cap, or else it'll be obvious which of you is the problem." Leonel's lip twitched.

What happened to the camaraderie? How did he end up being attacked like this? He ended up changing the topic and asking them about the battle.

He knew that they wouldn't let Aina fight on her own, so since they had all been in the Segmented Cube, he knew that they must have been fighting the Four Great Families as well.

"They're fucking cunts.

Do you know how they escaped?" James asked.

Leonel's gaze flickered.

Now that he thought about it, Aina had taken the Brazinger family's Heirloom, and Nana should have succeeded in taking the Adurna family's Heirloom; his enlightened self had certainly ensured that that happened.

All things considered, the Four Great Families should have been significantly weakened without these two treasures, and his gramps should have been on the edge of being absolutely furious with his mother's death.

If the Fawkes saw their enemies right before them, what were the odds that they'd just let them go? Of course, it was possible that the price to pay was too high, but that didn't make logical sense to Leonel either.

That was because if the Fawkes dared to return to the God Realm, how could they fear the Four Great Families who had also been forced to go into hiding? That said, the Four Great Families did also dare to return as well.

So it was possible that they had shored up their strength much like the Fawkes had.

All things considered, Leonel still felt that it was impossible for Gervaise to let them leave without facing any harm, especially after they lost two powerful Heirlooms.

Leonel was once again assured in his deductive abilities because his mind had not only returned to the state it had been without his Dream Asura Bloodline activated, it was even marginally better now.

All he had needed was a foundation to rely upon, and this was almost as good as any.

Although he was still leagues away from his enlightened self, the fact that he was already better than him with his Asura blood suppressed said loads about how much potential his Path had.

Right now, his Weapon Forces had only barely entered the Creation State.

As they improved, this foundation of his would only grow better and the potential he could pull out from the rest of his body would only improve.

Of course, without his Dream Asura Bloodline, he would still be missing a pillar that had made his Dream Force so powerful to begin with... But Leonel was already considering these matters seriously.

'One step at a time.' "Those bastards," James gritted his teeth.

"They're so completely and utterly shameless.

They relied on the Void Race." "The Void Race?" This answer surprised Leonel.

He listened intently and finally understood the rest of the situation.

It seemed that the Four Great Families had shackled up with the Void Race somehow.

From James' words, Leonel's speculation was that they had always been together.

'Maybe...' Sparks of lightning flew through Leonel's eyes.

It seemed that the realization of his Dreamscape was even more violent now.

His eyes were like a window into his Ethereal Glabella, and his Ethereal Glabella was where his soul resided.

Now, his Ability Index had become so powerful that it was beginning to affect the outside world even though it wasn't designed to do this at all.

He had just realized something profound.

It was highly likely that the Void Race was part of these plots and schemes that had been going on in the background.

The only reason they hadn't appeared in full force was because their role was different.

There was a reason the Pluto Race or many others hadn't appeared for such an important matter.

The Void Race was definitely tipping the scales.

Ironically, the Void Race had lost along with the Primordial Terror and the real winner in the end was the Demoness... However, according to his brothers, she had vanished from Existence as though she never existed, and there was simply no one capable of finding her or understanding what her intentions for all of this were.

All everyone knew was that Existence didn't have many years left, and the Void Race was forced to pick a side or be the public enemy of everyone.

To everyone's surprise, they began to flex a level of strength they shouldn't have had.

Chapter 3048: Weak

Leonel left the Segmented Cube to find Aina laying in bed with her palms over her belly, lost in thought.

Leonel's sudden appearance startled her for a bit, but then she smiled.

It was a sweet smile, almost careless in its formation, but deep and filled with love nonetheless.

It left Leonel in a daze for a long moment.

The way her hair spilled out onto the bed beneath her, the rosiness of her cheeks, the redness of her lips... even the way her nose scrunched up as though she was trying to tease him a bit with that smile of hers, as though she was well aware of just how beautiful she was.

Leonel didn't know what to say, and he was at a complete loss for words.

It was Aina who spoke first as though she knew he was stunned.

"You've gotten shorter." Leonel blinked.

"What? You want to divorce me now? Ai, the heart of a woman is so cruel." Aina giggled.

"Have you decided?" Leonel asked, his meaning clear as he looked at her hand-covered belly.

"It's a surprise!" Aina said with a brighter smile.

She hadn't even truly become a mother yet, but she was so bright-eyed and happy that Leonel almost melted all over again.

At the same time, he was kicking himself for withholding her from such a right for so long.

Just seeing this smile made whatever hardships came later more than worth it.

"Okay, keep your little secrets, then." Leonel chuckled and sat by her side, placing a much larger hand over hers.

The two sat in silent peace, feeling one another's warmth.

Leonel slowly traced his thumb over Aina's ring finger, feeling the burnt marks left behind by his soul brand.

Even now, he couldn't quite figure out how he could fix this... But he had an idea.

As for the baby in his wife's belly, it didn't matter to him.

Boy or girl, it wouldn't make a difference so long as it was healthy and his wife was happy.

"How long do you think?" Leonel asked.

Under normal circumstances, it should take nine months; they were human after all.

But the problem was that the two had long mutated away from normal humans.

Aina's talent spoke for itself.

As for Leonel, although he had seemed completely weak and fragile, other than his Dream Asura Bloodline, his seed should have carried everything else.

In truth, he wasn't even 100% certain if his entire Dream Asura Bloodline was gone.

After all, just logically speaking, his bone marrow hadn't been dug out and his genes hadn't been altered.

Just because Leonel couldn't sense it anymore didn't mean that it wasn't buried deep within him in some shape or form.

Even though his own bloodlines had been without a foundation, with Aina handpicking the perfect embryo to use, this obviously wouldn't be a problem.

This was why Leonel didn't care whether Aina became pregnant before or after his transformation.

Either way, what mutations were caused by their union would supersede anything regardless.

Plus, what Leonel had done to himself was more like a technique than a change to his talent.

If his children wanted to follow this path, he would easily be able to help them do so.

His only role right now was to grow stronger.

To grow strong to the point Aina could have all the children she wanted and it would change absolutely nothing.

"I could speed it up... but I don't think that's best," Aina said softly.

"Depending on the situation, two or three years, I think, is a good time." Leonel nodded.

That wasn't a long time at all, not with the current span of their lives.

"If you need any resources, let me know.

I will get them all for you—." Leonel's gaze suddenly sharpened and he pressed a foot down on his living quarters.

BOOM! The structure began to sway and shake, but Leonel had not only activated the protective formations, he bolstered them in the blink of an eye.

Leonel Morales was back.

All the Force Arts in the world were practically playdough in his hands.

"Stay here." Leonel said softly.

Aina was already trying to get up, but she could only pout when he spoke.

However, her pout vanished when she could feel the life growing in her belly.

Other mothers would need at least a baby bump before they could feel something, but Aina could practically feel every cell's movement.

Although she still liked to fight, that was voided by her will to be a mother ten times over.

She didn't even mind it and had already forgotten the commotion.

Her husband could handle it.

... Leonel walked out slowly.

He looked up to find a dome of swirling runes above his head.

Beyond this dome, there was a woman with long green hair that flapped about wildly in the wind.

She was unlikely to be a Fawkes and had likely married into the family from one of the powerful emerging bloodlines of Earth.

Earth had always been exceptionally talented, so with so many years of growth, many such lineages were bound to awaken.

Not only that, but the Sparks that lit their Lineage Factors were very likely to still be alive as well.

"RETURN MY SON TO ME!" Her screech caused a violent uprising of Force in the region.

But it suddenly froze when Leonel appeared before her.

At some unknown time, he had pressed five fingers to her chest, looking down on her indifferently.

The green-haired woman froze in place.

Didn't they say that Leonel was impossibly weak now? Even if he wasn't, wasn't he only in the Sixth Dimension? How... How could he be so strong? BANG! The woman was sent flying.

"Weak." Leonel said lightly.

These people were so sheltered, living lives of leisure while plotting the downfall of others.

He didn't believe that his grandfather was so incompetent as to raise a family of complete fools.

He knew Gervaise's tactics, and it was definitely almost a certainty that he had fabricated enemies for them even when there were none, forcing them to be tempered through blood and fire.

If not, how could they stand tall here? But it was also clear... that there were many among them that had managed to escape this fate.

She came here to flex her muscle... and yet couldn't withstand a single strike.

At that moment, several powerful auras descended from the surroundings as Leonel's pale violet hair danced in the wind.

Chapter 3049: Bear

Leonel stood tall in the skies.

He had been particularly heavy-handed against this woman, and it wasn't just because of her words or who her son was.

Just now, she had attacked with the intent to blow everything apart, without a care for who was inside, or how many of them she killed in her tirade. In fact, she was probably hoping that she would kill several people.

Even if it was just Ailsa alone, Leonel would have already been furious to an extreme. But now that she had a baby in her belly, this woman had just tried to wipe out his entire family in a single strike.

What did she deserve if not a heavy hand? In fact...

Leonel raised his hand again, his eyes glowing with a deadly light. Then, he lightly drew a finger across the air.

Die.

"Milady! WATCH OUT!"

A guard rushed out to block, but that was when something completely astonishing happened.

Their sword had blade-blocked the scythe of Spear Force when he froze. His body convulsed and then he erupted into a rain of blood and gore.

The spray of crimson liquids and meat landed all over the lady, and her face was stricken with horror.

Leonel stood indifferently in the skies, ready to draw another scythe.

The bridge between his Weapon Forces and his Ability Index wasn't a normal one. Allowing his Control Ability Index to wield his Weapon Forces like an extension of his body was already shocking enough, but it wasn't just his Control Ability Index that got the boost.

The bridge between the tangible and intangible, the opposite sides of his Ability Index and King Alexandre's, had allowed Leonel to gain even greater control over the latter Ability Index as well.

As a result, a casual thought of death made this insignificant guard unable to even withstand a single blow. In fact, it couldn't even be said it was a blow.

Instead, it was as though the world sensed that someone was trying to stand in the way of his Edict and it directly expelled the person who made such an attempt.

The screech of the lady pierced the veil of the skies and at that moment, the powerful auras who had been rapidly approaching finally arrived.

They looked down wide-eyed at the scene, and when they saw that Leonel was about to attack again, their expressions changed once more.

"STOP!"

The men who reacted first were most definitely under the faction of Leonel's third uncle. However, looking around, there was certainly no Third Imperial Prince to be seen.

But this made sense. Leonel would be surprised if Fawkes' offspring could be so casual about their time. In all likelihood, most of them were on the battlefield earning merits.

This useless woman was just likely one of his third uncle's many women and was certainly not the main wife. The main wife couldn't possibly be so useless.

She was either on the battlefield as well, or...

Leonel looked around and saw something curious. His lip curled into a smile.

It was subtle, but he noticed it immediately. There were many uniforms in the crowd. Some wore armor and others wore robes. However, regardless of what it was, he could see the fingerprints of the Crafter that made them all.

Of those that weren't acting right now, many of them had the designs of a different Crafter. But, though a minority, there were still several in the crowd of elites that were wearing the designs of the same Crafter as the men protecting this woman of the Third Imperial Prince.

What did that mean? It meant that the faction of this third uncle of his was split. And even further than that, according to Nilrem, the three he had killed shared the same father, but not the same mother. So why had only one mother appeared?

It could be several things.

One was a probe. A second was a trap. And a third was to get rid of this woman.

Like those three had said, useless people wouldn't marry useless people in the Fawkes family. So why was this woman so worthless?

The first explanation was that it was a personality problem. She had the talent and bloodline, but not the work ethic to do much with it. Still, she was good enough to pump out children from time to time.

The second explanation was that she had a background of sorts that would only help the Third Imperial Prince to solidify his standing in the family.

Leonel, though, was less interested in this and far more interested in who was trying to pluck strings behind the scenes. That was because he had a feeling that it was all three.

With a single move, they could probe him, pull him into a trap, and get rid of the woman they didn't like.

Leonel's sneer was clear and wide, his disdain practically becoming tangible.

He just... didn't care.

Die.

The scythe he was drawing finished at the same time all his deductions concluded.

The guards tried to block the attack again, cold sweat matting their backs as they stood on the flesh of their companion.

But the spear light just flickered and vanished. They didn't even have the time to react before the head of their mistress was sent flying into the air.

There was no quarter to be had here. He hadn't hesitated to kill his own cousins, let alone this woman he had no blood relation to at all.

There was only one path for those that stood in his way now.

His heart wasn't as dark as it had been after his father's death. In fact, it was clearer than crystal and shimmered brighter than stars.

He drew a clear line of what was right and wrong by his own standards and no one else's.

With one breath, he would protect the life of the masses and put his heart on the line for them.

In another, those that crossed him would bear his wrath.

Chapter 3050: Legion and Grand Prime Minister

No one knew what to do.

Nilrem was right. This was the first time something like this had happened in the Fawkes family. There had always been a push and pull of dark and light, but no one dared to break the bottom line.

But even if they hadn't personally seen Leonel kill them, after he killed one of their mothers with such careless disregard, how could they not just make the assumption that he had killed the three others as well?

Only a child would fall for "Nilrem's" confession, and it seemed like Leonel clearly didn't care if they believed it or not.

He seemed to be showing them that there was a door he was willing to open and walk through that they were not.

He was not a cripple, not someone they could just trample over; he was a Morales. And they all happened to be madmen.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

High in the skies, a legion of golden-armored guards appeared. These ones, Leonel recognized. That was because they were the same bastards that had always given him a headache every time he visited the Ascension Palace.

They were the guards that had been guarding the stairs and the entrance, and now, it seemed that they were no longer hiding their true power... or their true numbers.

Their head captain began to speak about a whole bunch of political jargon that Leonel couldn't be bothered to pay close attention to.

The "too long; didn't read" was that he had violated laws of the Empire and was under arrest pending the start of a trial.

Leonel ignored it all and walked back into his house.

"Go find someone else's time to waste," he said with his back facing them. "You have one of two choices. Fight or scam. If you want to hold a court proceeding, we can do that, but I'm not going to be detained and wait for your chain of bureaucracy to kick in."

Click.

The door closed behind Leonel quite softly. It was as though he was truly just strolling into his house and escaping annoying neighbors rather than subverting the rule of law.

There was another stunned silence.

The guards were already quite lenient. They hadn't even unleashed their pressure to suppress Leonel.

No matter how much Leonel had improved again, it had to be remembered that for the Fawkes to dare to do this and return to the God Realm, they had to have a God's foundation.

This meant that their strongest fighters all had God Constitutions.

Leonel could cross Dimensions to do battle against people, but that was limited by how talented his opponent was.

Obviously, the weak lady and her guards were insignificant. The lady wasn't even in the Ninth Dimension, and her guards were almost certainly handpicked by those scheming against her to be as weak as possible.

The golden-armored guards, though... they were not only all of the Ninth Dimension, they all had Creation State Forces and God Constitutions. None of this even accounted for what individual talents and shocking Ability Indexes they might or might not have.

Even against one of them, Leonel would most definitely lose, let alone a legion of them.

To make a complicated matter simple... if Leonel alone could be invincible in the Fawkes Empire, then they would have been wiped off the map while he was asleep by the God Realm long ago.

However, that was what made his actions all the more shocking.

No one knew what to do.

Unlike most of the new Fawkes, the guards obviously knew Leonel, and they also knew that he had done more for Earth than the best of their current Generals aside from the First Imperial Prince, Noah's father, and his own deceased mother.

Even then, that was debatable. Their perspective was based on what Leonel had done for them back in the Incomplete World; they didn't know how much pressure Leonel had to bear alone in the Complete World to ensure that no one was thinking about their little world.

If they did, maybe they would be even more bold about saying no one had feats comparable to him.

In the end, they sighed. They were supposed to be cold arbitrators of justice. But even for these hardened men and women, they had watched Leonel grow up with their own eyes... from a young man arguing with his grandfather about killing too many people, to the young man who practically conquered the whole Dimensional Verse before his grandfather took him away.

Just as they were about to take action, though... another aura descended.

This one made even the legion reserved.

He was a man wearing a judge's garb. Black robes were layered with a heavy stole embroidered by gold and founded by its emerald green color.

This man was not only one of the most powerful existences in the Empire, but his position was truly shocking as well.

Grand Prime Minister. More accurately, he was Grand Prime Minister Dove, someone who was just as familiar with Leonel's feats as compared to everyone else.

"We will hold the court proceedings here in three days' time. Everyone disperse."

The eyes of the spectators went wide.

This sort of favoritism... wasn't it too blatant?

The legion didn't hesitate. With a bow, they vanished.

Grand Prime Minister Dove cast a complicated glance toward the home. Was it really possible for Leonel to return to his former glory? Or had their Ascension Empire truly lost two geniuses instead of just one?

He was about to leave when his gaze flickered again. He looked at the formation that covered the home and his frown deepened until a sudden smile appeared in the depths of his eyes.

It seemed that even if Leonel's talent was gone, there was one that still remained.

Crafting.

The Fawkes had some of the best Crafters in existence right now. He wondered if Leonel would be able to make a name for himself amongst them. If he could do that, maybe they wouldn't have anything to worry about after all...

Chapter 3051: Disdain

"Is everything alright?" Aina asked with a tinge of worry.

Leonel grinned. "It's just fine."

"Are you sure?"

Leonel couldn't help but laugh. Aina wouldn't usually be worried about such trivial things. It seemed that she was starting to see the world differently already.

"Okay, I promise to let you come with me from now on. So long as you stay a step behind, of course."

Aina rolled her eyes. "What is this, the 1900s?"

"I seem to remember someone quite liked pretending it was the 1900s in bed."

Aina looked aghast. "Not with the baby listening!"

Leonel was left speechless before he erupted into another fit of laughter. The baby didn't even have ears yet, let alone comprehend language.

Given that Aina was taking the slow route with them, they would take even longer to develop. It probably wouldn't be until two years later that there was an even visible baby bump on Aina.

But maybe this was the crucible all fathers must go through. It seemed that enjoying his wife would be a struggle from now on.

"Don't worry, we'll get the baby little ear muffs. The little guy won't hear anything, I promise."

Aina sputtered as though thinking of her wearing ear muffs on her belly all the time.

"Tsk, what do you take me for?" Leonel asked, practically reading her thoughts. "Only the best for my baby."

He pointed a finger and then lightly touched Aina's belly. At that moment, her entire uterus was surrounded by a soundproof barrier of Force Arts. In fact, he made three layers.

"See that? Daddy's love life one, baby zero. I'm already upping the score."

Aina was left speechless, but she had already run out of excuses and could only laugh as Leonel pounced on her.

...

It was probably a few hours before Leonel and Aina finally finished their several extra rounds.

It had been just a few hours for Aina, but for Leonel... it had been decades since the last time he touched his wife.

She was confused about the longing that she sensed in him, but as his wife, she accepted it with open arms.

Leonel had no intention of burdening her with such a thought. She didn't need to know how much he suffered. She just needed to know that he would be strong enough to protect her and the baby in her belly.

Everyone else was also surprised by this as well, but not because of the same reasons, obviously. They were surprised that Leonel actually dared to step outside his courtyard.

Their souls couldn't help but shudder as the couple stepped through the craters and the uncleared blood and gore as though it was the very same paradise it had originally been.

They talked and laughed without a care in the world, and seeing the look in Aina's eyes, most people couldn't help but sigh.

Trying to take this woman away from Leonel... would that even be possible?

Aina's feats on the battlefield had long since spread. There were very few of the Fawkes men that would even be comparable to her in talent, and yet there were too many that didn't even understand their own limits and ended up jostling for position as though they truly had a chance.

What was even more amusing was that three such fools actually ended up dying and were publicly humiliated.

Although the sign said Nilrem had done it, and Nilrem also hadn't appeared in public since then... who could possibly believe such a thing?

...

Leonel and Aina continued their stroll and their walk seemed aimless. It didn't even particularly seem like they had a destination until they suddenly came to a stop.

"Hm... Let's go in here for a second."

On the way, Aina had been telling Leonel a lot about her army and the situation on the battlefield. Obviously, for Leonel, this was his next stop. But he still had to prepare some other things first.

First, he wasn't yet happy with his current combat strength. He was only taking a small break because he had quite literally just tortured himself for almost a century.

If he wanted to complete it, he would need to first build a new Divine Armor, rebuild his Weapon-Metal Body, and likely form at least one Dharma.

He had already cleaned out the treasure stores of the Fawkes once already. As willful as he was, he knew that Gervaise wouldn't allow him to do this continuously.

The reason he could play this political game with ease was because he knew how to take advantage of the rules, and he also knew when not to push his luck.

What had happened today and how things had ended were well within his expectations, but he could only ride on his olden days glory for so long before that rope ran out.

Leonel looked down at his wrist to find an impossibly small band of silver resting there. It was dormant and didn't seem to have the capability to awaken.

He would do something first... and then he would clear out the treasure stores of the Fawkes for a second time.

That was true capitalism.

Leonel laughed to himself as Aina gave him a weird look. This husband of hers was about to cause some trouble again, wasn't he?

The building they entered looked like an ancient academy. It felt like the cross between a castle and a prestigious college.

It was the Crafting Guild of the Fawkes, and there were already a large number of orders moving in and out as the Fawkes were no doubt rushing to embed themselves into the businesses of the God Realm.

Since the God Realm had expanded now to include even the Demi-God Realms, this was actually much easier than it sounded.

Leonel gained several frowns as he entered as it was clear and obvious that not everyone knew his face all that well, but those that tried to stop him were unceremoniously kicked away until he eventually made it to a basement pulsing with heat.

That was where Leonel's nose wrinkled with disdain.

Chapter 3052: Last Gift

There was a clear mass production line pumping out weapons at astonishing rates. It was clear that they had taken much of their inspiration from the industrial revolution of Earth and then transferred that power to Crafters to maximize their skill.

If there was anything he would praise his grandfather for, it was for waiting, watching, and biding his time as Earth progressed along its own unique path.

Gervaise didn't act early to establish his Ascension Empire because that would ruin much of Earth's personal potential. Instead, he only stepped in when the path of Earth was set, and even then, he remained mostly hands off.

Thanks to this, the Ascension Empire had a beautiful mix of wider Existence methods, mixed in with evolution driven by Earth's methods alone. This led to a mix of the two.

However, this...

'Trash.'

Truthfully, Leonel was being harsh. All things considered, these mass-produced items were very good.

They were all at a God Realm standard. The Bronze Grade weapons here could shatter the Life Grade weapons of the former Dimensional Verse with a single touch, let alone a swing.

However, to Leonel's eye, they were too inferior.

There was too much variation between them, the Runes were weakened on purpose for the sake of making mass production easier, and there were actually three Crafters working on a single weapon at a time.

Of course, they also finished this weapon in just a few seconds. But this was still an unacceptable use of their time. Every second they spent here was a second less actively improving... because there was certainly no Crafter that would improve in a place like this.

Leonel picked up a sword from a bin. Even though it had dimmed from its previous red glow, it was still scalding hot and should have melted his hand to ash. But he didn't seem to notice at all.

He looked at the Bronze Grade item for a moment and then flicked a finger.

CRACK.

The sword fell apart as he shook his head.

"STOP RIGHT THERE!" A burly woman came rushing in with short bob-cut golden hair and sparkling green eyes.

From the small bits of information Leonel had gathered, she should be of his generation, technically. Meaning that one of her parents was on the same level as his uncles and aunts, or where his mother had once been.

She should be an overseer of this factory, and after the commotion that Leonel had left in his wake, it was only natural that she would eventually have to step in and take action.

However, Leonel just waved a hand. An [Emperor's Edict] appeared before her and the woman was entirely frozen in place.

"Just stand there and watch. I can't be associated with this sort of drivel."

The woman's eyes opened wide. It wasn't because of Leonel's strength alone, but the technique he used.

[Emperor's Edict] was one of the most commonly used techniques of the Fawkes. After all, though they were mostly feared for their top three techniques, how many had the skill and talent to use them?

It had to be remembered that even Leonel almost died walking to the end of the platform to take these techniques.

Of course, there wasn't a trial for every Fawkes, and they could normally just read the technique in exchange for enough contribution, but that didn't change just how difficult it was to learn the technique.

The problem was that [Emperor's Edict], although being one of their commonly used techniques, took a lot of setup and time for most. Leonel had been so fast she hadn't even seen him cast it... did he even set a law? How was this possible?

As for Leonel, he had already ignored this cousin of his. Well, he wasn't sure if she was even his cousin or not, but he didn't care much. He didn't have a reason to kill her anyway.

His thoughts were focused on something else.

He had seen mass production work before; he just didn't use it much because he had no reason to. However, it had to be remembered that one of the functions of the Segmented Cube was to copy his Crafting style and perfectly replicate it.

The last time he had used something like that was during the Heir Wars, which was a bit amusing considering how useful the ability was.

However, Leonel had no intention of pawning his Segmented Cube off to the Fawkes for their own personal use. He would take a much different approach instead.

He would create his own path forward.

Leonel had already promised Anastasia that he would fix her weaknesses. He still wasn't as skilled as the Minerva had been, but if he couldn't even replicate a small bit of their strength now, he might as well end it all right now.

Taking a breath, Leonel's mind flickered with calculations. Then, his Dream Force suddenly began to manifest, projecting his Dream World into the outside world. It was an ability that only Savants should have had, but Leonel had actually broken through that barrier even though his Emulation Spatial Force Innate Node was gone.

This was, of course, because of the changes to his Ability Index... but these matters weren't important for now.

He scanned every inch of this place until he finally took out the last piece his mother had left behind for him.

Leonel looked at the World Spirit in his hands with a complicated gaze.

His mother was obviously the champion of Earth, so its World Spirit had always been in her hands.

The World Spirit had chosen his mother when it was still immature and nothing but a bundle of instincts, so right now, it even took on her appearance.

It slept soundly in his arms as though it was confident that nothing bad would ever happen to it as long as it was with him.

Leonel took a breath and exhaled.

The only reason he hadn't just cut ties and left the Fawkes even after everything that had happened, even though he knew that he and his grandfather would likely never see eye to eye... was because of his mother.

In that case, he would use her World Spirit in the best way possible...

Elevating the Fawkes.

Chapter 3053: Soar

Leonel's sadness vanished as his gaze became sharp. He lightly pushed the little World Spirit into the air and then pressed his palms together.

A strong flow of energy spread and then [Emperor's Edict] began to appear one after another. The laws of the world were bent and twisted and soon it felt as though the entire factory had become a separate world in and of itself.

At that moment, there were several powerhouses that sensed what was happening and came over. Their expressions changed, but they weren't sure of what was happening, and if they interfered now, they could end up destroying their strongest World Spirit.

The miniature Alienor yawned and awoke with a slightly confused look on her little face. She looked around, still not quite understanding. But when she saw Leonel, she smiled brightly as though she had found her home. At that moment, nothing else seemed to matter so long as Leonel was there. So she obediently stood in place, waiting for Leonel to finish.

She was an intelligent little World Spirit, and though she couldn't speak or emote like Anastasia could, she was smarter than probably most humanoids were. Understanding Leonel's intentions wasn't very difficult.

"It's time to wake up... Tolliver."

****Bloop****

It was weaker than Leonel remembered hearing it before, but it was the sound of Tolliver nonetheless. The little guy had been ravaged, having faced death not just once, but twice.

Back then, Leonel had to store it away in his Ethereal Glabella the first time he "died" and relied on [Instant Recovery] to come back. And the second time was obviously when the Demoness had acted.

But it was also just as obvious that Tolliver hadn't quite recovered from their first bout of trouble. There were still some lingering effects that Leonel hadn't been able to deal with before everything went down.

Now, it was about time they fixed that situation.

All of the completed weapons surged toward Leonel and then were greedily taken away by Tolliver, who grew larger and larger with every passing moment.

This was the biggest chance Tolliver had of absorbing God Grade Ores since its birth. Although Leonel had tried his best, such materials had just been too far out of his reach. But now...

There was an uproar as Leonel did this, but the burly woman was enough reason for them to not move as they wanted to. If they were too casual about it, they could end up being humiliated by Leonel as well.

But these... these were months of their hard work. They had been slaving away to hit the quotas the Empire demanded of them, and now Leonel was taking all of that away. How could they not be furious?

Leonel turned a blind eye to their fury. Soon they would understand that he was already doing them a great service by feeding his partner this trash.

Luckily, Tolliver only needed the foundational ores. How good or poor the treasures were was irrelevant. All that mattered was what it could feed on.

Quickly, it became apparent that Tolliver was benefiting greatly. The small blip became larger and larger until it encompassed the entire factory. It seemed that though Tolliver was even greedy enough to take it all for itself.

However, it was easily reined back under Leonel's control.

'Let's soar, buddy.'

Tolliver had been left to him by his father. This little World Spirit was left to him by his mother.

In that case, he would use them to create something beautiful.

Leonel slowly pressed his hands together.

BANG!

The entire building exploded. And yet, not a single person was hurt.

Everyone watched in shock and awe as the bricks, piping, and various inner fixtures of the building were taken apart as though they were Legos.

What shocked them the most wasn't even just Leonel having this ability, but the fact that he treated the Force Arts that protected this building as though they were papier-mâché. How much better than their experts did he have to be to do this?

The building was one of the most important in the Fawkes Empire. It housed the greatest source of their wealth, or at least one of the two greatest sources. As such, it was heavily protected, so much so that normal Ninth Dimensional experts with Dharmas would take several moments before being able to take it down. Although they would eventually succeed, it would definitely take a few hits at the very least.

But this very protective formation... was shredded apart as though it wasn't even there.

The world began to move in accordance with Leonel's mind. He could feel every material down to the very last, and it was with this that he began to reconstruct everything.

Those that had been in the building either left on their own or were carried out by a mysterious energy. Then, the only ones left were Leonel, Aina, the little World Spirit, and Tolliver.

Force Arts began to be pressed into the skies as though written into reality itself. Leonel no longer needed a Force Quill as a medium to add permanence to his Force Arts because his mind was now capable of acting on reality itself. With the Mage Core on top of that, even with the alterations, it was like his blade was carving into the belly of Existence.

The Crafters watched in shock and awe as Force Arts more complex than they could fathom appeared. They sank into individual bricks and even down to wood shavings. By the time they could analyze just a single one, hundreds more had appeared, leaving them feeling completely overwhelmed.

Beads of sweat began to appear on Leonel's brows. It was clear at a glance that he was straining himself a great deal, but his wife appeared by his side, dabbing his forehead dry with a beautiful smile on her face.

Leonel's heart thrummed and shook. His Creation Sovereignty rose into the air, a cycle of yin and yang forming as a heart-shuddering aura tore across the skies.

Chapter 3054: Seven Orifices

CLIP. CLIP. CLIP.

The sounds of the building coming back together echoed faster than their eyes could keep up with.

The closer it got to completion, the more it seemed that Leonel hadn't changed anything at all... but who could possibly believe such a thing?

Just looking at the building, it felt like it was just a few dozen meters in front of them, and yet, somehow, it still felt a world away. Somehow they got the feeling that if Leonel didn't want them to enter, either a powerhouse would have to take action, or they would be stuck outside for the rest of their lives.

At that moment, the last roof shingle was pressed into place and a resonating hum filled the skies.

Echoes of gold and violet spread, and though at first they were worried about being harmed by it, when it rushed by them, all they felt was an endless sense of comfort.

Before anyone could react, Leonel walked out a bit pale-faced. Tolliver had formed an arm sleeve on his left hand once again, swirling with silvers and golds... and what seemed to be hints of violet. However, the little World Spirit was nowhere to be seen.

At least it seemed until a wisp of something suddenly manifested on Leonel's shoulder.

The adorable little World Spirit looked just like what his mother might have looked like when she was far younger. Maybe even ten to eleven years old at best.

It happily wobbled around, tugging on Leonel's ears from time to time as though to point out something cool in the distance.

Leonel smiled. It was far more animated now than before. It seemed he had already succeeded in step one. His plan was feasible.

He didn't explain anything to these people as he left with his wife.

Everyone stood in silence and it wasn't until a long while later that chaos erupted. It was uncertain who moved first, but the moment they did, there was a tide of Crafters moving. The non-Crafters were much slower because they still had no idea what they had just witnessed. But no matter how useless the Fawkes family Crafters were, how could they not realize they had just witnessed a once-in-a-lifetime event?

The moment they saw what Leonel had done, they were in a complete uproar. The commotion was so great that it spread across the Fawkes family in a wave, so suffocating that eventually it gripped even the eldest members.

...

A man in his older middle ages walked into the factory. The moment he did, a hushed silence fell over everyone. They knew exactly who this man was, and not a single one of them dared to show the slightest hint of disrespect.

He was Grand Prime Minister Green, one of the very few who had risen up to take a new position here. Originally, the Ascension Empire only had two Grand Prime Ministers. But with the expansion of their strength, so too had come an expansion of their ranks.

This man went by another title as well. He was one of the three Crafter Gods of the Empire. They were individuals who had pioneered new fields of Crafting, fusing the paths of the rest of Existence and Earth. It could be said that this factory was single-handedly created by Grand Prime Minister Green.

Everyone couldn't help but wonder how he would react to see it like this.

What no one could have possibly expected was that he would stand in frozen silence for three entire days before he suddenly began to bleed from all seven orifices. He coughed up a mouthful of blood and then directly fainted.

...

News of what happened spread like wildfire. However, it wasn't just because of Grand Prime Minister Green's affair. That was because another high-standing official had a reaction much like the Green family head.

Secretary Marquiesette Leo of the Leo family, a middle-aged woman with the charm of a prowling cougar and the edge of an enraged lioness, also bled from seven orifices, coughed up a mouthful of blood, and fainted.

This event confused most people. It made sense for the Head of the Greens to end up in this state because he was a Crafter. But Secretary Marquiesette Leo was a Force Pill Crafter. Why did she have such a fierce reaction as well?

Very quickly... the news as to why spread.

The factory that Leonel had created wasn't only capable of perfectly replicating any Craft he forged, but it was also capable of replicating any Force Pill Aina concocted as well.

Secretary Marquiesette Leo and Grand Prime Minister Green had been working so closely together these last several years that countless rumors about a love affair spread far and wide. But in reality, they had been working on a method of taking these factory methods and replicating them with Force Pills as well.

If the Fawkes family had a way of mass-producing weapons and pills, they would be able to stifle the market and take control of the reins... even if they mass-produced pills and weapons that were inferior.

What no one expected was that Leonel would succeed in a single afternoon, and not only that... but the result of his process was akin to something they had never seen before in their lives.

Leonel and Aina had only left the blueprints behind for simple weapons and the most ubiquitous Force Pills, and yet... they were better than even Force Pills and Force Weapons personally hand-crafted by the best Crafters of their family.

This was especially so for the bows and spears that the factory produced. They were so amazing that many felt their hearts shudder at the thought of their enemies wielding such weapons. Could they really sell such things?

But this wasn't even close to the most amazing part... That was because the most shocking part of all of this was the fact that not a single human laborer was needed.

Instead, the factory became almost like a university hall where Crafters jostled for position just to get a better look at their teacher's lesson.

This sort of uproar was able to pierce a hole through the veil of the skies.

Chapter 3055: My Aina

The uproar in the Fawkes family didn't seem to have anything to do with Leonel at all. He had already gone back to his courtyard and was busy spending time with his wife.

She insisted on keeping her secrets, so his Dream World became a hub for housing both girl and boy names. The very same Dream World that was practically a nightmare for his enemies became a useful dream projection for his wife to cross off names she didn't like and add ones that she did.

Leonel didn't even get an input. Inside, he just sat smiling to the side as her beautiful face was scrunched up with seriousness.

"None of these feel unique enough."

"Oh god, no," Leonel said with a chuckle.

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"You don't want to name our baby something stupid like 'X Marks the Spot,' do you?"

Aina sputtered. "What the hell are you talking about?"

"Do you think we can count as celebrities now?" Leonel suddenly asked, seemingly changing the topic.

"... I guess so?" Aina blinked, not quite understanding. They were certainly well-known enough. The only difference was that rather than being known for entertainment, they were known for other things like their talent and combat skill.

Well, actually, Leonel might be known a little bit for his entertainment. She had seen his taunts toward the world and their powerhouses go viral more than once even though he didn't seem to pay much attention to it.

And technically, if she was going to add him, she counted as well, considering she was on several rankings for her beauty alone.

When she looked at things that way, it was hard to say that they were anything other than celebrities... just in a different time.

Leonel grinned. "I've heard celebrities catch this unavoidable disease."

"Huh?"

"It's a disease where they name their kids ridiculously, scarring them for life."

"Leonel!" Aina's face blushed. Suddenly, she realized that she really was about to go down that route. Almost immediately, she waved a hand and crossed off names like 'Heaven' and 'Blue.'

Leonel laughed so hard he almost fell off the bed they shared.

He understood Aina, though. She wanted to put a lot of care and affection into this baby, and she wanted their name to reflect that. But it was extremely difficult to come up with names that could embody that sort of care and affection when there would almost certainly be someone else that fit that criteria.

Who knew, maybe celebrities only went so far for selfish reasons, wanting their babies to become an extension of their marketing. But Aina certainly didn't want such a thing, or to even be associated with such a thing.

"Stop laughing," Aina pouted, pinching Leonel. "How can you do that when I'm carrying your baby? You need to be nicer to me."

Leonel only laughed harder. Aina lugged around an ax that probably weighed heavier than a moon in her hand all the time. Their baby would be ten pounds even on its heaviest side. The logic was hilarious to him.

"Oh my, I'm sorry," Leonel held up his hands in mock surrender. "I apologize, you're doing something that only you can do... well, you and half the rest of the population."

"Leonel Morales!"

"Oop."

Leonel dodged and ran, flashing around the Abode Setting of the Segmented Cube. However, after a few seconds, he felt that something was wrong.

'Hm?'

Leonel flashed and returned to Aina's side. She was still running after him with a smile on her face, but...

She was too slow.

Aina was a bit startled when he suddenly appeared, but the concern in his eyes made a bit of her smile vanish.

"Are you okay?" Leonel asked.

Aina blinked, confused. "What do you mean?"

"Your speed..."

"Oh, that." Aina's smile returned. "It's not a big deal. My body strength comes from using my Blood Force as a vessel for a lot of Life Force. I've directed most of that to the baby now."

Leonel stared at Aina seriously and then he nodded.

Aina had already told him that she would likely be weak for a while, but he didn't expect it to be this soon. He thought it would be much further down the line.

It was only now that he realized that this wasn't a matter of the pregnancy at all, but rather Aina's personal choice. She could very well still tap into her greatest strength, but she didn't want to because of the baby in her belly. She was already giving everything to it.

Leonel stroked her hair gently, feeling somewhat bad for his earlier words.

"Are you going soft on me?" Aina asked with a giggle.

"You aren't any other woman, you're my Aina, my wife," Leonel replied. It was hard to see how this was a direct reply to her question, but in Leonel's mind, he couldn't have been more direct.

He wrapped his arms around her. Aina was a bit stunned, but the look in her eyes quickly softened as she nestled her head into his embrace.

"You don't need to worry so much," Aina said softly. "I know you have a lot on your plate. You're right, half the population can carry a baby, and I'm better equipped than 99% of them."

Leonel didn't respond, so Aina continued.

"That said, I am your wife, so I will be taking my privileges as such. I will complain, and you will wait on me hand and foot."

Leonel finally chuckled a bit. "Yes, ma'am."

The two wasted the day away, and then the following days after that as well. They took their time enjoying one another's company, and that of their friends.

They only had one life to live, and there was no need to waste it away stressing about the world's end every waking moment.

A few thousand years was short in the span of Existence itself... but wasn't it still incredibly long to them?

Soon, though, the day of Leonel's trial came.

Chapter 3056: Farce

Leonel walked out of his courtyard casually on the day of to find that an enormous number of people had already gathered. Up in the skies, there were even three Grand Prime Ministers, two of which Leonel had some relation to, and one of which he had never seen before.

These two were Grand Prime Ministers Green and Dove, while the last was an unknown man with a sharp, twirled mustache that somehow didn't look comical on him. In fact, it suited him quite well.

This man was Grand Prime Minister Ji, and he would be the third ruling over this court.

Aside from these three, there were many more, including a group that was very clearly the family of the Third Imperial Prince. They were all wearing mourning attire, especially

two women at the front dressed in black gowns who had gazes just as black for Leonel and Leonel alone. They looked as though they wanted to rip him to shreds.

These two were likely the mothers of the other two he had killed. And it was likely that one of them had been the one to scheme against the one he had killed just three days ago.

'Well, it's also possible that it was someone else...' Leonel thought as he scanned the rest of the family.

Amongst those that he had initially ignored, there was a young woman who seemed to be giving off a great deal of pressure. It was surprising because her gaze of killing intent wasn't the first that he had sensed from them, yet it was certainly the most intense.

'Interesting. Her ability to conceal herself is quite deep.'

Unfortunately, it couldn't escape Leonel.

What Leonel didn't know, though, was that this young woman was another cousin of his, a certain Little Princess Popsy.

In reality, the reason she was the most furious was because she had lost both a mother and a brother to Leonel's hands. And it was clear that unlike her mother or brother, she was far more talented... and far sharper.

Leonel suddenly gave her a bright smile, taking her aback.

Her rage flared in her chest and for a moment the skies darkened. A powerful aura swept over everything and several in her group directly passed out.

She restrained herself quickly, but what was done was done.

She stared at Leonel as though she was trying to pierce through him with her gaze alone.

"I'm sorry lady, but I'm not a fan of incest. If you would please look elsewhere, that would be great."

"LEONEL MORALES!"

She couldn't hold herself back any longer.

This Little Princess Popsy was one of the many gems in Gervaise Fawkes' eyes. Of course, these gems referred to the talented among his descendants, the true talents. These gems referred to the youths that could help to elevate the Fawkes bloodline by bringing together the strengths of both their heritages.

She was known for being calm, level-headed, and sharp, all the things that Leonel had said that she was.

No one had ever seen her lose control like this.

She made it to within just a dozen meters from Leonel, a distance that wasn't even a single blink in the eyes of experts like themselves. And yet, she found herself stonewalled at that exact moment.

The formation of the courtyard was still activated and she ran right into it. Although she didn't faceplant, her fist rippled away from it as though it didn't exist.

Popsy screeched, a wild force billowing out from her in all directions. Her emerald eyes flickered with wild flames as she bombarded the barrier again and again, but it was all useless.

Leonel just stood there casually.

Normally, there would be no need to be so cruel to this young woman. She was technically his cousin and her family's sins weren't her sins. But his Dream Force was very sensitive now... he knew that she wouldn't let it go no matter what he did. So instead, he chose to draw a clear line.

"You're as useless as the rest of your family is. If you keep provoking me... I will kill you."

Leonel's sudden killing intent made Popsy's look like child's play. In fact, there was likely not a single person in the Empire, not even Gervaise himself, who had killing intent comparable to Leonel's own.

He had walked through a river of blood every step he took here. He wasn't an Emperor, he was a King. He didn't direct the battlefield from a throne, he took the vanguard.

The bloodthirstiness in his bones wasn't something this young cousin of his could even begin to compare to, and even though his Dream Force wasn't at the level of his enlightened self, it had already surpassed his previous self.

In these last few days, he and Aina had talked about their child's name and he gave her an idea. Instead of trying to force all the uniqueness of their child's name into a few syllables, why not do what Mo"Lexi had done with hers?

After that, Leonel spent some time teaching Aina how she might go about projecting her Dream Force onto a name and intention like that, something that was a bit more difficult for her since their souls were no longer linked.

In fact, that was what she was busy doing right this moment and it was the only reason she wasn't here.

But that lesson had also given Leonel another path of attack.

He had yet to form his Dream Force Dharma, but he was mind-numbingly close to it, and his strength, at least in Dream Force, wasn't something that these young cousins of his could ever hope to match up to.

So when he fueled his Dream World with his Destruction Sovereignty and his willingness to watch the world burn rather than let a single hair on his wife's pretty little head be harmed... Popsy wasn't the only one that felt it.

The entire Fawkes family felt it and they realized the price for enraging Leonel.

He wouldn't even let his own family off.

"Let's begin this farce," Leonel said coldly, ignoring Popsy who had fallen onto her ass.

Chapter 3057: Fuck Off

Grand Prime Ministers Ji, Dove, and Green settled the atmosphere down.

Everyone already knew the bias the court had for Leonel.

The fact that this sort of proceeding was happening at all was a testament to that.

But Leonel himself didn't seem to be very appreciative of it.

If this had been just two days ago, it would have caused a great deal of dissatisfaction.

But now everyone already knew how this would end.

After what Leonel had done for their weapon and pill industries, everyone understood that he couldn't be touched.

Useless? Riding on past valor? Taking advantage of connections? Who could even dare to say such a thing anymore? What no one knew was that Leonel hadn't even planned this out.

He had only been on a walk with his wife when he saw the ridiculous state of their Crafters.

He chose to take action for the sake of his mother and Anastasia.

The former because he wanted to do something for the Fawkes family since that was what she would want, and the latter because he needed practice using World Spirits as the foundation for his Crafts.

Although there was still a little adorable fairy on his shoulder right now, he had still succeeded.

This was the same way Anastasia could still appear anywhere while her Segmented Cube still completed its daily tasks.

This wasn't just because a World Spirit could split its attention so many ways, though that was true as well.

Rather, it was a layer more complex than that.

Leonel had used the World Spirit as a proxy for controlling the laws of the world.

He was essentially using the World Spirit to gain permission from the world to use its energy as he pleased.

This accomplished several things.

First, the energy would be taken from the surroundings and didn't have to be replenished.

Second, much of the computational load would be handled by the laws of the world that worked on the simplest evolutionary principles.

And third, this left Leonel only having to leave a guiding hand.

This was a level of Crafting that left Grand Prime Minister Green in so much awe that he passed out trying to comprehend it.

And the crux of this matter was certainly about to become very important... very soon.

"Leonel Morales," Grand Prime Minister Ji began with a calm cadence.

"Unranked Imperial Prince, son to the late First Imperial Princess, may she rest in peace."

Grand Prime Minister Ji had a clear solemnness to him that made it evident how much he respected Alienor.

It was hard for anyone not to respect such a woman.

"To—"

"And Velasco Morales," Leonel interjected, his gaze calm.

Grand Prime Minister Ji's gaze flickered, but he still nodded in the end.

"To—"

"And Velasco Morales," Leonel repeated.

This time, Grand Prime Minister Ji couldn't help but frown.

Leonel's intentions were clear: he wanted him to say the words.

"... And Velasco Morales."

Leonel couldn't help but notice that he didn't call out his mother's name and only referred to her by her title.

There wasn't much to say about this, but if he planned on skipping over his father as well, that wouldn't be allowed.

Since they were introducing him, they might as well remember that he was a Morales.

His mother's name was Alienor Morales, not Fawkes.

His father's name was Velasco Morales, not Fawkes.

His name was Leonel Morales, not Fawkes.

His wife's name wouldn't be Fawkes, and their child's name wouldn't be Fawkes.

"... Has been accused of killing members of the Imperial Family and committing fratricide. Would you like to refute these claims?"

Leonel tilted his head to the side.

Was this guy trying to sweep them up into one group?

"Depends on which one you're talking about,"

Leonel said with a smile.

"I've heard several have died in the last few days. A shame, really." Grand Prime Minister Ji froze, and the Third Imperial Prince's family shook with rage.

"... There are four counts of each for eight total."

"Interesting, but I only killed one person," Leonel said with innocent, blinking eyes.

This time, Grand Prime Minister Ji maintained his calm.

"So you reject six counts?"

"Well, I reject all eight. I was just curious about why there would be eight in the first place," Leonel replied calmly.

He was truly not taking this seriously.

"Imperial Prince, if you insist on making a farce out of these proceedings, we will hold you in contempt. We will lock you up for six months."

Leonel almost yawned.

If he had been tired, he might have really gone that far.

This was all a waste of his time, too much of a waste of his time.

Unless he was training or spending time with his wife, it just wasn't worth it to him.

"Listen... whoever you are," Leonel's gaze became cold.

"I'll say this once and once only. I'm only allowing this because of my mother. If not, not only would I not even be here right now, but I wouldn't have the patience for any one of you."

So let's speed run to the end, shall we? I didn't kill those three utterly worthless idiots.

I did kill one of their mothers, but only after she attacked my courtyard first.

Both my wife and I were in that house, and she attacked to kill, so I counter-killed.

"I hope that's enough for your little proceedings. You can fuck off now. "

Leonel turned and really walked straight back into his courtyard.

"HALT!"

Grand Prime Minister Ji completely lost his temper, his aura erupting like a volcano.

Before he could do anything, though, he was stopped by a hand on his shoulder.

This time, it was Grand Prime Minister Green who stepped forward.

"I understand the arrogance of the young, and you have indeed contributed more to this Empire in a single day than we old men have in a lifetime, but there are rules that an Empire must abide by. If you want to act as you please, then a price must be paid."

Chapter 3058: Stretched too Thin

Leonel's steps paused for a moment, and then he began laughing uproariously. The laughter was so piercing that it practically formed a spear that thrust through the skies above. In fact, that was exactly what it did. Leonel's Spear Force was at the point where it could move even without his conscious effort, rising into the skies with a momentum that could sunder the dome of Existence itself. He could understand what Prime Minister Green was playing for without even going through the farce of a back and forth. He wanted the method of recreating what Leonel had. And he likely knew that he would fail, so he was secondarily angling for the little World Spirit on Leonel's shoulder. Regardless of which it was, Leonel would be infuriated. But to have intentions on the latter was enough for something far worse. "Wash your neck, old man."

These were the only words Leonel said in response before slamming the door shut. Even Grand Prime Minister Green was taken aback. He had yet to remove the veil of cordiality between himself and Leonel, and he was still following protocol to its end. So how had things ended up this way? Grand Prime Minister Dove frowned. They had already made so many concessions for Leonel, but he was relentless, unwilling to take even a single step back. This was unlike the Leonel he remembered, but he was also only able to sigh. Was this just his form of grieving? He had no idea.

But whatever it was, it was trouble. An Empire couldn't exist without its laws, and though the Emperor wasn't here, that didn't mean that he wasn't paying attention to the situation. It could very well be that Gervaise would have to step in eventually, and if that happened, then any odds of this matter being resolved peacefully might go out of the window. Leonel was making several things clear. He wasn't here to freeload. He wasn't here to follow their rules. He also wasn't here to be disrespected. These youths had been pining after and scheming for his wife all this time, and they expected that things would just be blown over? Then after they died, their family came to his door seeking revenge and didn't expect to suffer a blow? All of the spectators couldn't help but feel their hearts trembling. Until now, the Empire had some internal conflicts, but it was mostly left to a superficial level. No one killed any others, and while there was some jostling about for position, it never crossed any lines. But Leonel had crossed several of them just days after waking up, and now he was leaving a mess no one knew how to clean up. Even if they wanted to be biased toward him, there was a limit, wasn't there? "Call the Legion here," Grand Prime Minister Ji said. "He will be found guilty on all eight counts since he's refused to defend himself, and the crime of threatening a Grand Prime Minister and inciting violence will be added to his counts."

"Shatter the formation and bring him in for detainment. The Emperor will make the final ruling on this."

The command came down like thunder, and it was executed upon swiftly. What no one expected was that it would take the Legion an entire half day to break down the formation. And by the time they entered, there was nothing to be found within the courtyard at all. The inner circle of the Empire was in an uproar, and no one knew what to do. Even the Grand Prime Ministers began to feel some reluctance. Had they sent in stronger warriors, then maybe the formation would have been cut down with much greater speed. However, it wasn't just that the Slayer Legion wasn't strong. The reality was that many of them were just reluctant to act. When they saw that Leonel wasn't even present, they even breathed out sighs of relief. However, while Leonel wasn't there, there was a very clear message left for all of them. Any talks of his wife, attempts at his wife, or wishes to be with his wife, would be met with the cruelest of deaths. What no one knew was that Leonel hadn't left at all. He was in the Segmented Cube, still within his courtyard, and too lazy to leave just yet. He had war to prepare for. ...

Leonel's grandmother sat in silence with tears streaming down her cheeks. From time to time, she would wipe them away, but more would come back in to fill their place just seconds later. She wasn't Aina; she had never wanted such a big family, maybe because she had already seen how family could fall apart with the Luxnix... A person could only have so many strong relationships with so many people before even their grandchildren became like vague recollections in their memories. What was even crueler was that with their memories and strength, it was easy to remember everything... and yet it was too difficult to care about them all equally. Gervaise had never taken a second woman, so all of the Imperial Princes and Princesses were her children... and all three of the princes Leonel had killed were considered to be her grandsons. The mother that had died was her daughter-in-law. And yet, she couldn't help but be wracked with guilt because she didn't care nearly as much as she should. It was like her emotional bandwidth had been stretched so far and thin she couldn't give them all the loving care and affection that she wanted to. Leonel's grandmother rubbed her belly. And now, yet another child was on the way... all to make her husband happy. She felt her heart shuddering, and the pain of the moment was becoming too much to bear. Her soul seemed to flee her body as her heart convulsed. She pressed a hand to her chest, a shred of panic coming to her as she collapsed. Her thoughts were too out of order, and now she felt that her consciousness was fading into something.

At that moment, in a flash, Gervaise suddenly appeared, hurriedly catching her before she could fall.

Chapter 3059: False Idol

Gervaise's frown only grew deeper the more he observed his wife. If the problem had been with her body, that would be fine. But... it most definitely was not.

The body of a Ninth Dimensional expert wasn't so easy to harm. A normal woman's body might break down after giving birth to so many children. Putting themselves through so many changes continuously was bound to have an effect.

However, not only was a Ninth Dimensional expert's body far more powerful, their lifespans were such that this was also much less of a worry.

If a mortal wanted to have 16 children and work on her 17th like Leonel's grandmother, Roesia, was, they would likely need to start having children as early as possible, and they would have to be pregnant every year of their physical peak. Otherwise, their bodies would become too weak to have children by the time they got to their late 40s and beyond.

Roesia, however, could easily take breaks as long as ten years between children and still be in her physical prime.

Sometimes, she wouldn't even have a choice but to take so long because it was extremely difficult for powerful people to have children usually. Aina and other Life Force experts were just an exception to this rule.

This 17th child had taken a particularly long time to conceive, mostly because in the last hundred years or so, Gervaise had been completely focused on raising his strength. This meant he had less time, on top of having a body too strong to conceive by normal means.

In the end, it had been over a hundred years since the last time Roesia had had a child, giving her more than enough time to recover amply.

No... the issue with Leonel's grandmother now wasn't her body, it was her mind, her soul.

Forming an Idol made a person incredibly powerful, but it also made you vulnerable in other ways. The Ancestor Primordial Terror was the perfect example of this. It was because he had an Idol that he could be schemed against by the Demoness for so long and not even be any wiser to what was happening.

An Idol was a great form of power, but that power could be summarized in a single word: self-reliance.

An expert with an Idol was essentially removing themselves from the normal laws of the world to build their bodies, their minds, their hearts, on their own understanding.

That made them extremely powerful, but it also meant that if there was ever a problem in their progression, it could easily mean death or outright crippling.

Roesia's mind had been taking so much abuse in the last three days between the death of her grandchildren at the hands of her own, well... grandchild, self-blame, and a feeling of helplessness because she didn't believe that things would be able to change in the future.

She felt stuck. Of the two children she felt closest to, she had been forced to watch one die, and now the other was drowning in political matters and didn't even have the time to see her.

It just felt like no matter what she did, it wasn't correct.

Back then, she had failed to protect Little Leo, and then she had been ostracized by her family for protecting the wrong people in the end.

She had managed to stop the Luxnix family from being wiped out, but at what cost? She had spent those years in a coldness she couldn't expel.

She still remembered how Leonel had allowed her to hold his hands that day during the Void Palace Selection. That happiness was something that she hadn't felt in a long time... but it was also bittersweet...

It was bittersweet because she understood some of the thoughts of her grandson. He wasn't a person who would forgive something that easily unless he just truly didn't care about it.

But what would have to happen for a grandson to not care about the betrayal of his own grandmother? Wouldn't that have to mean that he didn't care much for her at all?

He had allowed her to hold his hand back then maybe out of pity and nothing more. And maybe that was all she deserved.

Now, she couldn't even find the tears to shed for her own grandchildren. What kind of mother was she? What kind of grandmother was she?

She was supposed to be this great talent, the hallowed Northern Star Order. But what had that meant in the end?

"Roesia, you must get a hold of yourself, or else you will die."

The frown that knitted Gervaise's forehead deepened. Every thought he had for what to do was thrown out immediately. Casual interference in the formation of a False Idol could make the situation far worse.

Gervaise was in a better position because he had a soul bind with his wife, one that he hid beneath a wedding ring because an enemy would easily see such a thing as a weakness of his to be exploited, but even he didn't dare to do this casually.

Leonel's grandmother lay in her husband's arms, her breathing shallow, her face deathly pale, and her eyes half closed. It was clear that she hadn't heard a single word Gervaise just said.

...

At the moment, Leonel was having idle chatter with his boys when he frowned. He looked toward the little World Spirit on his shoulders before he suddenly stood to his feet.

"I'll be back."

Their expressions changed. Wasn't it a shit show outside right now? What was he about to do?

Leonel didn't have time to explain anything, and he vanished in an instant, appearing outside in his courtyard. Much of everyone had already long dispersed; there were only a few idle people in the very far-off distance, and it could be said that Leonel's reappearance caused its own small storm.

Leonel didn't have the time to mind them. He drew two fingers across the air and cut space apart like tofu before shooting forward.

Chapter 3060: CLING!

Leonel slammed against a barrier.

'Dammit.' He cursed beneath his breath.

Up ahead, there was a lofty palace that floated on golden clouds. There was a single staircase from the bottom to the top, and not only could he not fly, he had been blocked from spatial transportation.

In truth, the entire Empire should have these barriers. The only reason Leonel was able to come so far was because he used the help of the World Spirit. But even the World Spirit of Earth wasn't able to completely overcome all of the protections.

Clearly, this palace had the strongest protections, blocking Leonel from the outside.

There was only one way up.

Leonel's gaze flashed, and he took a step forward. A great amount of pressure fell on him, but it was as though he didn't notice.

His speed only seemed to increase beneath it. He unleashed a roar, and his body turned into a line of Spear Force, charging up like a thrusting blade.

He split the pressure in two, and it was at that moment that the guards seemed to react.

The members of the Slayer Legion who overlooked the palace were without a doubt the strongest there was. The instant they moved, the skies darkened.

They were shocked when they realized that it was Leonel, but by this point, their patience had already begun to wear thin. There was only so much that they could allow.

This was the most sacred ground of the Ascension Empire. The only people allowed into this region were the dead of the Fawkes, the First Imperial Prince and First Imperial Princess, and finally, the Emperor and Empress.

The only exception made to this rule was after the Empress gave birth, but when the child turned 16 years of age, they would, too, be escorted out of the Ascension Palace.

This couldn't be allowed.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

A rain of attacks fell from the skies above.

...

At that moment, Mordred and a familiar figure were entangled with one another in bed. The two women seemed to be extremely familiar with one another's bodies. They shifted positions like perfectly matched puzzle pieces and almost seemed to treat sex like it was a sparring session.

But the both of them froze at the same time.

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But the both of them froze at the same time.

"Monet," Mordred suddenly said.

"I know. I have to go."

Monet leapt up, a wreath of flames covering her body. By the time she landed on the ground, she was already dressed in flaming red armor before she vanished in a puff of flames.

"Fuck. Fuck. FUCK!"

Mordred began to curse. That wasn't because her love session was interrupted, but because she knew that her wife and Leonel would likely have to fight now. And though Leonel was far more talented than any of them, no one knew what would happen to his talent now, and he also had far less time than any of them.

She also had no right to stop Monet... especially since she had probably been nursing this grudge of hers for a long while.

It had to be remembered that Supreme Monet had her own clashes with Leonel. A long time had passed since then, and she had already gotten over most of it. But that didn't mean she wouldn't take advantage of the rules when she got the chance.

Mordred shook her head. 'Who asked me to have such a troublemaker of a little brother. I need to go.'

Darkness surged around Mordred, and she flashed and disappeared as well.

...

Leonel ignored everyone as the pressure around him increased. He seemed to have eyes everywhere, moving with a deftness and speed that even these Ninth Dimensional existences were having trouble dealing with.

It wasn't that he was so much faster than them, but his speed was applied in far better ways.

Gritting their teeth, the Slayer Legion realized that they would have to take a far more hands-on approach.

"Blackstar," Leonel said calmly.

BANG!

A mighty Destruction Idol appeared high in the air.

The majority of the Slayer Legion was sent spiraling away, rolling through the air as though they had fallen from a plane as mere mortals.

Leonel's foot stamped down, and he suddenly accelerated again. He had to be faster, faster...

"Speed."

Leonel spoke this word, and the world was forced to obey.

He shot up, forgoing any nimbleness and agility for straight-line speed.

He reached the top of the stairs in a blink; however...

WHOOOSH!

A pillar of fire pierced through the skies.

Leonel's eyes narrowed. A real powerhouse had appeared.

How could real powerhouses be assigned the task of guarding a palace most wouldn't even dare to look at for too long?

But even Leonel couldn't help but be surprised when he saw this woman. He hadn't thought about her in so long he had completely forgotten.

But then again... she had been a Supreme of the Slayer Legion before they rejoined the Empire. It only made sense that she was here.

"Do you have any idea what you're doing right—?!"

Leonel's spear was her only answer. Monet was caught off guard, not expecting Leonel to do this. However, when she felt the support of Blackstar's Idol, her expression changed once again.

A pair of fiery wings appeared on her back, and she hurriedly retreated as a ribbon appeared in her hand.

Leonel's wrist twisted, and his blade seemed to leave a net in the skies. Monet was instantly overwhelmed by his skill. If before, Leonel could already be said to be one of the greatest spearmen in existence, right now, he was on another level in comparison to his previous self.

None of his attacks seemed to be capable of causing life-ending injury to Monet, and yet she felt like her body was instantly covered in a cold sweat. If Leonel was any more powerful, she would die in a single strike.

His spear seemed to meld into the laws of the world, shredding apart the foundation of her Idol and piercing right into her soul.

By the time her gaze cleared, Leonel actually wasn't even in front of her anymore.

CLING! CLING! CLING! CLING! CLING!

The sound of blade marks echoing across her armor sounded, and her expression became ugly.

Not a single one of those strikes could even make it through her armor, but she had actually thought she was about to die.

"LEONEL!"

She rushed after him.

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