

Dimensional Descent

Chapter 3241: Dangerous

Anya felt a great pressure descending onto her, a suffocating aura threatening to rip all the air out of her body.

Aina only stood there in silence, and yet Anya's knees creaked and her bones almost collapsed beneath her.

Anya roared out, gathering what power she had left to burst out in a rain of light and darkness. Her two Sovereignties twisted and danced around one another, trying to form a barrier of momentum to fight against Aina. And yet...

CRACK.

BANG!

Anya was sent flying, her momentum shattering so thoroughly that she was sent spiraling.

She crashed into the ground below, hacking up mouthfuls of blood.

A sad smile spread across her lips. "He's dangerous..." she said to herself. "... He's too dangerous..."

Aina looked down indifferently. The words made her ears twitch for a moment, but she didn't have the time to carefully consider them as she sensed something else.

She looked up to find that the Four Great Families that had come to support Anya were trying to sneak around her and toward her children.

Aina frowned.

Logically, she knew that they stood no chance in doing such a thing. She was too powerful. But her motherly instincts made her feel antsy.

She didn't just want her children to be safe, she didn't want them to come even close to harm.

Taking a step back, Aina drew her ax across the air. There was a slow ripple before it suddenly exploded in speed, slicing the Four Great Family members in two.

When her attention turned back to Anya, she found that the woman had already struggled to her feet. Even now, she was still mumbling the same things, but there was a light of confusion in Anya's eyes as though she couldn't quite understand what she was saying.

Aina realized then that Anya was quite the victim herself. Raised in the Three Finger Cult, she only knew one way of life.

Meaning...

She had always been a pawn of the Demoness. Unfortunately, she had become a worthless pawn. Leonel had grown up too fast at every turn.

This was the last chance Anya would have had to deal a death blow to Leonel, and yet it had ended up failing this time as well. In fact, she wasn't even worthy of fighting Leonel himself. She couldn't even last a single strike against his wife.

Anya coughed up another mouthful of blood and looked toward Aina with bloodshot eyes.

"You have... no idea... what you're doing..."

Aina didn't respond, continuing to stare at Anya as though she was deciding whether she should feel pity or not.

It was clear and obvious to her that Anya had feelings for her husband. Why that was, or how they had come to be, she didn't know, nor did she particularly care.

What was important was that those feelings had seemingly become twisted by a mass of something else... something weighed down by duty and a twisted sense of control and suffocation.

Aina had put a great deal of effort into improving her Dream Force in these last few years, ever since she almost lost her babies to the schemes of the Sylvans. But this she felt...

Was far beyond her paygrade.

Aina slowly raised her ax.

There was only one way to deal with this situation, and that was to end it here.

However, when her ax reached its apex, she hesitated again.

Leonel had already done this before, hadn't he? He had killed her already. Aina knew that for sure.

So how was she here?

Someone had brought her back. But for what purpose?

A Union of Light and Darkness will reveal the Twelve Pointed Star.

The sudden thought didn't come from her. It came from Leonel. Their souls were intertwined and when they so chose, they could practically share their minds when they wanted.

That was when it clicked for Aina.

Wasn't Anya a Light and Shadow Sovereign locked away in a single body?

Could this prophecy have had nothing to do with Leonel or Aina?

"You have... no idea... what you're doing..."

The words repeated like a broken record. Anya's body shuddered and seemed to split in two before they came back together. Then they split again and fused once more.

A twin pair of versions of herself rippled out into existence time and time again, fusing once more every time.

Aina's gaze became sharper as she chose to take a step back. In a flash, she had appeared on the Spear monument once more, protecting her two children with her body.

There was a rumbling that shook the Idol Battlefield to its core and the world seemed to be flipping and overturning right before their eyes.

The Idol Battlefield pulsed and rippled, delaminating into two much like Anya before snapping back together.

Every time this happened, there was a cascading force that rippled outward.

Anya stumbled down below, holding onto her forehead with a palm while her other hand barely held onto her scythe.

Her confusion was only growing with every passing second. All she could mumble about was how dangerous "he" was, but it wasn't clear if she was referring to Leonel

or someone else entirely.

Logic seemed to dictate that she was speaking of Leonel. Since the first time they had met, she had said that he was a danger.

But if she meant him... it was odd that she didn't look toward Leonel a single time, almost as though she couldn't bear to face him.

The shaking of the battlefield only grew more feverish, and soon, it felt like the entire world was shaking along with it.

The grip Anya had on her head only grew stronger until she suddenly pierced skin, her nails digging into her scalp in what seemed like nothing more than an accident.

"You have... no idea... what you're doing..."

The words that had always been directed at Aina seemed now directed at herself.

"He's too dangerous... no... I'm too dangerous..."

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Chapter 3242: Twelve Pointed Star

Scythe Force... It was maybe the oddest of the Weapon Forces, not just because of the uniqueness and rarity of the weapon, but also because of its origins.

When speaking of other Weapon Forces, its lore had almost no impact on its current reality. No one cared why the first spear was created, and whips, though originally an instrument of torture, didn't have much of its Force related to these origins either.

But Scythe Force... it was very different.

The scythe was originally an instrument for farmers and harvesters. It wasn't a weapon used for death, but rather to give others new life.

As time passed, this instrument of life slowly morphed into something else. Ironically enough, what Leonel didn't know was that the Weapon Force he had the most compatibility with wasn't the Bow... it was precisely the Scythe.

Today, the Scythe was primarily known as an instrument of death, the symbolism of reapers. It was used predominantly by the Void Race who, while they were more well known for their spatial abilities, had abilities related to Destruction and the former Void Beasts that made them arbitrators of Death as well.

However...

This wasn't the true face of the Scythe.

The Scythe had a lot more in common with Leonel than any other weapon in existence... it too was a weapon of Creation that had become so distorted and twisted that it was now only known for its Destruction...

And this formed the foundation upon which caused everything that was happening now.

Anya had been a Light Sovereign while her twin sister had been a Shadow Sovereign. However, after Leonel killed her sister, the two became one individual, sharing Light and Shadow together and becoming a new person... Or rather, at least Anya gained a new body while overtaking her sister's mind.

This matter was simple enough and could mostly be waved away as an odd quirk of this world of Dimensional and supreme powers. But how could it be that easy to describe if such things were happening now?

Things seemed relatively fine until Anya began to truly focus on her Scythe Force. When Anya first came to a Complete World, she had faced much the same issues as everyone else. The skills that she had once been so proud in plummeted off a cliff, unable to keep up with those around her. The difference between an Incomplete World and a Complete one was too large.

But her talent still shone through. Slowly, she began to rebuild her foundations until she reached the stage she was at today...

And the most important of those foundations was her Scythe Force.

When she formed her Dharma, her two Sovereignties took a back seat to her Scythe Force, allowing her Scythe Force to become the center of her very being.

What she didn't expect, though, was to suddenly succeed in forming her Idol right here and now.

No... it was almost like someone or some thing was forcing her to succeed, pushing her down a path of no return.

What was the Twelve Pointed Star if not the visual representation of the Northern Star?

However, it wasn't just this alone...

The Northern Star Lineage Factor, both halves, each had six stages each exactly...

The Snowy Star Owl... The White Stone Elephant... The Starry Tailed Fox... The Twinkling Light Bear... The Golden Tiger...

The Infinity Beast.

The Shadow Tail... the Dusky Steel Bat... The Aurora Black .. The Crimson Claw Ape... The Death Pulse Deer...

The Void Beast.

Twelve perfect stages. Twelve perfect pieces of the puzzle.

When the experiments of the Envoys began, the Human Race was the only one who seemed capable of taking on their power and displaying the might of the Northern Star Lineage Factor.

However... what no one had ever explained was why this Lineage Factor had such a name?

Why wasn't it called the Creation Lineage Factor or Destruction Lineage Factor? Or maybe the Infinity and Void Lineage Factor?

There seemed to be any number of names that were far more appropriate...

It was question that was lying in plain sight and yet it was one that no one ever answered for reasons that couldn't be explained...

Unless one considered one person.

The Demoness.

Every time one felt as though they had stepped off of her chessboard, it was as though she was looming over an even larger one, her gaze peering down over the world and

waiting for the last of everyone to fall into her traps one after another.

If even the Ancient God Beast of Destruction, the Primordial Terrors, couldn't escape her schemes...

Then how could the modern era God Beasts of Destruction and Creation possibly do

so?

Even this Lineage Factor, down to its barest of bones, was personally crafted by the Demoneess much like the Morales Lineage Factor and all its parts had been.

And all of it was for this very moment when the only prophecy that Leonel had yet to truly grasp fell into place.

The Scythe... a perfect balance of Creation and Destruction.

It may have started as a weapon of Creation, but it had been given new life as one of Death and Destruction. It was no longer as simple as Creation bleeding over into

Destruction...

It was both.

Light Sovereignty, the pinnacle of life, of healing, of the world everyone could see with their own eyes...

Shadow Sovereignty... the pinnacle of darkness, of things hidden in the blackness of the light...

When the Scythe formed the center of this, and the two Sovereignities came together, it formed a perfected cycle of Creation and Destruction...

One that allowed the true Northern Star Lineage Factor to appear.

Anya's body shuddered and a Twelve Pointed Star burst into existence, blooming from her back as her aura continued to soar.

Existence rumbled, and the Northern Star that seemed to still have several thousand more years before it truly descended...

Trembled as well.

Suddenly...

BOOM!

The Northern Star broke through a veil.

At that moment, no matter what world you were in, if you looked up, the Northern Star felt so close that one could almost reach out and touch it.

The end of the world was here.

Chapter 3243: Feel It?

Anya unleashed a roar that filled the skies. Her body expanding, the light of the Twelve Pointed Star radiating from the depths of her white eyes.

She drew in size, doubling her height and then doubling it again. Soon, she stood at over six meters tall, but her proportions seemed to still be the exact same... the change to her features, however, was a different matter entirely.

Two pairs of wings appeared on her back, one set of black and another of white. White horns twisting with black fog grew from her forehead, and tendrils of light shattered her original scythe to form one much larger.

SHIIIIING!

A curved blade broke free from the light, sending the golden white motes shattering to the ground below like fine bits of glass.

PA. PA. PA.

One after another, golden eyes appeared across the blade. But its body seemed wrapped in a thick black leather.

Anyone who had experience with the Void Beast and Infinity Beast realized what they were seeing instantly.

Somehow, Anya had embodied them both, concentrating them into her scythe and causing her power to multiply several times over.

The more Anya's aura soared, the deeper Aina's frown became. Her confidence in defeating her was plummeting by the moment.

The issue wasn't her personal power. If Aina had to, she felt that she could at least hold on for a while. But the problem was that she wasn't confident in protecting her children at the same time.

For the first time since their birth, Aina began to wonder if she had made a mistake.

If she could just complete her last three Rebirths, she felt that she would be able to do it all. But right now, she had the comprehension, but not the foundation necessary to make the best use of it.

Aina looked up into the skies and felt a radiant warmth coming from above. It was filled with confidence and an undeniable will.

She could barely see her husband's back with how fast he was moving, but she still found herself calming down.

DENG. DENG. DENG.

One after another, Leonel's brothers, Noah, the Heirs of the Morales, all landed around her, facing off against the large monster that Aina had become.

Indeed... there was a reason her husband wasn't to become a King. It was for the sake of building a better future for them all.

They didn't just have to rely on themselves. They would have the help of those around them as well.

James grinned. "Don't worry, we can hold off until the show-off is finished with whatever the hell he's doing up there. Just focus on protecting the kiddos."

"Mommy, who's he?" Leah asked.

"Kid, learn my name well. I'm your favorite Uncle James."

"Why would you be the favorite?" Raj snapped. "You two were here flirting with the same girl who wants to kill us all now. What kind of example are you setting?"

Raj kneeled down to Leah and Leo's level and opened a palm. Diamond spiraled around his palm, forming a beautiful, sparkling lotus. He handed it to Leah.

Leah's eyes brightened as she took it in two hands. Her large golden eyes blinked with giddy happiness, pulling at the flower as though to check how durable it was.

Raj's hand flashed again and this time a big sword the length of Leo's body formed.

"Shh," he pressed a finger to his lips. "Don't tell your dad I gave you this. If he finds it, just tell him your favorite Uncle Raj was messing around and I'll give you another one later."

Leo's eyes brightened as well and he almost tipped over taking the big sword. But the wide grin on his little chubby face practically lit up the world.

"There has to be some sort of rule against this." James protested. It wasn't his fault he couldn't conjure things up out of thin air.

Plus, he was poor. It was too embarrassing if the only things he could give the kids were things their father had given him.

Well, he was actually more than shameless enough to do it. The main issue was that the moment one of these guys exposed him, he would be finished.

"Sounds like a skill issue." Raj said with a grin, proudly taking a kiss on the cheek from Leah and a bear hug from Leo.

Aina smiled at the interaction between her kids and her husband's friends.

All of them hadn't started with the best relationship. In fact, a long while back, it could be said that they all hated her.

But then again... so too had her friends hated Leonel.

Since then, they had grown a lot and it could be said that they were no different from one big family now.

Aina looked up toward the battle in the skies again and exhaled a breath.

Not once did she seem to bother with the Northern Star looming over the skies.

As far as she was concerned, even if the world came to an end... she had tasted the happiness she had always wanted.

These last three years with her children and her husband had been more than she could have ever asked for.

Taking a knee, she helped her children fix off the wrinkles in their clothing and the messiness of their hair after being ruffled by so many hands.

She smiled a bright smile.

"Are we going to be okay, mom?" Leo asked, seemingly sensing that something was off.

Leah's large eyes began to brim with unshed tears, the worries of her brother seemingly alerting her to something as well.

Aina's smile didn't so much as waver.

"Do you see that?" She asked, pointing up to their father's battle high above.

The two shook their heads. They had been able to watch Leonel's battles until now, but it seemed that he had lost the bandwidth to simplify things for them. It could only

mean that he had truly gotten serious.

Aina's smile deepened. "But do you feel it?"

The twins looked at one another, blinking. For some reason... they understood exactly what their mother meant.

Chapter 3244: Too

Aina smoothed out their hair one final time.

"So long as you can feel your father above, you two don't have the slightest thing to worry about. So long as you can feel me in front of you, you never have to waste a single ounce of your thoughts on fear. Your mom and dad will hold up the skies for you if need be."

Aina stood to her full height once more and her aura valiantly flared out.

She believed the words with every fiber of her being. Until Leonel died... she didn't. fear the end of the world because she simply didn't believe her husband would ever lose.

...

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Leonel's arrows soared through the skies, each one carrying planet-destroying might that warped the laws around them.

There didn't seem to be anything particularly fancy about them, and yet every one countered and even destroyed the chains of the Regulator it faced.

There was a surging confidence to Leonel, so much so that he didn't even look down below to check what the situation was.

By comparison, the little boy found himself growing more and more flustered.

How could a Regulator have any sort of battle experience? What experience they had was based on the laws they mastered through their Domains.

Logically speaking, that should give the Regulator the ability to use all weapons with a shocking amount of fluidity, and the fact it had created a new sort of Anarchic Force to wield displayed that quite well.

However, for some reason, it found itself feeling clumsy in front of Leonel.

What it had yet to realize was the fact that it was no longer completely standing in its world any longer. Its world and that of Leonel's Creation World were clashing and fighting for supremacy, causing the laws that the Regulator was used to wielding to deviate and weaken somewhat.

Leonel was so expertly controlling things that he was outmaneuvering even the Regulator itself. But he was still remaining cautious, inching forward, and displaying a calmness to him that belied his true age.

He didn't go on the attack, calmly using his arrows to deflect the snaking chains that continuously tried to take his life.

The idea of a loss never crossed his mind, not a single time.

Today, he could only win. For the rest of his life, he could only win.

And no one, not even the Demoness, would be able to stop him.

SKKKREREEEEEE!

The Regulator suddenly unleashed a manic howl as it finally realized what Leonel was doing.

A great pressure descended onto Leonel's world, nearly destroying it.

However... Leonel's lip only curled up in a smirk.

By now, it was already far too late for the Regulator, Maybe if it had noticed earlier, it could have done something. But giving Leonel this much time to prepare...

Could only have one result.

Leonel took a step forward and his Creation World bloomed into existence. Rather than hiding away in the Second Dimension, Leonel's Royal Crest bloomed above his head and pulled it into reality.

BANG!

A world of violet took shape. But if one looked up, they would find a world of red and black above it.

The two formed together like two halves of a single whole, and at that moment, a grinding force descended.

If Goddess Evergreen was still alive, she would have realized the shades of her grinding ability. But this... was on an entirely different level.

Leonel's worlds had already sunk their claws into the Idol Battlefield. Shaking him off wouldn't be so easy anymore.

He had woven his very worlds into the fabric of this world's Second Dimension, and because of that...

BANG!

The chains all exploded at once under the grinding force of Leonel's two worlds. He took a step forward, appearing before the Regulator and reaching out with a hand. Before the Regulator could react, it found itself dangling from Leonel's palm, its short legs struggling to touch the ground. It seemed to have completely forgotten that it could freely control its shape and size.

But it could hardly be blamed... the only thing it could see were those eyes of Leonel's, their silvery, violet depths piercing through the depths of its soul.

"I don't think this is enough." Leonel said lightly, holding the Regulator up.

BANG!

The pressure of the two worlds doubled and the figure of the Regulator twisted as it felt its Idol Battlefield almost collapse beneath it.

The existence of the Regulator almost blinked out, but it was forcefully stabilized by a power.

Indeed. A Regulator couldn't face true death so long as its world existed, and destroying a world on the level of the Idol Battlefield wasn't so simple. It was tied into the very fabric of humanity itself. It was a world woven into reality so deeply that even

if Leonel did somehow manage to destroy it...

It would simply return when given enough time.

So, Leonel wouldn't destroy it.

He would take it.

Leonel's body rumbled and his Ten Inner Worlds trembled along with it.

Then, with an inhale, the crumbling body of the Regulator was pulled into his body.

Violet veins pulsed across Leonel and his belly and chest suddenly grew a size as though he was about to explode from the inside out.

Leonel felt more powerful than he ever had before, but he knew it wasn't enough. The Eighth Dimension wouldn't even be enough for him to stand head to head with his grandfather or his master, let alone the Demoness.

The only way for him to stand a real chance was by entering the Ninth.

Even if he was confident in himself to win no matter the circumstances, there was a line between foolish confidence and reality.

He was Leonel Morales. He didn't need to rely on raw brute strength to make it to the end. He had his mind to rely upon as well...

Maybe the greatest gift his father had ever given him was his Crafting ability.

"A Union of Light and Darkness will reveal the Twelve Pointed Star, is it?"

Leonel smirked.

"Well... I can do that too."

Chapter 3245: Ripples in Time

The first time Leonel had thought of the prophecy in a long while was when he was helping out the Fawkes with their Crafts. He had felt that he was onto something back then, as though something had finally clicked for him.

But it wasn't long after that that the Pluto appeared and he was forced to derail his thoughts, especially after he realized that he needed to really shake things up if he wanted to completely free himself from the schemes of the Demoness.

Unfortunately, after coming here, he realized that it wasn't so easy to leave that

woman behind. If Leonel could think of using the Idol Battlefield, she certainly could as well.

Of course, there was still something Leonel benefited from.

The Idol Battlefield had come too early.

But it was the reason why it had come so early that was important.

This time, the Idol Battlefield appeared far ahead of schedule because of Leonel's actions.

The reason why this wasn't enough was because technically speaking, the Idol Battlefield would have had time to descend naturally given how much time Existence had left.

Although everyone was feeling the weight of the world ending, the truth was the "near end" they all feared was still tens of thousands of years.

The only reason it felt so looming was because such a time frame was nothing more than a blink given the lifespan of a universe, let alone Existence itself.

This was all to say that the Demoness would surely have contingency plans for the Idol Battlefield. In fact, Anya's existence was proof of precisely that.

Anya was only able to reach this step after affirming her Scythe Force Path... and she was only able to do that with the help of the Idol Battlefield.

Was that a coincidence?

Whenever it was something related to the Demoness, Leonel felt that it would be foolish for anyone to take things at face value.

This woman had schemes that ran so deep that they were hard to fathom, and there was one question that Leonel still didn't have the answer to...

Well, there were actually multiple.

But one of the strongest of them all was...

Why the Three Finger Cult? Why was it necessary?

And now, it seemed that he had his answer.

Anya.

For whatever reason, the Demoness wanted an opportunity to speed up the end of the world, and now she had her wish.

From tens of thousands of years... Existence had just months left now at best.

As for why, Leonel still didn't know. But he was brimming with anticipation.

The fear that should have been there was, and he had an intent blazing up from the depths of his heart.

That was because he knew that soon enough...

He would have this woman's head on a pike.

Several times now, this Demoness had taken his efforts, twisted them in her fair hands, and made them her victories. There was no greater example of that than when he personally acted to kill the Primordial Terror, only for her to swoop in at the last moment and claim victory herself...

Such a feat should have been spoken of for countless years, but no one even seemed to recall that he had defeated a legend with nothing more than his mind,

And yet, it was practically erased from history.

He knew why that was. The Demoness didn't want to be remembered. Even in the minds of the most powerful existences, she was probably nothing more than an afterthought. If one looked through the recollections of these events, she was maybe not mentioned at all or maybe only in passing.

But...

Now, it seemed that it was about time Leonel gave her some of her own medicine. Leonel slapped his palms together, his aura rumbling.

A shimmering light bloomed in his heart as his Innate Node shone with a brighter and brighter hue.

Deep within his body, there were several Incomplete Worlds. But these Worlds were very special...

They were the worlds of Invalids.

If there was any other Race of people who wanted to see the world end along with the Demoness, it was none other than the Invalids that seemed to have disappeared after successfully climbing to the God Realm.

But Leonel, unlike others, hadn't forgotten.

Finally, Leonel seemed to understand the purpose of the prophecies he had left behind. They weren't just methods of informing him of what happened in the future,

but they were small jumps, tiny distortions in reality that would allow him to trick even himself.

It was only now that he had reached an adequate level that Leonel realized that he had thought of a real solution long ago.

Back then, it seemed like he had grabbed onto the Incomplete Invalid Worlds because he had no choice. Even he thought that that was the reason...

When in reality there was another.

Leonel hadn't just been trying to quickly fill up his Nodes for the sake of reaching the end of the Sixth Dimension...

He was laying his own trap, a trap that had been prepared ever since he formed the perfect cycle between his two Creation Sovereignties and his two Destruction

Sovereignties.

Leonel's aura flared out.

"A union of Light and Darkness will reveal the Twelve Pointed Star... that's cute."

Light and Dark would certainly do it. They were the perfect dichotomies.

But what could an inferior path of Light and Dark do in the face of Creation and Destruction?

Leonel's severed memories came flooding back to him at that moment, and he realized that the Demoness might have taken his Dream Asura Bloodline away because she needed it... but it was also because she feared what he might be able to do with it.

Light and Dark would always be powerful.

But how could it match up against Creation and Destruction?

It seemed that back then, Leonel had already realized that he was a Creation Sovereign, not a Destruction Sovereign. If he wanted to bridge that gap and perfect

it...

He would have to step into the shoes of an Invalid.

The silvers of Leonel's eyes suddenly became entirely white.

Chapter 3246: I Am Content

Leonel felt vicious thoughts rampaging through his mind.

Death. Destruction. Hunger.

He wanted to devour it all...

And shockingly enough, all of these thoughts didn't come from him...

But rather Tolliver.

The menace that was Spirits was well documented. One of the very first lessons his father taught him was to only feed Tolliver in moderation.

Leonel had never really had the time to think about why it was Spirits were like this. Why were they so dangerous...

Ultimately, the answer didn't have a complicated background like most things he dealt with. Instead, it was quite straightforward.

Spirits were bundles of instinct. They only existed to improve themselves...

If Invalids were the counters to humanoids... then Spirits were the counters to Regulators and World Spirits.

They were existences that only lived to improve themselves, and that was why they were so good at creation. It was ironically because they took so much.

Spirits were none other than the perfect embodiment of Destruction taken to an extreme to form Creation... They were creatures that lived only to Devour, and yet, they were the greatest tool that Crafters had to forge their creations and shock the world...

But Tolliver had now swallowed the potential of an Infinity Beast, ironically completing the cycle. By taking on a beast with enough Creation potential to become Destruction, it had formed two halves of a whole.

Finally, realizing this, Leonel allowed Tolliver to truly lose control, before taking hold and striking the perfect balance that they were looking for.

And just like that, one half of his intentions was already complete... and then there was the other half.

Invalids... they were Existences that were designed only to destroy. However, they were also the lifeblood that allowed improvement.

It had happened so long ago now that it was easy to forget, but one of the main ways Leonel improved before he gained Dimensional Methods was by killing Invalids.

In the past, when the first Fourth Dimensional world began to appear, Invalids and their deaths were the only way for humanoids to improve. Only by killing them and swallowing their energy could they improve.

This embodied Destruction for the sake of Creation.

The Invalid Worlds formed the foundation of Leonel's Destruction World... but where did his Creation World come from?

That came from none other than himself, his Scarlet Star Force, the embodiment of who he was as a person, and his Innate Node...

Leonel was a man who had thought himself to be a Destruction Sovereign all his life, only to realize what seemed to be far too late that he was actually a Creation Sovereign.

He was the end of the Cycle... the Creator who bloomed so greatly that he Destroyed instead...

Like this, Leonel completed all four legs of the cycle...

Tolliver and the Infinity Beast...

His Creation and Destruction World...

Creation so great it bloomed to Destruction and Destruction so bright it bloomed to Creation...

Destruction so harrowing it left nothing but Creation behind and Creation so destructive it could only be seen as Destruction by a layman...

The four pieces of Leonel's Sovereignities came together, one piece forming his Divine Armor, and the other piece forming his Inner Worlds, while his body formed the anchor that kept them all in place.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Leonel's aura blossomed as the Idol Battlefield shook apart at its very seams.

"Do you feel it now?" Leonel said lightly.

The Regulator shook fiercely, but no matter what it did, it couldn't get out of Leonel's grasp.

"Weapon Forces are a beautiful thing. They're the first example of Humans taking what they needed from the world around them. The very first instance of Creation leading to Destruction... the Creation of a Weapon for the sake of killing another...

"It's a cycle that can only be continuously perpetuated, and the so-called Ancient Humans loved to take credit for such things, no?"

"Today, however... you will become the foundation I need to put an end to this... to everything.

"My Innate Node is now the center of my body. It's the Weapon Force Innate Node that shines my path forward and makes me feel secure in the future of myself...

"And now, your Idol Battlefield will become the center of my worlds of Creation and Destruction. I'll grind everything you are to dust with my intent."

Leonel spoke every word slowly and calmly, unmoved by the shaking of the Regulator at all.

"You see, I don't usually like to explain myself when I do things. But I feel like for you, I need to make a very special exception... because you seem too foolish to understand it on your own.

"The things you've done to me in this world, maybe it's the case that you were only doing your best to keep up with the status quo. Maybe you felt that you were doing what was best for humanity.

"But... I really don't give a damn about any of that."

Leonel suddenly grinned a fiendish grin.

"Even if the world ended today, and it took all of you with it, I would be perfectly content. I have a wife who loves me. Brothers who are willing to fight by my side. Two little mischievous little munchkins who share my and their mother's face...

"What more could I ask for?"

"But it's selfish people like you who always want for more for reasons I could never understand..."

"All my life I've been quite lazy, more than willing to let things come as they may. Maybe the only thing I was ever truly active in was pursuing my wife's love.

"And yet, for some reason, there are so many people not content with what they have. Do you think you're superior to me in some way?"

A bit of Leonel's arrogance flared up. It was the only piece of his confident pride that he was unable to fully expunge...

And he let it bloom.

"If I, Leonel Morales, King of the Existence, am content with what I have...

"What right do you have to ask for more?"

BOOM!

"Who do you think you are?!"

Chapter 3247: Only One

BANG!

The body of the Regulator shattered as Leonel's aura soared.

The Idol Battlefield found itself being ground to dust between Leonel's Creation and Destruction World, the very fabric of its existence being shredded to ash.

Chaos.

The unpredictability of Creation and Destruction, the blurring of the lines between them and the rush of improbable events.

Leonel was an anomaly that stood beyond just Creation and Destruction.

At that moment, the Northern Star that had formed such a great and solid connection with Anya suddenly felt itself being ripped out of her control.

In one moment, Anya had been the center of the world... but in the next, it was no one else but Leonel himself who stood at the peak of all things.

The Northern Star shuddered and if it had an eye, it would seem to have looked over, changing its focus from Anya to Leonel.

A third and final Dharma began to shimmer into existence above Leonel's head. The first was his Crown. It sat hovering above his bed of dancing violet hair with the momentum fit for a King. It was simple, almost to the point of looking more like a halo than it did a crown. It wasn't overbearing, but rather seemed to embrace the world with large arms. Gentle and caring, but sturdy and strong enough to hold up the skies if need be.

Then there was Leonel's Royal Crest, his second Dharma.

A quill, a bow, and a spear crossed one another, fanning out in three directions.

The outer rim of the crest brimmed with a violet gold color with a subtle underlying silver hue. It took the shape of a badge, its edges sharp in some regions and gently sloping in others.

It was far larger than the crown halo above Leonel's head, standing almost like a tower shield in the skies.

And then came Leonel's third Dharma...

A Star.

A Violet Star.

It stood opposing the Northern Star, boldly facing it.

Deep within, the swimming structures of a Void Beast and an Infinity Beast could be seen. They were subtle and almost non-existent... if one tried to look too closely, the star itself could burn one's very soul, shredding it to pieces in a whirlwind of chaos and destruction.

However, if one had a will that was bold enough and eyes that were strong enough, it would be possible to see their forms hidden within.

These weren't the true creations, but rather simple projections. In fact, their forms were less important than the laws that swirled around them.

There had been many God Beasts of Destruction in the past... much the same way there had been many God Beasts of Creation...

What Leonel cared about weren't their forms, but their power, what they represented, what they were to their truest inner core.

BOOM!

The last of the Idol Battlefield was ground to dust. Leonel's hand squeezed and the Regulator's head shattered to pieces, only for its bits and pieces to be sucked into his body.

Opening his arms to the world, Leonel's silver violet robes fluttered as his aura began to skyrocket.

From the First Tier of the Eighth Dimension to the Second, and from the Second to the Third...

His power continuously leapt upward, rocketing through the Dimensions until it reached the Ninth Tier of the Eighth.

Leonel took a deep breath and his sharpened before he unleashed a roar that was heard across time and space.

BOOM!

The barrier to the Ninth Dimension shattered into countless pieces as Leonel's body unleashed a tremble and splintered the space around him into countless pieces.

The restlessness of Leonel's aura finally seemed to slowly settle down only after this.

The world felt so much brighter to him, as though any and everything was resting in the very palm of his hands.

"This is it."

He spoke these words only to himself as he looked up into the skies. Tolliver's body slowly sank into his and his Divine Armor vanished along with the trembling cascading

forms of his Dharmas.

Leonel clenched his fists.

The Ninth Dimension.

For a long time, he could only gaze at it from afar. But then when he came to the

Dimensional Verse, it almost felt like an insignificant Realm, one that so many had touched upon. But now... it was once again a full circle moment.

The Ninth Dimension was truly a demarcating line, one that separated the weak from the strong.

Most who could manage it would slow their progress through the Dimensions for the sake of bolstering their Force Manipulation first, and there were very good reasons for this.

The weight of one's Dimensions was far heavier when one's Force Manipulations could keep up. You usually only received one chance at this sort of baptism.

It could be said that Leonel's breakthrough into the Ninth Dimension, though... was entirely unprecedented.

That was because he had waited until he not only had one Dharma, but three of them... And each one of these three Dharmas was more than powerful enough to have been an Idol all on its own. In fact, in the case of his Royal Crest Dharma, it was the equivalent of three Idols, taking up the forms of his Spear, Quill, and Bow Forces into

one.

But now, the roadblock to forming an Idol felt impossible to cross. It was like Leonel was staring up at a mountain without a peak. It reached so high into the skies that he couldn't even see it past the clouds it pierced through.

But...

Leonel's lip curled into a smirk.

He was very much used to lifting mountains.

Leonel looked down from the skies to find that after he had dealt with Anya's greatest strength, the disadvantage his wife and brothers had been in had decreased considerably.

Leonel waved a hand and the Segmented Cube appeared in his palm. Soon, a shimmering Anastasia had appeared.

She opened her mouth to speak.

"Don't." Leonel said firmly before smiling and rubbing her head. "This isn't your fault, you don't have to apologize for anything."

Anastasia blinked.

After she had gained her senses back and was no longer restrained by the Segmented Cube, there was a distance between herself and Leonel that was hard to fathom. Unfortunately, it wasn't something that she could easily fix. She honestly didn't know how to do so. She didn't have the emotions of a human. But Leonel's next words left her in a heap of tears again.

"What are you standing there for? Don't you want to meet your godchildren?"

09:49 -

Leonel grabbed Anastasia's little hand and he flickered and vanished, appearing on a floating rock in the depths of space where the two little tykes were currently bickering.

Leah and Leo didn't know how to react to the little girl that was a sobbing mess before them. Anastasia barely looked any older than them, but they found themselves having to comfort her.

Leonel watched with a smile, especially when Leah offered the pretty little lotus Raj had made for her to Anastasia in hopes that would make her feel better. But that only made Anastasia cry harder.

Leonel looked down at the Segmented Cube in his palm. He could feel that Anastasia had never stopped working to help everyone within. In these years, he had made a great number of improvements to the forces under Leonel's banner.

'We'll be needing these...'

Leonel was very much focused on the Demoness, but he knew that this wasn't a battle he would be able to win on his own. As powerful as he had grown, he would never underestimate the hidden Ancestors of Existence. Or more accurately... he would never underestimate the Demoness' ability to manipulate and make use of them. The Ancestors of the Sylvans, the Pluto, and the Void Race would be handled by him and Aina. But they still had countless subordinates under them.

If he wanted to achieve what he wanted to, he needed an army... and now, he had that. Aina suddenly appeared by Leonel's side, heaving for breath.

Leonel looked over and carefully wiped a line of blood away from the corner of her mouth.

"Did you have fun?" He asked with a smile.

Aina blinked as though surprised by the question for a small while before a gorgeous smile spread across her face.

She nodded like an enthusiastic little girl, the dichotomy between her bright expression and beautiful countenance contrasting with the blood that caked her and her battle ax.

Leonel raised his head to the skies and unleashed a booming laughter.

"Good. In that case, we will return now."

The fighting intent within Leonel was blooming as well. He too was eager for battle. It was time to put an end to all of this. But first...

There was something else that he needed to handle.

The Human Race could only have a single head. There was only room for a single King, and that King could only be him.

It seemed that the match between himself and his grandfather could only happen now.

"Let's return to the Ascension Empire."

Chapter 3248: A King and an Emperor (1)

"Really? I get to be a big sister?"

Leah excitedly put her little palms onto her great grandmother's large belly. She seemed to want to pull the baby out right here and now. She was growing tired of Leo always making fun of her for being born just a few seconds earlier.

Not long ago, Leah had pouted to her mom. With Aina's control, she could have easily let her be born first.

Toward her daughter's dissatisfaction, Aina could only smile bitterly and chuckle while Leah wasn't looking.

"So what?" Leo said with a wide grin. "Then I'll just have two little baby sisters."

Leah pouted, giving her brother a glare.

The Empress of the Ascension Empire watched the two siblings squabble with a happy smile on her face. It had been a very long while since she had felt such a simple joy. In this warm little garden, with her great grandchildren around her, and her granddaughter-in-law braiding her hair, she felt at peace.

Aina had a light smile on her face as well, sitting cross-legged on the soft green grass and listening to the bickering of her children like it was the sweetest joy.

Neither of the two women looked toward where their husbands likely were.

Maybe it was because the two had an undisguised confidence in their men. Or maybe it was because they were content no matter what the result was. Or maybe they had truly forgotten about it, choosing to lose themselves in these final moments of peace. Their hearts were settled and their thoughts were unrushed and unhurried.

They didn't take even a single second for granted. If the world ended right this moment...

They would be alright with it.

...

Leonel stood in silence, his hands clasped behind his back as he gazed toward his grandfather.

A droplet of water fell from on high, rippling down to the ground below and spreading out across the calm surface of the lake of emerald they were in.

Gervaise, however, sat silently on his throne, seemingly hardly acknowledging his grandson's appearance.

The region felt dark with the only light coming from the waters beneath their feet. The lake stretched for seemingly an ungodly distance. Even Leonel's eyes couldn't see it through to the end.

This location was in the depths of the Ascension Palace.

wy www.

When Leonel arrived here, his grandmother was already waiting in his courtyard. He simply greeted her with a smile, spending some time with her before he climbed the stairs to the Ascension Palace.

This time, there was simply no one capable of laying a finger on him. Even when Mordred and her wife appeared, it was useless. If before they could stall him, now their weapons weren't even able to penetrate a domain around Leonel.

They would have died with a single thought if Leonel so chose it to be so. But he didn't feel that there was a need.

In the past, Mordred had been one of his men along with her father, King Arthur.

But oddly enough, King Arthur hadn't appeared, while Mordred had.

That told Leonel something quite profound.

Mordred's views had changed. She chose to side with her wife and thus the Ascension Empire.

Arthur, by comparison... was still not fully under the control of Leonel's grandfather. The difference was that Gervaise didn't care. What Emperor could claim absolute loyalty from all of his subordinates? Such a man didn't exist.

All that mattered was having the power to keep everything under his control, and Gervaise felt that he had that.

And much the same way... Leonel didn't care very much about Mordred's change in allegiance either.

Would it matter when he claimed the throne for himself?

Leonel suddenly smiled.

"You're quite confident, old man. I know you could have stopped me from triggering the Pluto like I did, but you didn't."

Gervaise looked up and met Leonel's gaze, his expression still calm.

"I did that for my wife, not you," he said lightly.

Leonel's smile deepened. "And that's exactly why I'll let you keep your head. Aren't I nice?"

"Is that so?"

Gervaise slowly rose from his throne.

As he did so, the world seemed to rumble around him. A violent torrent of Force rose to the skies.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

A whirlpool with a depth that sunk into an endless abyss appeared between grandfather and grandson, a clash of emerald green and gorgeous amethyst.

separating the world into two.

They were separated by over a kilometer, and yet, given their strengths, they might as well have been just a single step from one another.

"I, however..." Gervaise continued lightly. "... Am not so kind."

The band that held Gervaise's white-gold hair together broke apart, causing the strands to dance in the skies like filaments of crystalline energy.

"This Empire is my own, crafted by my calloused hands, my sacrifices, my blood."

Gervaise waved a hand and a scepter appeared in his palm. It was a meter and a half long, carrying a beautifully polished pearl half the size of his head on the end of it. This pearl swirled with a depth of cotton pinks and sky blues, looking as though it had plucked out the clouds of a Dream Pavilion and sucked them into its marbled surface. Gervaise's momentum grew so fiercely that the harsh flapping of Leonel's silver-violet robes made it feel as though the material might be shredded to pieces at any time. And yet, as powerful as it already was, it only seemed to be accelerating its growth as though a slumbering Dragon was awakening right before his eyes.

A vortex appeared beneath Gervaise's feet and the roar of a dragon filled the cavernous space, shuddering space until it fragmented into the shapes of the mythical creature's scales.

BOOM!

Gervaise's aura reached a peak before it suddenly vanished. Like a shredded leaf in the wind, it disappeared in the blink of an eye and the world fell into silence.

"Who do you think you are? I will have your head today."

Chapter 3249: A King and an Emperor (2)

Gervaise waved his scepter and the silent world churned. Palms filled the skies and Leonel was forced to look up to witness their majesty.

In that moment, he felt like he had been transported back in time, teleported to the day Gervaise used a single palm to swat a ship of Shield Cross Stars out of the skies.

Leonel remembered that day clearly because for maybe the dozenth time, he found himself facing his own death and mortality. However, just when he thought that his life was finished, Gervaise had swept in from on high.

He could recall feeling how grand that ability was. Although he had never thought it in so many words, he pined to one day have such strength.

Watching these palms descend now, his smile couldn't help but grow wider.

"If someone else had said that, maybe I would change my mind," Leonel spoke with a booming cadence, his words laced with his laughter and amusement. "But just for you, old man, I'll let it slide. That said, I won't be able to spare you from the consequences. I'm putting you right into a retirement home after this battle."

Leonel's palms flared out and Tolliver coated his body.

He took a step as a spear of writhing silver formed in his palm before solidifying into a gorgeous blade that looked half a cross between a spear and a quill.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Leonel's wrist flickered and the palms in the skies shattered one after another, a rain of emerald shards falling from the skies above.

The scene was oddly beautiful despite the fact anyone beneath their level of strength would find themselves shredded down to the bone just by standing in the vortex that formed between them.

Leonel took a step forward and the intent in his eyes blazed.

Gervaise raised his scepter once more, but he was suddenly forced to bring it down.
BOOM!

Spear and scepter met, the noses of grandson and grandfather so close that their beads of sweat almost fused into one.

"You blocked. Not bad," Leonel said with a grin before he was sent flying backward.

Leonel spun in the air, landing on the raging waters heavily.

He looked up to find a half dozen Force Arts rotating on the surface of the lake. There was no time to react before six eastern dragons rose out from the waters.

It didn't seem like Gervaise had prepped the environment ahead of time. It was nothing but normal water beneath them, albeit filled with God Realm Force.

Instead, Gervaise seemed to have incorporated the Living Construct Force Arts of the Luxnix into his battle style.

Leonel's steps shifted as he dodged.

A flood dragon pierced into the location he had just been, only for it to curl through the waters and attack him from below even as the other five surrounded him from all sides.

Pillars of emerald water shot into the skies and tsunamis that could wipe out what felt like entire universes rose up before crashing down.

More Force Arts formed on these raging waters, claws that pierced through space ripping through them and toward Leonel.

It felt like everything the world itself was attacking on behalf of Gervaise.

Leonel's laughter peeled through the skies as he weaved his way through the

destruction and carnage. His robes were already somewhat disheveled, and his inner organs were quaking within his body with every near miss, and yet there was a light of passion within his eyes that howled like a wolf to the full moon.

"Give me everything you have!"

Leonel's spear suddenly vanished from his hand as he appeared high in the skies.

His bow formed in one hand, and the Laevis Bow appeared in the other.

He slammed them together, the former devouring the latter and severing the Path of this once Great Family.

However, it felt like nothing but a footnote to Leonel.

A pulse of radiant light filled the skies with a golden hue, turning the emerald ambiance into something even more ethereal and magical.

And then Leonel unleashed a torrent of arrows.

He shot so fast that his attacks blurred, forming an umbrella of energies over his grandfather's location.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

A cacophony of erupting destruction tore what calm waters there were left apart.

Suddenly, Leonel swapped out his bow for his spear once again, hurriedly turning to his back and slashing out with all his might.

BANG!

Gervaise had appeared behind him at some unknown time, and both grandson and grandfather took a step back at once. The space beneath their feet shattered and a deep abyss ripped the water even further beneath them apart.

They ground their heels into the air and shot forward, their weapons blurring as booming concentric circles blasted the region apart.

Leonel's spear parried Gervaise's scepter upward and his blade snaked toward the latter's throat.

Gervaise pretended as though he hadn't even seen it at all, his body blurring and doubling. He slipped past Leonel's blade and it seemed like it ripped through nothing but an afterimage. At the same time, he had closed the gap even further, his palm appearing right above Leonel's chest.

Leonel's reaction was just as swift and indifferent. A Force Art appeared on him like a breastplate, blinking into existence just an inch before one appeared on Gervaise's palm as well. It was as though Leonel had seen through the Force Art Gervaise was drawing before he had even completed it, drawing a perfect counter in an instant. The two Force Arts clashed and canceled one another out. Gervaise's palm rebounded back just enough that Leonel could step forward to send out his own palm. Gervaise reacted smoothly, his reflected palm seamlessly switching to an elbow that blocked Leonel's hit.

BANG!

The two were forced to separate, but once again it was for nothing more than a blink of an eye before they erupted into another flurry of exchanges.

They crossed the skies like the air was their lane, their Empire....

And yet both somehow knew that they were only just getting started.

They separated once more and Gervaise unleashed an uncharacteristic roar, Force Arts far more substantial than any he had drawn until now appearing.

Leonel realized immediately that Gervaise was summoning something.

With his free hand, Leonel's palm and fingers formed a seal. His grandfather wasn't the only one that could summon things.

Chapter 3250: A King and an Emperor (3)

The world shook as the clanging of armor echoed through the air.

Emerald energy became solid in the air, forming gems that stacked onto one another in complicated armor patterns.

When the armor took shape, a ripple of gorgeous green light spread, and a humanoid formed in each one.

The Force Arts they formed from collapsed, fusing into their bodies.

Leonel didn't recognize their faces, but he could recognize their Races more than easily enough. And when he did, he couldn't help but burst out into laughter once

more.

Plutos. Six of them.

It was said that the Pluto Race couldn't be blasphemed, that the world wouldn't allow it, and yet here were six of them turned into construct puppets, refined for no other purpose than to do his grandfather's bidding.

Leonel's hand danced in the air as the last of his seals took shape. The world pulsed around him as well.

He had never used seals like this before. However, in this context, it was very much necessary.

Every shift of his hands seemed to direct his Force to move in very special ways. That was because despite the billions of ways Leonel could split his mind, he had focused them all on the man before him, straining himself to the absolute limit.

If he could avoid shifting his attention away for even the slightest moment, then he would take it.

His Dream Seal ability was something that he had prepared specifically to deal with opponents as strong as Gervaise, individuals who needed his full and undivided attention for every second he could spare it.

Dream Seal was an off-shoot of Dream Counter, Dream Counter was only meant to trigger when Leonel faced death, subverting his reaction time and bypassing his mind to force his body to commit an action ahead of time.

Dream Seal worked similarly without the need for death. By assigning very specific Force movements to the positions of his fingers, he could trigger these actions without thought.

And in this case...

Summon his Destruction Beast.

ROAR!

AKIM ann an -mnarro

Billowing black fog spilled out into the region, pooling into the resplendent green waters and turning it into a murky darkness.

Blackstar surged out of the billowing fog, taking the shape of a Void Beast, its head akin to a black dragon roaring inches from his grandfather's face.

However, that was nothing more than an illusion of shadows that scattered a moment afterward.

Leonel had already appeared on the real Blackstar's back and they shot forward as a single entity.

A bow appeared in Leonel's palm.

Timeless Radiance filled the skies. Arrows moving instantaneously through time and space looked prepped to riddle Gervaise's summons with holes.

However, Leonel's attack just clattered off of their armors as though they had no strength at all.

Blackstar's roar filled the skies as he swiped down, a smirk spreading across Leonel's lips.

CRACK

The armors that looked to have been doing just fine suddenly cracked seconds later. Gervaise's eyes narrowed, raising his scepter only slightly. The fractured armors healed and the Pluto all took a step forward, sending out a punch that looked entirely identical down the line.

And they were.

The six fist auras fused into one, appearing before Blackstar in a blink.

Leonel's gaze flashed and he pulled his fingers from his bowstring, forming another seal swiftly.

A surge of waters plowed up from below, a dense Water Force colliding with the fist before it even made it to Blackstar.

The world was overturned as a shimmering silhouette appeared behind Leonel.

The Sea Goddess.

In all her glory, her green-blue skin shimmered beneath the radiance, her body draped in solid violet armor.

She opened her cherry lips, a chant echoing as the emerald waters around them began to surge again and again.

Spiraling flood dragons took shape once again and the attacks of the Pluto were shredded apart.

Leonel, Blackstar, and the Sea Goddess burst through its rain of aura, appearing before Gervaise.

Blackstar smashed a palm down toward Gervaise while the Sea Goddess controlled the emerald waters once more. It looked like Gervaise was standing over an abyss, but the Sea Goddess caused the waters beneath him to tremble, forming tendrils that wrapped around the Emperor.

Leonel himself drew his bow, firing out six powerful shots. But not a single one of them were aimed for Gervaise.

Infinite Radiance.

Arrows carrying the weight of the world appeared before all of the Pluto, stopping them from helping Gervaise deal with the situation.

All the while, the Emperor faced the claw of a God Beast of Destruction and the restraint of a Goddess of the Ocean.

Anarchic Force and a gorgeous Force of Creation filled the skies, swirling together in a mass of Destruction and Creation that melded into a single fuse that sparked and exploded.

Chaos.

Gervaise looked up calmly. Ever since his last outburst, he seemed to have returned to his usual self, his body, mind, and soul, all moving like a single well-oiled machine.

He exhaled a light breath and Force Arts bloomed in his eyes.

Just as Leonel's arrows were about to hit the Pluto, Force Arts appeared on their foreheads and they were directly deconstructed.

[Assimilation].

No, it was a higher form, a variation that Leonel had never seen before.

The Pluto's essence was sucked into Gervaise's body and time suddenly froze for Blackstar and the Sea Goddess.

Leonel, the only one who could still move, was only now recovering from his recently fired arrows and wasn't prepared for the sudden change.

Gervaise only waved his scepter lightly and a solid blow collided with Leonel, almost as though the Emperor's intention had become tangible and attacked him. There wasn't even the slightest ripple of Force on this Dimensional Plane, it was all hidden

away in the Second.

Leonel was sent flying off of Blackstar's back and his pupils couldn't help but constrict.

He was certain of it.

Gervaise had just used not one, but two different Ability Indexes just now.

Chapter 3251: A King and an Emperor (4)

The first was a time stop ability. While useless on Leonel, that didn't mean it was so on his summons.

The second was a powerful telekinesis ability, one that went beyond just controlling things with his mind, but could take Gervaise's imagination and force it to become reality.

Not only were both of these shockingly powerful abilities...

Both of them were at the Savant Level.

Leonel had only just had this thought when a third Ability Index came.

Chains manifested from the depths of the Second Dimension, swirling with auras similar to that of a Regulator.

Leonel had never seen an Ability Index like this one, but he was truly shocked nonetheless. An Ability Index capable of mimicking a Regulator, just how powerful were the trump cards his grandfather had on hand?

Leonel had no choice but to be quick on his feet, swapping out his bow for his spear once again. His wrist flickered as he fell back, clanging against the surging chains that threatened to suffocate him from all sides.

Unfortunately, Blackstar and the Sea Goddess weren't so lucky.

Leonel only diverted his attention for the most insignificant of split seconds, and yet there was a fourth Ability Index that almost did him in right then.

The chains suddenly exploded in weight and density. It was an Ability Index that reminded Leonel of Noah's, but simply on a completely different level. A normal amount of weight wouldn't throw Leonel off, but it felt like an entire universe had just been thrown at him.

He clashed with a chain and spear bent into a 'U' shape, nearly snapping back on him. A sickening crunch came from Leonel's arm as he tried to maintain his grip. He succeeded, but at the cost of his forearm bending in the wrong direction.

The pain didn't reflect in Leonel's eyes by much other than a flickering light.

Someone else would have used the momentum of the blow to try and make some distance, but Leonel had already regained his focus. He realized that this was exactly what Gervaise wanted him to do.

"Alright." Leonel said lightly. "Since you seem to really want to kill me, if I keep treating this like a joke, you just might think that I'm some sort of pushover, huh, gramps?"

Leonel's liquid divine armor spread over his skin and robes, snapping his forearm back into place. His King Force Dharma took shape above his head, and his body seemed flooded with the Force in an instant.

His gaze became a deeper hue of purple, and his hair looked as though sparkling amethysts were hidden within.

His body spun instead of retreating.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

With his grip on his spear tightening, he unleashed a torrent of cyclical blows that almost shattered the Regulator Chains.

By this point, Gervaise had already appeared high above the chained Blackstar and Sea Goddess. His hands were rapidly forming their own seals, his scepter floating about them.

Leonel only needed a glance to know that rather than killing him, Gervaise wanted to take them for himself.

"Overestimating yourself."

Leonel's eyes unleashed a glow, and at that moment, Blackstar and the Sea Goddess broke free of their time freeze and the Regulator Chains.

Gervaise's eyes narrowed, realizing that Leonel had just done something quite profound. He was breaking the rules of summons, using his King Force to give them abilities they shouldn't have.

With his connection with them, he had linked their Dream Force to his own, allowing him to bestow his abilities onto them...

This was King Force.

A Force truly fit for a King and his subjects.

ROAR!

Blackstar slashed out.

Gervaise was still in the middle of his seals and couldn't easily back out without causing backlash to his Dream Force.

Leonel thought he had him... when a fifth Ability Index activated.

Gervaise split into two perfect clones. Blackstar's claw broke through one of them, shattering him into a rain of blood and showering the now murky emerald waters below.

However, the second Gervaise didn't even react.

'What?' Leonel was truly speechless this time. He had never seen an Ability Index like this one, something that was suddenly becoming a running theme.

If he had to call it something, it would be Schrodinger's Ability Index. The clone

Gervaise had formed wasn't a clone at all. It was him. 100% him.

However, the laws of reality couldn't decide which one was the true Gervaise, and it wasn't confirmed until after one of them died.

But the thing was... Gervaise seemed to have manipulated the scales somehow. With yet another Savant ability, he was able to decide that whichever died was the fake one ahead of time.

It was an ability that even Leonel had a hard time wrapping his head around. This was beyond just being powerful; it was practically rewriting reality.

Gervaise raised his scepter high. There was a pulse of light and a huge accumulation of Force gathered, forming an enormous star above his head. He looked like nothing more than a tiny shadow beneath its enormous body.

Leonel knew that it was yet another Ability Index... one that seemed the simplest of them all, and yet held a profound ability hidden away in the shape it took...

That of a Star.

Leonel took a breath and exhaled. He had already said that he would get serious, but even then... he found himself holding back somewhat.

Somewhere deep inside, he felt that his grandfather was still weaker than the

Demoness. If he couldn't defeat him while messing around, the odds that he could defeat the Demoness would be next to nothing.

A mixture of familial ties and a small strand of doubt buried deep within himself mixed together to disrupt his better judgment.

Leonel looked up to gaze into his grandfather's emerald eyes.

This time, he didn't speak. The light faded from his eyes and he seemed to become a

cold, calculating machine.

Slowly, he raised his spear, his Royal Crest Dharma and his Violet Star appearing to finish off the trifecta of his three Dharmas.

Leonel vanished just as his grandfather sent his attack down in a slow arc.

Chapter 3252: A King and an Emperor (5)

Leonel raised a palm to the skies, appearing beneath the star his grandfather sent toward him.

It looked like a simple Ability Index this time, but it was truly anything but. This Ability Index was capable of causing a perfect Fusion between Star Force and any other Force, thus giving it the ability to accumulate a large amount of Force in a short period of time.

Stars across Existences were responsible for the existence of Force to begin with. It had to be remembered that Earth Force was only responsible for forming the anchor that Force attached themselves to, it was Stars that truly produced them in large quantities.

So just what kind of concept was it to be able to form a Star of any Force you already had control over? It was like Gervaise was his own walking generator, having access to an infinite supply of Force.

But it wasn't just a matter of quantity, or even just quality either. Both were off the charts, but what was truly shocking was the speed with which Gervaise could accumulate both.

This scale of attack was simply too shocking. It should take several minutes or even hours to accumulate this much Force. Otherwise, one would have to rely on a large-scale formation or something of the sort instead.

Yet, all Gervaise had done was casually raise his scepter into the air and he had already accumulated enough energy to feed over ten God Realm Worlds in a single breath.

There wasn't a single one of Gervaise's Ability Indexes that wasn't broken beyond reason, and Leonel had no reason to believe that these were the last of them.

He had already come to understand just how his grandfather had done this. This was obviously the product of an evolved form of [Assimilate] where Gervaise was able to take the Ability Indexes of his summons for himself.

Over the years, Gervaise had secretly accumulated the broken ability of several targets. Back on Earth, he had even had an entire prison of Savants to keep in check. Who was to say that he hadn't also gotten more abilities from them?

Indeed... the foundation that Gervaise had built for himself gave him the right to be arrogant, it gave him the right to look down on the world and proclaim himself Emperor, it gave him the right to ask this foolish grandson of his just who he thought he was.

He was born the genius of a generation... and maybe even that wasn't enough to describe just what level he stood alone at. He was so feared by the enemies of his
09:52 -

family for what he might grow to be in the future that they sacrificed billions of lives just to destroy the Fawkes before he had a chance to rise up.

But now he had.

He was no longer that little boy who could only watch everything be destroyed in front of him.

He was Gervaise Fawkes, Emperor of this world.

And even his grandson didn't have the right to stand in his way.

The eyes of both men flashed at once, roars leaving their lips as they clashed.

Leonel felt an overwhelming might press down on his palms and he was almost instantly sent flying back. But the issue was that the star followed with him, sticking to his hand and suffocating him from above.

It was so mind-numbingly large that the idea of side-stepping it before was impossible, let alone doing so now.

However, there remained a blazing intent in Leonel's eyes, a strong sense of duty, respect, and most of all... unbridled arrogance.

To form Stars was nice.

To create them was another matter entirely.

These seemed to be the same things, but as a Sovereign of Creation...

Leonel knew the difference well.

Leonel's arm pulsed and all at once, a Force Art raced across the body of the Star.

In one moment, it looked like a Star of emerald flames, and in the next, it was suppressed by a cage of complex violet Runes.

In an instant, Leonel had drawn a Force Art to cover the body of a star as though it was as easy as flipping over his palm.

A Natural Force Art.

No... an anti-Natural Force Art, one that bent Creation to such an extreme that it became no different from Destruction.

In what felt like a distant past, Leonel had faced off against the Spirituals of the Dimensional Verse, and they had a huge Natural Force Art net over their entire planetary system that had almost cost him his life.

Back then, he had been fascinated by their methods. They were able to tune their Natural Force Art to the resonance of their solar system, allowing them to gather power from it directly and even help individuals to display more strength than normal.

And here... Leonel had just done the same.

His grandfather's Ability Index was powerful, but it automated too much. The only reason it could work was because it relied so heavily on the Laws of the World and the natural abilities of Star Force. That was precisely where its strength came from.

But that also meant... that it had the same vulnerabilities of other Stars.

If you knew what you were doing, then its strength could become your own.

Leonel swept his spear backward, one hand still on the falling star as his violet hair danced in the wind. The pressure of the gravity threatened to rip him apart, but as far as he was concerned...

This Star was already his.

SHIIIIIIING!

The howl of Spear Force sang through the air.

The violet rune-covered star pulsed and then the Violet Star hanging behind Leonel's head rotated just a single time.

And then...

SHUUUU!

Gervaise's Star suddenly vanished.

An enormous vacuum appeared in the space it had left behind. For such a large object to suddenly disappear left a black hole-level force of suction in its wake.

Winds howled and space shattered, collapsing in itself.

Even Gervaise couldn't help but also be sucked in, while Leonel himself didn't fight against the current in the slightest. Instead, he held on to the very spear he had swept backward as his body began to glow even brighter than the Star that had just

disappeared.

That was when it all sank in for Gervaise.

Leonel had taken the power of the Star for himself and he was concentrating it all into a single attack... concentrated into a region that wasn't even fraction the size of the original Star.

Blaring warning signs of danger filled Gervaise's mind as his aura solidified. His body stabilized in the air as Leonel shot toward him like a rocket out of orbit.

Gervaise unleashed a roar, his robes shattering to pieces to reveal a body pulsing with a shocking vascularity.

At the same time, the echoes of his heartbeat and the raging blood through his veins began to boom across the air, seemingly having been suppressed earlier by his now shattered robes.

He held out his scepter in his hands and then pulled it back as well as though he was getting ready to thrust a spear.

The head of a dragon wrapped around the pearl, making it look as though the emerald beast was trying to swallow it whole.

Gervaise's golden band crown cracked beneath the pressure as the illusory green dragon around his scepter suddenly exploded in size, and then doubled again, and then again.

By the time it doubled once more, Leonel was there.

Their gazes clashed in the air and space shuddered and cracked.

The churning waters below had been blown so far apart that one could see clear to the bottom of the ocean, and even that wasn't enough as its moist earth exploded and shattered beneath the pressurized waves of their accumulating attacks. Blackstar and the Sea Goddess vanished just as the two unleashed everything they had, spear and scepter meeting high in the skies.

The clash was so shocking that their auras met several kilometers apart, so powerful and reverberating that they fought for dominion over large swaths of land.

However, in the end....

"You should have spent more effort learning to Craft, old man."

CRACK.

Gervaise's scepter cracked. Its pearl splintered as a fissure appeared on its surface in a single instant.

BANG!

The dragon head shattered with it and the scepter was blown away.

Gervaise's arm snapped backward, a rain of blood bursting from the limb as a pressurized wind tore it apart. But that was only the wind itself.

Soon after, the Force came.

Gervaise was swallowed up whole and his body seemed to vanish under the enormous current of violet energy.

A silence fell for but a moment before the green waters that had been sent soaring off in tsunami-like waves came crashing back, filling the hole left behind by the two. Leonel stood in the air, gasping for breath, a tingling discomfort coming from his mind as he looked up.

Chapter 3253: A King and an Emperor (6)

Gervaise stood high in the skies, seemingly half dead. He was missing an arm, and even extended from that, large swaths of skin and flesh had been seared off from his body, making him look like half a skeleton. Even half of his face was gone, leaving nothing but a green eyeball on one side of him.

And that cycball continued to carry a cold light as it stared down at Leonel.

Leonel stared back at him, not moving as he took deep breaths. He could feel that there was still a very potent danger coming from Gervaise, as though the man was staring at him now only to try and figure out what method of murder he would like to choose.

However, Leonel wasn't someone who would casually lose out in terms of momentum. He too was injured, but his injuries weren't nearly as severe as his grandfather's. The one that had come out on top was clear and obvious...

At least for now.

A flame suddenly flickered in Gervaise's eyeball before it expanded and suddenly swallowed up the fleshless parts of his body.

The green flame danced and Leonel sensed pulses of Dream Force as one summon after another was silently killed.

In the next moment, the flames vanished, revealing an indifferent and perfectly healed Gervaise.

Leonel watched silently and still didn't say or do much of anything. It was as though it didn't matter to him whether the Emperor healed or not... or maybe he knew that there wasn't much he could do to stop it in the first place.

Gervaise grabbed at the air and another scepter appeared.

"Is this necessary?" Leonel asked indifferently. This time, the amusement in his eyes had long vanished. Or maybe it had already vanished after he realized that Gervaise was truly doing his best to kill him.

He was accepting of that, it was fine enough. What he wasn't accepting of was someone that didn't know when to accept a loss.

The scepter Gervaise had just brought out was weaker than the last one. And it didn't even matter that he had been able to heal himself, because the price for doing so was heavier than not.

Gervaise had definitely sacrificed those Summons. And in order to heal himself from that level of injury, they had to be powerful as well.

That meant that they had powerful Ability Indexes, which meant that Gervaise had also lost a significant portion of his combat prowess as well.

Without those Ability Indexes, he would be more predictable. Though Leonel had been training all of his senses on his grandfather, he knew that his mental capacity had already surpassed that of Gervaise's own. If Gervaise had fewer trump cards to pull from, then he would only continuously be outmaneuvered by Leonel.

To make matters worse, his main weakness, his lack of support from his weapons, would only be exacerbated now that he was being forced to use an inferior weapon. Leonel was already a league beyond him, but now it was even worse.

In a fight that Leonel had no intention of making life and death, he didn't want his grandfather to do this.

This sort of effort, scraping at the bottom of the barrel for the slightest chance of survival when the battle was already decided, was something that you would only do if you felt like you were facing off against a real enemy.

Was it worth it?

"Even now... you are still so naive. I thought you would have grown up."

Gervaise's voice remained calm and indifferent.

"You've done enough." Leonel said as the anger in his voice could no longer be hidden. "Do you think I don't have methods of restraining you without killing you? Do you think you have the ability to force me to make a martyr out of you?"

Leonel felt like he was being insulted. If he was still being treated like a child at this point, then what had he been fighting for all this time? Or could it be that he had just overestimated his grandfather and his mental fortitude?

Gervaise met Leonel's gaze calmly, the reverberating beat of his heart still echoing with great force.

"You can't always have everything you want in life. The hardest things to control don't come from yourself"

Leonel's pupils trembled.

As much control as Leonel liked to have, as much power and authority his Ability Index gave him over his own body, it was only that...

His own body.

This was the hardest thing for a leader to grasp. Juggling one's own emotions was hard enough without also having to consider how everyone else felt.

Goggles had taught Leonel this intimately. Leonel had given him everything, trying to treat him like he was the same Goggles he was when he first met them...

But a person's experience shaped as much of who they were as their natural dispositions.

The Goggles that Leonel knew died that day in the battle against King Alexandre. He was never going to come back.

The only way he could accept the things that happened back then was by also accepting that the Goggles he was forced to kill was a completely different person.

You could give a person the world, you could do everything for them, you could even have their best interest in mind every step of the way, but what you could never control was how they reacted to your love.

Gervaise was a man of great pride. He was an Emperor who had dedicated his life, given every ounce of blood, sweat, and tears he had to reach this stage.

What was he supposed to do now? Just accept things in stride?

Would Leonel have just casually accepted it if he had lost? Or would he have fought to his very last breath for the last chance to grasp the fate he wanted more than even his own beating heart?

Leonel wanted to build a world for his family. He wanted his children to be able to frolic through the fields and for his wife to be able to pop out as many of those little munchkins as she wanted.

He wanted his grandfather and grandmother to live in harmony, for the Fawkes family to bloom the way his grandfather wanted, and for his grandmother to finally find the peace and security in herself that she had always been looking for.

He wanted his brothers to find the loves of their lives, or marry the ones they had already chosen... he wanted them to grow their own families, to feel what it was like to smile and laugh without a worry in the world.

He wanted Humans to have their place in the world again, for the Races to live in harmony, to form a world where one's talent didn't have to decide the quality of life you would live.

He had wanted all of these things for so long even though he had never said them in so many words... or maybe he had and they were just often marred by hatred, anger, or even his own insecurities.

If he thought about it... Would he allow his grandfather to stand in his way if he had lost this battle? Would he truly have been able to accept it in stride?

Naive, indeed...

The reality was that Leonel had never considered the possibility of losing, so he hadn't spared a single thought of it. He could split his mind billions of ways, and yet not one had gone down this line of thought, and maybe neither had his grandfather until they were both forced to face this moment.

Leonel's gaze never left his grandfather even as the man raised his scepter.

At that moment, he could see something that had always been there. The mountain of weight that they both shared.

Large and looming, the mass pressed down onto Gervaise's back, almost forcing his back to round over and collapse.

Gervaise seemed to barely be standing at all, but he continued to do so. Until the moment he breathed out his last, he wouldn't allow this weight to fall.

Unshed tears accumulated in Leonel's eyes as he seemed to see the world for the first time. The last thin barrier of something he hadn't even known was holding him back broke apart, shattering to pieces.

The three Dharmas to Leonel's back cracked apart, falling in a rain of violet.

The violet condensed, the aura of a forming Idol causing the world to shake and rumble.

A tear fell from Leonel's eyes as the violet condensed to his forehead. All three of his complex Dharmas formed an Idol so simple that it was hard to believe it had come from them.

It was a single thin band of violet-gold across his forehead. It perfectly mirrored the now cracked green-gold band of his grandfather... except it was whole and complete.

Leonel raised his spear as his aura seemed to vanish.

The world could no longer seem to measure him.

"I understand." He said calmly. "Then, come."

Chapter 3254: A King and an Emperor (7)

Gervaise's attack came swift and heavy, but a flicker of Leonel's wrist deflected the scepter.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

The emperor stumbled backward, his wrist shaking beneath the impact, but his gaze remained firm.

Leonel's senses picked up something beneath him as a Force Art suddenly appeared. It looked as though the maw of a green dragon had opened up beneath him, trying to swallow him from the bottom up. But this dragon was trapped in a mirror it was just about to soar out of.

With a single tap of his foot, a counter Force Art was drawn and the dragon's nose smashed against the glass, shattering it apart.

The pieces of the mirror fell to the ground as Leonel took a step forward, stabbing out with his spear several times in quick succession.

Gervaise used a combination of Force Arts and his scepter to block, his stern eyes locked in concentration as streaks of blood began to appear across his body, caused by attacks he couldn't perfectly block.

With a wave of his arm, Gervaise's scepter rippled out with a dense energy and his body seemed to multiply into several mirror images. Each one held out their scepters, drawing a large circle in the air.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

Leonel was swallowed up from all sides by strong beams of light, each one capable of seemingly wiping out a universe.

An image of Gervaise in the back tossed his scepter into the air, slamming his palms together and sending out a shockwave that caused space to crackle and bend.

It was as though he was already clear on the fact that this wouldn't be enough to deal with Leonel.

The cracked crown on his forehead splintered more as he pushed, his aura skyrocketing. A rush of powerful might spread out as a shadow appeared behind Gervaise.

PUCHI!

The shadow ripped a hole through the Emperor's chest, but this wasn't Leonel at all. That much became clear as the shadow pulled its arm back, slowly unearthing a scythe from the depths of Gervaise's heart.

Gervaise hacked up a mouthful of blood, the focus in his eyes only increasing as he unleashed a roar.

The shadow flickered before vanishing into Gervaise's own shadow. There was a shudder as Gervaise grabbed his scepter out of the air.

BOOM!

At that moment, the beams of light that had assaulted Leonel from all sides shattered. CHI! CHI! CHI! CHI!

Arrows ripped through the air and pierced through each image, the last appearing before Gervaise who now had a hole bleeding black blood right in the middle of his chest.

However, by that point, Gervaise had already plucked his scepter out of the air. With a ripple, its size expanded, a blade jetting out from its large pearl.

This blade wasn't connected to the scepter but instead seemed to hover near it as though they were one object.

With an arc of his arms, Gervaise split the arrow in two, his white-gold hair becoming a dark gold as tendrils of darkness began to pulse out from the corners of his eyes.

Death Sovereignty.

Leonel could feel it quite clearly. It seemed that his grandfather was far from running out of trump cards. But it only seemed natural. If he could steal Ability Indexes, there was no reason that he wouldn't be able to steal other things as well.

This one seemed to be particularly special, though. He was so casual with how he had brought out the Pluto, but this Void Race member... he was especially cautious, even going as far as to hide it away in the depths of his very body.

Just summoning this construct required an act of self-mutilation almost on the same level as the time Leonel had been forced to allow himself to be eaten alive.

However...

It just wasn't enough.

Gervaise was still in the motion of cutting the arrow when Leonel had already appeared before him.

To his credit, he reacted quickly, but the death aura of the blade was sliced through by Leonel as though it wasn't even there.

A reverberating tempest of blows echoed through the region as Leonel and his grandfather crossed blades. Their tempo was fast and hard to follow, a cascade of sounds that should have been individual resonating and bleeding into one another until it sounded like nothing more than a continuous, long, drawn-out echo.

But what was clear was that Leonel firmly held the upper hand.

The scythe was parried and pushed aside at his will, his blade cutting into Gervaise's body again and again.

There was a fierce intent to kill that permeated both of their eyes, a bloodlust hanging in the air as they flickered and vanished time and time again.

Their speed caused the world to warp around them, even to the point that the laws of time seemed to cease to make sense.

Images of less-injured versions of Gervaise began to meld in with more-injured versions. Sometimes, attacks that should have reverberated several seconds ago were delayed by a minute in both sound and image. And sometimes, clashes from the future would flicker around the duo as they were locked in the present.

Each time this happened, it was like Gervaise was getting a peek into the inevitability of it all, but his gaze remained firm and unbothered, the chilly coldness hidden in the depths of them neither warming up nor chilling any further.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The two separated and a haggard breath came from Gervaise, contrasting the smooth casualness of Leonel's own.

Leonel took a step forward and his bow appeared in his hand. A kilometer separated him and his grandfather, but this sort of distance might as well have been nose to

nose at their level.

His arrows began to rain down again as Gervaise struggled to parry them.

An arrow ripped through Gervaise's shoulder, but he didn't so much as flinch, slashing out to destroy a follow-up arrow only to suffer a similar wound from a third.

Leonel's rain of arrows was relentless, each one aiming for a vital spot. His arm blurred in the air and the images of the past, present, and future began to bleed into

one another.

The flicker of his fingers seemed to carry the cadence of a Crafter, his Finger Designation having reached unfathomable levels.

As though he were drawing his fingers across the keys of a piano, he moved with a careless elegance, and once again, his Bow Force seemed to reach a new height

entirely.

A Force Art was quickly forming before Leonel's bow, and every time an arrow went through the incomplete Force Art, it seemed to become stronger.

The more complete the Force Art became, the more trouble Gervaise had in protecting his own life.

Arrows ripped through Gervaise's legs and limbs, but in a relentless bid, Gervaise activated another Ability Index and an illusory hand appeared high above his head. The hand flexed and puppet strings attached themselves to Gervaise's body.

At that moment, the weakness of Gervaise's body after tanking so many injuries no longer seemed to matter.

He slashed down with great might, roaring as a cascade of arrows were ripped to shreds, splintering like wood in a hurricane.

But then Leonel's Force Art completed itself.

Staring at the Force Art, Gervaise found himself frozen.

It wasn't out of fear, but rather because he physically couldn't move. The Force Art seemed to claim dominion over all Dream Force, ripping his puppeteering Ability Index to shreds and leaving behind nothing more than a weak body that could no

longer hold up to this sort of pressure.

But it was deeper than even that...

His very soul was frozen, unable to think properly, unable to formulate a new solution for the trouble he was dealing with now.

The gazes of King and Emperor met.

The world fell to silence, the oceans below becoming as calm as the surface of the lake even as the rubberbanding of past and present slowly fused together into one just in time for Gervaise to see one final glance of the future...

One where his body was torn apart, his soul ripped to shreds, and the last vestiges of his will being eliminated under the might of the arrow.

There was no suspense, there was not even a corpse left. The powerful will of Gervaise didn't even allow Leonel to show this bit of mercy. When facing a man who was willing to give up everything for his hopes and dreams, there was only one way to deal with him... and if that man happened to be an all-powerful existence who would continue to battle so long as there was the slightest shred of him left, there was truly only one path forward to take.

Leonel had no choice but to destroy everything this Emperor had been, once was, or could become.

Gervaise didn't waver in the slightest, the light in his eyes making one thing clear... if Leonel gave him even the slightest opportunity... he would take it.

The last light of hope in Leonel's eyes dimmed as his fingers trembled, releasing the arrow.

It appeared before the Emperor in a final sweeping might.

PUCHI!

It ripped through Gervaise's forehead, shattering his Ethereal Glabella.

The remaining force was so powerful that

it ruptured the rest of his body, sending him blasting out in a rain of blood and gore.

At that moment, the aftershocks of the future and the present melded into one, the

layers fusing and combining into one final, undeniable conclusion.

The death of an Emperor.

Chapter 3255: An Emperor

The last moments of Gervaise's life seemed to last an eternity. He could feel his life slipping away from him, but all he could do was sigh. It seemed that in the end, he hadn't been able to accomplish what he had promised.

He had carried this weight on his shoulders for so long, that guilt.

He could still remember every moment of the destruction of the Fawkes family, how many people sacrificed their lives just so that he could survive.

Not a single one of them acted out selfishly. Even though it was all his fault, even though they would have been just fine if he had never been born, they still went above and beyond, sacrificing themselves to the last man...

And then he remembered his own father.

Prometheus Fawkes.

That broad back, those shoulders that seemed to hold up the skies, and that stoic sort of smile that rarely came out and yet carried with it the grace of an Emperor.

He was such an arrogant man, a man who deserved to sit atop the world and call it his own, the one man who was actually worthy of ruling Existence like Gervaise hoped

to...

But that man, who had pride running into the very depths of his bones, had actually lowered his head for the sake of his son.

The inaction of the Pluto was always something that had filled Gervaise with endless amounts of fury. But it wasn't their inaction itself that truly made him so filled with wrath. It was the fact his father, the man he respected most in the world, was forced to ask for their help in the end.

Gervaise knew his father well. If it was only for himself, Prometheus would have preferred death over asking the Pluto for anything, even if the Pluto owed them.

However, for the sake of finding a path for Gervaise to survive, that prideful man had lowered his head, making a trip to the Pluto.

Gervaise hadn't been present, but he knew the ways of the world now that he had long since matured. He could imagine the sorts of humiliation his father had had to face that day, how the Pluto had likely made him feel like he was asking for a handout, how they had debased him and turned their noses up at him,

His father shouldn't have had to go through that. But because of him, because of his stupid talent, their lives were completely upended.

He had really wanted... to be the one who corrected all of that...

He had really wanted... to be the man who brought the Fawkes back to the peak of the world, that destroyed the Void Race, and pressed the Pluto beneath his heel for their arrogance. He wanted to wipe the Four Great Families out to their last man, and then face off against the Northern Star with a happy smile on his face.

Every second of his life, he had pushed himself to the extremes... but as he neared the end, he realized, ironically enough, that the very talent that had destroyed his family wasn't enough to help him rise above it all.

In the end, he wasn't as good as this grandson of his. And maybe he needed to see it through to the end to finally be accepting of that.

It was just that... he didn't want to accept that the talent that was the reason for the destruction of his life, his family, his mother... his father...

Wasn't the best there was...

Because then... what was the point of it all? They had gone so far, and he couldn't even justify it to himself like this.

It only filled him with more anger.

He had to be the strongest. He had to be the one that lifted up this mountain. He had to be the one who justified both the pain his family had suffered, and the one who pulled them out of it.

Even facing his death, this will burned so fiercely and strongly that he wanted to find a way to struggle...

But it was in vain. There was nothing to hold onto, nothing to push against, nothing for him to even apply pressure on or with for that matter.

His body was gone. His soul was dispersed. All that was left...

Was death.

In the end, it wasn't enough. No amount of will, no amount of rage, no amount of hopeless begging or pleading, would change much of anything.

As prideful as his father was, he had to lower his head to the Race he hated with every fiber of his being.

And now, he, Gervaise Fawkes, the Emperor of a Generation, would have to accept his loss much the same way his father had.

It was just that he had wished... that he could have done so with as much purposeful drive as Prometheus had.

Gervaise found himself frozen again after having this thought. He couldn't remember having ever had it before, but now, facing his death, he felt that he finally had.

His words before were right. The one thing that would always be uncontrollable were the thoughts and emotions of others. If you could, then they would no longer be their own person.

The world had too many variables in it, but it was precisely these variables that

allowed the uniqueness of every individual. You couldn't separate a person's experiences from who they were...

This was why reviving someone would never be easy. Even if Gervaise could revive his father, what then? Would he make that prideful man live out his life knowing that he failed to sacrifice himself for his son and was instead now only alive thanks to the sacrifices of this child of his?

Even if Prometheus was happy for a few days, maybe in a few years, the worthlessness of his existence, or at his perceived worthlessness, would turn him into a completely different person... a man more jaded by life, more filled with hatred, less prideful because then...

What would be the point of everything he had done.

Life was always a road of assigning arbitrary value to things. This was what Leonel had to realize himself... he had to come to an understanding that maybe life itself wasn't any more special than a rock laying by the side of the road. Maybe life was only valuable because the living said it was...

And that was enough of an answer in itself.

It was because of this that Leonel had chosen to have children even though it felt like an objectively foolish decision. It was why Aina had abandoned the thought of reviving her mother. And it was why Gervaise was spending the last flickering embers of his life

in a daze.

Prometheus had decided the own value of his life, believing that what gave it worth was allowing his son to live the life he deserved to... to give his son a chance to be the Emperor of a World...

Before he died, Prometheus never said a word about revenge. He just wanted his son to live.

Unlike the challenges Leonel faced, Prometheus hadn't believed that Gervaise's clash with the God Realm was inevitable. The Demoness wasn't avoidable, but Gervaise's enemies were.

It was left up to Gervaise to take the position he had and did the things he did. But in doing so, he had lost his purpose along the way.

Was revenge really all he wanted?

No. If that was true, then he would be fine with Leonel taking his place so long as it got done.

Was it the satisfaction of revenge dealt by his own hands?

Somewhat... at the very least, this would justify all the pain, suffering, and humiliation he had put his family through...

But that answer in and of itself seemed to prove that there was a deeper underlying

V

reason.

It wasn't because he wanted the satisfaction himself, but because he wanted to retroactively justify everything that had happened... only by being the best could he justify the pain he had brought to the Fawkes family... only by proving their enemies correct about the threat he was could he finally set the weight on his shoulders

down...

But by virtue of that, from the very beginning, he was chasing after an ending that

would allow him to finally shrug this mountain off of his shoulders. He was trying to climb to a mountain peak, not for the ends, but so that the ends would justify the

means...

In those last moments of his life, Gervaise found himself asking himself a question he never thought he would...

Had he ever truly wanted to be an Emperor...?

Or did he...

Just want his family back?

The last embers of Gervaise flickered out, his thoughts drifting into the wind on a current into silence and solitude...

Until a hand wreathed in violet suddenly reached out, pulling him out of the darkness.

Gervaise gasped as though his head had just broken the surface of water.

The first sight he saw was the pale face of his grandson staring at him with tears streaking down his face.

"I really hate you, old man, Could you have waited any longer?"

Chapter 3256: Fruits

Leonel really wanted to punch his grandfather in the face, but he felt that that might not be appropriate given the moment.

He had really been about to let the old man go. When you were faced with these sorts of issues, the only person who could choose to live was the person themselves. Unless Gervaise could realize that being an Emperor was never something he wanted, but something he had forced, hypnotizing himself into believing he wanted, then there would be no amount of bringing him back that would change anything.

In the end, if he had revived his grandfather without his input into it, then they would have just ended up locked in battle again and Leonel would have been forced to kill him once more.

Or... Gervaise might have accepted his loss and become a twisted version of the man Leonel knew him to be.

Regardless of which of these happened, it wasn't something that Leonel wanted to see. At that point, the man he knew would be dead... so what would be the point in bringing him back?

This was something that Leonel had accepted long ago.

What part of a person did you actually value?

If it was just their fleshy bits and the blood that ran through them, then yes, the younger version of him was right... life was worthless.

He could remember having a crisis when he realized that the Silver Tablet was capable of reviving people from the dead. Back then, he had assigned too much weight to the physical existence of a person, and not nearly enough on the other factors that made them who they were.

Now... he knew far better.

Leonel didn't think that there would ever be a point in time that he cried for this grandfather of his. He wasn't the sort of person who got attached easily, and all things considered, he didn't know this grandfather of his very well...

Or so he had thought.

But he realized during their battle, and as he was dying, that he was truly tired of losing people.

He had lost friends, lost family, and lost countless more things in pain, anguish, and hardship.

He was so completely and utterly fed up with it all.

His reaction to his grandmother's near-death had said it all. He truly didn't want to lose a single more soul...

But it was deeper than just that as well. In fact, it was deeper for two reasons. First, this grandfather of his meant more to him than he had realized. He was the man who built the foundation for him to grow into the man he was today... in a lot of ways, Fawkes was akin to a second father to Leonel. Just because he hadn't known him from his youth like he had his real father, didn't mean that Gervaise was any less impactful. Recalling everything he had gone through, from being a refugee of Shield Cross Stars, to being given the chance to reaffirm his Dimensional Foundation from the Third Dimension upward... all of these things were matters that his grandfather had helped him accomplish whether from the shadows or actively.

Even now, Leonel had no idea how his grandfather had managed to allow him to do the impossible and return to the Third Dimension. Though... after their battle, he had a pretty good guess.

It was almost surely on the long list of broken Ability Indexes that he had.

Gervaise was still in a bit of a daze, but understanding slowly overcame him. He looked down at the hand Leonel was using to hold him up.

"How long are you going to hold me by my collar like that?"

"I don't know, old bastard. How long are you going to dangle like a toddler? Aren't you a man? Stand up yourself."

Leonel let go, but Gervaise, who should have fallen to the waters below, just hovered as though nothing had happened.

Then, as though nothing had happened at all, he brushed away the wrinkles on his robes as though they weren't littered with holes and wounds, and then began to walk away.

Leonel was speechless. That was it?

"Where are you going?"

"To see my wife." Gervaise replied casually, already over a kilometer away.

"Don't you know how to say thank you? How about: 'I love you, grandson?'. I can also settle for: 'You are my lord and savior and I'll worship you to my final breath..'"

"No."

These were the only words Gervaise said before he disappeared from Leonel's sights entirely.

This time, Leonel was truly without words. He had thought that Nilrem was shameless, but his grandfather truly took the cake.

Leonel shook his head and then began to laugh, his tears becoming motes of violet light that danced in the surroundings.

It seemed that there was another way to save people as well.

"There's still much to do..." Leonel thought to himself, looking toward the tall ceiling of the underground catacomb as though he could see right through to the skies above... or

maybe it was that no matter where you were, it was impossible to miss the Northern Star's influence no matter where you were.

That aside, there was indeed much to do...

The Four Great Families... The Void Race... The Pluto... The Minerva... The Sylvans...
The Demoness.

Leonel should be raising war banners and charging out onto the battlefield. But at the moment...

He had no desire to do so.

The matters of the world would come. The end of the world would come. His enemies weren't going anywhere.

So why should he rush to deal with them?

There was no reason to not spend every moment as though it might be their last.

And that was precisely what Leonel did. He too went to see his wife.

It wasn't until over half a year later that Leonel finally seemed to recall that the world was in chaos and there were things that he finally had to handle.

He peeled himself out from under his wife's body, swinging his legs to the side of their bed and standing to his full height.

Exhaling a breath, the breath of calm in him solidified into a hidden coldness. Putting on his robes, he stood a strong step out, appearing high above Anastasia's world.

Seemingly sensing something, Anastasia appeared by his side a moment later, her aura glowing.

"How is it?" Leonel asked lightly.

"Everything is prepared."

"Explain it to me."

Leonel truly hadn't been paying any attention this time. He hadn't wanted to make Anastasia do all the work on her own, but she had insisted. It seemed that she was still feeling guilty about what happened back then. So... Leonel took his grandfather's

lessons to heart.

Controlling the heart of the people wasn't nearly as easy as controlling his own. And a step further than that... he shouldn't want to control their hearts either. Otherwise.

.

what made them the people he wanted to love and surround himself with would be erased, lost in an endless tide of space and time.

Anastasia was still carrying around guilt surrounding his father's death. She knew that in exchange for herself, Velasco very well might still be here today. Leonel didn't want her carrying around extra unnecessary guilt, so he had allowed her

to do as she pleased.

And she truly performed.

"The Morales have all been fast-tracked properly. Their compatibility with Valor Force is extraordinary and it evolved their Constellation perfectly. The Morales Dimensional Method we created paired well with [Dimensional Cleanse]. The Constellation allowed their Stars to synergize excellently."

The plan with the Morales was multi-layered, but it built upon functions that they had already come to understand.

The Spear and Creation halves of their abilities were combined thanks to Valor Force. But the true shocking displays of their abilities came thanks to the synergy between [Dimensional Cleanse] and their Constellation.

As the creator of [Dimensional Cleanse], Leonel understood it the most intimately. So doing something like tweaking it was excellent. But it was also thanks to Anastasia workshopping a special Morales Dimensional Method that everything came together

so well.

The short of it was that he was able to use [Dimensional Cleanse] to help the Morales form Stars of their own. These Stars would then arrange in a formation when they were activated, and this would in turn form the foundation for the army's Force Art.

Ever since Leonel had learned about army syncing in the Cataclysm Zone, he had been playing around with and tweaking it.

Now, he felt that he had created the strongest army formation in all of existence. Not only was it built into the family's Constellation, but it also fed off the Idol of a True God... Valor Force.

And all of that was tied together perfectly by the Morales Dimensional Method.

By now, Leonel understood that the Demoness had created the Morales Lineage Factor for her own whims and wishes... but now she would face the fruits of her labor herself.

[Important Announcement Below]

Chapter 3257: Bunch of Babies

The drums of war echoed across the God Realm.

Four Great Families.

Imperatress Anselma walked with vigorous strides, the strips of her red gown practically hovering above the marbled ground, fusing into her red-gold hair. BANG!

Her palms slammed the wide double doors of a throne room open.

Several gazes landed on her at once, but with every step she took, her aura only seemed to grow until she eventually stood like a towering mass.

The current Head of the Brazinger family looked at her with a frown, but by the time she had placed a foot on the first staircase, he was covered in such a heavy cold sweat that he no longer dared to speak.

A memory triggered in his mind as Anselma climbed the stairs and his emotions quickly flickered from rage, to shock, then fear, then understanding.

"Scram." Anselma said coldly.

Berat was a veteran of war. A man who had bathed both his skin and blades in blood. However, right now, he couldn't seem to muster up the momentum he needed to do much other than move out of the way.

Anselma didn't slow a single time as though she already expected that Berat would move for her.

Without breaking her stride, she crossed the threshold of the final step and took a scat, facing off against a sea of red eyes staring back at her. Each was colored with some shade of confusion, not understanding what was going on.

The woman in question herself trembled slightly when she sat on the throne. Memories she had long forgotten whizzed by in her mind one after another. With each new consolidated thought, her aura grew less violent and more solid.

By the end of it, she seemed to recall just who she was as well.

"Ha." A single, hollow chuckle came from her lips.

When she had been walking here, her body had practically been controlled by a mysterious power and she could only watch as a third party as she did something she would have normally never dared to do.

But now that she understood... she felt like it was all just one big joke.

"I, the Imperatress, actually have a day where I fall so far."

10:00 -

Losing her temper for a man, torturing mere mortals, being sent fleeing with her tail between her legs by a mere child.

She had prepared herself to recall her previous life with quite some regrets. With things like this, it was impossible to control every variable.

She had thought that she might accidentally marry a man who was beneath her status, or maybe humiliate herself in various ways. But this left a taste of disgust even in her mouth...

Not because she regretted the actions, but because she regretted the reasons for them.

If she was going to kill, maim, and humiliate, she should do it for herself.

A cold sneer spread across her beautiful features.

Aina Brazinger, was it? Did a woman who took another family's name deserve to carry their blood?

"Who are the Brazingers?" Anselma asked, a chilly wind spreading beneath the weight and majesty of her tone.

The Brazingers, even the most skeptical ones, were compelled to answer by a mysterious power. Their mouths opened at once and the aura in the throne room solidified.

"WE BLEED."

A simple two words. Yet, they resonated with an echo that howled across space and time.

The Imperatress had returned.

The weight of the words didn't seem to settle in for a time. Anselma had carried the title of Imperatress for all her life, and others called her by it naturally as though it was just a fact of life.

But it wasn't until today that the meaning was realized.

And she wasn't the only one that revived on this day.

Dreadarch Eryvon of the Laevis supplanted the Head of the Laevis.

Thronebearer Loryth of the Crudus directly took the Head of the Crudus.

Regentrix Myxor hung the Head of the Adurna to dry, allowing her to slowly die beneath the sun and the crows.

The Imperatress. The Thronebearer. The Dreadarch. The Regentrix...

Each one had returned.

But the latter three only had one action they all took when they recovered their memories. Without fail, they all turned to the Brazinger Clan, falling to a knee.

Anselma sat on her throne in silence, her eyes closed and her breathing even. The slight movement of her chest was the only proof that she was still alive at all.

When she sensed the actions of the three, a fiendish grin spread across her face. With her eyes still closed, it looked to be particularly out of place.

"... There is only room for one lioness at the top!"

**

Leonel sat at the top of the Ascension Palace stairs. He looked down toward the sea of warriors below, some looking at him with complicated glances, some with confusion,

others with unwillingness.

"You see that?" Leonel asked his son and daughter.

Little Leo was standing on the top step Leonel sat upon, half hiding behind his father's shoulder as though only this gave him the courage to peer over and take a look at the millions looking up at them.

Leah, though, was sitting on her father's lap, only barely peeking out from burying her head in his chest.

"Mhm..." Leo said, squeezing out his words.

"Most of them aren't very happy with me. Whether it be that they're still very loyal to my grandfather, or the fact that they think the world is ending so there's no point in scrambling for power right now."

Leonel's voice wasn't very hidden, so many froze when he spoke out such things so candidly.

"Most of them will probably never put their full effort into the coming battle, some probably have plans of defecting and end rushing off to the middle of nowhere to live out the remainder of what little time they have left. What do you think?" Leonel asked

Leo.

"Bunch of babies." Leo muttered.

Leonel sputtered with laughter as a spark of rage lit within the army below.

Chapter 3258: First Blood

"Oh, you're angry?" Leonel said between his bouts of laughter. "So what?"

With those words, Leonel stood to his feet, his aura changing.

"You know who isn't worried about the end of the world? The Pluto. The Void Race. The Beastmen. The Minerva. The Sylvans. While you're here busy sulking, they're positioning themselves to take everything you're worth.

"I can hear your thoughts. I can see through those pitiful expressions. You don't care. Maybe you think they're wasting their time. But this is the difference between them and the Human Race.

"They know how to take what they deserve. All you all know how to do is wait for it to be handed to you.

"The Creation Beasts granted you power in the past, and when they passed away, you lost it. My grandfather granted you power this time, and now you want to squander it. "You have no backbone, no heart, no conviction. It's no wonder the entire world looks down on the Human Race. What are you worth?"

Leonel's voice was powerful, but he didn't shout. And yet, it felt like each one of their chests were rattling with the vibrations of his words.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Suddenly, to Leonel's back, one heavily armored existence after another appeared.

"It seems that all of you have forgotten what it means to be Human. Morales men. Remind them."

ROAR!

Leonel took a step as the Morales roared behind him. The aura of the madmen of the Dimensional Verse shook the stars and the skies, and before the Northern Star, they didn't shrink even the tiniest bit.

To his back, his Generals took the stage. From Joel to Elthor, and then from James to Emna.

The only one that seemed to be missing... was his wife.

But if Leonel wasn't worried about that, then it probably wasn't anyone else's place to be.

Not to mention the fact... it was hard for them to focus on anything other than the steadily building momentum in the skies.

"I will say this only once." Leonel's voice became glacially cold. "I do not have the time to slowly win you all over, nor do I have the patience. If you do not fall in line, I will kill until the stars' cries and the rivers run red.

"I have the blood of my own cousin on my hands. Don't think that your relation to me will save you.

"I do not favor the Morales over you. Both are my family. However, unlike you all, they have a grudge that they have been nursing for many years. While you all... have gotten soft and complacent. You don't know war. You don't know battle.

"You will either learn how to live in this rain of blood or you will die. There is no other option."

SHIIIIIIING!

Leonel reached to his back, his spear unearthing itself from the depths of space. He pointed it toward the skies and a spear howled across Existence. At that moment, there wasn't a single person alive who didn't hear it.

Down below, Mordred's gaze flickered with a complicated light.

She still remembered the young boy who had a heart that was still too kind for his own good. That young boy helped her rebuild her relationship with her father and her mother... the young man that took in a world of people who didn't have a proper place in the world and showed them that they weren't just words on page, but rather real people that deserved to be treated as such.

But now, he was no longer that young boy.

At least that was what she thought before she felt an image of Leonel winking at her surface in her mind.

She blinked, wiping her eyes in confusion. But the image was long gone, and the sight of Leonel standing in the skies coldly with his daughter in his arms was firmly imprinted once more.

"I am no Emperor. I will draw my blade and I will shed blood with you on the battlefield. However, I am likewise unwilling to allow your pettiness and selfishness to go unpunished either. I will give you as much as you give me back.

"Beneath my charge, not only will the Human Race rise to its previous glory, it will surpass it."

The skies rippled as Leonel slashed his blade down. The blue seemed to part like the seas, a moon in the far-off distance trembling once before it was split in two.

"And... the cowering rats that only know how to backstab and take advantage of numbers and the weaknesses of others will suffer the fate they always had coming to them."

The moon fell into two halves, the faint image of it barely perceptible in the bright light of day. However, what was clear was the fleet of ships surging over from a

distance.

Without the moon blocking their line of sight, the Ascension Emperor citizens realized something horrifying.

Leonel wasn't just lying to them. He was very much telling the truth.

Even if they wanted to relax and rest on their laurels until the end of days...

Their enemies wouldn't allow them such a luxury.

While they were busy sulking, the rest of the world was scrounging up just the slightest hope.

The moment they had this collective thought, the sound of glass shattering echoed through the ether.

A ship cut through the darkness, wreathed in golden roots and bark. Unlike the others, it seemed to be living and breathing.

In its depths, an ancient tree swayed in silence, and all seemed right and perfect... Until there was a sudden pulse of red.

A face appeared in the body of the ancient tree and it coughed out a mouthful of blood.

The peaceful atmosphere was shredded to pieces.

"I'm glad you're on your way here so I don't have to waste my effort. Trying to use

Dream Force to influence my citizens...? You Sylvans do a great job overestimating yourselves.

"Let your death be the first blood of this war."

CHI.

The ancient tree was split in two.

Chapter 3259: Overgrown Weeds

A savage grin spread across Leonel's face.

Were the Fawkes really such cowards? Maybe in part, but definitely not to the point that it would be such a systemic problem. Violence and rage were reactions that he was ready for. This pacifism and self-loathing wasn't part of that equation.

It made the manipulation almost too obvious.

There was only one reason they would react like this.

The Dream Force undercurrents of the Ascension Empire had already been controlled by others.

But before this plan could even be executed on, Leonel directly shattered it with a few words.

In this world... if he said he was second in Dream Force control, only one person dare to claim being first, while the others were ignorant of their own inferiority.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

A familiar scene played out as the Fawkes snapped awake. They didn't even have the time to react to the changes properly before their world was entirely surrounded.

Ships wreathed in golden roots shook to a stop. However...

CHI!

One was suddenly split in two right down the middle.

What should have been an oppressive rival was cut through just as easily. It was only then that those that thought Leonel was just showing off his power realized that he was, in fact, attacking something they hadn't even been able to see, let alone attack themselves.

A gloominess hung in the air, several oppressive Dream Forces descending. Their minds were so powerful that just the fluctuations in their emotions seemed to paint the skies a different color.

One after another, one Sylvan elite appeared per ship, standing on their backs as though they were one part their body and another part transportation.

Leonel wasn't surprised to see this. This method was the one the Sylvans had come up with to deal with one of their greatest weaknesses.

Their perceptions were the greatest when they were rooted down. But when they were rooted, they were also highly vulnerable.

Like this, they could have the best of both worlds.

However, seeing them appear like this, Leonel couldn't help but raise his head to the

10:02

sky and unleash a billowing laughter.

Leah frowned, pouting as she used her little hands to cover her ears.

"Daddy, you're too loud."

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry. It's just too funny."

"What's funny?" Leah asked, confused.

"Do you know who claims to be the smartest Race in Existence?"

Leah blinked. "Oh, the Sylvans?"

"That's right."

"But daddy said that they're just overgrown weeds."

The gloominess of the Sylvans only deepened.

Leonel burst into laughter again. "I did say that, true."

"You also said that in the past, our Ancestors used to use their leaves to wipe their-"

Leonel hurriedly covered his daughter's mouth, a cold sweat matting his back. If she finished that, Aina would definitely have him by the balls later.

"Yes, yes, I did say that."

Leah blinked innocently, a smile in her eyes.

"Alright, three scoops of ice cream."

Leah held up her chubby little fingers.

"Alright, fine. Four."

The giddy little dance his daughter did brought a smile to Leonel's face. For a moment, he almost forgot that he was in the middle of a battlefield.

"... I do not know what Emperor Fawkes was thinking handing his Kingdom over to you, but even though you are clearly lacking in many respects, you at least share your grandfather's overblown sense of confidence."

Leonel looked over, seemingly offended. "What do you mean overblown? That bark that covers your body sure makes your skin a bit thick."

Leah giggled.

"Eryndal is your name, right?" Leonel asked as though he didn't already have the answer, but the Sylvan Ancestor fused to the floating vessel couldn't help but narrow his eyes. His name wasn't something that most should know. Even if they did, they would know him by his title, not his full name.

"No need to be surprised," Leonel continued. "Your Race might not be very smart, but what they are is long-living. I read a passage about you in the Life Tablet. You started off as a walking stick for-."

"ENOUGH!"

Eryndal's roar parted the clouds.

"-Rhyntia the Gentle, right?" Leonel's voice cut through as though Eryndal hadn't spoken. "Quite noble of you to help out others in their old age. It's quite interesting, though. All of your Races descend from Humans, or so I thought. So why were you a normal block of wood?"

"That confused me for a long while until I understood.

"The God Beasts of Creation were doing quite a lot of experimentation back then. I wonder how many people ended up dead because of it?"

"If you read history at face value, you might miss a lot of the finer details. Like how..." a coldness flashed in the depths of Leonel's gaze. "... Plants like you grow best with fertilizer."

The echo of Eryndal's roar was still hovering over the horizon. But it did nothing to stop Leonel's words from cutting through.

Eryndal's chest heaved and the murderous intent of the other Sylvans only seemed to grow.

"Those... will be some of the last words you speak." He said coldly.

"Is that so?" Leonel asked. "In that case, how about I say some more. Have you noticed something odd about what's happening here?"

Eryndal frowned, the bronzed orbs that were his eyes practically piercing through Leonel as though trying to see through him.

"Do you think that your Race is really the smartest there is? You think you got here first, after months of planning, thinking that you'd have the leg up? Did you think that everyone would allow you to fly under the radar because you're neutral "pacifists"? Who did you think you were fooling here, exactly?"

Eryndal slowly calmed, his face becoming entirely expressionless.

His Dream Force reacted in kind, calming until the skies stilled once again, the deformed clouds remaining as the only proof of their previous fury.

"And what do you mean by that, exactly?"

A malevolent grin spread across Leonel's face. "They sent you here to die. You're nothing but a sacrificial lamb to roast, here to test my bottom line.

"But they'll learn quite soon that you're not worthy of that.

"Kill them all." Leonel said coldly.

BANG!

Leonel's army shot into the air.

Chapter 3260: Blood.

Blood.

The scent hung heavily in the air, tinting what should have otherwise been a clear atmosphere crimson.

Aina walked slowly through a plain that didn't seem very special. It was flat, mostly barren of life, and it didn't have the slightest bit of character to it...

Aside from the large castle right in the middle of it all.

Aina's approach couldn't have been more silent, but it also didn't look like she was trying to hide her presence at all.

She was alone, accompanied by nothing more than the ax on her back and the leather armor on her body.

Her eyes were so emotionless that they were practically dull. They would have been had it not been for the resplendence of their golden hue.

But her brows remained flat, her lips gently pressed together, her neck proudly straightened, drawing a line right from the back of her head to her planted feet.

However... that scent of blood was only becoming more suffocating, more

omnipresent, until the blue skies above became purple... and then from purple, they became a deep rouge.

The change was so oppressive that even the sun that hung high in the skies trembled, dimming and becoming painted in crimson as well.

Despite all of the changes... one would have never thought that they were related to the beautiful young mother walking calmly across the plain.

Anselma's eyes suddenly snapped open, her pupils constricting.

There was a slight palpitation in her heart that she ruthlessly suppressed, but the solemnness between her brows hadn't vanished.

Her head turned and her crimson irises flashed as she seemed to see through the walls of the palace.

"I see..."

Anselma slowly stood to her feet.

"This Founder's Ax has returned home."

...

Aina's steps didn't pause for a moment. She felt a gaze land on her, one that she recognized intimately, but it might as well have been nothing more than air.

Her gait was even, so mechanically precise that it could be measured down to the exact millimeter without a hint of deviation.

The battle ax trembled on her back, greedily soaking in the bloodlust in the air. How many years had it been?

Aina's expression finally slowed just the slightest hint of deviation, her head tilting up to the skies.

She had been not much older than her daughter was now when those matters took place. Being forced to experience the horrible fate of her mother, as she lost her life piece by piece to the sickening torture methods of the Brazingers.

She had bled more blood than she cared to count for, waiting for this day.

Memories floated by her thoughts one after another... days she would train until her body was too tired to even sleep properly... days she would swing her weapon so many times it felt as though her joints themselves had become calloused... days she used to shatter her own bones just to grow them back stronger.

Her training methods had only grown more devastating, more cruel... more masochistic with every step she took.

And yet, it never felt like it was enough.

She always wanted to push further, press harder.

A light smile spread across Aina's lips as a fond memory came to mind.

When she was younger, she used to have a terrible habit of biting her lips whenever she was agitated. She had grown out of that long ago, but it wasn't because she had forgotten about it.

Every time she thought about doing so, she remembered words that maybe even Leonel didn't remember saying.

"You shouldn't do that..." Aina said softly. "... You'll scar your lip..."

She hadn't known what to think back then, and it made her even more afraid to face Leonel with her real face. If he was worried about a scar on her lips, then what would he do when he saw what the Curse the Brazingers had placed on her had done? Still, she had, subconsciously or otherwise, stopped biting her lip after that day. Aina raised a finger to her bottom lip, a gorgeous smile blooming on her face. That short sentence completely recontextualized everything to her when Leonel didn't care about her scarred face at all.

The scar wasn't the problem. He just didn't want her to be hurt.

It was a simple thing. So impossibly simple that even Aina felt a little silly that she was thinking about it now of all times.

But it brought a broad smile to her face.

Indeed... she didn't need to be that woman anymore.

Aina took another step and a pair of black wings grew from the small of her back. Her eyes became a deep abyss of black, her hair lengthening as a pair of horns formed.

Her temperament became more regal and overwhelming as a crackle of black lightning peeled across the crimson clouds.

Okay... maybe she could be that woman only for a certain man.

"My babies and husband are waiting for me..."

Aina's blooming smile suddenly became ice cold as she reached out a hand, her battle ax slapping into her palm. In one fluid motion, she didn't pause a single time as she swung down.

A scythe of crimson tore into the ground, almost splitting the world in two. It appeared before the gates of the castle in a blink of an eye.

A ripple of red appeared, an invisible dome flashing into existence.

Scythe and dome warped around one another, a clash of Force twisting and pulling against one another.

Shades of red flashed around one another until.

BANG!

A bolt of black came from the skies, ripping into the barrier.

BOOM!

The barrier flexed like a rubber ball before it shattered completely, unable to withstand the power.

Alarm bells rang through the Brazinger family compound and a large number of warriors shot into the skies, expecting to find an army that had suddenly appeared out of nowhere.

But instead...

They only found a single young woman with an ice cold gaze.

And even then, it was only for a short moment.

Before they could react, dozens of heads had been bisected from their necks.

Blood shot into the skies and formed just as many blooming roses.

Today... she had come here to kill.