

Descent 281

Chapter 281

Leonel shot up from his platform without the slightest hesitation. Though he hadn't expected such a thing to happen, he realized that there had to be a reason why others still dared to have thoughts of targeting him. The only explanation was that a round exactly like this one existed.

The smaller grey platforms shot toward the large. In one swift motion, not only did the metallic beast disappear, but they were all dropped toward it.

The large platform expanded. Soon, it was about 200 meters in width and length, but this sort of situation left Leonel frowning. There were over 200 people who had entered these trials. This sort of platform might seem large but'

'200 meters' ; 40 000 square meters' ; that leaves 200 square meters to a person.'

Ultimately, when the math was broken down, everyone got a 14 by 14 meter region to themselves. How was this considered to be much space at all?

For Leonel, who had taken the path of a bowman, he would be placed at a striking disadvantage.

Leonel's gaze suddenly flickered.[PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

'What is that?'

Realizing the danger he was in as he fell toward the large platform, Leonel immediately chose the smartest path available to him and began to pay attention to those that could threaten him. Of course, all those that fell into such a category were those who managed to gain Perfect evaluations.

However, in doing that, Leonel found something that stunned him. Each and every one of them had two orbs of light hovering above their heads, whereas no other person had such an orb of light.

'Those'! Those have to be the Star Points they earned. Could it be that they can be stolen during an elimination round?'

Leonel's eyes widened. That had to be so. Why else would they only appear now?

If he noticed such a thing, how could others not notice as well? PANDA NOVEL

'In that case'!

Leonel's feet hadn't even landed onto the large grey platform yet when he had drawn his bow.

A hint of Force wrapped around his bow, causing it to glow with just the slightest sheen. However, in the next moment, the seemingly normal light began to crackle with faint hints of yellow lightning suffused with the green glow of wind.

Leonel hadn't been able to use the ability of his glove treasure until now because his Force was restricted. But after unlocking 'Reinforced Arrow', everything would be different.

Leonel also realized something else. While he was at a disadvantage in being in such a closed space, he also had a huge advantage as well! Among those soon to land on this platform! none were safe from him!

'Reinforced Arrow!'  $\rho \int$

SHUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU!

The sharp sound of wind and crackling lightning took hold of everyone's senses. Everyone had been entirely focused on where they would land on the platform and the enemies they'd have in their immediate surrounding, how could they expect that not only would someone attack while still in the air, but that they'd also attack someone over a 100 meters from them?!

One of the two demons with inborn strength was completely caught off guard by Leonel's actions. How could he have ever expected to be targeted at this time?

In his shock, he acted on reflex, trying to deflect Leonel's arrow, but to his horror, he realized that the rules of the Merlin Trials were still restricting his movements. He hadn't spent any skill points on the physical root, and even if he had, the maneuvers one could buy that applied to this situation were too far up for him to even afford.

Feelings of disgruntlement and unwillingness welled up in the demons heart. Who among those who were here weren't heroes of their generation? Each of them stood at the top of their respective Kingdoms. To die like this? And even while being unable to use his true strength? He was unresigned!

PUU!

A bloody hole shot through the Demon Lord's skull.

Before anyone could react, the two orbs of light above his head flickered and disappeared, reappearing above Leonel.

With a harsh bang, Leonel landed on the platform. It was unfortunate, but he only had time to aim and fire a single arrow. However, the benefits he had gained were unimaginable. He hadn't thought he'd get the chance to earn Star Points so quickly. Now, all he needed was five skill points and he'd be able to allow Blackstar the ability to move.

Just when Leonel was feeling that he had benefited, he suddenly felt his heart go cold. Even after all this time, the primitive man's instincts still ran through his veins, making him feel as though he was in imminent danger.

Leonel looked up to find not a small number of eyes on him. Whether it was the demons or the humans, the vast majority had turned their attention toward him.

It was only then Leonel realized that he might very well have acted too rashly.

If he realized the advantages and disadvantages he had, how could others not as well? Leonel might have benefited in catching everyone off guard, but now he was pegged as the most dangerous whether or not this was the objective reality.

Everyone realized that if they turned their back to Leonel now and fought their own battles, who was to say that they wouldn't be the next to suffer beneath one of his sneak attacks.

This wasn't all, either. They all realized that Leonel now had two star points floating above his head. Not only would killing him now benefit them into the future, but whoever did so would gain two star points. The benefit of such a thing was inconceivable.

Leonel slowly took a step back, but realized he couldn't take another. This wasn't because he was at the edge of the platform. In truth, at this moment, he would rather prefer if he was.

Unfortunately, though he couldn't be said to be in the middle of the large square platform, he was still about 40 to 50 meters from its bottom edge and over a hundred meters from his closest side edge.

Suddenly, he was faced with enemies from all sides' |

## Chapter 282

Leonel felt his skin prickle, his palms becoming sweaty. The hairs on his body stood on end, raising like needles across his skin,

In his life, he had never been in such a dangerous situation. The eyes of over 200 elites locked onto him, not a single one making a move. Even the other star point owners were completely ignored.

This was just how human nature was. The process of group think, the oppression of the masses. Once a few had locked onto Leonel, not moving an inch, others followed suit. Soon, even the slowest among them had come to realize the truths behind this matter. By then, they were no longer just following the leads of others around him, but had begun thinking about how they could gain advantages for themselves.

Leonel felt stifled to the point his knees trembled slightly. He tried to steady his grip on his bow, doing his best to calm the beating of his heart.

It had been a long time since Leonel felt like this. After the first few weeks of his time in the Mayan Tomb, he had begun to slowly temper his battle will and heart.

To now, he had fought in many battles and been on the frontline for many of them. However, today was the greatest pressure he had ever faced.

Beads of sweat poured down his brow and his breathing hitched. His inability to control himself made him feel as though he wasn't getting enough oxygen.

The suppression continued. It was as though those around Leonel wouldn't stop until he completely collapsed beneath their might. [PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

Facing the combined pressure of over 200 Demon Lord level and higher individuals was too much for any one person to take. Even an individual on the level of King Arthur or Modred would feel weak at such a moment.

In the distance, King Arthur's lip curled into a cold smile.

'Where is all your previous arrogance?'

To now, he had swallowed several grievances due to Leonel. Seeing a brat who thought too much of himself in such a situation gave him untold satisfaction.

Leonel's blood slowed and his bow seemed to become heavier and heavier with each passing moment. The silence alone was weighing on his mind as though intent on making him go mad.

A numbing sensation spread throughout his body and the hitching in his breath only seemed to continue. Soon, he felt as though he couldn't breathe at all, as though there wasn't enough air in the world to satiate his lungs.

Leonel had never felt such a way in his entire life. PANDA NOVEL

The truth was that he had always been a daring individual. How could he not be? He used to sky dive off of his Paradise Island onto the skyscrapers of Earth's surface. If that wasn't daring, then what was?

That was who he was. Daring, confident! He was a man who always had great belief in his own ability even if that wasn't shown outright as blatant arrogance.

Even when it came to the Mayan Tomb, just how many could put down their fear and enter that unknown world on their own? Just how many people would have waited for the others to wake up first? Or cower in fear after running into their first battle?

Though Leonel's actions back then seemed stained by his unwillingness to kill, beneath the first and most obvious layer, there was a hidden depth of courage and bravery.

But it felt as though all of that was crumbling down now.

It was sudden and abrupt. It came without warning and without foreshadowing. These were just the way things in life worked. But at the same time, it represented yet another one of the myriad of choices one had to make along their path.

'Is this where I'll die?' PANDA NOVEL

Leonel had this same thought for the third time in his life.

The first was when the sacrificial virgin of the Mayan Tomb had her hands wrapped around his neck. The second was during his battle with Lamorak who had eyes on him even now. And the third was now!

The first time, he accepted death. It was a shame that still rested on his shoulders, one he still had yet to face himself.

The second time he was unwilling, but to this day, he still had no real idea how he managed to survive. To take credit for such a thing was beneath him. Ultimately, he had just been lucky.

And now this third time? Would he fail himself again? Was that the choice he wanted to make?

Leonel's slipping grip on his bow tightened.

He was unwilling.

Leonel suddenly raised his head up and shouted. The sound he made wasn't as coherent as words nor as powerful as a roar. It was as though he was venting something within his chest, pushing it out from himself until it had nothing to do with him any longer.

The sudden noise in an otherwise deathly silent atmosphere left many stunned. By the time Leonel had closed his mouth once more and leveled his gaze to meet those around him, the deathly calm of his gaze had returned.

Persistence.

He didn't feel ashamed for having felt fear, but he most definitely would had he allowed it to rule him.

A halo of bronze shone atop Leonel's head. However, at this moment, it felt as though the violet hue was several levels more powerful than it had been in the past. Even without the rest of Leonel's Runes activated, his eyes became a deep violet, his hair fluttering wildly beneath his stabilized aura.

At that moment, an oppressive might gushed from Leonel's body. His focus reached unprecedented levels and his will stood tall and firm. Though he didn't realize it then, the chains of his black spear began to clang wildly as though it too was standing beneath the mighty winds of his aura.

When his mind had calmed, he felt like a fool. This wasn't a battle to the death nor did he have to kill all of these people before him.

Even if they all wanted to kill him, so what? All he had to do was take down nine more'! As long as nine of them died beneath his hand or the hand of others, he would survive.

Leonel pulled an arrow from his quiver, his aura steadily climbing with each moment of silence.

He could still feel the pressure weighing down on his shoulders. How could he not? These were all existences he would have to go all out to battle even if it was just one on one, let alone when there were so many.

However, to the current him, the amount of pressure no longer mattered. His arrow would be the blade that cut through it all.

He didn't need to breathe a word. His demeanor said it all.

Come.

## Chapter 283

Leonel sudden change caught them all of guard. Even with their experience, they had never witnessed such a thing. However, Leonel didn't need them to react. Since they were standing in a daze, he would take the initiative. He had no intention of standing here and waiting to die.

Leonel immediately activated 'Stacked Shot', firing two arrows in quick succession.

Before the arrows even landed, Leonel realized three things.

'The sharp aura of my Metal Synergy Lineage Factor gives my arrows added sharpness and strength. With my Lineage Factor activated, the restrictive effect of the laws in this place have been lessened by at least half. I can bend the limitations of my skills for at least the next five minutes.'

In that instant, Leonel understood that along with abilities, this space couldn't restrict his Lineage Factor either. The only trouble was that it seemed his stamina was drained faster than it was usually as his



bloodline fought back against the restrictions. But, that was fine. Leonel felt that five minutes' | five minutes was enough.

No one had expected Leonel to be the first to react. However, the demons and humans that stood around him were all veterans of the battlefield. In addition, now that Leonel had lost the advantage of being in the air, they obviously had far more possible rebuttals to actions.pANDA-N0VEL.COM

Even still, of the two demons Leonel targeted, one who had chosen twin daggers as their weapon of choice didn't manage to block Leonel's strike, suffering a bloody hole to the throat. However, the second who had a broad sword as their weapon managed to use it as a shield in the last moment.

At that moment, the humans hesitated. Was it really appropriate of them to attack a fellow human while it was so clear Leonel had been targeting demons?

This sort of hesitancy was exactly what Leonel wanted. If it was up to him, he would have attacked another demon with a small weapon. He could obviously tell that it would be much more difficult to block. However, he hadn't done so for several reasons.

First, his failure lessened the threat he presented to everyone. Second, it was a question of those around him.

There were a total of 4 humans and 6 demons within 20 meters of Leonel. At the same time, Leonel was aware that he wasn't in position to battle so many individuals at once. His best bet was to spark a battle. In the chaos, killing nine more, or rather, eight more would be far easier. pANDA N0VEL

In that case' | he just needed a spark.

The demon wielding a broad sword was forced back by the strength of Leonel's arrow. It didn't even have the mind to realize that its back was completely exposed as it stumbled toward a group of humans who had their nerves on edge.

Leonel didn't wait to see if his strategy would work. He had already learned once today that not everything would work out how you imagine it to. If it did, he wouldn't be in his current situation.

With a flip of his palm, several fish scales appeared. He activated them one after another, layering his body with three Force Skins in one breath.

Unfortunately, Leonel was correct. Instead of taking the opportunity to strike at the stumbling demon, the humans backed away.  $\rho\sigma\tau\upsilon\phi\chi\psi\omega$

In a lot of ways, Leonel could understand their choice. No one wanted to be the one who truly turned this into a battle royale. At the same time, the demons weren't their comrades, so they had no obligation to step in and get revenge. Wasn't it better for them to sit back and wait for a better opportunity to present itself?

Still Leonel didn't seem to be fazed at all.

“BOY!”

The demon who just managed to block Leonel's arrow roared in rage, shooting forward with all the speed he could muster. Unfortunately, everyone was limited to the same slow and evenly spaced steps. In fact, to now, Leonel counted less than ten others than had spent skill points on their movement.

By the time the broad sword wielding demon had charged to within five meters of Leonel, the cool down of 'Reinforced Arrow' had completed.

Leonel's lip curled, his gaze suffused with cold indifference. Though he could shoot a normal arrow once every 2 seconds thanks to 'Advanced Quick Reload', 'Reinforced Arrow' didn't fall under this category. Its cool down was 10 seconds. If not for this, it was impossible for this demon to have blocked his arrow.

However, would Leonel really waste a reinforced arrow on an enemy so close to him. Entering a five meter radius of a Bowman with such a limited range of techniques was asking for death.

Leonel pulled the string of his dark, black bow. Even with his current strength, he only managed to pull it 50% of the way. But, with its strength, this was more than enough.

The crackling of lightning sounded once more as Leonel stared down the enraged demon. However, this time, an imperceptible bronze luster coated the arrow as well as though the metal that formed it was resonating with a higher existence.

The demon froze. An overwhelming sense of danger shook his heart.

He wasn't among the demons who had gained star points. His performance only managed to net him a B evaluation, and that was only after he managed to gain a few tricks after observing those who came before him.

When facing an arrow even a demon who had gained star points couldn't do anything against, how could he not feel as though he had acted rashly?

However, would Leonel care for his feelings?

SHUUUUUUUUUUUU!!

The demon closed his eyes, realizing that death was upon him. But, even after several moments of holding his breath, he seemed to realize that his heart was still beating. In fact, he hadn't even felt any pain.

It can't be that a marksman would miss from such a close range'! right?

The demon snapped his eyes open, a cold sweat matting his back. He was just in time to hear an enraged and mournful cry to his back. Not only that'! but he also watched as two more star points manifested above Leonel's head.

“What'!?”

Chapter 284

Just moments ago, he thought he was safe. He stood silently in a corner of the platform, having been lucky enough to be dropped here.

He couldn't have been more happy that Leonel had taken all the attention for himself. He had thought that after these two star points appeared above his heads that he would most definitely become a target. He really had to thank Leonel.

'Ha, idiot. What are you doing entering the range of a bowman like that without a proper plan. This is the problem with us demons, focusing too much on brawn and not enough brain. How else could we possibly have allowed a female human to become our leader?'

The demon clenched his fists.

He had already affirmed it in his heart. He would use the entry into these trial grounds to raise his strength above that bitch Modred. He could already imagine her riding beneath his crotch. Of course, he would treat her well. It wouldn't be so bad to have such a powerful queen by his side.

'Hm? Is that idiot dead yet?'

The demon looked up just in time to see a flash of brilliance approaching him at impossible speeds. He blinked just once, yet it had gone from tens of meters from him, to right before him in a flash.

The demon's expression changed. He had to dodge.

Just when he wanted to, his expression changed again.

'Dammit!' [PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

He had completely forgotten that he was already at the corner of the platform. There was' ; no place to dodge.

SHUUUUU! PCCHUU!

It was only after the arrow had shot through his forehead that the demon realized that dodging was never an option.

If there was any solace in death, maybe it would be that he wasn't alone in his despair. The very demon he had called an idiot just moments earlier now found himself in a similar situation.

Standing in a no-man's land within five meters of Leonel's bow! It was asking for death.

PCCHUU!

Another deathly silence fell over the platform.

In an instant, four demons had died beneath five arrows.

'This boy!'

This simple thought was one shared by them all. Going from being suppressed in one instant to taking the lives of three more in the next! Even though they had all witnessed it, they couldn't believe it.

King Arthur and Lamorak's expressions darkened. They couldn't believe the sudden change. Now, not only was Leonel safe for the time being, but others would hesitate to come after him.

That bravery, that daring! He actually targeted a demon over a hundred meters from him when he was surrounded by enemies from all sides.

This feeling! it felt oddly similar to when Leonel strolled out of Camelot's gates!

"Dammit! Charge together!"

The demons around Leonel were completely enraged.

Leonel steadied his breathing, his gaze flashing like lightning. However many came is as many as he would take on.

In the distance, Big Buddha and Monet looked on with dark expressions. They had been cautious about making a move before, but it seemed that they might have to. They weren't worried about being seen as the enemies of humans. After all, they were already under the banner of Modred.

Just when everyone was about to target Leonel, the situation changed once again. ρ??C???

The demons who had chosen to charge toward Leonel suddenly found themselves frozen, completely unable to move.

“Bind.”

The delicate voice of a little girl rang through the battlefield. Beads of sweat poured down her little face as she pushed her hand forward. It was obvious that binding the three demons that charged toward Leonel in that instant had taken a lot out of her.

Not only was the distance far, but there were actually three of them. How could she not be struggling.

Seeing such a scene, Leonel's heart softened with gratitude. His cold and indifferent expression cracked just the smallest bit.

‘Stacked Shot.’

Feelings were one thing, but Leonel wouldn't allow his actions to lag behind.

In an instant, two more bloody holes appeared within the demons.

The moment she only had to bind a single person, Little Nana's pressure was reduced by a significant amount, allowing Leonel's cool down to be completed and for him to draw another arrow.

However, Leonel didn't fire this one. He took a step toward the last bound demon and pierced his drawn arrow through her throat. He could see the look of despair as she struggled to break free, but his eyes remained callous.

In a flash, Leonel had killed seven and still had three arrows remaining.

He drew his bow once more.

The contrast of blood dripping from the tip of his drawn arrow and the corpses littered around his body painted a heart palpitating picture.

At that moment, everyone had grown hesitant. The ability of that little girl was too powerful. They had all been apprehensive about her earlier and now that she had stepped forward to help Leonel, the situation had gotten several times more complex.

Just when everyone was shaken and wondering what the next step would be, a pained cry called out.

Leonel's brow shot up. His bow was still drawn, so this cry was obviously not caused by him.

His Internal Sight locked onto a certain region only to find that King Arthur and Modred had both reacted as one, both killing a member of the demons and humans respectively. In fact, their steps didn't pause as both of them shot toward a second target.

Leonel was shocked. He couldn't understand why they were acting like this.

Technically, he was still in a dangerous situation. He hadn't gotten out of the woods by any stretch of the imagination.

Modred's actions could be justified. After all, Leonel had killed seven demons to now. If things continued, she would only fall into more of a disadvantage. However, King Arthur's actions didn't make much sense at all.

A third cry sounded. In their competition of two, Modred won, taking down a second human. Just as King Arthur's sword descended, a barrier of protection appeared around a shocked demon, saving her at the last moment.

King Arthur frowned, but eventually retracted his sword unwillingly. It couldn't be helped. He didn't have long ranged attacks but Modred did.

Just as Leonel was feeling even more confused, Merlin's voice sounded once again.

<First Elimination Round Completed>

<Slaughter Points to be Distributed>

<Leonel – 5.5 points>

<Modred – 2 points>

<Nana – 1.5 points>

<Arthur – 1 point>

A sudden understanding came over Leonel. It seemed this was where the last points of currency came from.. It was no wonder they would take action.

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Leonel realized then that these slaughter points must have been important. At the very least, they were comparable in use to star points. But, since Leonel hadn't seen anything he could spend them on, he concluded that it might be related to the store ticket he received earlier.

Still, Leonel didn't spend much time thinking about this. The moment the Elimination Round ended, rather than basking in his victory or the fact he managed to keep his life, he made his way toward Little Nana with the fastest speed he could muster, taking advantage of the loosened restrictions while his Lineage Factor was activated.

Others were shaken by his sudden action. However, they sighed a breath of relief when they noticed the protective barriers around them. If they could block King Arthur's strike, they had no need to be worried about Leonel.

But, Leonel didn't spare them a glance as he appeared before Little Nana just as their small platforms formed beneath their feet once again. Thanks to his action, he ended up floating in the expanse of black once more with her by his side.

Leonel smiled toward the little girl. A protective feeling couldn't help but take root in his heart when he saw her delicate brows matted with sweat. It seemed that helping him from so far away hadn't been easy on her.

"Thank you, Little Nana."

Nana blushed slightly, her large blue eyes twinkling with a slight hint of pride. It seemed she was quite happy that she could help Leonel out. At the same time, she felt slightly more comfortable in her heart with Leonel by her side.  
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Leonel wanted to ask her what happened to her family, but he hesitated in the end. He could feel that Margrave had sent a portion of his senses in his direction. Things would be fine as long as he just made it look like he was chatting idly with her. However, if the Pope overheard him asking questions, things might become difficult.

Leonel sighed in his heart. He could sense that his presence had eased the little girl's tension by a small bit. This was all he could do for her for now.

In truth, he wanted to let her enter the Segmented Cube, but the logistics afterward would be difficult.

When it was only Little Tolly within the Segmented Cube, it could maintain its small size and even fit into his spatial ring. But, whenever Leonel himself entered, the Segmented Cube couldn't shrink past five cubic meters.

This was better than it had been in Phase One. Back then, its smallest size when he entered was ten cubic meters. But, it still wasn't small enough.

Leonel believed that this had something to do with the strength of his life force. Uncle Montez had said that Little Tolly couldn't enter his spatial bracelet because the little guy was a living being. However, even then, it was easier to accommodate a spirit than a full blown human. PANDA NOVEL

'Wait' | I can let her enter one of the snowglobes' |'

Leonel sealed this thought at the back of his mind.

Though Little Nana seemed more at ease around him, that was only relative. Ultimately, they had had very few reactions. For a little girl to survive on her own to now, no matter how naive and innocent she looked, she was definitely highly intelligent. It wouldn't be a simple matter to get her to put her whole trust in him.

In addition, Leonel was only acting now because he was soft hearted and also owed the little girl a favor now for helping him out. Their relationship couldn't be considered to be deep. It was just that Leonel had a good impression of this little girl despite the fact she had acted against him in the past.

"I just helped a little' |" Little Nana said softly, her voice as delicate as a butterfly's wings. "' | Big Brother is the impressive one, standing up to them like that."

Leonel found it a bit odd Nana called him big brother so directly. But, he assumed that it might have just been the dialect of where she grew up. From his understanding, these hidden families were quite reclusive. Had it not been for the fact she was expelled from her clan for whatever reason, Leonel might have never met Aina in his lifetime. PANDA NOVEL

After organizing his thoughts, Leonel smiled once again and chatted idly with the little girl. However, their conversation didn't last very long before it was interrupted.

<Would you like to use your Special Store Ticket now?>

Leonel hesitated. Originally, he wanted to save it until he had more skill points to use since he thought he would need them within the store. But, after gaining slaughter points, he wasn't sure anymore.

'Forget it. Since I gained a ticket but no star points before, it seemed such tickets are less valuable. I'll enter now even if I can't buy anything.'

"I'll be back." Leonel told Little Nana.

"Mm."

Leonel used his ticket, his body vanishing in the next instant. For a moment, his vision blurred. When he could finally see his surroundings again, he realized that he had entered another wide expanse of black.

Just as he was feeling confused, a translucent screen appeared before him and a catalog of items appeared. It only took a cursory glance for Leonel to notice that all of these items were high quality, even the worst were B-grade treasures.

It was a shame that it didn't matter much to Leonel. He couldn't take anything out of this Zone without it disappearing.

'Hm'! Even if I can't, if I Dream Sculpt items I'm interested in, I can Craft them for myself' !'

Thinking to this point, Leonel's mind suddenly latched onto an idea.

He remembered that he still had the weird naked sniper's Ethereal Glabella. According to the dictionary, the same way it was possible to refine a Beast Crystal into treasures, it was also possible to do with humans.

All this time, Leonel had been greatly hesitant. He didn't like the idea of doing such a thing to a human. It seemed morally wrong.

Leonel wasn't wrong either. There was a great taboo against doing such a thing in the world of Force Crafters.

However, as time passed, Leonel realized that his earth escape treasure was becoming less and less reliable. It wasn't that the beast crystals they were formed of were lacking, but rather that his skill in refining them hadn't been good enough.

The biggest problem was ultimately that it took too long to activate. It couldn't be used in battle at all. However, the naked sniper's blink ability. It was hard to pass up.

Unfortunately, Leonel had yet to draw up a satisfactory blueprint for it. He realized that even though he had managed to Craft a Tier 9 Black treasure, his skill couldn't really be considered to be at that level just yet. At most, he was able to use his ability to drill himself into being capable of doing something he would otherwise find impossible.

But if he found a treasure here that accomplished a similar ability, it would make things much easier on him in the future.

What Leonel didn't know was that he had touched on his second taboo already.

The first was refining a human into a treasure and the second was stealing the Craft of another master.

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'This isn't working. Going through all of these treasures one by one would take forever.'

Leonel suddenly had an idea. He wasn't sure if it would work, but it wouldn't cost him anything to try.

“Can you show me all short distance teleportation treasures with cool downs less than ten seconds.”

Much to Leonel’s surprise, the translucent screen before him immediately reacted. There was a few seconds of rapid scrolling before treasures disappeared one after another, leaving behind a total of five.

Leonel’s gaze brightened. There were two necklaces, one brace, one bracelet, and the last was an ankle brace. They all had short ranges of within ten meters. The highest cool down amongst them eight seconds while the lowest was three.

Leonel focused on one of the necklaces. Though it was quite feminine, what he cared about was its ability. Worst come to worst, he could just hide it beneath his shirt or armor.

This necklace was the overall best treasure here. It had a teleportation distance of three meters and could be used once every three seconds. It was possible to store teleportation charges for up to three attempts. After that, one would have to manually pour Force into it.

Just when Leonel was about to get ahead of himself and purchase it, he suddenly froze. He remembered he didn’t have any of the currency necessary for this Special Store. In fact, he wasn’t even aware of what the currency was to begin with.

Leonel’s gaze slowly shifted to the side of the image reflecting in his gaze. When he saw the numbers beside it, he couldn’t help but smile bitterly.

<Treading Goddess Necklace (Legendary Equipment) – 72 000 skill points>

If Leonel was a weaker man, he would definitely begin to shed real tears.

72 000 skill points? He didn’t even have one. It seemed he had gotten way too ahead of himself. How could it be so easy to lay his hands on such a treasure?

This Treading Goddess Necklace was a Quasi-Bronze treasure. As long as it was a Third or Fourth Dimensional world, it wouldn’t weaken in the slightest. How could it be so casually given out?

Leonel settled his breathing. It seemed he had wasted an entry ticket. He didn't have a single skill point on him. And, even if he did, he wouldn't have the heart to spend it on a piece of equipment. 72 000 skill points was enough to make it a good portion of the way up his skill tree. He couldn't casually use such an amount. His first priority was still mastering the Four Seasons Realm.[PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

Just as Leonel was about to resign himself to a loss, he suddenly remembered something else. Since this space could respond to his verbal command, maybe it could answer a question of his?

"Um, how do I use slaughter points?"

The translucent screen flickered and changed once again.

<Slaughter Point Exchange>

<Current Conversion Rate>

<1 Slaughter Point – 100 Skill Points>

<1 Slaughter Point – 3 Special Store Tickets>

<1 Slaughter Point – 1 Star Point>

Leonel's gaze brightened.

So it was like this. Slaughter Points could be traded for a myriad of things.

'It says current exchange rate' ! does that mean it's subject to change?'

Leonel came to a logical conclusion. It was very likely that as the numbers dwindled, slaughter points would gain a boost in value. Who knew, in the future, it might be possible to exchange a slaughter point for thousands of skill points.

‘Arthur must have benefited from these treasures from his last entry, but why is it that he hasn’t used them yet’? Is it that he can’t due to the restrictions, or is there another reason?’ PANDA NOVEL

Leonel realized that his own treasures didn’t seem to have any restrictions. The only reason he hadn’t been able to use his wind-lightning glove before was due to the restriction on his Force, not the treasure itself. So, he was unsure if he had an advantage others didn’t

‘Forget it, we’ll see how things go.’

Armed with this new information, Leonel became more confident.

The first thing he did was spend 5 skill points and 1 star point to unlock ‘A Companion for Life’.

“Yip, yip!”

Finally feeling that he could move, Little Blackstar excitedly jumped around. The little guy had truly felt too stifled.

Once Leonel unlocked Blackstar and Tolliver, he gained a fourth branch of his skill tree related to them. Originally, Leonel had no intention of spending any skill points on this new skill tree. After all, Blackstar’s ability couldn’t be restricted by this world. There was no need to give him new skills.

However, Leonel froze when he saw a particular skill.

‘Perfect Union’.

The moment Leonel saw it, he knew he had to have it. He understood too little about Blackstar's ability while this skill would allow him and Blackstar to essentially share one mind. Everything the little guy felt and all of its instincts would count as Leonel's.

The best part about this skill was that it wasn't the highest skill on the tree, nor did it take much to reach it.

"It would take 321 skill points to unlock the branches necessary and four star points to reach it"

Leonel hesitated.

If he converted all of his slaughter points now, he would have 550 skill points. However, he only had three star points left now, so he would only have 450 skill points while the last slaughter point would go toward the last star point he needed

Leonel's gaze narrowed. At the moment, he was feeling uneasy in his heart. He felt like things would only become more dangerous from here on out, and who knew when the next Elimination Round would begin.

Leonel was certain that he would be targeted from the beginning during the next round. It couldn't be helped, he stood out too much and had made many enemies.

"It ultimately comes down to one question" will understanding Blackstar better give me a greater immediate boost in strength, or would using all 550 skill points on myself do so

Leonel sent a glance toward his own skill tree.

Several calculations fired off in his Dream World. Eventually, he fell into a simulation, the results of which shocked him.

It wasn't even close. Investing in Blackstar was by far the best choice.



Leonel took a deep breath and stopped hesitating.

<5.5 Slaughter Points Exchanged>

<1 Star Point Gained>

<450 Skill Points Earned>

‘|

<Bronze Skill ‘Damage Share’ Chosen>

<Bronze Skill ‘Vision Share’ Chosen>

‘|

<Bronze Skill ‘Battle Mount’ Chosen>

‘|

<Silver Skill ‘Perfect Union’ Chosen>

The moment he clicked on this skill, Leonel’s mind was suddenly flooded with a whole host of new sensory information.

Little Blackstar, who had been playing around, suddenly turned back to Leonel and blinked with an adorable curiosity. The little guy seemed to be wondering why he felt so much closer to Leonel all of a sudden.

It took a while for Leonel to regain his bearings, but when he did, a confident smile spread across his face. Up until now, he had still been wondering if he made the right choice. But now, he realized he had.

Without another ounce of hesitation, he began to use his remaining hundred or so skill points on himself.

<Basic Skill 'Triple Shot' Chosen>

<Basic Skill 'Rapid Fire' Chosen>

' |

<Basic Skill 'Sprint' Chosen>

<Basic Skill 'Roll' Chosen>

<Basic Skill 'High Jump' Chosen>

' |

<Bronze Skill 'Curved Shot' Chosen>

<Bronze Skill 'Exploding Shot' Chosen>

<Bronze Skill 'Armor Pierce' Chosen>

Leonel spent 80 or so skill points on his skill tree. As for the remaining 50 or so, he spent it all on a Bronze piece of equipment – Bronze Quiver.

Not only could it hold 25 arrows, but it could spawn another every 30 seconds.

Feeling confident, Leonel finally left the Special Store. But, what he found when he stepped out doused him from head to toe in cold water.

King Arthur stood majestically, his white armor glowing with a fierce light. It was as though it had been completely reborn. It alone made Leonel feel as though a mountain was weighing on his shoulders.

How could Leonel know that King Arthur could indeed use treasures he had gained during his last entry. It was just that he had to pay an appropriate price to reactivate them. And, unfortunately' ; that price was far less than it cost to originally buy the equipment' ;

<White Lion King Armor – 60 000 skill points>

<Reactivation Price – 300 skill points>

Another thing Leonel didn't know was that star points could also be exchange for skill points' ;

Chapter 287

Leonel met King Arthur's gaze.

It was a short interaction, hardly worth a thiing. Yet, Arthur seemed to realize that Leonel's gaze was even firmer than it had been in the past. Not only that, but he noticed that the little beast lazing around Leonel's neck had grown more active.

'What is that beast' ; this boy was actually willing to spend 5 skill points and a star point to allow it to move' ;?'

A star point was worth 100 skill points at this juncture. It wasn't a small matter to make the choice to use it. Arthur couldn't help but grow a level more serious.

<Second Trial Begin!>

The world warped. Suddenly, the singular square platforms of a meter in length and width lengthened, stretching into the distance. In the blink of an eye, it formed several long roads the each of them stood at the end of.

Leonel sent a gaze toward Little Nana before looking back toward the long road ahead of him. Without another thought, he took a strong step forward.

\*\*

The universe was a nearly endlessly vast place. Some believed it was infinite while others believed it was infinitely expanding. There were even some schools of thought that believed there were endless copies of this impossible vastness, each telling the same story a different way.[PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

Still, there was only one truth.

There was just a single universe. However, within this single universe, there were trillion upon trillions of worlds each with billions upon billions of existences of their own.

In this universe, there were usually many names for the same thing. However, this universe only went by a single name by those who were advanced enough to realize its profundities "" The Dimensional Verse.

Though the Dimensional Verse was formed of many worlds, it was more accurate to say that these worlds simply represented a 'Fold of Reality'. Each Fold encompassed a world and could be given a Dimensional Grade.

A single Fold could vary in size. It could be as small as a single city within a planet or as large as an entire galaxy. It is when these Folds begin to evolve that a 'world' is considered to also evolve.

The Fold that represented Earth's world encompassed Earth and the Moon. In comparison to other Folds, it was neither too big nor too small. But, it could be said to be convenient.

When Folds are too small, the benefit is also small. The evolution potential will be limited as there are limited gains to a small scale evolution. The smaller the scale, the less change there is to catalyze, and thus the less benefits there are to gain.

However, at the same time, if the Fold is too large, it becomes too difficult to deal with. For a fledgling world like Earth, what could it do if its Fold of Reality encompassed its entire solar system? What if a Zone appeared on Jupiter? PANDA NOVEL

Even though Earth's advancement in technology has been vast in the past several centuries, what did it matter if it was impossible to use this technology thanks to the Metamorphosis?

This wasn't the only issue with large Folds either. The larger the Fold, the more history a Zone could encompass, and the more complex they became to clear. The more random a Zone could become, the more complex its quests become, and the more difficult it was for Zone detection treasures to calculate the quest requirements.

Of course, a place like Jupiter wouldn't have any real history of its own. That would be nonsensical. However, its addition to a Fold of Reality could cause mutations in an otherwise normal history one would never expect' ;

Unfortunately, the size of Folds was destined to always grow. Though it would be nice if it remained the same until the fall of a world, such things were never meant to be.

Due to this truth, the higher the Dimension of a world, the larger its Fold was, and the more powerful it had to be to survive to its current point.

As though this wasn't enough, sometimes growing Folds could clash and begin to overlap, resulting in an instance of two worlds having no choice but to go to war for fear of their own world collapsing' ;

Still, these instances were often never reached by a world because the process of surviving a growing Fold of Reality was too much for many worlds to bear' ;

There were many worlds that sat at this crossroad. To the left was a road where they survived and managed to prosper. While the growing of a Fold could devastate a world, it also provided opportunities. ¶¶¶¶¶¶¶¶¶¶

The larger a Fold, the more Natural Force Arts it encompassed and the greater resources it could produce.

However, the right was a road of immediate benefits. These worlds would choose to abandon their Folds of Reality to migrate to more stable Higher Dimensional Worlds. But, before they did so, they would wring their world dry of all the resources it had left, using it to fund their new lives' ;

Many worlds had a certain ratio of both types of people. Where there was population, there would always be opposing view points.

Would it be better to build something with your own hands and leave something behind your future generations could admire you for? Or was that foolish? Why shed blood and tears for a reality you wouldn't get to enjoy yourself?

' ;

The world of Terrain was at a similar crossroads. It had been 500 years since it evolved into a Fourth Dimensional World.

Unlike Earth, it didn't sit in a Fold of Reality with much potential. According to the higher Dimensional beings, it would at most become a Fifth Dimensional World before reaching the end of its evolution.

For worlds that reached the end of their potential, the clashing of these two ideologies would become especially tumultuous. The effort needed to have a world step into its final evolutionary stage was a lot' ; but just how many were able to put in this necessary effort?

That said, whether this clash was relevant to the events occurring at this very moment was very hard to tell. It could only be said that this matter should be left up to those observing' ;

‘

At this very moment, a singular woman was the target of a large scale man hunt.

This woman had long, flowing black hair and shining amber eyes that almost looked like shimmering gold when they reflected the sunlight. Even as she ran with all her being, her steps not leaving the slightest trace of her, her gaze didn't lose its alluring beauty.

However, her eyes could be said to be the only beautiful thing about her. When one's eyes landed on her face, the sight would be enough to make even the most stoic of men sigh.

It was clear to anyone that she was an impossible to find beauty, the kind that if Leonel were to witness, he would realize that Joan, Monet and Modred couldn't possibly hold a candle to.

Unfortunatel, this beauty was completely marred by savage scars. They crisscrossed across her face, her cheeks, her lips, like enraged pinkish-purple earth worms.

The scars seemed to pulse with her every breath, giving the impression that they were either coursing with a mysterious energy, were on the verge of becoming infected or were severely poisoned. It might even be possible that it was a combination of all three'

It was difficult to describe just how horrid the sight was. And, even for a man, let alone a young lady in her prime, it was difficult to accept having such an appearance.

Most in this young woman's position would choose to cover it up. In fact, for most of her life, this particular woman had chosen to do exactly that. However, her reasons for doing so were very different from what another young woman would give.

At this moment, though, these reasons hardly mattered. The life she lived on her home world was far different from the one she lived now. All she cared about was improving and tempering herself, growing powerful enough to one day seek revenge on her enemies. In fact, it was due to these ambitions that she had landed herself in so much trouble.

The forces currently chasing her had standings in this world that would make the citizens of Terrain shiver in terror. However, this young woman had infuriated them all without hesitation.

The young lady dashed through the mountain range. Beads of perspiration fell down her face, rolling over her unsightly scars. Every time they did, she would feel a nearly unquenchable desire to itch at her face, but she stubbornly ignored this desire, knowing that such an action would only make it all worse.

‘The beasts in this mountain range will be troublesome. They should give me some time!’

A serious expression warped the young woman’s brows.

She flipped her palm, causing a vial filled with a thick, blood red liquid to appear. It was because of this item that she was confident no beast would approach her. But, it was also because of this that she was being hunted like a criminal. Still, if she went through so much trouble for this vial, she had to take advantage of it too.

With another flip of her palm, her opposite hand suddenly gained a familiar ax.

If Leonel was there, despite the initial unfamiliarity he had with this young woman’s face, he would immediately recognize her now.

She was none other than the only woman in his heart, Aina Brazinger.

Chapter 288

“That damned ugly bitch!”

A roar shook the forest. It was laced with endless fury and unwillingness. It was the kind of shout that caused birds to flee and an unwitting silence to overwhelm the immediate aftermath.



At that moment, a young man stood in the midst of a group of warriors. He had sharp features and a hidden air of elegance beneath his current anger. It was clear that he was very much used to the lifestyle of a noble.

At the same time, he wasn't alone in his rage. There were two others of equal standing to his own that felt the same rage toward the same woman.

One of them was a young lady whose delicate, expressional features reddened beneath the gnashing of her teeth. And the last was a stocky young man who was a head shorter than even the young woman.

These three young masters represented three of the most powerful powers on Terrain. In fact, there were only a handful of other territories that could match them in strength. Yet, they all felt infinite rage toward the same woman.

The Cliff's Edge Terrace. The World's End Falls. The Mirage Pavilion.[PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

Each of these were names that shook the hearts of those born on Terrain. Yet, they had actually made a move together.

"Spread out the encirclement. Do whatever you have to do to find her!"

"But... Young Heir, the Mountain Sands Range is too dangerous. If we spread out too thin, it will become too difficult to protect you."

An older man stepped forward to say these words.

The attire from those on Terrain was quite unique. They all wore a cross of robes and soft armor that made their clothing look somewhat like delicate art pieces. However, the truth was that these seemingly soft pieces of cloth provided more defenses than heavy duty armor ever could.

The older man and the young master he spoke to both wore deep black robes crossed with dark blue soft armor. The combination made them look somewhat sinister mixed with a touch of an ethereal feel.  
PANDA NOVEL

These robes were the marking of the Cliff's Edge Terrace, a power ranked within the top ten of the Terrain world.

The words of the older man was exceptionally tactful. The truth was that the ones that would be in the most danger would be those who separated from this young master of theirs. With all the protective treasures this young man had, even if he was alone in this mountain range, he would still have better than 50% odds of survival.

However, the old man had seen too much life to argue from the point of view of a servant. He had to convince the young man that he would be in danger, otherwise why would he care? This was the reality of the world.

Hearing the name Mountain Sands Range, the young man immediately grew sober.

It was an odd name for a mountain range, especially since there were no deserts anywhere within hundreds of kilometers of this place. In fact, when the young man heard that a Tier 1 Bronze Zone would appear in this place, he had been hesitant to go at all until he heard it was a Variant Zone.

There were a total of four different kinds of Zones. Regular Zones, Unique Zones, Mythological Zones and finally, Variant Zones. p??J?????

Variant Zones were unique in that unlike the others, they didn't pull from culture or history. Rather, they came from the future.

Regular Zones represented the trials of a world. Unique Zones represented the invasion of a world. Mythological Zones represented the potential of a world. And, Variant Zones represented... the end of a world.

For higher Dimensions, toying with the timeline of a weaker world wasn't difficult as long as an appropriate price was paid. However, in this instance, it wasn't another world trying to sabotage Terrain, but rather the future generations of Terrain trying to save their own world.

Whenever a Variant Zone appeared, it meant that a world had entered a crossroads. Choosing to go one direction or another would decide whether they would sink or swim. A Variant Zone could be considered the universe giving a world a few more chances before they perished.

Of course, the appearance of just one Variant Zone didn't necessarily mean a world was on the brink of destruction. But, what it did mean was that if appropriate measures weren't taken, a world would be in danger given due time.

What truly differentiated Variant Zone from others was that... treasures could be taken out of them!

Usually only Gold Zones and above would have this ability. But, only Variant Zones could completely ignore this restriction.

It was no wonder, then, that this group was so infuriated. The penultimate treasure of this Variant Zone was snatched away by an unknown young woman. And to make it all worse, she had somehow managed to escape their encirclement.

However, even with all the pent up rage, the young heir still calmed the moment he heard the name...

The Mountain Sands Range.

It gained this name not because of its terrain, but because of the fact it was a danger zone countless individuals had lost their life in. The legends said that the deeper one entered this mountain range, the more difficult it was to get out, just like quicksand.

They had already traveled deeply enough to have entered the so-called 'sand box' region. If they entered too deeply and reached the true 'quicksand' region, even the young heirs wouldn't be confident of escaping.

However, it was clear by the actions of that young woman that she had no intention of escaping outward. In fact, she was putting more pressure on them the deeper she entered.

The young heir to the Cliff's Edge Terrace grit his teeth.

To pursue or to not pursue. What should he do?

After regaining his calm, he became several levels more thoughtful.

“Send out communication talismans. I want to hear from Miss Falls and that short bastard first before we make the next step of the plan.”

In the end, he was the young heir of a great power.. He had initially lost control of his emotions because he couldn't stand the thought of such an ugly woman with no backing causing him to suffer a loss, but now that things had come to this, he had to take the next step carefully.

## Chapter 289

It wasn't long before a meeting of three had been converged.

One was a young man wearing black robes alternating in deep blue soft armor. This young man was the heir of Cliff's Edge Terrace, Reynred Solar.

The second was a young woman wearing bright white robes alternating in a light sky blue soft armor. This young woman was the heiress of World's End Falls, Jilniya Falls.

The last was a short young man wearing red robes matched with violet soft armor. This young man was the heir of the Mirage Pavilion, Wilas Mirage.

If one were to witness this scene, there would only be one of two reactions to have. Either one would be impressed, or disgusted.

Reynred sat in the middle of a dense forest with a tea spread before him. A small round table housed precious herbs being steeped in hot water and delicate, neatly arranged pastries.

He sat at the table, one leg crossed over the other, as though he wasn't in the wilderness at all. One would think that he was taking a break of leisure within his own personal garden rather than being on an expedition within one of the most dangerous Danger Zones of Terrain. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

"Is all of this really necessary, you sissy? You called us here to waste our time eating pastries and drinking tea?"

Wilas exploded the instant he saw Reynred set up. He and Jilniya both thought that he had already captured that ugly bitch. They had never expected that he would call them here without rhyme or reason. Did he not understand the situation?

Their three powers had invested too much into this. Not only had they invested many resources into making sure the opening of the Zone remained secret, but they had lost large amounts of man power forming expeditionary squads to clear a path toward it. What was this fool thinking?

Reynred's hand paused, causing the tea cup in his hands to stop just before his lips. A hint of cold killing intent flashed for just the briefest moment. In the end, he managed to control himself.

"We need a better plan than the one we have now. If we continue to follow this ugly woman into this mountain range... I'm sure you know the kind of consequences we could face. This isn't a playground."

Hearing these words, both heirs became slightly more serious. Even the perpetually silent Jilniya grew a level more serious. PANDA NOVEL

"What do you propose?" Wilas said after some time.

Reynred took a long sip of his tea before placing the cup down.

"There are only four passageways out of this mountain range. Pressure Winds Valley, Reverse Flow River, the Mountain Sands Path and the Mountain Sands cave network.

“I think we all know that no one has come out alive from that cave network since the Fourth Dimension descended. I suggest our main forces control these three passageways. As for the fourth, just in case of anything unexpected, we can send a few scouts with decent strength.

“That whore isn’t very powerful to begin with. If not for her cunning, she would have long since fallen beneath my blade. The moment we lay eyes on her will seal her death.”

Reynred’s gaze turned frosty. He had actually suffered a loss at the hands of a Third Dimension swine. How could he not feel disgusted? ρ??∪???????

Wilas and Jilniya looked toward one another.

“What if she dies? Wouldn’t it all be for naught?” Jilniya finally spoke her first words.

Her voice was light, delicate, and didn’t carry the slightest hint of emotion. She seemed detached from everything. But, then again, it seemed as though all those from World’s End Falls were exactly like this.

Reynred sneered. “In the end, even if it’s a Variant Zone, it’s still ultimately a mere Tier 1 Bronze Zone. How great could the treasures possibly be?”

The two heirs looked at one another and shook their heads. No matter how one looked at it, Reynred’s words simply sounded like sour grapes.

Compared to other Zones, Variant Zones had exceptionally low difficulty and provided rewards that were disproportionately greater. After all, they were meant to provide hope to a dying world, how could it not be like this?

It wasn’t surprising for a Tier 1 Bronze Zone to have rewards within in comparable to a Silver Zone. Reynred was just speaking nonsense. However, he was too lost in his own world to care for the opinions. It was clear that his hatred for this young woman had surpassed his desire for this treasure.

Reynred shook his head.

“We can’t afford to bet our lives here. Those important matters I’m sure you two are aware of aren’t as far away as it might seem.”

Wilas frowned. “Hmph. The only reason I’ll be migrating along with the rest of you is because the elders have already decided on it. I’m not like you shameless individuals who give up so easily.”

This time, it was Wilas’ turn to be looked upon oddly. However, they didn’t have the mind to say anything to reprimand him. Instead, the meeting dispersed. Soon a net designed to capture one young woman would be perfectly deployed.

...

At that very moment, Aina had entered a cave. If the three heirs had been there, they would have been shocked to realize that this ugly woman they were chasing had actually entered one of the many networks of tunnels beneath the vast mountain range.

Unfortunately, Aina didn’t know anything about the dangers of this place. In truth, after Leonel sent her here with her teleportation ticket, she had appeared not far from the Variant Zone. It was then she entered, not knowing that she would be ruining the plans of so many large powers.

Teleportation tickets were actually designed such that new comers would be taken to prepared stations. After all, any world that had entered the Fourth Dimension was used to visitors from other worlds. It was a part of evolution.

However, that little fool Leonel didn’t know that one had to prepare appropriately for a teleportation as every small factor was important. Namely, Aina’s ax had still been in her hand at the time. As a result, it influenced her teleportation and sent her off course.

In the end, here she was, being chased to the point of entering these dark caves with nothing to rely on but the ax in her hands.

A heavy breath left Aina's lips.

The cold breeze of the damp tunnels nipped at her body, making the portions of her skin exposed to the elements ripple with goosebumps.

Though she wore the very same black military uniform covered with many pockets, it had been torn in several places due to her battle. Had it not been for her ability, she might very well have been crippled of movement by now.

'So cold' !'

Aina's petite body trembled slightly, but she grit her teeth and pressed onward.

Without a choice, she was forced to put her ax away. Using such a large weapon in an enclosed space might cost her her life. So, she pulled out a sword instead.

The blade's edge gleamed within the darkness. In her left hand, she clutched the vial of red and the other, she clutched the hilt of her sword. [PANDA-NOVEL.COM](http://PANDA-NOVEL.COM)

She didn't really think much about her weapon. She had just happened to pick it up within the Variant Zone. However, she wasn't very fond of light weapons, she felt less secure behind such a small weapon.

Aina shook her head, willing these useless thoughts away.

'Hopefully these tunnels run deep so they won't be able to find me easily. I'll find a place to rest and heal my injuries.'

Aina had no idea what kind of danger zone she was entering. She thought that this place was no different from any normal array of underground tunnels. The only reason she was being semi-cautious was because she wouldn't be naive enough to believe that there were no dangers at all before her.



Not only were beasts far more advanced on Fourth Dimensional worlds, but Invalids were several levels more dangerous as well. In fact, there were even instances of Invalids creating and manning civilizations of their own.

Of course, such a 'civilization' could hardly be called as such. After all, the vast majority of Invalids were mindless zombies. However, Variant Invalids were impossibly dangerous foes. There was a chance, albeit a small one, that there might be Invalids up ahead. PANDA NOVEL

Luckily, nothing obstructed her path forward. She managed to find several branching paths. After picking one, she chose an area with multiple escape routes and sat down in meditation.

Her chest heaved, her eyelashes trembling slightly. It was only after she sat that she felt the exhaustion take hold of her body.

It had already been several months since the last time she slept. Even Leonel, who had such an overwhelmingly strong spirit, couldn't do such a thing.

All this time, she had relied on her ability to accomplish this feat. Whenever she felt overwhelming fatigue, she would activate her self-heal and wash it all away. But, she had been gaining diminishing returns for a long time already.

Aina sighed. 'If he was here'!

Aina suddenly shook her head furiously.  $\rho \int \rho \rho \rho \rho \rho \rho \rho$

During their time together within the Joan Zone, Aina had gotten used to relying on Leonel's sleep meditation ability. He had always been the perfect scout. But now, there was only herself.

'Focus, Aina. The moment you decided to take your mask off, you left that life behind.'

Aina snapped her eyes open, willing her fatigue away. She bit down on her lip hard. There was no doubt that if Leonel was here, he would have asked her to treat them better than she was now.

She looked down at the red vial in her hand. This vial was the top treasure of the Variant Zone. According to what she understood, it was the blood of a beast known as the Abyss Panther.

The Abyss Panther was a Fifth Dimensional beast that would be born on Terrain within the next thousand years. This meant that in all of current existence, the only instance of its existence was currently in Aina's palm. This was the magic of Variant Zones.

Every world would birth mystical and powerful beasts of its own after every evolution. Earth would likely have some of its own very soon.

Among those evolved beasts, some would grow powerful enough to make a name for itself within the whole universe. Only then would its name ring sonorously within the ears of all.

However, the Abyss Panther wasn't of this level. In fact, it might never be. There was even a chance it would never be born at all and its 'future' lineage would end in Aina's hands right here and now.

Aina hesitated.

With this vial in hand, no beast would dare approach her. She basically gained a ring of protection around her. However, if she ingested it now, it would likely bring a huge boost to her strength and smoothly allow her to enter the Fourth Dimension within a few months.

If others heard Aina's thoughts, they would think that she was insane.

The universe had countless magic systems. One that involved ingesting the blood of powerful beasts, of course, existed. However, this situation was completely different.

For one, this was blood from a Fifth Dimensional beast while Aina was still within the Third Dimension. There were a full two watershed moments between her and this beast.

In addition, the ingestion of blood was considered to be an unorthodox path. It would always leave behind latent dangers and injuries. Even in the rare instances that it didn't, it would chain a person to a certain level of strength. As such, ingesting blood should never be taken lightly.

Yet, by Aina's demeanor, it seemed that she wasn't worried about any of this. And' | this most definitely wasn't due to ignorance.

Aina had reason to be confident.

Her ability fell under the healing type, yet she wasn't able to heal anyone else but herself. This seemed like a limited and useless ability, however it was actually the exact opposite.

Aina's Gene Assessment listed her as a Five Star Health Professional. Her ability was related to self-healing. Each was related to the other.

The reason Aina was so confident was because her ability allowed her almost limitless control over her own body.

Any benefit she could gain with her body would be multiplied several times over compared to a normal person. She could manipulate the small portions of her body with absolute control.

If she ingested this blood, not only could she ensure that there wouldn't be any lingering issues, but she would benefit far more than anyone else who ingested the same blood.

However' | this was only part of the reason she dared to do this.