

Descent 291

Chapter 291

Aina gently touched the scars on her face and winced. They felt exceptionally tender as though they had just healed, but only she knew that she had had these scars for an entire 18 years of her life.

Her main reliance were these very scars on her face.

'These scars you've given me, not only will I not let them shame me, I will use them in a way you could never have calculated.'

A fiery rage lit Aina's amber eyes. In that moment, they flickered like golden flames.

Without hesitation, she poured the entire vial contents down her throat.

BANG!

Aina's clothes were blasted to ash. However, there was no gorgeous sight to behold. What should have been delicate, somewhat tanned skin, was nowhere to be seen.

Along with her clothes, Aina's skin had been torn asunder. A rain of her own blood and flesh coated the walls of the cave as though a massacre had taken place. All that was left were the fine fibers of her bloody muscles. In fact, even some of her skeleton shone through regions where even her deep tissue was broken.

She looked like a human that had been skinned alive. Yet, somehow, the scars on her face still remained prominent. They were so deep that they dug into the tissue of her face and latched onto her skull. Even in this situation, they pulsed like grotesque worms, not letting go even as their host was on the verge of death.

However, if one looked closely, it seemed that Aina was still in a state of meditation. She no longer had eyelids to close her eyes, but, her pupils seemed to have glazed over.

Anyone sane would believe that she was dead' ; That is, until one noticed a steadily beating piece of flesh. It was beneath two large mounds of yellow fat flowing with blood, beneath a ribcage bathed in crimson, and between two barely perceptibly moving lungs' ; PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Her heart. It continued to beat with a rhythmic consistency.

As time passed, its beating slowed. It seemed that Aina might die at any time, however' ; though the rhythm seemed to slow, it became deeper and more resounding. Soon, it felt as though the whole underground space was trembling beneath its might.

' ;

At that moment, in a certain region of Earth, there was a hidden estate. It seemed completely separate from Earth, as though it was a heaven gracing the land of mortals.

There were vast stretches of exotic, alien plants, plains were graced by odd creatures of mythology, and the forests held an irresistible scent to them that seemed to pull one into a trance.

At the center of this land, there was a mansion that hung in the skies. From its base, thick, heavy chains hung. From a distance, it almost seemed as though these chains were the pillars that held this mansion up. If it wasn't for their slight swaying every so often, any ignorant observer would conclude this as well' ;

Within this mansion, in a room hidden from the eyes of even most of those worthy of stepping foot onto its floors, there was an alter.

Though it was an alter, it didn't seem to be worshipping anything. Rather, it seemed to be the exact opposite.

A stone tablet of sort sat with names crossed out, as though being banished from a level of respect they had once deserved, or maybe never deserved to begin with.

There were only two names on this list. Both of them seemed to have a magic aura wrapped around them. However, this aura was poison, sinister and dark' | PANDA NOVEL

Compared to the awe inspiring display of the Morales family ancestral grounds, this place was several levels less grand and also lacked any celebratory mood.

At that moment, an emaciated old man looked up with dull eyes. He sat within this dark room as a perpetual overseer, but his position didn't seem to be very high. Whether it was his long black robes or the rattling of chains beneath them, he seemed more like a slave than an elder.

His eyes were a milky white. He seemed completely blind, yet also seemed to sense something. However, whatever that something was made him sigh.

Before he could do much of anything, the pulsing lights on one of the names became more intense. The aura it exuded became several levels more vindictive and savage, exuding an endless dark energy.

A commotion was raised throughout the mansion and soon news was spread to all corners.

Within a room of that mansion, a beautiful middle aged woman sat before a mirror, allowing a petite maid to apply light makeup onto her delicate features. If it wasn't for the slight wrinkles toward the side of her eyes, it would have been impossible to tell this woman's age.

Not long later, a messenger quickly entered the room and left just as quickly.

Upon hearing the message, the beautiful middle aged woman snickered.

"That whore's daughter is still trying? How many is that already in the last year?"

"38, Madame." The petite maid replied softly. p??(???????)

“That little bitch sure can endure pain. She should know that that seal isn’t going anywhere. She can struggle all she wants, but it won’t change the outcome.”

The beautiful middle aged woman’s countenance distorted. Her beauty seemed marred by decades of resentment and hatred. She wanted nothing more than for that little bitch to live a life of torment.

After a few moments of silence, she regained her usual air of nobility. It was as though she hadn’t been the one to make such an expression just seconds earlier.

“Has my boy Simeon still not found their traces? And is there any information about this Leonel Morales who dared to kill the people of my Brazinger Clan?”

“Madame’! According to our information, Leonel Morales is the grandson of Emperor Fawkes.”

The beautiful middle aged woman seemed to be stunned for a moment, seemingly not expecting such news. But, after a moment, her gaze narrowed.

“And so what? Even if a member of the Fawkes Imperial Family acted, they still have to lose a pound of flesh to my family!”

The petite maid hesitated before continuing.

“His mother hasn’t been seen in several decades and we weren’t able to find out anything about his father. In addition, madame should remember that Young Heir Simeon failed to gain a fourth of the World Spirit’!”

Though the petite maid didn’t finish her words, the meaning was clear. Acting against Leonel with such little information was inadvisable.

The beautiful Madame sneered. “It seems that cheap little whore is just like her mother. They sure know how to pick their men. I don’t care what background he has, can it surpass ours? I want him dead before

we're swept up by other matters. I don't want a fly buzzing around my business while I'm dealing with those greedy bastards who have eyes on our Fold of Reality."

The petite maid bowed. "Yes, Madame."

The Madame's sneer deepened. Thinking about how that little whore was suffering just to head toward another failure, her heart felt exceptionally light.

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At that same moment, Aina still sat, her skin peeled completely from her body. However, a sneer also coated what was left of her lips.

They probably thought she was struggling to break these seals once again. But, in reality, she was using it to weaken the backlash of this blood. And she would keep using it in this way until the day she could bury that family in the dirt.

They wanted to seal her? Well, there was no one in this world who better understood her own body. There was nothing she could put into her body that she couldn't find a way to gain a benefit from.

Her dull eyes flashed with an endless determination.

**

Across the world, as Aina fought her own battle, Leonel too fought his own.

Blood covered his body from head to toe, but his gaze was just as blazing as Aina's.

"You dare pair yourself with a demonic creature and deem yourself a human?!" Lamorak billowing roar shook the arena.

Several competitors ran about the surroundings, chasing after orbs of light in the skies.

Leonel drew his bow, his gaze defiant.

SHUUUUUUUUUUU!

Another orb of light was broken apart by him, fusing into his point total.

Leonel wiped the blood that was falling down from his face.

“I’ve long since been tired of you.”

Leonel’s voice rumbled like thunder. It didn’t seem very loud, yet it reverberated in the chests of all those who heard him.

He wanted nothing more than to teach the man before him a lesson.

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Just when Leonel was about to go all out with Lamorak, a familiar voice called out once again.

<Third Trial Complete>

<Group 7 Results Calculated>

<‘!’>

<Leonel – 302 points>

<Umred – 212 points>

<Gawain – 197 points>

<Cralis – 189 points>

<Lamorak – 168 points>PANDA-NOVEL.COM

‘
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Cralis and Umred were both Demon Lords ranked #4 and #2 respectively. Gawain and Lamorak both were Knights of the Round Table. It could be said that Leonel’s group for the third trial was among the strongest. To say that he was unlucky was a definite understatement.

If it wasn’t for this, he wouldn’t have been in such a sorry state.

During the second round, he relied on himself to gain a perfect evaluation. However, he had been targeted during this third trial since his marksmanship gave him a great advantage. As a result, he had no choice but to get Little Blackstar’s help.

He should have known that by doing this, he would have given Lamorak the excuse he needed to target a fellow human. It was no secret to Leonel that the little mink was a Dark Elemental creature. He had expected Lamorak to use such an excuse. But, what he hadn’t expected was for the demons to also take the opportunity to target him.

Surprisingly, the only one who didn’t target him was Gawain. Yet, despite this, Umred ranked above him in the end. This made Leonel several points more serious about the Demon Lords. It was clear that not all of them were as weak as the #62 Demon Lord he took the life of just a few months prior.

Leonel turned toward Umred, trying to catch his breath.

The #2 Demon Lord looked like a devil risen from hell. He stood three meters tall and had skin the color of crimson. There were two horns that adorned his head. They pierced and curled upward menacingly, vibrating with a hidden, dark power. PANDA NOVEL

Umred's chest was completely bare and his lower half was covered by dark beast skins. He wielded two battle axes, one to each of his massive hands. Their blades seemed as large as his body, dwarfing him despite his size.

Cralis was a demon of large size as well. However, rather than being red, he was covered from head to toe in deep black scales harder than steel. And, rather than wielding battle axes, he wielded a massive broad sword of over three meters in length.

Whether it was the two demons or the two knights, all of them were looking toward Leonel. Three of them had somewhat reluctant expressions, only Gawain seemed to be expressionless.

Leonel glared back at them all, his chest heaving up and down. He had already reached the point where just these few had no ability to pressure him any longer.

Without another word, he stepped onto his small grey platform and soared back up.

"Big Brother, are you okay?"

Leonel took a deep breath. "I'm fine. It's not a big deal."

Little Nana frowned at these words. She could tell from the tone of Leonel's voice that he wasn't as fine with these matters as it seemed. PANDA NOVEL

Toward such a reaction, Nana couldn't help but feel somewhat speechless. What was it? Did he expect to not suffer a loss after being targeted by so many powerful beings? In fact, did he even really suffer such a loss? Wasn't he still first?

However, Nana had no idea that the reason Leonel was so short and succinct wasn't because of this. Though it played a part, it wasn't everything.

At the moment, Leonel had an uncomfortable, suffocating feeling in his chest. It was the kind of feeling he only felt due to Aina.

For some reason, Leonel felt as though there was something wrong with Aina at this very moment. Yet, he was still years away from leaving these trial grounds. And, even if he left right now, it would be impossible for him to find her immediately.

This left him feeling anxious, so anxious that he didn't even think about why he was so certain these thoughts were reality.

It was no wonder, then, that Leonel almost completely snapped just a moment ago. If it wasn't for the trial ending, there was no telling what he would have done in that moment.

<Trial Grade: Perfect>

<Skill Points Rewarded: 3020>

<Special Reward: 1 Special Star Ticket. 3 Star Points>

<Perfect Grade Recovery Rewarded>

A pillar of gold descended upon Leonel. He had no choice but to discard any distracting thoughts he had. Even if he wanted to rush to Aina right now, he couldn't do so without strength. If he wasted this time, any small chance he had would just shrink all the more so.

Star Force rotated within Leonel's body. As time passed, he felt his Force growing more and more crystallized.

'Just a little more' | Just a little more and I'll be able to form my final Nodes.'

Each recovery reward Leonel gained was worth three to four months of normal meditation. After two perfect recovery rewards in a row, Leonel had already managed to cover over half a year of meditation. With a few more rewards like this, he would be able to meet his goal.

“Nana, come over here.”

A sudden voice sounded as Leonel opened his eyes. He didn't need to look over to know that it was Pope Margrave. Before Leonel could even react to the words, the first thing he noticed was Nana's imperceptible trembling. It was as though she was deep within a nightmare.

Seeing Nana's hesitation, Margrave frowned.

“Did you not hear me?”

The dignity in his voice raised several levels. Despite the fact he didn't raise its volume, it felt as though his words were thundering in the little girl's ears, causing her blood to rush in reverse.

Little Nana's hands gripped at her chest. It looked like she would bend to the pressure at any moment.

At this instant, the eighth round of the third trial was beginning, but at least half of the remaining participants had suddenly turned their gazes toward their direction.

However, no one could have expected Leonel's reaction.

“I'm not in the best of moods right now, Pope.. Scram.”

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Leonel wasn't a person who got pushed to anger easily. Even when he was oppressed several times by Camelot or even the powers he had been a part of in the past, being vicious with his words wasn't normally the route he would take.

His usual response would be calm and collected, even to the point of bordering on inhumanly cold. But now, after swallowing several grievances, being targeted by the very people he was meant to save in this damned Zone, and now seeing a little girl being so blatantly bullied before so many'. He snapped.

He looked toward the handsome Pope Margrave, his hair billowing beneath his own aura.

Margrave's gaze narrowed.

Though Leonel had called him Pope, it didn't carry a hint of respect. And, as if the disrespect wasn't enough', he actually told him to scram?

Margrave remained silent for several moments. The motives for his actions were quite obvious. He was the Pope of The Church while Leonel just revealed that his beast companion was a demon beast. How could he allow one of his own people to interact with such a man?

Modred looked over with a hint of curiosity in her eyes. There was even a hint of understanding and compassion within them, as if she understood Leonel's plight. But, just as quickly as it appeared, it disappeared just as fast.

Margrave didn't respond to Leonel directly and turned back toward Nana.

"Are you sure this is what you want?" PANDA-NOVEL.COM

His words seemed to be hinting at something. Yet, only Nana herself seemed to understand. Everyone else was completely left in the dark.

Little Nana's trembling grew fiercer. It became quite obvious to Leonel that this wasn't just a matter of being associated with him.

While others might not know it, Leonel knew that Nana wasn't of this world. In a few years, this Pope would have no control over her life whatsoever. So, while others who heard their conversation assumed

that the Pope was an elder advising Nana for the sake of her future, Leonel knew that she wouldn't react like this if it was just about that' |

Leonel stood up and stepped into the void that separated his and Nana's platform. It seemed like he was committing suicide for a moment, yet in the next instant, he actually took a step on the air, shocking all those who were watching him.

Of course, Leonel was using his treasure shoes to mimic such an effect, but the others had no way of knowing this.

Little Nana was so shaken that she hardly noticed when Leonel had already appeared before her. If it wasn't for his shadow, she would have noticed anything at all.

"Ah' |!"

"Do you want to leave here?" Leonel asked. PANDA NOVEL

"Ah' |" Little Nana was speechless.

If she could leave, wouldn't she have? What was Leonel saying? She was confused about exactly what was happening.

"Do you?" Leonel pressed.

"Y-yes' |"

"Good."

Leonel nodded. Then, he brought out the Segmented Cube and allowed her to enter. In one instant, there was nothing but a small gray platform and two youngsters. In the next, there was no one but Leonel standing outside of a large five by five meter box. In fact, the cube was so large that Leonel was able to step from it to his original grey platform without using his treasure shoes.

Pope Margrave's brow furrowed.

What was this supposed to accomplish? ρ??∫???????

How could Pope Margrave know of the Segmented Cube's abilities? Entering it was like being disconnected from the world entirely.

During the second trial, Leonel had had thoughts of entering the Segmented Cube. But, something made him rethink doing so and he asked the dictionary about it first.

As expected, once he entered the Segmented Cube, he would be considered to have left the Merlin Trials. If he did that, he would lose the right to fight for the Four Seasons Realm comprehension.

However, for someone like Little Nana, this was perfect for her. She would no longer be restrained by the trials. But, from now until the trials ended, she would have to remain within the Segmented Cube. There was no telling how the trial grounds would react to a 'dead' participant suddenly coming back.

Leonel landed on his own platform, his chest heaving slightly. This was the first time that his recovery didn't bring him back to 100%. However, this only made sense. He had directed all of the Star Force toward concentrating his Force.

In addition, for whatever reason, Leonel seemed unaware that he had already awakened the Healing Branch of his Snowy Star Owl Lineage Factor. If not for this, how could he ever worry about his body's condition? How could he ever have been put into such a sorry state just moments ago?

It seemed that Leonel had truly been unconscious during the matters of that day'!

After landing, Leonel turned back toward the Pope only to see that the latter was already looking toward him. However, Leonel disregarded him the very same way he had once disregarded Leonel.

This time, though, the Pope didn't seem intent on maintaining his silence toward Leonel.

He sighed. “Are you not aware that your actions have made an enemy of all those here?”

Leonel’s footsteps paused. If it wasn’t for his mood, he may very well have laughed at what he had just heard.

He was a Leonel Morales. He was a man who, despite his modest upbringing, managed to gain the love and adoration of a school filled with nobles.

Who among those who went to Royal Blue Academy didn’t know his name? Who among them didn’t respect him and have a good opinion of him? Even when he ‘shamed’ himself and never missed a day of confessing to Aina, not a soul made fun of him for it and they even encourage him.

Yet, after the world changed, everything seemed to change along with it. It seemed that no matter where he went or what he did, he would be hated, ostracized, and targeted. It was as though after the new world order descended, his charisma, his kind heart, his warm nature’; it all wasn’t worth a single shit anymore.

Thinking to this point, Leonel began to laugh, unable to hold it back. He genuinely laughed, finding it all to be very funny.

“Then be my enemy.” Leonel said after he finished laughing.

He didn’t say any other words and his tone even seemed somewhat sad. But that was all. He didn’t spare the Pope another glance.

<Third Trial Complete>

<Group 8 Results Calculated>

<Random Event Triggered>

<70% or more of those participating have gained animosity toward one trial taker [Leonel]. Survival Event triggered>

<10x the rewards for participant [Leonel]>

<Half the rewards for enemy participants>

<Location Chosen: Camelot>

<Trial Chosen: Capture the Flag>

<Time Limit: 23:59:59>

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Leonel's expression changed. This was the last thing he could have possibly expected to happen. However, after a while, he understood why such a thing would happen.

The Merlin Trials were set up with the utmost transparency. With the exception of hiding what happened within the Special Store, everything else was laid bare for all to see. Whether it was one's performance and grade or even the skills one chose to unlock, everyone saw it.

Beyond this transparency, one could watch everyone battle. This was especially so in single participant trials like trial 1 and 2 had been. In that case, even when one waited to unlock skills after using a Special Store Ticket, it was more likely than not that whatever improvements one made would become very obvious, very quickly.

As though this wasn't enough, everyone shared the same physical root skill tree. In addition, all those who used the same weapon shared the same weapon root and special root skill trees as well. This meant that even if one wanted to hide their skills and did a good job in doing so, the kind of skills one had unlocked could be deduced just by observing someone else with a similar weapon!

What did this all come to mean? It essentially meant that this set up made it very easy to distinguish who was powerful and who wasn't, in addition to who was improving faster than others and who wasn't.

In such a situation, a small group of individuals becoming the target of many was very possible. One could even say that it was inevitable. The only question was of when.

Understanding this, Merlin would have definitely made some plans accordingly. Or, maybe this was always Merlin's intention to begin with.

'It feels as though everything is suddenly moving quicker. Whether it was the sudden Elimination Round or this Random Event, both were triggered by something that should have only begun to happen much later in the trials'

After thinking to this point, Leonel became several points more serious. Though the voice had said that he had 10x the rewards to claim, he knew that doing so wouldn't be so easy.

Before Leonel could think anymore, he felt the world warp around him. When his vision cleared, he found himself in a familiar throne room. Except this time, rather than kneeling before it as he had done last time, he was sitting on its cushioned seat.

'King Arthur's Throne Room?'PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Leonel frowned. He felt that this positioning wasn't much of a coincidence.

After a sweep of his senses, Leonel realized that though he was within Camelot's castle, it was completely deserted. In fact, for as far as he could stretch his Internal Sight, he didn't spot a single person.

<Preparation Time Given: 00:30:00>

Leonel was pleasantly surprised. He hadn't thought that he would gain something like that. This made things much more convenient for him.

After a while, Leonel understood the Random Event.

There was a flag in this very throne room. In fact, it was waving above the throne he sat on at this very moment. His role was to protect it, while the role of everyone else was to steal it.

Leonel had to protect the flag for a single day. However, should the flag be stolen away, it only had to be protected by the opposition for ten minutes. The only exception to this is if there was less than ten minutes remaining to the end of the trial. In that case, they only had to protect it until time ran out. This essentially meant that the most dangerous time for Leonel to lose the flag would be in the final minutes.

Of course, the reason Leonel wasn't in too bad of a position was because he could move the flag if he wanted to. The only restriction was that since the chosen location was Camelot, he couldn't leave the city walls. In fact, from Leonel's understanding, he had to stay within the core city's gates as well. However, this was still a large area.

'Run?'

Leonel's lips curled, a cold light suffusing his eyes. PANDA NOVEL

In order to participate in capturing his flag, Leonel's enemies had to pay 1 star point or 1000 skill points. This way, most were filtered out. However, it also guaranteed that all who dared to do so would be elites.

At the same time, the more who participated, the better his rewards would be.

"Yip! Yip!"

Little Blackstar jumped up from Leonel's shoulders to the top of his head. Previously, the little guy had felt quite enraged about how Leonel was being treated and had even wanted to charge out to face their enemies directly. However, Leonel had stopped the little guy from doing so. Though the little mink was powerful, Leonel was sure Blackstar was still an infant. He couldn't let him rush to his death like that.

“Yes, yes. We’ll get them back now. Giving an Earth Mage time to prepare their own terrain? They should expect to suffer a few losses’!”

Leaving such an advantage to an Earth Mage was bad enough. But, Leonel wasn’t just an Earth Mage’ ; He was an Earth Magus who also happened to be a Force Crafter.

The moment Leonel had this thought, he began to use the over 3000 skill points he had just gained without thought for conservation.

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The 30 minute timer ran its course.

At that moment, several individuals turned their gaze toward the Segmented Cube Leonel had left behind. However, none of them had the ability to cross the skies like Leonel had. Or, maybe some of them did, but had yet to unlock such an ability from the physical root skill tree and could only watch it.
p??J??????

Unfortunately for them, there wasn’t much time to think about just what this treasure was or how it worked. They were all given the same option.

<Would you like to enter the Random Event?>

<Cost: 1 star point>

In that instant, several elites made their decisions and disappeared along with Leonel.

When they reappeared, they found themselves within the walls of Camelot. The sun hung high in the sky.

For them, who had been within the trials for the last few months, seeing such a sight was actually quite refreshing. But, after a few moments, they grew serious. This wasn't the time to be losing themselves in thought.

They had all spawned in random locations, stretched across the core city of Camelot. No two individuals could be found within a hundred meters of one another. Now, they just had to make the decision of where to look for Leonel first.

Luckily, they were all elites. The prerequisite to cultivate Force was to grasp Internal Sight. Even if they all had varying degrees of how strong their own were, they all at least had Internal Sight capable of covering a few tens of meters. The more powerful of them could cover several hundred meters.

The truth was that if Leonel wanted, he could hide himself from their search. After all, that was how he had escaped Camelot initially. He had been able to avoid Lamorak's detection and simply walked out.

However, while he could do, he didn't feel that it was necessary. At least not for now. This was the perfect chance for him to gain slaughter points.

By now, Leonel had learned the benefit of saving and not using his slaughter points immediately. From being worth 100 skill points, they were already worth 1000. If he saved them well, the benefit could be imagined.

As the elites looked for Leonel, they seemed to realize that this might have become more difficult than they originally thought.

In a corner of the city, Umred frowned. The action made his already sinister crimson features all the more so.

'He can hide from Internal Sight?'

This was the first thought the #2 Demon Lord had. However, it wasn't a thought he wanted to confirm. If this was true, finding Leonel truly would be impossible.

‘Hm?’

Umred’s expression changed, his twin battle axes trembling slightly as he seemed to realize something. He didn’t immediately sense Leonel, but what he did sense was a faint fluctuation of magic.

He looked toward the castle with a slight hint of shock.

The reason he was shocked wasn’t because the magic fluctuations were powerful. But rather because of their location. These fluctuations were actually coming from Camelot’s castle.

As a demon, he had never stepped foot so close to Camelot’s core. However, he knew a castle when he saw one. The fact that these fluctuations were coming from the very center of this city’ it can’t be that Leonel hadn’t been running and hiding like they thought?

While Umred was having these thoughts, so were many others.

Surprisingly, neither King Arthur nor Modred had chosen to take part. In fact, Pope Margrave, who Leonel thought likely had the highest chance of taking action, hadn’t moved either.

That said, there were still some familiar faces. Aside from the crimson Umred, there was the black scaled Cralis and even the large bellied Big Buddha’

All at once, these three seemed to realize the very same thing.

Big Buddha looked toward the castle with a dark expression.

He had once had a great impression of Leonel. This was a youth that had saved many of their promising geniuses, after all. However, ever since Leonel said those words about the Slayer Legion, his opinion of Leonel had only plummeted day after day. These emotions reached their peak when he watched so many of their own die.

Mountain'! He was a youth that Big Buddha saw a lot of himself in. Mayfly'! She was a cheerful little girl with a big heart and had even been among those who went to take Leonel out of the Project Hunt Island.

Yet, all of them had died here.

It was Leonel's fault. Had he not been unreasonable and caused so much chaos, the Adurna family would have never grasped the chance to enter the Zone and their team would have been whole and complete. But, because of his own selfish desires, he actually caused the death of so many.

Big Buddha's gaze turned red, his steps causing the ground to rumble as he entered the castle before him.

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Big Buddha frowned when he entered the castle. He immediately realized that there wasn't a single other soul. But, by his estimations, this didn't make sense. He most definitely wasn't the most powerful of those who had chosen to participate. By all rights, he logically shouldn't have been the first to reach this point.

He suddenly felt like something was wrong. The cold stone beneath his feet, the eerie works of art that hung from the tall walls and windows, the knight statues decorated with immaculate armor'! It all felt too quiet, too disconcerting.

Little did Big Buddha know that there were several individuals feeling the exact way he did.

They all stood in the very same hall Big Buddha did, staring at the same eerie walls, feeling the same stifling weight on their chests, but none of them sensed the other. It was as though they were on different planes of existence, viewing the same things from a completely different perspective.

Leonel sat within the throne room, coldly watching these events. He was both surprised and disappointed to see Big Buddha taking part. Others might not be aware, but weren't they both here to complete the same mission? What did he gain by targeting him like this?

Leonel sighed and shook his head. He looked off blankly into the distance for a moment.

This world? Why was it like this?

Something faint budded within Leonel's heart, but he wasn't in the mood to grasp it. He simply wanted this to end. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

"Let's go, Little Blackstar."

Leonel took a step forward and was suddenly shrouded by shadows.

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Zyllee was a Demon Lord ranked #19. He could be considered to have made a name for himself a long time ago.

He had a hook nose that seemed displaced from a large beaked bird and two sharp hawk-like eyes. What was most surprising about him, though, was the fact he was one of the rare bowman who had chosen to take part in the trials.

Zyllee's steps were slow and silent. He crossed over one step at a time, leaving his body in a ready position to fire his nocked arrow in short notice.

Just from his movement alone, Leonel could learn many things. It was clear that while Leonel's talent was several levels beyond his own, the one with more experience and training was clear at a single glance. PANDA NOVEL

Unlike Big Buddha, Zyllee wasn't surprised by the fact he was the only one here. He was confident in his own tracking and sensory abilities. There were very few things that could hide from his hawk-like eyes.

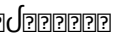
However, it was for this very reason that though he seemed cautious, he was the one with his guard the most lowered. In fact, he could even spare thoughts toward the kind of rewards he would gain for killing Leonel.

Sure, the goal was only to capture the flag. But, wouldn't the game end much quicker if he just killed his only opponent? Why waste ten minutes running away if things could be ended so easily?

Zyllee licked his lips, revealing a long brownish-red tongue covered in bumps and sinkholes. It looked more like a piece of aged skin rather than someone's tongue.

Out of habit, the tip of his tongue swung past his nose, picking at both his nostrils.

"Hehe, I can see you!"

Zyllee suddenly spoke, his head whipping around in the direction he had sensed movement. But, all he found was a corpse falling down toward him. 

Such a realization shocked him to the point that he hardly registered an arrow aimed through the body and toward his heart.

In the end, Zyllee was still a veteran of the battlefield. While it was clever to use a body to cover an attack, it was also inevitable that said attack would be slowed after passing through such an obstacle. This gave Zyllee plenty of time to react.

The hawk-nosed demon dove out of the way of the corpse, rolling along the ground before propping himself up on a knee. Without even standing up, he was already prepared to fire an arrow.

Unfortunately'!

BANG!

The corpse exploded. A ran of metallic shrapnel barraged the #19 Demon Lord.

Zyllee had focused his entire being on aiming his first shot. He had thought that Leonel's attack was finished the moment the corpse fell and didn't even bother to move away from it. Little did he know that the corpse that fell by his feet would be the true attack.

An entire side of Zyllee's face was bombarded by shrapnel, causing his already unpleasant features to become even more ghastly.

Zyllee's vision swam. He could already feel his consciousness slipping away as his body bled out.

He never even got the chance to hit the ground when an arrow shot through his forehead.

" | You couldn't have at least' | checked if I was dead first' |?"

Zyllee died with grievances. Though he had been hurt by the initial strike, it hadn't been to the point of dying so soon. He was severely injured, but as a demon, he could have fought another round or two before his life truly slipped away.

Who could have expected that Leonel wouldn't even speak a word before sealing his fate completely? Any thoughts he had of luring Leonel into a false sense of security before counter attacking was completely disregarded as his eyes grew dull.

' |

At that moment, another Demon was slowly exploring the castle, trying to find exactly where Leonel was hiding.

His steps paused, his large body becoming frighteningly still.

His nose tilted up into the air, a large pair of fiery red nostrils taking a deep breath.

'Blood' !'

The demon's eyes narrowed.

It could be said that Leonel's means were quite clever.

Taking advantage of the fact his enemies didn't enter at the same time, he used a few illusions of the eyes and senses to separate them and deal with them one by one.

He managed to isolate sight, hearing and Internal Sight. However' ! he didn't manage to do so with scent.

It wasn't necessarily Leonel's fault. A human wouldn't be able to pick up the scent of blood from so far away. In fact, not all demons had a strong sense of smell either.

But' ! it just so happened that Umred did.

Chapter 296

Leonel steadied his breathing.

Not every battle had been as simple as the one against Zyllee. Many were more cautious and sometimes Leonel's plans didn't work out as perfectly as they did in his mind. But, regardless, Leonel had already gained 7 slaughter points. Five of which came from demons and the remaining two of which were humans. Now, there were only three left, Big Buddha, Umred and Cralis.

Leonel felt that there were more who had entered this trial, but, it seemed that their senses hadn't been sharp enough to come to the castle.

This was already the best result possible. Leonel didn't want to make it too obvious that he was here. If he did, those who were powerful would realize that it was a trap. In that case, it was best to miss out of luring everyone if it meant capturing all of the big fish.

Leonel took a deep breath.

'Of the three that remain the weakest is...'

Leonel sighed. He had been subconsciously putting off confronting Big Buddha. In truth, several of those he had already killed were more powerful than the large bellied Commander.

Leonel knew that he was still too soft hearted, even now. But, there was nothing much he could do about his own disposition.

All of his kills up to this point were strangers or those he hardly knew. Big Buddha could be considered to be the first person he would kill that he had once had a decent relationship with.

Even thinking this, Leonel felt silly. After all, this so-called 'decent' relationship was just a matter of conversing with this larger than life man for a couple hours, if that. But, Leonel still felt that it would cause a knot in his heart.

Leonel closed his eyes and took another deep breath.PANDA-NOVEL.COM

'He's trying to kill you.'

These were the only words Leonel whispered to himself. They were words no one else would ever hear, but he repeated them to himself again and again.

Leonel's eyes remained closed for a long while as he calmed his heart. When they opened again, his calculating gaze had returned.

'Get ready, Little Blackstar.'

Leonel sent his thoughts over to the little mink. After unlocking 'Perfect Union', doing such a thing wasn't an issue. Though the little mink and him couldn't communicate in the truest sense, it was

possible for them to understand each other's intentions as though it was their own. In a way, their ability to understand one another was even better than if they used words and it was also much quicker as well.

Leonel shot forward, his steps exceptionally light.

One of the benefits this trial had given him was an understanding of movement. Leonel had never really considered its importance before.

Originally, he had been entirely focused on just improving his movement speed. The restrictions within the trial were so great that he felt stifled. After all, ever since he awakened his Snowy Star Owl Lineage Factor, speed had become one of his strong points.

However, after unlocking the skills within his physical roots, Leonel began to realize that movement was more complex than he once thought. It wasn't always strictly about straight-line speed. In many ways, agility was even more important than pure speed.

It wasn't just about speed, but how he fused a myriad of changes to his movement. PANDA NOVEL

Leonel was a marksman. It could be said that this was the path he was by far the most talented in. As a result, he knew how easy it was for him to hit a target with a predictable path. It was to the point where he would never miss such a target.

But, what if said target not only had speed, but also an enigmatic method of using it?

When Leonel used his Dream World to simulate such things, he realized that even without improving his power by much, if all he did was focus on his movement technique, his lethality was increase by 100% if not more.

Knowing this, Leonel realized two things. First, he realized that when he left this place, he should use one of his rewards on a movement type technique. They were far more important than he had given them credit for. And the second thing was that he realized his best bet at this juncture was to pour all of his skill points into his physical root skill tree.

All 3020 of his previous earned points had gone exactly there.

<Silver Skill 'Explosive First Step' Chosen>

<Silver Skill 'Abrupt Stop' Chosen>

...

<Gold Skill 'Irregular Steps' Chosen>

Leonel streaked across the castle, appearing where Big Buddha was in a flash. ρ??∫??????

As though to stop himself from hesitating, he didn't pause for a single moment. With a single motion, his palm flipped, causing a corpse he had kept within his spatial bracelet to launch toward the large man.

Big Buddha had long since grown impatient. He had been looking everywhere for where Leonel might be, but had found nothing. In addition, it was obvious that Leonel was fine, or else the Random Event would have come to an end already. Yet, all this time, he hadn't heard anything. He couldn't help but grow anxious.

It was at the moment he was thinking of backtracking and leaving the castle entirely that he suddenly realized the same thing Zyllee had just moments later... A corpse was coming toward him.

Big Buddha's eyes widened. However, he managed to react reflexively.

His palms were suddenly coated by a massive energy. In the blink of an eye, that energy seeped into his flesh, expanding the size of his hands until they rivaled his massive body in size. On the surface, his ability seemed somewhat comical. But, in practice, it carried a devastating power.

Big Buddha slammed a palm forward, not holding back in the slightest.

BANG!

A shower of shrapnel assaulted Big Buddha. However, his palms were so large that his attack acted as a defense at the same time. Though bits of hard metal sank into his palm, a strong reflective energy blasted them away before he could suffer any real injury.

“LEONEL!” Big Buddha roared.

He was completely enraged to the point of being irrational. He seemed to have completely forgotten that he had come here to kill Leonel.

However, Leonel had already set his mind to the task. There was no way he would allow Big Buddha the time to rest, nor would he allow himself the time to hesitate and regret his actions. Aina had told him once before... to be kind to your enemies was to be unkind to yourself.

Leonel pinched two arrows between three fingers, nocking them both at once and activated the Silver Skill ‘Double Shot’.

SHUUUUU!

Leonel’s arrows twirled around one another in the air. At first, their spiral seemed separate. But in the next instant, they seemed to fuse, becoming a spinning corkscrew of Force in the air.

“AGH!”

A large finger was severed before Big Buddha could react. It flailed in the air before dissipating the energy that formed it and hitting the ground at its normal size.

Unfortunately for Big Buddha, Leonel’s gaze remained cold and calculating.

Leonel activated the Silver Skill ‘Hot Streak’, eliminating his cool downs for the next 10 seconds. Then, he immediately activated the Silver Skill ‘Five Pronged Net’.

He fired five arrows in quick succession. Each curled in the air from five different directions, firing toward Big Buddha from five separate directions at once.

Big Buddha panicked, swatting his two massive palms to the left and right, smashing apart 'Five Pronged Net' before it could form.

Unfortunately... that exposed his front.

The Silver Skill 'Shooting Star' activated.

Lightning crackled and wind sliced. Leonel's gaze met Big Buddha's. Though his heart shook when he saw the fear and helplessness, his steady hand never wavered.

SHUUUUU!

Leonel's expression suddenly changed. He retreated with his quickest steps, not forsaking his Light Elemental Force for a even a moment.

A battle ax suddenly smashed down from his side. However, there was no owner behind it. It was clear that it had been thrown toward him. Had he not moved, his arms which had just been holding up his bow would have been severed.

However, it was fine. He had already released the arrow. Regardless, Big Buddha would die.

At least, that's what Leonel thought before a second variable appeared.

A massive broad sword smashed into one of Big Buddha's palms, sending him flying to the side.

Big Buddha slid along the ground in a sorry state. It was clear that whoever had 'saved' him hadn't really cared about his well being because he seemed to be barely alive. It was as though their goal was to prevent Leonel from gaining more slaughter points rather than saving a comrade.

Leonel's expression grew heavy. He recognized those two weapons.

Umred and Cralis had managed to see through his maze of spells.

Chapter 297

Leonel didn't have time to think about why it was that these two demons managed to find him. However, he realized one thing instantly: they had been stalking him.

Before Leonel made the choice to target anyone, he first checked in on where everyone was. If they were too close to one another, he wouldn't even take the risk of attacking.

All of the spells he had written could be walked directly through, there were no physical obstructions. As a result, crossing over from one region to another was not only easy, but seamless. This was how Leonel managed to maintain the illusion that his enemies were always alone. If there were physical obstructions, it would become too obvious, too quickly that he was interfering with their senses. Once that happened, everything would be exposed.

This was all to say that the last time Leonel checked on these pair of Demon Lords, they were several hundred meters away. Leonel was certain that he could kill Big Buddha in time. The only explanation for how they both made it here so coincidentally was that they were lurking and waiting for him to enter battle so that they could counter.

'Hot Streak is still active.'

Leonel's mind spun quickly. Since he dared to do this, how could he not have contingency plans? He just needed an opportunity to use them.

'Little Blackstar.'
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Leonel activated the Silver Skill 'Double Shot' again. This time, he aimed for Cralis. He didn't really have any other choice. Since Umred had thrown over his ax, it meant that he was still a small distance away.

Leonel didn't even bother to send his senses over to lock onto him, he only needed to deal with the problem in front of him.

Cralis blocked the corkscrewing arrows with the flat of his massive broad sword, sliding back beneath the strength of the impact.

Unfortunately for him, due to having to save Big Buddha, he was outside his own attack range. But, all he had to do was hold on. Not only was Umred on his way, but he knew that Leonel couldn't quick fire at this rate indefinitely. This was definitely the skill 'Hot Streak', it would last at most ten seconds.

Leonel unleashed a barrage of arrows. All of them were simple normal 'Single Shots', however they were all reinforced, crackling with strong amounts of lightning.

As he did so, he explosively retreated, not allowing Umred to surround him.

'It's done.' PANDA NOVEL

Cralis' shot forward, his broad sword trailing behind him like the tail of a flying kite. His black scales shimmered beneath the low light of the castle, bouncing off his body like droplets of water.

His speed was unbelievably fast. Leonel couldn't help but wonder again how it was that Cralis and Umred weren't among the two who gained perfect evaluations for the first trial. But, whatever the reason was, the pressure they could place on Leonel now after benefiting greatly from the second and third trial was enough to make his hair stand on end.

Leonel's expression changed once more.

Another sharp wind assaulted his back. Leonel didn't need to turn back to know that it was Umred's second battle ax.

Leonel couldn't help but be shocked. Umred had actually thrown both of his weapons?

With a firm plant, Leonel dove to one side. ρ??U??????

‘I timed it perfectly.’ Leonel’s gaze narrowed.

Leonel thought that Cralis would be obstructed by Umred’s throw, allowing him a chance to slip away. However, a fleeting thought crossed his mind that made his expression change once again.

He was certain that he had retreated in the opposite direction of where Umred’s initial ax came from. So, how had another ax suddenly come from his back?

Now that Leonel thought about it, he initially gave up on locking onto Umred with his Internal Sight because he couldn’t immediately find him. Though his maze of spells was very helpful in separating his enemies and allowing him to deal with them one at a time, it also hindered himself.

In order to circumvent this problem, Leonel used visual arrays that could project the happenings to him, that way he could maintain control of the entire situation but...

Leonel clenched his jaw. ‘Visual arrays are easily fooled...’

Leonel felt that he had stepped into a pile of shit. Who said Demons couldn’t use their heads?

All of these thoughts flashed by Leonel’s mind in a split second. He still had one advantage in all of this. His thinking speed was so quick that he saw through the plan of the pair of Demon Lords before it was even revealed.

The more information he had and the earlier he got it, the faster he could make adjustments.

In that instant, the ax veered off course, curling around Cralis as though it had autonomy of its own.

‘That’s the Silver Special Skill ‘Weapon Control’.’

Leonel understood what happened now.

Umred had used 'Weapon Control' to fake the direction he was truly in, essentially blocking off a lane of retreat for Leonel while leading him to where he really was.

However, the real plan wasn't to hit him with this second ax, but to make him think that Cralis would be stalled, thus giving them time to pincer him. Umred banked on him being confused for just long enough not to realize that he was using 'Weapon Control', thus causing him to make an error in judgement.

However, Leonel was ready. Rather than trying to escape like the two expected, Leonel fired an arrow from a single knee, aiming right for Carlis' head.

The #4 Demon Lord was stunned, not expecting Leonel to make such a choice. He had been preparing an attack to catch Leonel off guard this whole time, how could he also defend at the same time?

Without an option, Carlis twisted his body, dodging to one side. However, it wasn't enough. Leonel was too close and his arrows were simply too fast.

SHUUUU! PCCHUU!

An arrow ripped through Carlis' black scales, tearing into his collarbone and just barely missing Carlis' throat.

In that instant, Leonel took the chance to explosively retreat once again, avoiding Umred's pincer.

Leonel took deep breaths, his bow primed and his arrow nocked. Beads of sweat fell from his brow as he watched Umred's battle axes float toward empty space.

In the next moment, a large three meter tall crimson demon with savage horns stepped out, crossing a spell wall Leonel had put up to appear.

Leonel steadied his breathing, his gaze narrowing.

Had he been just a bit slower, he would have been forced to take on an attack from the front and the back simultaneously. Taking on such an attack from two such powerful individuals would be like asking for death.

At the same time that Leonel was steadying his quickly beating heart, the two Demon Lords were looking toward him with exceptionally serious expressions. They didn't know if Leonel had lucked out or if he had seen through their plan in such dire straits, but if it was the latter' it was simply too monstrous.

There weren't many who could remain calm in the midst of battle. But, remaining calm and analyzing the situation so quickly was something straight out of a fantasy novel. There were those who could make appropriate actions like Leonel's on instinct honed through countless years of battle. But' Leonel was simply too young to have cultivated a battle sense of that level.

The little mink grew restless seeing these two. These were the same two demons that had been bullying Leonel during the third trial. The moment the little guy recognized them, he bared his little fangs, growling. Though, due to his small size, Little Blackstar's growling sounded more like the purring of a kitten than the prowling call of a predator.

'Alright, alright little guy.'

Leonel smiled, somehow feeling more at ease after seeing Blackstar's antics.

"Yip! Yip!"

Leonel's gaze became more serious as he looked back toward the two Demon Lords.pANDA-N0VEL.COM

'No, let me fight them on my own for now''

A small circle of wind surged around Leonel, his eyes becoming somewhat dull.

Since he began these trials, he had yet to get a chance to test his own hypotheses. He originally wanted to see if it was feasible to use his Dreamscape in place of his battle sense. What better opportunity was there than now?

As his gaze became dull, the entire battlefield was projected into his Dream World. A replica of himself stood, as did one of both Umred and Cralis.

Everything before him was broken down into numbers and percentages. They flickered by his eyes like the words on a screen, his mind becoming faster and faster with each passing moment.

The two Demon Lords suddenly felt their hair stand on end. They felt an overwhelming sense of danger for a moment, but they had no idea where it was coming from. Did this boy get help? But that was impossible, this was a trial set up by Merlin himself.

Before the two could truly understand what was happening, Leonel took a step forward, firing a simple arrow.

It was just a simple arrow, but Umred felt stifled. The step he had planned to take was suddenly cut off. He had no choice but to change his tactics midway, but the result was a taboo in battle. He thought too much about his next move, making his reactions slow. PANDA NOVEL

In the end, he could only hurriedly block with his two axes in a sorry fashion, stumbling backward due to his base not being solid.

Cralis watched this happened with an incredulous gaze. At first, he thought that Leonel and Umred were teaming up to put a show. Could it be that Umred planned on using Leonel to get rid of him?

He definitely didn't put such an action past the #2 Demon Lord. After all, they were demons. Plotting, scheming, and backstabbing one another could be considered just another event of the day.

However, in the next instant, he realized that it wasn't Umred scheming against him at all. He couldn't understand how a single arrow could put him into such a sorry situation.

It had no flare, no complexity, there was hardly even any curve to it. It simply didn't make any sense.

Cralis roared, swinging down his broad sword with all his might. But, due to the fact Leonel had shot through his collarbone earlier, he could only use a single hand, causing him to end up in an even sorrier state than Umred.

Leonel's barrage was relentless. Even with 'Heat Streak' being on cool down, he had long since unlocked the Silver Skill 'Superior Quick Fire' which cut his reload time to 0.70 seconds. Such a small time wasn't enough for the two Demon Lords to recover.

As though that wasn't enough, Leonel had already upgraded to the Silver Quiver. His quiver could now hold 50 arrows and it could respawn 2 arrows every 20 seconds. In addition, this quiver had the an added effect called 'Random Reload'. There was a 10% chance of an already fired arrow reappearing within the quiver after being let loose. $p \ll 0.1$

By Leonel's calculations, if he fired at his highest rate, he could expect 'Random Reload' to activate 2-3 times every 20 seconds. This essentially meant that Leonel could expect 5 extra arrows whenever his quiver's respawn was ready. If he went all out, he'd had 55 arrows to use in a single spurt. Maybe more if he got lucky.

All of these thoughts and calculations spun by Leonel's mind, but they neither uplifted his mood, nor diminished it. His entire focus was on the battle at hand while Umred and Cralis were like two frogs in slowly boiling water.

Leonel shot another arrow with every step he took. His imposing aura was no less than a mighty warrior. If it wasn't for the bow in his hands being so obvious, one would think he was wielding a halberd, brandishing it to taste the blood of his enemies.

The moment the two Demon Lords lost the initiative, it was like they could never gain it back. Leonel seemed to perfectly see through their weak points, not allowing them a chance to regain their footing.

And, in that very instant.

PENG!

Leonel activated 'Shooting Star' causing a light of panic to enter Cralis' eyes. He hurriedly blocked with his great sword, only to find he couldn't step as far back as he thought he could. All this time, he had completely forgotten that they were still within the castle walls. The pressure Leonel placed on them made them forget everything about their surroundings but him.

He awkwardly blocked with his great sword, unable to get as much leverage as he was expecting. However, that was when something completely astonishing happened.

Leonel's arrow skimmed off the side of Cralis' sword, changing its trajectory and appearing before Umred in the blink of an eye.

The crimson demon felt his life flash before his eyes. He was still reeling from Leonel's last attack. It could be said that the only reason he survived until now was because Leonel had to split his attention between the both of them. How could he possibly challenge two attacks at once?

He hurriedly tried to block with his two axes but it was to no avail. He had never regretted choosing two such heavy weapons in his life. It had always been his pride and joy. But now'! now he definitely regretted it.

PCCHUU!

The arrow tore through Umred's chest, lodging into one of his beating hearts. Even though he had two, they were both reliant on his each other. With how large his body was, it was simply impossible to survive for long with just one.

It was at that moment Umred saw Leonel take another step forward, his dull eyes flashing with thoughts of victory.

'It can't be'! he predicted this'!?' '! Monster'!'

A crimson demon with the horns of a devil calling another a monster'! It was truly a great irony'!

But' that was when the second unexpected thing of the battle occurred.

Leonel suddenly stopped.

Not only were Umred and Cralis confused, but even Leonel himself seemed to be confused as well. It was only after his dull eyes slowly regained their clarity that things began to make sense.

Leonel's expressionless visage became flushed. Sweat began pouring down from his brow and his steady breathing became heavy. His muscles twitched uncontrollably as though they had been overdrafted, his mind and thoughts feeling languid and slow.

'Shit' !'

Leonel had never expected for such a thing to happen. He had calculated everything, but he hadn't considered the possibility of his Soul Force running dry. All this time he had never had to worry about such a thing. Even when he was casting Three Star Magus Arts, it was child's play to him. How could he account for such a thing? He never thought that his greatest strength would actually fail him at such a crucial moment.

The sound of clapping entered Leonel's ears at that very moment. Without the support of his Soul Force, his spell maze was severely weakened and collapsed in the next instant, allowing sounds he couldn't previously hear to reach him.

Leonel's expression had already flushed and then paled beneath his fatigue, but it only got worse when he saw that the one clapping was Lamorak.

Unknowingly, the battle within the castle had begun to inch outside. It was clear that the two Demon Lords had been doing their best to run.

Leonel had already long seen through this, but he had also calculated that he would be able to kill them before they could leave the range of his spell maze and alert those who hadn't entered the castle.

What he didn't expect was for Lamorak to be waiting outside the large doors of the castle. And, not only was he waiting, but he had also gathered up a dozen men who had entered this capture the flag game with them'!

Chapter 299

Leonel breathed heavily, sweeping over the enemies before him with an expressionless gaze.

Though he seemed to be in a bad situation, Leonel didn't feel like it was so. After all, all of his enemies were before him. He hadn't been surrounded and still had a lane to retreat.

Leonel's gaze landed on Lamorak, measuring him up and down. He didn't bother to speak any words as there was nothing he could say that could change the current situation.

In a lot of ways, Lamorak and Big Buddha were incredibly similar. They were both die hard supporters of their own individual ideals "" one for the Slayer Legion and the other for Camelot. To them, the moment Leonel challenged their bottom lines, he was already deemed to be an enemy of theirs.

To people like them, things were only in black and white. And, even if they were aware that there might be a region of gray, they would rather stamp any instances of it to protect themselves from having to challenge their own ideals.

Leonel didn't feel like wasting his breath on people like this. Lamorak was already willing to go all out to kill him. But, the moment he saw the little mink in action, he felt as though all of his previous preconceptions were validated. This only made his fervor all the more great.

Lamorak would never consider what he would have done had the little mink not been on Leonel's side. He was simply a hypocrite, the kind of person who only sought to confirm their own biases while ignoring all else. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

If Lamorak was any sort of objective, he would be considering why it was that a young man who could wield the Light Element would choose to side with a Dark Elemental creature. Logically, things shouldn't be as simple as they seem. But, would such a fanatic consider such a thing? And, even if they did, how seriously would they take it?

Seeing Leonel's lack of a response to his grand entrance, Lamorak could only admit within his heart that he felt somewhat stifled.

"Surround him!"

Leonel shot backward, completely ignoring the advantage he had over the two Demon Lords. What good were slaughter points to the dead?

In fact, Leonel had learned during the third round that slaughter points could be stolen upon death. He had no desire for his hard work to benefit someone else, and held even less of a desire to die.

Unfortunately, just because he willed it to be so, didn't mean that his body would function as he wanted. He was in a state of complete exhaustion, causing his body to be sluggish and uncoordinated.

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The good news was that it was only his Soul Force that was completely drained, the Force within his body was still ample and could be slowly converted into Soul Force given enough time after being purified by the two stars of his Two Star Constitution.

However, where there was good, there was also bad.

Soul Force was what sustained Leonel's ability. Without it, his calculative abilities took a massive dip, his Dreamscape became useless and his Internal Strength couldn't be used to monitor his surroundings.

In addition, Soul Force also represented the focus of the mind even outside the use of Leonel's ability. Without it, his judgement and reflexes were impaired. Before, Leonel's coordination and reflexes used to be strengths of his stats, but now, they had plummeted by more than half each' ;

Leonel nocked an arrow and fired, hoping to maintain the distance between him and his pursuers. He still had several contingency plans to use, he just had to make it to them. But, he was completely astonished by what happened next.

His arrow shot through the whistling wind, appearing before a charging human of Camelot in an instant.
p??J??????

The young man in knight's armor froze, his body trembling as though he saw his life flash before his eyes. However, the sharp pain he had expected never appeared.

Not only was he stunned, but Leonel was even more so.

His arrow sailed, shooting into the ground and managing to land on the thigh of an unassuming mage who cried out in pain. However, Leonel was still in a daze.

He missed? He never missed. Outside of the time Leonel took to get used to the recoil of 15th century guns within the Mayan Tomb Zone, he couldn't remember the last time he missed. Even during his career as a quarterback, unless it was a hit impeding his throwing motion'! He had never missed his target.

It was such a shock to Leonel that he almost paused his steps, not believing what he was seeing.

It was at that moment Leonel realized that the drain of his Spirit Pressure affected far more than he thought it had.

'This is bad'!

Leonel was the only one who realized just how bad his situation was. Others thought it was simply normal if a bowman missed once in a while, not to mention the fact that Leonel's arrow had still technically hit a target. But, Leonel knew that if he stayed here for any longer, his situation would turn dire soon.

"Mages!" Lamorak coldly commanded.

Lamorak had waited here all this time. How could he not be aware of Leonel's potential escape route?

He might have been more powerful than Leonel, but his main occupation was as a General. The importance of a General Star to Camelot just might be greater than a Three Star Magus despite the fact there was more of the former than the latter.

However, one had to know that just because one had awakened a General Star didn't necessarily mean theirs was at the highest level nor did it mean it was necessarily serviceable, even.

It could only be said that Lamorak's was far beyond a normal level' ;

A volley of arrow spells shots into the skies, falling toward Leonel like a rain of meteors.

Arrows of earth, fire, wind and water' ; it felt as though all the elements of the world were converging onto a single man. The surge of Force was so great the front wall of the castle collapsed, widening the doorway until it was dozens of meters across.

'Little Blackstar.'

Leonel grit his teeth. He knew this move took a lot out of the little guy, but he had no choice. Most of the spells he had prepared in advance had collapsed after his Soul Force ran out. And obviously, he had no ability to cast any more.

The little mink stood on his four little paws, latching onto Leonel's hair. He growled, his hair standing on end until he seemed to double in size.

Just when Leonel was about to be completely overwhelmed, his body was suddenly covered by a thin layer of black fog.

SHUUUUU!

The violent fluctuations of magic shot through him completely, shattering the ground beneath him and leaving the ground of the castle in shambles.

Chapter 300

“Charge!”

Lamorak watched coldly as Leonel was completely enveloped by a swarm of spells. He was so invested in the death of Leonel that the irony was completely lost on him.

Between Lamorak and Leonel, there were still the #2 and #4 Demon Lords. Not only were they both there, but they were both still heavily injured. It could even be said that they were on their last breaths with Umred being in the far worse condition.

Umred had at most a few more minutes to live with one of his two hearts pierced through. Not only was he bleeding out, but even if that wasn't the case, a single heart wasn't enough to sustain his massive body.

By his side, Cralis wasn't in as bad of a position, but he was still originally weaker than Umred to begin with. In addition, he could only use a single arm with limited use of the other after Leonel shattered his collarbone.

To this point, Leonel hadn't done a single thing to harm Camelot. In fact, aside from killing some humans who entered this capture the flag game to target him, all of his kills to this point had been committed against demons. Not once had he actively targeted humans.

Yet, here was Lamorak, a supposed great knight of Camelot, ignoring two Demon Lords right before him for the sake of taking down Leonel.

Maybe in his mind this was still justified. Before Modred appeared, there had always been demons and humans. However, it was only after Modred organized demons and gave them strength and intelligence that they truly became dangerous.

To Lamorak, Leonel was another potential Modred. Not only that, but he was a man. As a man of this medieval era, Lamorak still subconsciously placed more emphasis on the role of a man. To him, not only would Leonel become another influence like Modred, but he would become something even more dangerous.
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This went beyond just the fact Modred was a woman. Others might not be aware, but Lamorak was keenly aware that Modred was King Arthur's daughter. It was precisely due to this tightly held secret that the relationship between their King and Queen had been somewhat estranged in the past decade.

Due to this relationship, Modred always had some reservations dealing with Camelot. If not for this, maybe things would have gotten out of hand long ago.

However... did Leonel have such ties?

Not only did he not, but his future was almost ruined by Camelot if not for him taking matters into his own hands.

Such a threat... to Lamorak, was even higher than two top four Demon Lords.

By Lamorak's calculations, Leonel was likely not dead. But, he was most definitely severely injured. It was the best time to surround him now.

The knights of Camelot charged into the billowing dust, completely ignoring the two Demon Lords. With Lamorak's senses locked onto them, they didn't dare to make any rash movements against the people of Camelot, or else they knew that this small reprieve they had gained would shatter.

They all knew that the quality of elite warriors Camelot had was greater than them as Demons. This was the reason they could survive despite being so outnumbered. Even at full health, they might not be a match of Lamorak. PANDA NOVEL

However, exactly what no one expected to happen occurred at that moment.

Streaks of darkness shot out from the cloud of dust. Though they were faster than most eyes could follow, they came in sets of threes as though a creature of the darkness had torn space apart with their claws.

The frontline of knights completely collapsed. Those who didn't die had their armor collapse and their bones broken. Those that were more unlucky were torn in half, their bodies erupting into a rain of blood and gore.

At that moment, Leonel shot out from the back of the crater, using it as cover to escape as quickly as he could.

The little mink no longer had the strength to cling to his neck or his hair, Leonel could only hold the little one in his arms, careful not to harm its fragile little body.

In the instant before those magic arrows landed, the little mink had taken Leonel into his shadow world. Though it was very easy for the little mink to enter that land as it pleased, making him immune to attacks. Taking someone else with him was enough to drain more than half of the little guy's stamina.

As though that wasn't enough, the little mink had to send out its most powerful attack an instant later. Little Blackstar had given Leonel all he had, Leonel couldn't ask for any more.

This was the most important reason Leonel had been hesitant to use the little guy to now. Blackstar was still an infant. Not only were his actions quite childish, but his stamina was still lacking. Leonel felt terrible even asking this much of the little guy. p??J??????

Leonel ran with all he had, charging out and putting distance between him and the others.

He couldn't use his Light Elemental Force at the moment. Unfortunately, he learned another important use of his Soul Force in that moment.

The Embryo of Leonel's Light Elemental Force was within his Ethereal Glabella. In order to communicate with it, he relied on a basal amount of Soul Force. Without Soul Force, he couldn't communicate with it and thus couldn't use his Force Strengthening Deviations.

Lamorak's expression changed. Was that a final attack on his last legs?

From his vantage point, Lamorak couldn't see Leonel through the cloud of dust. To make matters worse, since he had used his senses to lock onto the two Demon Lords so that they couldn't act, he hadn't spared any Internal Sight toward Leonel.

By the time he clenched his jaw and removed a strand of his senses to look toward Leonel, he realized that... there was actually nothing in the crater!

He didn't have time to guess about how Leonel had done it. He completely abandoned his command, charging forward personally.

The difference in speed was striking. Leonel might have his normal Force, but with his coordination lacking, his speed suffered a 10% drop. In addition, without his Light Elemental Force, he didn't have access to his usual speed either, making matters even worse.

Under normal circumstances, Lamorak wasn't a match for Leonel in speed at his current peak. But now...

Lamorak shrouded his forward path with his senses, searching for Leonel. Without his Soul Force, Leonel had no ability to hide himself from detection. It took no more than a few seconds for his position to be locked onto.

Leonel continued to charge as though he didn't realize he had been found.

'I can make it. At this current speed it should take ...'

Leonel furiously shook his head. Without his ability, he couldn't even finish calculations that used to be as easy as breathing for him. Leonel began to wonder if his ability had become a crutch...

Leonel grit his teeth. He didn't have the mind space to waste for errant thoughts. He had only one goal: to make it to his destination. As long as he did, he could ride out the rest of his trial.

While his other spells had dissipated, there was one that hadn't. Teleportation arrays were Magic Arts specially designed to be autonomous from their creator's Soul Force. If not for this, how could Camelot rely on them for transport?

This was Leonel's last and final contingency plan. He just had to make it.

“Boy! Accept the punishment for your crimes!”

Lamorak's roar felt as though it was just over Leonel's shoulder. Had Leonel still been able to use his Internal Sight, he would realize that Lamorak was less than 200 meters away. With their speed, such a distance could be covered in barely ten seconds, if that. Leonel couldn't afford to pause.

‘I'm close, I'm close.’

Leonel shot through the corridors, reaching the hallway that acted as the final stretch to the Throne Room.

It was at that moment, just as Leonel rounded the final corner, that he felt a mighty force suddenly slam into his body.

The air was completely knocked out of him. He felt his bones quake and his inner organs tremble. With the sturdiness of his body after awakening his Metal Synergy Lineage Factor, it wasn't enough to severely injure him. But, in his current weakened state, it was enough to send him flying backward, skidding along the ground and toward the one enemy he was running with his everything from. He only barely had time to protect the fragile little mink in his arms.

Leonel couldn't use his Internal Sight. But, he vaguely saw a massive palm through his swimming vision.. And, behind the massive, larger than life palm was... a severely injured Big Buddha.