

Descent 431

Chapter 431

Leonel raised his eyebrows, clearly having not expected Arthur to come to a decision so quickly.

In fact, the most surprised were those from the hidden families. They had come here with a lot of confidence and the only reason they hadn't interrupted during the extended silence was to give Arthur some space and respect.

Negotiations were meant to be like a game of tug of war. A single volley of arguments should have never been enough to close the subject completely. They had expected Arthur to have some back and forth discourse with Leonel first before tracking back to them. Then, they could try to rebuttal some of Leonel's views.

But, instead of any of that happening, King Arthur shut it all down from the beginning. In fact, he didn't even pause to have a conversation with his court ministers either. He just directly made the decision before them all.

It was no surprise, then, that even the court ministers were shocked. The only one that didn't seem to have a violent reaction was Lancelot.

He sighed deeply, closing his eyes. He sank back into his chair.

"Hold on a moment, King, isn't this too rash?" Matteus' expression changed violently as he stood. "Please reconsider, there are still many matters I've yet to bring to the table."

"Though what the child said about us is partially true, it is not completely so. Even without technology, we have access to many mystical means far beyond what mere ""PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Arthur rose a hand, his eyes remaining closed.

“That’s enough. I’ve understood most things but my decision remains the same. If you would like to stay as ambassadors to my Kingdom, please feel free to do so ““ we will accommodate you appropriately.”

Matteus’ expression froze. Were things really going to end just like that? How had they lost to a kid who barely spoke a few words?

Unfortunately, Matteus didn’t really understand the backstory of it all. There were too many versions of the King Arthur story. He was shocked enough that Mordred was a woman, he would have never guessed that she was also Arthur’s daughter.

These intricacies were all things that Leonel picked up by being front and center within Camelot. Of course, he also got a bit lucky by being placed within the same trial as Mordred as well. But, regardless, these were all things outside of Matteus’ grasp.

Matteus didn’t know what to say or how. Arthur’s words were so final that any attempt he made to change them would come off as a sign of hostility.

At that moment, Matteus felt a hand grasp onto his shoulder. He turned to find that it was the red haired Brazinger Clan member. PANDA NOVEL

“In that case, we will be taking our leave.”

Arthur nodded lightly and all the energy seemed to drain from him. Under a heavy silence, the four hidden family members walked away under the escort of several guards.

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“Fuck!”

Matteus blasted a fist print into a thick tree. Despite his strength, the tree hardly swayed. But, that didn’t stop bark from flying in every which direction.

Though he had hid it well before, Matteus was completely enraged by Leonel bringing up his capture. He had already suffered ample punishment from the family, but to also be berated in public and looked down upon for it? how could he not be enraged?

It was no surprise that anyone part of the hidden families that could be on Earth currently didn't have very high statuses. The only exceptions to these rules were the youths that had yet to mature. In comparison, Matteus and the others were just glorified babysitters. p??(???????)

In order to display a stronger front, the older members were sent to negotiate. But, Matteus had never expected to run into Leonel. Had he known, he would have allowed one of the others to speak even if the red haired man of the Brazinger family didn't.

The flicker of a lighter caught Matteus' attention. He looked over to see the red haired man lighting up a cigarette.

“Those things have been extinct for centuries, Laeron. Keep that cancer smoke away from me.” Matteus waved his hand, slapping the grey smoke away.

The green haired woman and the golden eyed man stood to the side, feeling somewhat impatient. They were more peeved about the wasted trip than Laeron seemed to be and were wondering why they were standing in a forest instead of returning home.

“If you all are just going to stand here, I'm going to leave first.” The woman spoke, pulling out a talisman.

“Hold on there, Zindi. What's the hurry?” Laeron spoke languidly.

Zindi sneered. “You seem quite relaxed for a man who was almost killed by a brat.”

Laeron's gaze flashed with killing intent as he swept it over Zindi.

“Almost killed by who?”

“Stop wasting my time, Laeron. Have a good reason for stopping me or I’m leaving right now.” Zindi replied without fear.

Laeron continued to coldly glare at Zindi as though he hadn’t heard a word she said.

“Alright, alright.” The blond man stepped in. “That’s enough. I’m sure you had a reason for leading us here instead of letting us go home to report this, correct?”

The blond man was known as Ameron. His words seemed to hold quite some weight because instead of continuing to glare at Zindi, Laeron took another long puff and exhaled slowly.

“ ‘! You guys plan to go back and report a failure? Why? So that you can fall even more out of favor?”

“What are you trying to say, Laeron?” Ameron’s gaze narrowed.

“I’m saying that you’re giving up too soon, tucking your tails and running just because a fairy tale character told you no?” Laeron chuckled, taking another big puff.

“And what do you want us to do about it exactly?” Zindi interjected.

Matteus turned an eye toward Laeron. Clearly, he was interested as well.

“Didn’t I already give you the answer?” Laeron smiled slyly. “Do you get the impression from them that they understand that they’re nothing but a bedtime story?”

The three’s eyes widened as Laeron continued.

“I noticed that that ‘Queen Guinevere’ was quite close to that ‘Demon Empress’ in the court room, they were even holding hands at the end there like a pair of girlpals. I have a gut feeling that folk tale of a King only made such a decision because he sided with his wife.

“I wonder how he’d react if he knew aside from being the legendary boy who pulled the sword from the stone that.... he was just as legendary of a cuck?”

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Arthur stood and walked off, leaving the Royal Court room alone.

One would have thought that he would bask in his decision, even try to reconnect with his wife and daughter immediately. Unfortunately, unlike Laeron made it seem, this wasn’t a fairy tale. People don’t change immediately, neither can relationships fractured over several decades be repaired in a day.

At this moment, Arthur was feeling quite desolate.

Pride was a hard thing to overcome, especially when it was your own. Now, Arthur had to come to grips with the fact that he would not only be handing over something he had worked his whole life to build, but in doing so would have to act like he was grateful.

It was a difficult thing for a man to set aside his pride. It was even more difficult for a King to do so. It was difficult to the point where even though Arthur knew that he stood at a diverging path “ one facing his family and the other facing his kingdom “ he still found this decision hard to swallow.

The Royal Court remained silent. It was taboo for a King to display such emotion and this could be the first time any of them had ever seen Arthur like this.

Guinevere cast a glance toward Arthur’s back but she hesitated. Her gaze wanted to shift to another place, but she didn’t dare to look.

Their relationship had never borne any fruit, but Guinevere still felt all sort of complex emotions about it. Guilt, trepidation’! but even those were accented by a budding sweetness and a freedom she hadn’t felt in a long time.
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She couldn't help but feel like she had taken advantage of Lancelot's feelings to make herself feel better. Such a thing filled her with a swirl of thoughts she didn't know how to deal with.

"Your Majesty."

Leonel's sudden voice drifted to Guinevere's ears, stunning the Queen. She had never interacted with Leonel before and the start of such communication at this particular moment left her at a loss. If she was honest with herself, though she was grateful to Leonel, he was the last person she wanted to talk to now.

However, Leonel's next words shook her to her core.

"Go speak with him and be as open and honest as possible."

Guinevere froze, her hand involuntarily tightening around Mordred's.

Mordred, who had, of course, not been expecting this looked toward her mother. However, she couldn't hear Leonel's words at all. PANDA NOVEL

"It will be difficult." Leonel continued. "However, what Arthur needs the most now is your transparency. When a man loses everything, his family is his only pillar."

Guinevere wanted to lash out at Leonel's words. However, she couldn't, not because she didn't have the mind to, but because she couldn't replicate Leonel's silent communication. This left her feeling overly stifled and her breathing even hitched, her grip tightening on Mordred's hand again.

She was a Queen. Maybe in some ways, the same pride that ran in Arthur's veins ran through her own.

But, it was even deeper than this, anyone being confronted about such an intimate matter would react defensively first. This would be the case even if two people were close, let alone if they couldn't have been closer to strangers like Leonel and Guinevere.

This in addition to the fact Guinevere was a woman while Leonel was a man, all added to the fact she was a Queen used to an unblemished and polished image' ! Guinevere felt a mixture of embarrassment, unwillingness, and unending grievances.

As if all this wasn't bad enough, Leonel was a kid in Guinevere's eyes. What did he know about being a man? Such words coming from the mouth of a teenage boy felt like a bunch of flowery nonsense without substance.

However, Leonel knew he had no choice but to continue to push. p??J???????

When Arthur made his decision, he felt that feeling again, that feeling that something was about to change. Spark lit in his mind, but he had no way of fully connecting them. He had no choice but to act on his instincts and hope for the best.

“I know that hearing all of this from me fills you with feelings you don't know how to deal with, and I know that communicating with you in this way where you can't respond to me is even more stifling. I can't comfort you with any words outside of this.

“I only want you to know that I have the best interest of Camelot at heart. Have you wondered why it is I know about these things I shouldn't?”

Leonel's final question caused Guinevere to freeze completely. All her anger vanished with the wind, a deep trepidation gripping her heart.

“All I want you to ask yourself is if you would rather him hear it all from your lips? Or find out through the words of another?”

Guinevere clenched her jaw, her eyes reddening.

“Mo ""

Mordred's words paused before she finished them. Could she really still call Guinevere mother? She didn't know if she was ready for such a thing yet' !

But, she had no idea just the start of her words snapped Guinevere back to reality.

Guinevere looked toward where Arthur disappeared and back toward her daughter.

“Mordred, I’”

Guinevere was completely flustered. She forgot about how she had address Mordred as Demon Empress all this time. A motherly tone involuntarily came from her.

However, surprisingly, Mordred wasn’t off put by this. In fact, she seemed to understand something as she smiled lightly.

“Go.”

Guinevere’s eyes uncontrollably teared. If it wasn’t for the court ministers having become lost in their own debates about the changes coming to Camelot, she would have instantly become the center of attention.

There were two that did notice though’

Her son was the first and the second was Lancelot.

Guinevere stood slowly, her hand still wrapped around her daughter’s. She looked intently at Mordred as though making sure it was truly alright. She had already abandoned her daughter once, she couldn’t stand the thought of doing it again.

But, seeing the reassuring gaze Mordred returned her, her back straightened, a certain determination lighting her beautiful eyes.

She released Mordred's hand, a light smile on her face. Back straight, she walked toward the direction her husband left in.

From start to finish, she didn't look toward Lancelot. She seemed to be using her actions to convey something profound.. But, ultimately, it all led to the broken heart of a Knight.

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"I think I will return now." Mordred said softly, motioning toward Crakos.

From start to finish, the #1 Demon Lord hadn't said a word and had simply observed things. Though he received many looks and several auras were constantly locked onto him, the Demon Lord always remained calm, restraining his own.

Leonel nodded lightly. He knew that Mordred had gone through a lot today. The wounds she had suffered in her past couldn't be cured so quickly, but Leonel felt content that they were going in the right direction.

He and Mordred practically knew everything about one another. In many ways, Leonel felt that he was closer to her than he had ever been to James. Seeing her slowly coming back to her family left him feeling happy.

"What's with that smile?" Mordred teased. "Is big sis very beautiful?"

Leonel coughed, not knowing how to respond. But, his predictable reaction left the Demon Empress giggling.

Just as Mordred was about to turn to leave, Leonel suddenly spoke out.

"Demo "" Em, I take you to be one of my close friends now. I just wanted you to know that."

Mordred's steps froze, looking back toward Leonel with surprise.

Seeing those clear, pale green eyes and that handsome, charismatic smile, she felt her heart shudder. For some reason, she felt her tears well up in her eyes.

She quickly dried them with a subtle use of Force, not letting them fall. Then, just as quickly as she had almost cried, she smiled a charming smile.

“Big sis has more to teach you about women. Rule number one is to not make them cry.” PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Mordred strolled away under the escort of several guards, clicking her tongue as though she was still reprimanding Leonel. But, in response, Leonel only chuckled.

“You must be happy having such a beautiful friend, hm?”

Aina’s voice disrupted Leonel’s mood, causing his coughing fit to return.

“‘! It’s fine, I’m pretty sure Em only likes women anyway.” Leonel quickly recovered.

“So you mean that if she liked men instead you’d be happier?”

“Ah’ !”

Leonel had been checkmated once again. He didn’t know how all his insane thinking speed and people skills couldn’t find him a path out of this.

Luckily, he then heard Aina begin to giggle to herself, the soft bells of her laughter warming his heart.

He didn’t know when Aina got such a teasing side to her. The two sides Leonel knew were either the overly shy Aina or the bloody killer Aina.

What he didn't know was that Aina had no choice but to begin teasing Leonel like this. Before, it felt as though Leonel was always the one causing her to be flustered. Getting back at him now made her feel much better.

Maybe even Aina herself didn't realize that in order to tease Leonel like this, she had to play into the fact they were a couple. Who knows how she'd react if she realized what her jokes meant' | PANDA NOVEL

Leonel suddenly sighed, thinking back to Arthur and Guinevere.

“| Do you think we'd ever grow apart like that?” He suddenly asked.

Aina froze. She hadn't even thought through herself what she felt for Leonel, she didn't even believe she had the time to think of such things now.

Being presented so suddenly with such a loaded question left her not knowing what to say for a long time.

“| Is it possible for you to grow distant from me?”

Aina asked a question back herself.

Maybe deep down she was also afraid of such a possibility. Leonel had pursued her so doggedly for years. She couldn't help but admit to herself that she thought he would have given up on her a long time ago.

During those days, her best friends were Yuri and Savahn. Savahn especially used to always say that men were just like that. They loved the chase, but the moment they got something, they would soon grow bored and leave it behind for other things.

Though Aina never really took much of her rants seriously, she had to admit to herself that thinking of this might have subconsciously been one of the reason she also never tried to respond to Leonel.

This had left her in a perpetual cycle where she never said yes but also never said no' ;

She never quite understood why Leonel was so infatuated with her. She hadn't been the most beautiful in their school, and now she was even further from that reality thanks to these scars. It was even possible that the reason she hadn't shut down Leonel's line of questioning like she would have usually done was precisely because she could no longer bury her curiosity' ; p??J??????

However, Leonel's response left her completely shaken.

“Yes. Yes, I could grow apart from you.”

Aina couldn't explain it, but she felt as though her whole world was collapsing at that very moment. Her mind swam, her vision even blurring.

She hadn't expected a particular answer, but what she absolutely never expected was for a response to be able to flip her world upside down like this.

The feeling was so real and undeniable that even she couldn't mistake what it was any longer.

It hurt. Like a twisting knife at her heart, it tore her apart.

Her vision blurred. But, it was hard to tell if it was due to tears or if it was the foggy state her mind had entered.

“But' ;” Leonel continued. “‘ ; That's if and only if you stop trusting me.”

Aina's breath, hitched and hiccupped like she couldn't hear Leonel at all. It felt as though she couldn't breathe enough air, as though there wasn't enough oxygen in the world. Every huff she took felt filled with smoke.

“Aina.”

Leonel frowned, gripping onto Aina's hands.

In her panicked state, she tried to shake Leonel's arms off her. She used such force that Leonel was almost thrown across the room. But, he held onto her tightly, gripping the sides of her face and forcing her to look at him.

By this point, Leonel had already put up a [Light Refraction] spell. He hadn't expected Aina to react so violently, but the last thing she needed now was to be seen by others.

Aina struggled, but Leonel didn't let her slip away.

"Aina."

Leonel's deep, rumbling voice seemed to finally cut deep enough, shaking Aina out of her panicked state.

"I am a person who severs his emotions easily when I find a logical reason to do so. The only reason it was hard for me to kill for a long time was because I felt my life was worth the same as anyone else's. So, why should I kill them just for me to survive? Sometimes I even fear that one day I really will feel that I am better than others and will no longer have a reason to hold back..."

"However, at the same time, for a very long while, I believed that my mother had abandoned me. Since the day I drew that conclusion, I never thought of her, dreamed of her, or pined after her."

The more Leonel spoke, the more Aina seemed to calm down. The rushing tides of her heart slowed to a normal ebb and flow, her breathing slowly returning to normal.

Leonel eased his hands away, his gaze becoming much more gentle.

“I know that you have a heavy burden on your heart. All I want you to know is that I’m here to bear it with you. I just want you to trust me, lean on me. Never go off on your own and do something stupid because I will not come to save you. Do you understand me?”

Aina’s pupils trembled.

Where were the words of romance? Where were the talks of running through the fires of hell and smashing the gates of heaven to make it back to her?

But, no’! These weren’t the words that Leonel spoke.

“As long as you trust me, place your whole faith in me, lean on me like I will lean on you’! If you can do this, I swear on my life that I will never leave your side.”

The tears in Aina’s eyes could no longer be held back. They fell like an endless flood. This time, she knew exactly why her vision had blurred.

And, maybe it was exactly because her vision blurred that she couldn’t react in time. Before she knew what was happening, she felt something hot and heavy press over her lips.

Her heart seemed to explode. Feelings she had never felt before kept bubbling forth.

Warmth. Sweetness. Anxiousness.

As though butterfly wings had spread within her chest, she felt like she was floating on a cloud.

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Chapter 434

It wasn’t the most romantic kiss as kisses went.

In the stories, the couple would be on a hill by a setting sun or beneath the rain and awashed in emotions. But, there was no beautiful scenery to be seen. In fact, with a look around, there was nothing but a bland Royal Court still suffused with a heavy atmosphere.

In the stories, maybe some loving words would have just been said. But, Leonel had just finished with telling Aina that he had no intention of saving her if she went off and did something stupid on her own.

In the stories, the female lead would be gorgeous and flawless. But, Aina was still scarred. Even as he kissed her, Leonel could feel the imperfections running across her lips.

Still, even with all of this said, Leonel felt as though he was on the top of the world. To veterans of love, Leonel had barely given Aina a peck on the lips. But to him, it felt as though he had conquered the world. It felt better than anything he had ever experienced before' | no game he had ever won, no battle he had ever claimed victory in, no complicated thought he had ever finished could match up to the euphoria he was experiencing now.

It was only when Leonel sensed his hastily put up [Light Refraction] spell wavering that he retreated despite his reluctance. However, his actions allowed him to see a scene he would never forget.

Aina still sat on her chair, her legs swung in his direction. But, her two hands were over her heart, one balled into a fist and the other wrapped around it. They pressed against her chest as though she was trying to stop her heart from escaping.

Her lips were slightly separated and trembling, her breathing wild and erratic. A blush travelled up from her neck and through her face, not missing even her trembling eyelids that still hung closed. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Though she only remained in this position for a fraction of a moment, Leonel's burned the image into his mind, even down to the way she slightly leaned forward as though subconsciously asking for more.

"Ah!"

Aina awoke from her stupor, the flash of crimson across her face and neck deepening by several shades.

“You’! You’! I’!”

Aina’s words stuttered.

Leonel grinned like a madman, the deep, rumbling cadence of his heart making his emotions clear.

“You can’t deny that you like me now, right?” PANDA NOVEL

“I’! You’!” Aina was speechless.

She stood up quickly, wanting to run away. But, this time, Leonel grabbed onto her wrist.

“! Don’t run anymore’! Okay?” Leonel’s grin faded and his tone softened.

Aina’s chest heaved, her breath feeling short once again. But, seeing the look in Leonel’s eyes made her shudder, a wave of guilt overwhelming her.

She took deep breaths, allowing Leonel to lightly hold onto her wrist. She looked down at him from her standing position, her gaze a wild mix of emotions. But, Leonel’s own remained steady, like a pillar waiting for her to lean on it.

“! Okay’!” Aina nodded almost imperceptibly, her voice as quiet as the wings of a butterfly.

Leonel smiled. It was no longer a wild grin, but it had a level of peace to it that made Aina almost start shedding tears again. ρ??∪??????

Leonel rose to his full height. The way he almost cast a shadow over Aina made her oddly feel at peace, the erratic beat of her heart finally slowing to a crawl.

“Lean on me from now on, alright?”

Aina looked up as Leonel stroked her hair. For some reason, she no longer felt shy or apprehensive. She even felt quite calm.

She nodded almost imperceptibly again.

For the first time in a long while, Leonel felt relaxed. Standing here like this as though they were in their own world despite everything going on around them felt like a remedy to all that had ailed him.

Since the Metamorphosis began, he had lost contact with his only family, he had lost his home, he had constantly been on the run or in a perpetual state of battle’! Ironically, the first time he truly got any semblance of rest was while he was negotiating for peace on Mordred’s behalf.

But now, he had found a self-sustaining peace. He felt that no matter where he was or what he was doing, even if he was in the midst of blood and war’! As long as she was by his side he would never feel so lost again.

You know, people say that all the emotions one put into something never paid off when you truly received it’!

Athletes spent their whole lives working toward becoming the best of the best, but after winning it all once, it never quite felt the same afterward.

The richest men and women in the world devote themselves to growing their net worth to heights still yet unseen, but no matter how much they make, it will never feel as good as the first 100 000 they made.

This seemed to just be human nature.

Yet, even after Leonel spent five years chasing Aina, even as their relationship slowly became closer over the last year’! he swore to himself that none of it could compare to this moment.

It couldn't be described as a tsunami of emotions but could rather be summarized in a single word' ;

Contentment.

When Leonel pulled himself out of his languid daze, he grinned once again.

“You know, we have yet to have our first date as a newly minted couple.”

“Huh?” Aina was shocked awake by Leonel's words. She wanted to refute, but couldn't seem to find the words to. She had already promised not to run away any longer, but she was shocked by the sudden labeling of their relationship.

Leonel's grin only grew wider.

“I don't think we should have a normal first date, though. Wouldn't that be too boring? A picnic or a stroll at the park doesn't really suit us, don't you think?”

Aina raised her brows, her amber irises almost reflecting gold as she looked toward Leonel. She seemed to understand what he was getting at.

“What better first date for us than a date to kill?”

Leonel's grin suddenly became somewhat sinister.

Chapter 435

Laeron, Zindi, Matteus, and Ameron still hadn't left. How could they, they were waiting for a proper opportunity.

The truth was that although Laeron's plan was excellent, executing it would be far more difficult. It wasn't as though they could just plop a bunch of novels and movies in front of King Arthur and expect him to read and watch them all.

Whether he even would was one matter, but by the time he did it would probably already be too late. Who cared if Arthur threw a fit after Camelot had already been assimilated by The Empire? By then, they could just send someone to kill him with ease and it wouldn't matter in the slightest.

“‘! Our best bet is most definitely an illusion specialist. It will be difficult finding one strong enough to cause him to fall, and even more expensive, but it will be worth it. It's the most seamless option we have.”

The four of them seemed to all agree with this.

King Arthur's strength was something they looked down upon initially, until they were in the same room as the man. They couldn't deny the pressure he placed on them, it was undeniable.

“Not a bad plan.”

The four were stunned. If these word had been spoken by one of them, it would be fine. The issue was that it most definitely hadn't been. And, to make things worse, they recognized the voice it was spoken by as well.PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Leonel slowly walked out of the forest, causing the four to be shaken. How had they not heard his approach until just now? That was impossible.

Ameron's gaze narrowed, his golden eyes piercing toward Leonel.

Unfortunately, before they could focus too much on Leonel, another, much louder set a footsteps caught their attention. They spun around, only to find Aina walking forward with a great sword dragging in her hands across the forest floor. Compared to the flustered girl she had been just a while prior, her current cold expression seemed worlds apart.

“Yip! Yip!”

A little mink dashed along the tree branches, appearing from a third direction.

“Leonel, what do you think you’re doing?!”

Matteus could no longer hold back his temper. Leonel had already infuriated him enough once, but this blatant provocation was too much for any human to handle. PANDA NOVEL

“Do you understand what you’re doing, kid?” Zindi cut in, her green eyes locking onto Leonel.

“Enlighten me.”

Instead of taking these words as an opportunity, the four hidden family members only grew more enraged toward Leonel’s response. They didn’t want to have to explain themselves to a child, and it seemed even more pathetic to do so. Those who had strength didn’t need to speak, they could just do. They didn’t have to convince anyone of anything.

“No takers?” Leonel almost pouted in disappointment.

Truthfully, he was looking forward to learning more about these hidden families. Other than seeing their hair color, he knew nothing else about them.

Well, he did know a bit about the Brazinger family’s Lineage Factor thanks to Aina. But, this was about it.

Leonel shook his head. PANDA NOVEL

“I’ll give you four two options.

“The first option is to surrender. Allow us to escort you to a holding cell within Camelot until negotiations are complete. After this, we will release you and you can go about your business.

“The second is to battle. Should you do this, however, you will definitely die.”

Leonel didn't add any flowery words of encouragement or any coercion in the slightest. He simply laid out the facts as they were.

These four had no idea, but they were facing two opponents who had already stepped into the Fourth Dimension. Not only had Aina done so, but the little mink had done so as well. On top of that, there was Leonel whose ability was already at the pinnacle of the Fifth Dimension and was supported by a mind within the Fourth.

With only four of them' † they simply stood no chance.

The truth was that Leonel suspected that Ameron had already stepped into the Fourth Dimension. He could tell simply by observing him that he was different from the other three. But, Leonel didn't believe that this would make a large difference.

Still, Leonel made a mental note that he needed to understand more about the Fourth Dimension. Because he didn't have the latter portions of [Dimensional Cleanse], he was flying in the dark about how the power systems of the Fourth Dimension functioned. As such, he found it difficult to scan the 'stats' of someone within this Dimension.

However, Leonel's gut feeling told him that the combination of Aina and the little mink was more than enough to deal with this golden haired man. As for the other three' † they were his.

“So, which choice will you make.”

Leonel brandished his bow, his demeanor calm and collected.

The four began to sweat. This wasn't just a problem of facing the three before them. The main issue was that they were still in enemy territory.

Defeating these brats was one thing, but what if Camelot mobilized an army? What would they do then?

They didn't feel that these three were stupid enough to come without requesting any sort of back up assistance' ¦ right? They couldn't have?

Leonel's lip curled into a smile. The most important thing about applying pressure on a person wasn't how much you applied, but when you applied it.

If you used all your tactics immediately on a strong minded individual, they would all fall flat. But, if you simply poked at someone when they were in their most fragile state' ¦

They would collapse like a house of cards.

Leonel pointed toward the green haired lady.

“You have a Lineage Factor that has great synergy with plants. In your mind, you're probably undefeatable in a forest facing opponents like us, right? You're probably even more confident than a usual member of your family because your ability is an A-grade Harden ability that reinforces the chemical structure of objects to make them tougher than the strongest diamonds and the best alloys' ¦ is that right?

“Quite a great synergy of your abilities. Would be quite a hassle to deal with a flood of vines all harder than the sharpest swords.”

Zindi shuddered, the subtle movements she had made to control the vegetation in the surroundings coming to a grinding halt.

Leonel's smirk deepened, pointing toward Matteus.

“And you' ¦”

“| Your Lineage Factor is quite interesting. A defensive type Lineage Factor that relies on the fluidity of your body, is that right? Your ability is a C-grade sharpened sight ability that also synergizes well with your Lineage Factor. I’m sure you’re good at hand to hand combat, commendable.”

Leonel spoke with a smile, his demeanor relaxed.

“There’s also you.” Leonel continued. “Your Light Elemental Lineage Factor is quite intriguing, focusing on your attack strength, hm? I’m sure that pairing that with your Fifth Dimensional Wind Elemental ability helps you quite a bit, right?”

Ameron’s gaze narrowed further. Leonel’s words had subtly revealed the fact he was quite aware of his strength yet still dared to stand here.

Among those here, he was the only one with an ability that touched the realms of the Fifth Dimension, or so he thought. But now that Leonel was speaking so nonchalantly, he wasn’t confident in this matter any longer. Was this brat more dangerous than he originally thought?

“And you.” Leonel’s smile faded, his gaze locking onto Laeron, the red-haired Brazinger family member.

“Your Lineage Factor is related to your blood and your bodily strength. As for your ability, it’s of the S-grade and only gives you perfect recall of events, is that right?” PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Leonel’s cheerfulness had completely vanished. Even as a method of applying pressure, he couldn’t stand to continue putting up such a façade for a man from that family.

“So, what is your choice?” Leonel continued coldly.

The pressure was palpable.

In this world, one of the most protected secrets of a person was their ability. When it came down to a crucial moment, what an opponent did or didn’t know about your ability could decide your life and death.

The simple truth was that abilities came in all shapes and sizes. And, even if by some miracle two people received two near identical abilities, the methods by which they used them could be strikingly different.

In a fictional world, everyone had set and predictable patterns that could be used to follow an opponent's intentions in the midst of battle. But, in the real world, a burly man could just as easily bring out a strong wind affinity, a person with a strong Fire Lineage Factor could easily be born with a Water Elemental ability, it was even possible for a close combat specialist to be even better in the long range simply due to an ability they were born with. PANDA NOVEL

So, one could imagine how it might feel to have your abilities displayed so grandly. And, not only that, but for their Lineage Factors to be exposed as well. Almost any thoughts they had of surprise or trickery vanished.

It was at that moment that Laeron suddenly began to laugh.

"You know, all this time I was wondering why it was you hated me so much." Laeron's laughter grew, his blood boiling. "So that's why, that's why! I get it, I get it!"

Leonel calmly weighed his black bow in his hands, his gaze never leaving the four before him.

Laeron's gaze turned toward Aina and his laughter only grew.

"! Brats, I have nothing to do with the matters of all those years ago. I'm not sure why you're targeting me for the actions of a few. Those people you want to kill me for only treat me slightly better than the piece of dirt they see those of impure blood as." ρ???(???????)

Laeron's gaze reddened. Clearly, he was feeling indignant.

His feelings made sense, for the most part. He obviously didn't receive very great treatment from the family. Maybe it was because his talent wasn't as great, maybe it was because his ability didn't have very great offensive prowess, or maybe it was because he didn't have much backing within the family itself.

Regardless of the reason, being targeted because of the actions of someone you didn't like very much to begin with wasn't a pleasant feeling.

Of course Laeron remembered Aina. Leonel had just described his ability as perfect recall. It could be said that the only reason he didn't recognize Aina immediately was because it had been almost two decades since he last saw her from afar.

In fact, it wasn't even Aina's looks. No, what he remembered was the exact pattern of the scars drawn across her face. This was his perfect recall at work! How could two women have the exact same pattern of scars?

Leonel's gaze narrowed at Laeron's words, but he still nodded slightly. Even though he wanted to reject Laeron's words due to his own bias, he knew that not accepting such a thing and hating him just because of the family he came from would make him no different from the Brazinger family.

"Like I've said already, if you want to live then just surrender yourselves. I'll release you all just the same."

"And you expect me to believe that?"

"Do you have a choice? Do you really think we came here alone? The only reason the others haven't closed in is because there's no need to risk innocent lives when it could all be resolved by us. But, if you force us to act, even if by some miracle you manage to defeat the three of us, there'll be a world's Kingdom waiting to deal with you."

Laeron and the others shuddered. The only one who still managed to remain a semblance of calm was Ameron.

After a long while, Ameron sighed.

"Kids are getting more and more brazen everyday. We asked you if you really knew what you were getting into before, but the question still remains the same. Are you sure you know what you're getting into?"

Leonel shook his head. "Seems you're the one still not getting it. Sir Lancelot!"

At that moment, the clanking of armor sounded.

Ameron's confident expression finally changed. In the seemingly quiet forest, the sound of unsheathing blades and rattling chainmail rebounded through the greenery.

Somehow, without their knowledge, an entire troop of knights had surrounded them from all directions.

At this point, Ameron realized he had been played. Though Leonel was maybe confident in defeating them all, doing so while also preventing them from having enough time to activate their talismans to return to Earth would have been too difficult.

So, he stalled for time.

Now where would they go?

Chapter 437

Leonel watched as the four were escorted away.

He felt better than he thought he would. Being able to resolve things with his words again rather than his fists left him feeling light.

Well, technically he still relied on strength this time around. If it wasn't for his vastly improved method of using Camelot's Mage Art magic system, it would have been impossible for him to hide so much movement from them all, this was especially considering Laeron's perfect recall ability. If there was even a single blade of grass out of place, he likely would have been seen through.

Still, Leonel was happy. He didn't have anything to complain about. He could only hope that the negotiations The Empire went as smoothly.

Unfortunately, Leonel could only be hopeful about this. The power imbalance between The Empire and them, even if Camelot and the Demon Empire came together, was too large. He obviously couldn't use bully tactics as he had just done if this was the case.

"Are you sure we'll be able to hold him?"

A sudden voice cut into Leonel's thoughts. When he looked over, he found Lancelot's figure beside him.

Lancelot was wearing the same smile he always had. His mood seemed great. But, Leonel was quite aware that much of this was a façade.

A leader of men didn't always have the luxury of wearing his heart on his sleeve. This was a curse that it seemed both Lancelot and Arthur were afflicted with.

Leonel nodded. "The restrictions I placed on him are modified Three Star Magus Arts. Though they're not able to stop him completely, it will take him some effort to break them even if he goes all out. My estimates sit at '1' seven seconds. By the time he breaks it, I'll already be aware and that time is enough for me to activate the teleportation key I hid on him." PANDA-NOVEL.COM

Lancelot nodded with some assurance, his smile as bright as ever.

"About these negotiations, Leonel. I'm curious about this Ascension Empire and what joining them means for Camelot."

Leonel sighed. "The Ascension Empire is just like any other. Its main focus is growth, expansion and holding onto its power. In the past, what mattered most was your talent and now what also matters most is still your talent. In truth, I wouldn't say that it's any different from Camelot. The only difference is that compared to being at the top like you are now, you will have to fight to hold such a position again."

Leonel swept a glance toward Lancelot, half expecting him to defend Camelot and speak words about how much they loved their people and other similar things.

In truth, Leonel was being quite kind to Camelot. Compared to The Empire, Camelot treated its 'lesser-thans' far worse. At least on the surface, anyway.

Leonel would never forget that The Empire allowed billions to die just so that it would be easier to deal with Invalid tides. In fact, much of the reason Leonel didn't run into an Invalid despite the early stages Earth was in was precisely because of this.

Other worlds in similar positions would have to spend centuries fighting against Invalids. By the time they established themselves, their worlds would have to be separated in safe and unsafe zones.

But, by killing so much immediately, Earth never had to deal with this problem. And, with the exception of the oceans where humans couldn't normally reside anyway, everywhere else was still reasonably safe.

Sometimes, Leonel couldn't help but wonder how much of the invention of Paradise Islands were about land shortage' and how much was a plan for this all along' PANDA NOVEL

"I see." Lancelot nodded, not a hint of derision on his face. "I hope they will be better at finding talents than we have been."

Lancelot smiled somewhat sadly, a slight crack showing in his usual façade.

"I didn't have an opportunity to say it before, but I'm sorry for what happened to you. To think that you would also be our savior as well, how ironic."

Leonel gave a slight chuckle. "I can't take credit for that, it wasn't intentional. In truth, I did it mostly to save my own life. It's just that my selfishness happened to help others."

"Selfishness, huh'?" Lancelot sighed, his blue irises dimming somewhat. "' It's unfortunate that selfishness isn't always possible, and selflessness isn't always rewarded."

Leonel remained silent for a long while before finally speaking.

“Selflessness can only be rewarded after selfishness has finished taking everything it wants first. After that, the selfless can only find time and space to heal.”

Lancelot froze. He looked toward Leonel’s side profile, his pupils visibly trembling.

Was it just a coincidence? ρ??(???????)

Leonel’s words seemed to resonate with Lancelot’s soul.

‘Time and space to heal’!

At that moment, the ground beneath their feet began to shake.

Leonel’s gaze sharpened. ‘It’s here? That was enough?’

All this time, Leonel had felt a feeling tugging at the back of his mind. However, his Dreamscape didn’t seem capable of finding the answer. So, Leonel did it himself.

Leonel’s mind was even more powerful than maybe even he himself knew. The more he thought about it, the more possibilities he crossed off! the more he realized that there was only one possible explanation left!

The Zone quests hadn’t ended yet.

Camelot had already become a part of true history and Leonel had already saved King Arthur from a fate of death, if he could just resolve the love triangle, everything would be perfect.

But! there was one issue with this.

Leonel couldn't possibly kill Mordred. Let alone the fact that he wouldn't have the heart to do so even if he didn't know her so well, they were now intimately acquainted. To Leonel, killing Mordred would feel no different from killing any one of his teammates. He couldn't bear it.

But, that moment when he called Mordred his friend, something clicked.

Zones were not a game so their quests didn't exist just for the sake of existing. The quests were in place as guides to those who entered, allowing them to help along the resolution of the Zone as a whole.

This was a simple matter. Leonel had long since learned as much during his time within the Joan Zone.

What did all of this mean, then? It meant that the quests themselves were not as important as the function they served!

Saving King Arthur. Resolving the love triangle. Killing Mordred. Making King Arthur a part of true history'!

What did all of these quests have in common? It was all about resolving Arthur as a person, helping him to complete his character arc.

Often times it was difficult for someone who had been wronged to forgive. There was definitely a timeline of events where Mordred would never forgive her father and even choose to continue her attempts to kill him.

When a person is too far gone, despite how tragic their pasts might be, the crudest way to deal with them would be to kill them'!

In such a reality, Arthur would mourn the loss of his daughter with his wife and son while Lancelot, being the good man that he is, would take a step back and allow the family to come together. In such a way, Mordred's death would become the catalyst to truly heal Arthur of his ailments.

But'! What if Mordred didn't choose that path? What if she was alright with reconnecting with her family? What if'! she made the first friend she ever had?

In such a case, wouldn't it fulfill the same requirements as her death would have?

The savior of King Arthur. The manifestation of Camelot. The resolution of the love triangle. The 'death' of Mordred.

The sound of shattering glass resounded throughout the small moon as the world continued to tremble.

Leonel felt his heart suddenly thrum to life. It wasn't just him, but every citizen of Earth's world felt the very same way at that exact moment.

It was then Leonel understood what his actions meant.

Earth was evolving into a Fourth Dimensional world.

However, Leonel expected what happened next even less.

Chapter 438

It had been several weeks since the disappearance of Leonel and Aina. By now, those who had spectated the Brave City trials were well aware that these two youths would not have to participate.

Of course, many had an understanding of exactly what this meant. For these two to be personally escorted by the overseers and then disappear, there was a high likelihood that both Leonel and Aina were given the rights to directly enter Valiant Heart Mountain.

Unfortunately, there was nothing the others could do about this. Without a choice, they could only continue to follow the proceedings, hoping to gain a spot for themselves.

Still, this was the real world. Hopes and dreams couldn't be manifested at will, nor could strong desires make one more talented or wield more power. The so-called 'geniuses' of Terrain fell one after another

beneath the trials and it very much seemed as though this would be a repeat of every other year prior where not a single person was selected.

However, it was exactly then that a young man stood out.

The story of Anared Kaefir, the Heir to the Kaefir City Lord title was quite an interesting one. Since his youth, he had always been known as the genius of Terrain just as much as he had been known for his insane tendencies. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

He was a man who protected his little sister to a fault and was even quite protective of his little sister's best friend as well, though she could be a bit of a ditz. However, the truth was that Anared had always been within the realm of understanding for those of Terrain.

Though he was lauded and praised, he was ultimately just one of a long line of geniuses that wouldn't amount to much at all in the Dimensional Verse. Terrain was too small, the talents it could produce were too weak, and the starting point of those talents it did manage to produce were too low'!

With these shackles on his future progress, Anared participated in the last Brave City trial. Without suspense, just like all those who came before him, he failed.

The memory was still quite vivid in the eyes of those who had witnessed it all.

There were a total of eight trials to complete. In order to be accepted into Valiant Heart Mountain as the lowest tier disciple, it was necessary to pass at least the fourth. But back then, Anared only managed to make it halfway through the second trial. [PANDA NOVEL](http://PANDA-NOVEL)

The trial was a sea of wooden puppets. The only task was to make it from one side of the room to the other, but for so many, it was a trial they would never pass.

As a mere King back then, Anared scratched and clawed, his eyes a furious shade of red. Even when he was forcefully pulled out of the trial by the overseers at that time, his gaze was still wholly focused on the goal ahead of him. He looked like he would rather die than not make it to the other side.

It was impossible to tell what his motivation was. Who could read the mind of a madman?

Did he just want to get stronger? Did he have something to protect? Something he wanted to accomplish?

No one knew. $\rho \int$

But those red eyes and the way he clung to the broken hilt of his sword was seared into the minds of all those who watched that day.

After failing the trial, it became hard to hear of Anared again. All people knew was that he went off to travel for several years, even missing the next entry to Brave City. Many thought he had given up due to that! But, no one blamed him.

He was a talented young man who went to see the world and even managed to come back with a beautiful wife. There was no doubt that Heira was a preeminent beauty of Terrain. Not only this, but she also had the refined demeanor of a lady.

But, what no one expected was for Anared to participate in this one as well. Not only for him to succeed! but for him to completely out perform his previous limitations.

Many thought that Anared was at most on par with the other Emperors. In fact, due to the way he reacted when the other Emperors came to apply pressure to his Sector, many confirmed this belief.

But, once again, no one could get a read on the thoughts of a madman.

He crossed the third trial and faced the fourth. Many Emperors of the past had reached this level but could never clear it.

It was a trial that tested one's movement speed and flexibility, a death obstacle course of swinging blades and shadow-hidden assassins.

Yet, Anared crossed it with ease. With a sword in his hand, his movements became like flowing water.

Even as the other Emperors failed at this step, he crossed into the fifth trial, then the sixth.

In the end, under the astonished gazes of all those around him, Anared made it through the seventh and almost all the way through the eighth before he was forced to stop.

Beaten and bloodied, he stood on the final eighth floor, the jagged bladed ax of a giant having stopped just before his neck. Even at that moment, a defiant look blazed within his eyes. He kept looking up at the giant as though he still wanted to hack it to pieces. It was clear to anyone who saw him that he was still unsatisfied with his result.

Zilar watched on from afar, his hands tightly gripped around his broken spear shaft. He hadn't even been able to pass through the first trial. No amount of fire in his gut or will in his soul could help him overcome his lack of talent at the moment.

All sorts of complex feelings shook his core as he watched Anared proceed to where no one of Terrain had ventured before. It was as though watching Anared do it gave him even more determination to do it himself. He too would reach that level one day, he too would shock everyone with a single feat.

Chapter 439

Anared calmly received his spatial ring, the sword hovering to his back still singing. It was clear that his battle intent was still roaring, but there was no longer a trial to face. He had failed to clear the final hurdle.

After a few words from the overseers, everyone was ejected from Brave City. Another round had come to an end, it would be several more years until Brave City opened up its tall, bloodthirsty gates once again.

Days later, within the Kaefir family City Lordship, a meeting was taking place. But, if those who understood the relations between the City Lords saw this meeting, they would be shocked out of their wits.

Not only was the forever lone wolf Black family City Lord present, but even the Swan family City Lord who had always butted heads with the Kaefir family was present!

To make matters more shocking, this was just one of the usually estranged or clashing relationships in the room. City Lords from all over Terrain were gathered, each one with a complicated network of relationships with those around them.

Yet'! each and every single one of them had set aside their differences to appear at this meeting. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

The setting was a room reserved for grand banquets. Elaborate chandeliers hung in the air, long tables that extended for tens of meters seated those numbering in the several dozen, while the decorations were designed to impress.

Though this wasn't the most appropriate location for such a meeting, it was the only place that could house so many important characters.

It wasn't that there were hundreds of City Lords on Terrain. In fact, there were only a dozen. The main issue was that none of these City Lords, due to what was at stake, would want to appear here unguarded and unprotected.

The luck of it was that since these City Lords had brought their entourages to Brave City in the first place, they wouldn't draw the attention of those they wanted to hide their actions from. In fact, the fact they had all appeared in such a large banquet rather than slinking off sneakily made this even less of a matter to pay attention to.

Of course, there was one other big reason this would work despite how foolish it was'!

They all had a reason to attend this banquet. And, that reason was provided to them by the success of Anared Kaefir! PANDA NOVEL

City Lord Kaefir stood from his hosting position, a confident smile on his face. Even his full beard couldn't hide the grin on his lips.

"You all know the rules."

These were the first words the City Lord said. As for what the 'rules' were, only they knew that.

"Since my son has met the goal we all set, I will be taking the lead of this operation as previously agreed upon. I hope that there would be no rejections to this, right?"

The banquet hall remained silent.

They weren't fools. They knew that anyone who rocked the boat now would be immediately executed, City Lord or not. It was precisely because of how volatile this seemingly genial atmosphere was that they all brought their guards despite the lack of secrecy that could cause. ρ???(???????)

It was only with the status provided by Anared that they could execute this operation with less worries. As such, it was only right the Kaefir family took the lead. It was just unfortunate that none of their own heirs could have the same accomplishments.

Hearing such words, the various guards and lesser vassals of the City Lords looked around in confusion. What they didn't know was that the so-called 'rules' were exactly in place to cause this sort of vagueness and unassuredness.

This operation had been being planned for years. Actually, it was more accurate to say that it had been decades.

In all this time, this was the very first instance in which all the City Lords had come together. In fact, this was the very first time they all had a direct line of communication with one another.

Other than City Lord Kaefir, the others hadn't even been sure that all the City Lords would participate. It was only now that they were all certain that everyone was on board.

But, it was exactly this secrecy and this slyness that gave the City Lords confidence. There were eyes and ears everywhere, especially in this era of abilities.

It could be said that City Lord Kaefir had proved himself. Even if Anared had failed, they would have still elected him to be the leader of this operation' ;

This operation was too important to them. It could be said that even in the case of Anared failing, they would have moved forward regardless. When it came to matters of life and death and the futures of their coming generations, they had to be prepared.

“Good. I want everyone to be ready to move out within the month.”

‘ ;

The month quickly came and went.

The City Lords had been prepared to move out any day for the last five years already. Let alone being prepared within a month, they had long since primed themselves.

Among these twelve City Lords, there were four women. And, among these women, there was one with a very complicated relationship with City Lord Kaefir.

Though the common people didn't dare to spread rumors about City Lords, what was to stop the City Lords themselves from doing so?

It was said that in their youth, this City Lord White was once a lover of City Lord Kaefir. However, for whatever reason, City Lord Kaefir married another who gave birth to his current son and daughter.

According to the rumors, City Lord White visited the Kaefir City Lordship just once in the last 30 years' ; And it was said that she brought a baby along with her back then' ; But, when she left, that baby was no longer on her person.

Regardless of whether those rumors were true or not, City Lord White had long since returned to her city.. The thoughts of all those years ago had long since been thrust from her mind.

Chapter 440

City Lord White sat in an office, a map spread out across her desk. She had long since memorized its contents, but due to a sudden change that happened a while ago, she wanted to ensure that she had it all imprinted into her mind.

The City Lord was quite unique in comparison to other women of Terrain. It was very rare to find technologically advanced places like Earth and thus even rarer to find equality amongst men and women “ at least in low level worlds.

Technology acted as an equating factor between men and women. The strength of a man meant less if a woman could simply pull out a gun and deal with a threat just as easily as he could.

In low level worlds like Terrain, the awakening of abilities didn't have much time to create a balance between the sexes like technology could.

This was all to say that in Terrain and worlds like it, having women in positions of power was a rarity. And, finding women like City Lord White was even a level more rare.

City Lord White had exceptionally short-cut white hair. Her demeanor was quite valiant and she chose to wear black robes accented by white flexible armor. Everything from the way she sat and spoke seemed to exude a masculine air. Even her handwriting was boisterous, purposeful and bold.

She was quite tall, especially for a woman. She stood at over six feet, but this didn't dampen her figure in the slightest. Her hips were wide and her bosom was bountiful.

At that very moment, seemingly without reason, City Lord White froze.

She stood, a sadistic grin on her face. Her face even became somewhat flushed as though she was excited.

She touched a spatial bracer on her right arm. Her gaze only grew more excited after pulling out a talisman glowing with a blinding light.PANDA-NOVEL.COM

It was finally time.

BANG!

She smashed a fist against her large desk, splitting it in half and kicking its pieces out of her way.

Her hand swept forward and snatched out the map before it could fall to the ground, carelessly tossing it into her spatial bracer.

“Someone get me my Clara! Now!”

Her booming voice shot over White City. An impossibly vast aura shot out from the City Lord’s body. The result was a city that fell into immediate silence.

It didn’t matter if it was a noble or a humble street vendor, they all felt their knees buckle.

The City Lord’s mansion began to glow.

City Lord White kicked down the door of her office. [PANDA NOVEL](http://PANDA-NOVEL)

To the side of the now broken opening, a patient secretary with her hands respectfully clasped before her sent a glance toward the flying door and didn’t seem to react very much at all.

City Lord White turned toward the secretary, a bloodthirsty light in her eye. It was difficult to tell if she was excited, enraged, or in heat.

“Niya, give me my Clara, we’re moving out!”

“Yes, City Lord.” The secretary bowed politely.

With a small clap of her hands, a light appeared in the secretary’s hands and slowly expanded.

Eventually, when that light dimmed, all that was left was a monstrosity of a weapon.

It had a polearm of two and a half meters long alone. But, the true shock was its head. It was a hammer, but even calling it so seemed to not do it justice.

The head had two massive blunt ends that shimmered like the surface of a mirror. Each head just under a meter in diameter each, easily matching more than half the size of most bodies.

City Lord White snatched this massive weapon from Niya’s hands. ρ???(???)

“Ah, Clara, Clara, Clara. We’re going to taste blood again!”

‘Clara’ seemed to react to these words too, a shimmering light racing across its polished surface.

City Lord White strolled down the hallways of her mansion, wantonly swinging ‘Clara’ around and not giving a damn about the damage. Niya could only follow quickly behind, calmly taking note of all the newly created holes and sending out orders for repair.

The two quickly made their way out of the mansion, every one of City Lord White’s steps causing the ground to sway and tremble.

The head of City Lord White’s mansion was completely unlike what one would expect. While others would pave the way for vehicles or decorate with elaborate gardens, the front of the White Mansion was a military field.

On this military field, tens of thousands of warriors had already gotten into formation. They all stood ramrod straight, their chests sticking out with pride.

“HAI!”

The instant City Lord White appeared, a collective breath was taken as the army roared as one.

The crisp sound of shifting clothing pierced through the soul as they saluted in unison, crossing their hands over their hearts.

City Lord White stood atop the stairs of her mansion, her smothering aura towering into the skies.

BANG!

The butt of her massive weapon smashed against the ground, causing waves of trembling earth to spread in every direction. To her back, Niya continued to stand, her hands clasped together respectfully.

The importance of this battle wasn't lost on any of them. This was a turning point.

For a long time already, Terrain had been teetering at the very edge, standing at the start of a diverging path.

To one side, there was the abandonment of everything their Ancestors had ever built, everything they had ever strived for.

To the other, there was a slim hope. But it required their sweat, their tears, their blood. And, even then, they could very well fail.

Their future would be decided by this battle, this war. Whether they could hold their heads high or be buried in the cemetery of their hopes and dreams, it would all be decided now.

“Today, we go to battle.”

“HAI!”

“Today, we’ll brandish our blades toward the necks of our enemies.”

“HAI!”

“Today, we’ll either shed blood or shed the blood of others.”

“HAI!”

“Follow me to those crimson fields! Give me the beating hearts from your chests! Lay down your lives for me!”

“HAI! HAI! HAI!”

The glow of White City grew to a fever pitch.. Then, inexplicably, the entire city disappeared.