

Descent 441

Chapter 441

“It’s time.”

In Black City, preparations were underway as well. The only difference was that while City Lord White took sole leadership, Black City was headed by a father-son pair.

Jerach was stunned out of his thoughts when he heard his father’s voice.

The two men looked practically like copies of one another. Jerach’s father had the same bald head, black armor and jagged beard his son did. The only difference was that Jerach’s father was a head taller than he was.

Obviously, since Jerach was already in his 30’s, this wasn’t a matter of youth. Rather, Jerach’s father simply had a far larger stature.

“Get the men ready.” Jerach’s father continued. “The city will be disappearing in just a few minutes.”

“Yes, father.”

Jerach nodded and went off to complete the last of his duties.

Jerach was lost in his thoughts as he made his way toward the military fields. Black City wouldn’t be taking action immediately, so their mental state didn’t need to be in a primed state. Not that Jerach was in the head space to give a motivational speech to begin with.

He had just failed the Brave City trials miserably and his heart was still being shadowed by a perpetual guilt.
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Even now, he could still remember Leonel's complete disregard of him.

If Leonel had ignored him, it would have been one thing. But, Jerach remembered making eye contact with Leonel just one time while they were both still on the first floor.

Back then, it had been as though Leonel was looking at a stranger. He glanced at him as though he was observing someone he had seen for the first time and moved away from him just as easily

The way Leonel looked at him at that moment was something he would never forget...

At least if Leonel never looked in his direction, he could make himself believe that Leonel felt some anger toward him. Somehow, he felt that that would make him feel better. After all, anger was just another way of acknowledging someone's existence.

But, to so genuinely treat him as though they had never met before...

As the son and Heir to a City Lordship, he never thought he would ever have to deal with emotions like this, he never thought anything could make him feel this way, let alone due to someone he had met so recently.

However, deep down, Jerach knew that his emotions were less about Leonel and more about letting down himself.

Jerach shook his head. PANDA NOVEL

'It doesn't matter anymore.'

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Back on Camelot's moon, Leonel was still in a state of shock. He hadn't expected that the Zone quests had truly not been over, but he had expected even less that the 'reward' for completing them would be accelerating Earth into the Fourth Dimension.

Leonel's expression changed.

Without waiting for anyone to react, he shot to Ameron's side and sent the strongest punch he could at the latter's chin.

Ameron was completely flabbergasted by the change. He still didn't understand what was happening. All he knew was that he was bound now, and even if he wasn't, it would take him too much time to undo Leonel's restrictions. His last thought was that Leonel had tricked him and that he was basically a dead man.

His vision went black, collapsing to the ground.

Lancelot's eyes widened. "What a —"

Lancelot froze. "Huh?"

At that moment, Lancelot suddenly felt as though shackles that had held him down for decades suddenly imploded. Strength flooded into his body at impossible rates.

In the blink of an eye he was twice as powerful, then three times, then four times. Eventually, it got to be so much that even he no longer understood just how powerful he was in comparison to his former self.

Leonel stumbled backward, the forcefulness of Lancelot's breakthrough being too great. The wind kicked up and even the several meter thick trees around them began to sway.

Leonel put a forearm over his eyes, trying to peek through to see what was happening. But, he soon realized that it wasn't just Lancelot.

At that moment, dozens, even hundreds of knights they had brought with them were experiencing similar power boosts.

Leonel looked down at Ameron's unconscious body and suddenly felt a bit bad. The reason he had taken him down like that was because if Camelot entered the Fourth Dimension, the restrictions on Ameron's strength would have been completely lifted. By then, he would have been too troublesome to deal with.

Leonel sent an apologetic gaze toward the other three hidden family members. But, considering the fear in their eyes and the way they were trying to distance themselves, Leonel felt that his smile might not have been as kind as he thought.

Aina smiled lightly at Leonel's embarrassed expression. But, truthfully, Leonel made the right move in such a situation. The worst case scenario was definitely a terrible situation they didn't want to be in.

'This makes sense, though. They've been stuck at the peak of the Third Dimension for so long, it's only right they breakthrough. It's likely related to their unique magic system, too...'

"Aina."

"Hm?" Aina blinked, a slight blush coloring her cheeks.

Leonel couldn't help but smile when he saw this. She was still so shy, all he did was call her name.

Aina currently found it troublesome to even look at Leonel. Every time she did, she would remember what happened before...

She furiously shook her head, looking away.

Leonel began to ask the question he was planning to, but Lancelot's sudden burst of laughter shocked him out of his train of thought.

Lancelot spread out his arms as though trying to catch the rays of the sun falling through the heavy canopies above. For the first time in months, the heavy rain of Camelot finally came to a stop, allowing the clouds to separate.

As a warrior, Lancelot had spent his whole life training. He never thought there would be a day where he could finally break through the final barrier, but here that day was. He felt better than he ever had before.

To an outside observer, he had simply broken through. But to him, it felt as though he had seen the light at the end of a dark tunnel. He hadn't thought that a simple shift in his mindset would bring him such benefits.

“Leonel, thank you!”

Leonel opened his mouth to respond again, but it seemed as though the universe had something against him today. But, this time, the cause of the interruption was far more serious. It was serious to the point where it just might decide the life and death of Earth as a world.

The sound of shattering glass reverberated throughout. Whether you were on Camelot, on the Moon, or on Earth, everyone heard it. It felt as though the fabric of time and space itself was quaking, threatening to tear itself apart.

Leonel looked up through the dense foliage, barely catching a glimpse of a sight he would never forget in his life.

A city had appeared in the sky. And, this city was falling toward them.

At the top of this city's gates, a lone woman dressed in black robes accented by white soft armor stood, a massive hammer in her hand as she looked down toward the rapidly approaching Camelot.

A bloodthirsty aura soon enveloped their lands. Those faint of heart felt as though there simply wasn't enough air to breathe.

Terrain was invading.

Leonel's eyes widened. Everything suddenly clicked at once.

However, there was simply no time to harp on it.

"Run!" Leonel roared.

The impact of such a massive object hitting the ground from such a height would be enormous. A meteor of 100 kilometers across would be enough to annihilate all life on Earth. Even though this city was only 10 kilometers across and its velocity was much slower in comparison to a meteor, Leonel was absolutely certain that its hardness was far beyond anything a normal meteor could compare with. If this wasn't the case, how would they dare to stay within its walls as they fell from the skies? Plus, this wasn't Earth! It was a small moon!

Leonel wasn't sure how his calculations would change in a true Fourth Dimensional world like this one, but he didn't have the mental space to spare.

Without hesitation, Leonel grasped at Aina's hand and charged out. But, he soon realized that despite his speed, Aina actually had no problem keeping up with him. In fact, she was the one dragging him forward.

'[Swiftness], [Second Wind], [Breath of Wings] –'

Leonel cast as many wind speed spells as he could in quick succession. His affinity for the Wind Element wasn't very high, so the expenditure of his Soul Force was several levels more. But, this wasn't a situation where he had the mind to care about such things. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

The Knights around Leonel and Aina were a second later in reacting, but they too shot forward trusting in Leonel's judgment.

With their speed, even covering a few hundred meters wouldn't be impossible by the time the city hit the ground. In this situation, every extra foot they could gain was an extra chance at living.

Leonel's Soul Force continued to surge. He never realized it before, but it seemed that shackles on his own body were loosening greatly as well. His mind felt freer than it ever had before.

Leonel let Aina pull him along, his mind entirely focused on his spell. He dug deep, a violent wind kicking up around him.

"Yip! Yip!"

'Don't worry about me Little Blackstar! Stay in the air and in your incorporeal state! Don't come down here, we'll be fine!'

The little mink skipped through the air, steps of black fog forming before it. But, a clearly distressed expression was on his little face. PANDA NOVEL

Though the little guy couldn't understand what was happening, he had a deep enough connection with Leonel to know that something bad was coming.

The more panicked the knights saw Leonel feel, the more panicked they also seemed to become. The most troublesome part about it all was that they were in a forest, constantly having to dodge around trees and branches. The terrain made them slow down by several factors more than they would have in practically any other landscape.

Without time to care for anything else, they had even gone as far as to abandon the prisoners they had already captured, allowing them to run on their own.

At that moment, the city falling from the skies was already within half a kilometer of the ground. Just the wind pressure of its descent was enough to give Leonel an even stronger tailwind than previously, allowing his spell formation to speed up by several levels.

"Brace yourselves!" Leonel roared.

Leonel pulled back on Aina's hand, stunning her for a moment. All of her forward momentum stalled in that instant. But, Leonel didn't give her time to say anything else.

With one swift motion, he grabbed onto her slender waist and sent the large curved package on her back and the great sword in her hand into the Segmented Cube. ρ??∫???????

Instead of continuing forward, Leonel launched himself into the air, cradling Aina's body close to his own.

Leonel's body seemed enveloped by a blinding light in that moment. Those who could only catch a faint glimpse would swear that they had laid eyes on a soaring bird.

He leapt from tree branch to tree branch, shooting past a hundred meters into the air in what felt like the blink of an eye.

The instant Leonel reached the tallest canopy, his gaze sharpened, all the strength he could muster bowing his legs and causing his thighs to explosively increase a fold in size.

“HA!”

Leonel flooded Force into his legs and launched himself toward the clouds.

As though he was a bullet, he left a streak of golden light in his wake, a violent cyclone of wind shattering the tree he had used as a springboard.

In the distance, the city reached within a hundred meters of the ground. The wind pressure alone flattened the forest beneath it, uprooting trees and sending them flying in every direction.

SHUUUUUUUUUUUUUU! BANG!

The city suddenly came to a sudden grinding halt. Unlike what Leonel had expected, it never physically touched the ground. However, the damage....

It was one of the most basic laws of physics. For every action, there was an equal and opposite reaction.

A city falling from the skies like a meteor, weighing an impossibly great amount, suddenly coming to a stop like that wouldn't magically make everything better.

The world seemed to fall silent for a moment until the ground suddenly registered just the level of force it was about to withstand.

The earth exploded, surging like a tide along with strong winds to all sides.

If trees were uprooted before, now, even ancient trees that dug hundreds of meters into the ground were blasted away.

The soil, the rock, the greenery, it was all uprooted spreading out as though using the floating city as the epicenter of disaster.

The tsunami of earth seemed to gain speed the further it spread, its momentum increasing and rolling over endlessly.

At this moment, Leonel had reached his apex, just barely 500 meters above the surface. Seeing what was happening below him, his jaw clenched. He wasn't sure if the others could survive, but at the moment, he didn't have time to worry about them. Even he wasn't safe just yet.

Veins bulged out from Leonel's forehead, his strain reaching a new level.

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Using a spell you had no affinity with took an obscene amount of Spirit Pressure. Sometimes, when the Mage Academy of Camelot gained a child of rare affinity, they would have no choice but to give them a teacher who might very well not have any talent in the child's field.

In such a case, the teacher would do their best to guide the child in the fundamentals. But, even in that case, the strongest spells the teacher might cast would be Apprentice level Arts.

However... [Float] wasn't an Apprentice level Art. In fact, it was well known as one of the most difficult to cast Magus Arts in all of Camelot.

Not only was Leonel casting a Three Star Magus Art he had no affinity with, but he was also using it in a situation he had no business using it in.

[Float] was only meant to help one hover ten meters above the ground at most. And even then, every second one spent at that height would cost a huge expenditure of Spirit Pressure even for a high affinity wind mage.

Yet, Leonel not only had no wind affinity, but he was over 500 meters in the sky!

Wind Mages would often use [Float] like an Earth Mage would use a defensive technique. It was only a method of protecting themselves in battle for a short period of time. Every extra meter they soared into the air, the exponentially more Spirit Pressure they would need to use.

"Send me inside!" Aina suddenly said.PANDA-NOVEL.COM

She hadn't spoken a word since Leonel pressed her against his chest like this. She didn't want to admit it to herself, but she found it to be quite comfortable. But, her comfort wasn't worth Leonel strain.

The fact that Leonel had sent her box and sword in was enough to show that every extra pound was a huge strain to him.

Of course, it wasn't that Leonel wouldn't rather send Aina in, but rather that sending in a living object compared to an inanimate one was a completely different concept. For the same reason Leonel had to knock Aliard out first before stuffing him into a snowglobe, he couldn't casually send Aina wherever he wanted whenever he wanted.

In that split second, it was better for him to take this action than explaining his plan. Who knew what might happen? If he told Aina not to resist and that he'd be fine, who knew if she'd believe him?

Just when Leonel was about to answer Aina and agree to her suggestion, veins bulging across his forehead, it hit them.

“Yip! Yip!”

‘Do as I said!’ Leonel roared in his mind. PANDA NOVEL

BANG!

It was just the surge of wind finally reaching them. It was far weaker than what it was on the ground. Yet... it felt as though they had been smashed by a sledgehammer.

Leonel wrapped his arms around Aina tightly.

He could feel bits and pieces of rocks and chipped wood rebounding across his back, trying to tear his skin apart.

“Leonel!” Aina cried out.

Leonel grinned. In all his life, this was only the second time he could remember Aina calling out his name.

“Don’t worry, I have thick skin.” PANDA NOVEL

Leonel sent his voice to Aina’s ears. If not for this, it was doubtful that she would be able to hear him at all.

Aina didn't seem comforted by these words at all, but there was nothing she could do. If she tried to force her way out of Leonel's protection, it would only make everything worse.

There was no time where Leonel wanted to use his shuttle more, but he knew it would be useless to do so here.

The shuttle provided too little control. It was great at straight-line speed, but Leonel had just been in a forest. By the time he managed to make it above the foliage, it was already too late to guarantee making it out of the range of the shockwave.

If the shuttle got hit by the shockwave, Leonel was certain it would be able to hold up against the elements alone, but he would have no control of it. According to his simulations, the likelihood of it crashing into the ground was near 100%. In that case, it was far better to rely on his own body which he had far more control of.

And, even though the surfboard form of the shuttle gave greater nimbleness, it provided no protection whatsoever. If Leonel brought it out now, it would be more likely to just get lost in all the chaos instead of helping them escape.

'I'll definitely modify that damn thing!' Leonel roared in his heart as he tumbled through the air like loose trash.

Every time it seemed that Leonel might be headed toward the ground, he would grit his teeth and activate [Float] in full force again, slowing his descent. It was exactly this level of control he wouldn't have in the shuttle.

Slowly but surely, the tsunami of earth and walls of wind began to calm.

According to Leonel calculations, they had been blown over two kilometers away from their original location, and this was after going half a kilometer into the skies. Leonel couldn't even imagine the devastation on the ground.

Seeing that it was calm enough, Leonel slowly opened his eyes.

The surroundings were filled with a dense fog of dirt and soil, it was the kind of air one couldn't breathe in too deeply.

Leonel summoned the shuttle and entered the surfboard mode, instantly stopping his descent to the ground.

He slowly rose, trying to get to a point where his vision was clear of this mushroom cloud of earth.

When he finally did, he was already over a kilometer above the surface and what he saw left him stunned.

Devastation. Absolute devastation.

Where there once was an endless forest of greenery, there was nothing but overturned earth. The land had become a slosh of broken trees, sand, soil and rock.

Leonel couldn't even begin to imagine the devastation this had caused to the wildlife and he was even more worried about what happened to Lancelot and the others.

Aina looked down from her position in Leonel's arms, her heart also trembling.

They both locked eyes onto the floating city in the distance.

At that moment, White City finally completed its descent, perfectly fitting into the hole in the ground it had created.

Seeing such a scene, Leonel shuddered.

What was the most difficult part about invading another world? Wasn't it gaining a foothold...?

But, what if you came with your own foothold? What if you brought your own fortified city to launch your attacks from?

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Leonel took a deep breath.

At the moment, they were about twenty or so kilometers from Camelot's main city. But, between here and there, there were two Baronies and several smaller settlements. Who knew how many of them were affected by this earthen tsunami?

'Though it benefits them to bring a city along, they definitely faced complications themselves.'

There were many benefits to wiping out all the land around them like this, the main of which was the fact this fallen city didn't have to worry about attacks in the immediate future while also wiping out any potential nearby settlements Camelot might have had.

But, this method was a double-edged sword. While White City now couldn't be easily attacked, they also couldn't easily launch any attacks either. Marching an army through this mess would be a nightmare.

It made Leonel feel like this was a purposeful choice.

Leonel felt that there was an over 98% chance that their current attackers were the City Lords of Terrain. The information he had access to put him in a unique position where he likely knew more about their current enemies than anyone of The Empire or the Slayer Legion did.

This perspective allowed him to understand that this wasn't a quick invasion plan.

If Leonel put himself in the shoes of those City Lords, their goal wasn't just to conquer Earth, it was to make Earth their new home. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

The reason for this could be summarized in a single sentence: Earth had more potential than Terrain.

As for why they waited until now, that was even more straight forward. There was no coincidence they waited for the exact instant Earth evolved into the Fourth Dimension.

And, unfortunately, due to Camelot's appearance, this happened long before Earth had fully settled itself. Leonel's actions had inadvertently placed Earth in a bad position.

Leonel felt somewhat complicated.

On the one hand, he felt that Earth was no longer truly a home to him anymore. But, on the other... He felt a twisting pain in his chest watching it being invaded this way.

Leonel descended from the skies, riding his jet-black surfboard back into the dense cloud of kicked up dirt and soil.

"Bear with it for a bit." Leonel spoke softly to Aina. "I want to see if I can find any of the others."

Aina wanted to say something like 'You can let me go now', but sensing Leonel's downcast mood, she remained silent, resting her ear against his chest. PANDA NOVEL

Leonel touched down to the ground, his brows furrowing.

'This will be difficult, but it's still worth a try.'


"[Repulse]."

A sphere of wind twirled around Leonel and suddenly expanded violently. In the blink of an eye, it cleared the heavy atmosphere.

[Repulse] was a Three Star Mage Art usually used as an area control sphere to push enemies away. So, it was quite effective in its task.

Leonel took a deep breath in the cleared air, closing his eyes and planting his two feet firmly in what ground he could find. In fact, he sunk in ankle deep into the rolling dirt and rocks.

“[Seismic Wave].”

A strong surge of Spirit Pressure shot out from Leonel. If one looked closely, it was possible to see small ripples in the loose earth beneath his feet. 

There were many sensory specific spells within Camelot’s magic system. They not only existed within the auxiliary types, but they also existed within the Elemental types as well. Wind Elemental and Earth Elemental spells especially had many of them for obvious reasons.

[Seismic Wave] was a Three Star Magus Art used for scouting with the Earth Element. It worked almost like echo location, except with sensing changes in the earth rather than with sound.

Several small waves were sent out that were practically imperceptible to the eye. On solid ground, there would be no visual cues at all. But, in loose ground like this, it showed up similar to the way a pond would ripple after experiencing a thrown stone.

Everything within several kilometers was suddenly fed back to Leonel.

There were very few limitations to [Seismic Wave]. It took very little energy to send a wave out, the only real limitation was how sharp the senses of the person sending them out was.

It was said that certain animals could sense the coming of an earthquake days in advance. Such small changes could be detected by mere beasts of the Third Dimension... So what about Leonel?

Even after reaching out ten kilometers, Leonel still didn’t feel like he had reached his limit. He had even crossed the barrier of the city in the distance. But, he shook his head and focused again.

Instead of distance, he focused on depth.

This required stronger waves and a bit more Earth Elemental Force, but it was still within Leonel's ability even though his previous uses of [Float] had almost burnt him out. Simply put, thanks to his Three Star Constitution, Leonel's recovery of Soul Force was unmatched.

Leonel's breath suddenly hitched and his heart grew heavy.

He had found his first dead body.

His heart clenched, his hold on Aina involuntarily becoming tighter.

He found another. Then another.

Many of them were crushed beneath the weight of the heavy earth. Some unlucky ones were struck by heavy flying stones and trees, causing damage they couldn't live through. Some others were pierced through by errant sharp branches.

Leonel continued to search, going deeper and deeper. But, somewhere deep inside, he realized that the deeper he went, the less likely he was to find someone he could save.

'There! There!'

Leonel almost cried out.

Leonel found one beating heart, then another. His breathing grew quicker. This was good, some had survived. This was definitely good. As long as he helped them climb back out, their lives should be saved.

Unfortunately, Leonel was a bit too naïve.

One of the most important aspects of war was the element of surprise. Keeping one's enemies on their toes, catching them unawares, and gaining victories for the smallest price in exchange... These were the staples of good generals.

Since Terrain's City Lords had planned this matter for so long, how could they be unable to predict what would happen to the landscape around them? And how could they allow that landscape to force them to give up their advantage?

The sharp call of several beasts shook Leonel out of his focused state.

His head tilted up into the skies, peering through the dense cloud of dirt only to barely make out a sight that made his heart tremble.

Birds. Hundreds of them. Each one with a wingspan of no less than five meters while some of the largest were over twenty meters in width.

On their backs, each had two warriors. One was outfitted with a polearm weapon while the other manned a massive cross bow machine strapped to the backs of these massive birds of prey.

White City was already attacking and their first wave would be an aerial assault.

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Leonel was instantly at a loss.

If he continued saving those buried beneath the rubble, many of whom were unconscious, he would be allowing this attack to continue on smoothly. But, if he moved to stop them now, it was very likely that many of those he could save would die.

'Dammit!' Leonel roared in his mind.

"Leonel."

"Huh?" Leonel snapped out of his own thoughts.

“Just point out where they are to me and I’ll dig them out. I can’t battle in the skies like you can.”

Leonel opened his mouth to reply but wasn’t exactly sure what to say.

It would definitely be more efficient for them to be saved by him. He could use his Earth Elemental affinity to simply carry them out. But, Aina would have to physically dig them out.

“Just leave it to me.” Aina insisted. “More people will die than those buried down if they’re allowed to go.”

Leonel’s hesitation was broken when he heard these words. She was right. If they managed to make it to one of the Baronies, hundreds would die. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

“I”

Aina pushed off, breaking out of Leonel’s embrace and landing on the ground.

“They can’t see me on the ground through all the dirt clouds. Stop worrying about me.”

Leonel blinked and nodded.

“The first is 57 meters in that direction and 13 meters underground.”

With that, Leonel shot into the skies.

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The formation of predatory birds soared through the skies in perfect formation. They were split into groups of eleven. Each group of eleven was split into three groups.

The first group formed the outer structure of the formation. At the helm, there was one bird and following its wings there were three birds to each side for a total of seven forming this outer structure.

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This first group formed an inverted 'V' structure.

The second group was likewise in a 'V' structure, but they were tucked within the larger outer structure. This inner structure was formed of smaller, swifter birds and there were just three of them.

The final 'group' was actually just a single bird. This bird protected the commander to the back of this double inverted 'V' structure.

In the end, from afar, it looked as though numerous triangular formations were flying through the air. They looked no different from jets shooting through the skies, all of them exuding a Fourth Dimensional aura.

This sort of formation should have been far beyond Leonel's means to deal with. The only reason Aina didn't stop him wasn't because she wasn't worried, but rather because she knew that trying to stop Leonel would have been useless. He was simply too fond of doing stupid things to save people he didn't even know, let alone the fact he was now doing so to protect those he thought of as his friends.

In Leonel's mind, Mordred was now a close friend of his. If Camelot fell, it would be Mordred's family that suffered the most. How could he allow such a thing to happen?

At the center of these numerous smaller formations, a man wearing black robes accented by white flexible armor stood atop a predator bird of his own. Unlike the others, he was the only one on the back of this bird.

He stood with his hands clasped behind his back, his hair shaved down until only the smallest bristles remained.

The rushing winds whipped against his face, but it was as though his skin was tightly stapled to his skeleton. His stern expression never distorted, nor did his eyes ever blink. p???

He was one of City Lord White's White Knights, Khaled Diore.

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Leonel stood in the skies, a simple [Light Refraction] array centered around him. The more he observed the coming tide of predatory birds, the more he realized he didn't stand a chance.

Even ignoring the warriors and assault weapons on their backs, just the beasts alone were beyond anything Leonel had ever seen before.

They had beaks that glistened like the blades of a polished spear. Their black feathers caused the light of the setting sun to rebound as though they were metal plates. Their eyes were a bright shade of crimson that exuded a bloodthirsty light as though all they knew was slaughter.

As though this wasn't enough, Leonel felt that the large crossbows fitted to their backs contained much more power than 23rd century canons. By his estimations, they were weaker than 25th century technology, but marginally stronger than 24th. And, unlike Earth's technology, they weren't negatively influenced by Force in the slightest.

None of this even began to touch upon the humans that managed to command these beasts and control these machines. Leonel was simply in over his head.

He was still within the Third Dimension and he was just a single person facing almost 500. Any smart person would turn tail and run.

Leonel took several deep breaths, trying to calm his beating heart.

For a moment, he closed off his senses. He heard nothing, saw nothing, felt nothing.

Earth was probably in chaos at this moment. Leonel could almost feel it.

Everyone's lives had already been turned upside down once, but here it was again.

But, he was lucky. He had talent. If he wanted to and had the time, he could gain the strength to protect himself, but not everyone could claim this.

Did Leonel feel some sort of responsibility because of this?

He would be lying if he said no. But, somewhere inside, he felt it was more than this.

It was the same feeling he got on the football field, the same feeling he felt when he sat down at an exam, the same feeling he had when he stepped onto his first battlefield.

Leonel opened his eyes, a mad grin spreading across his face as his irises flickered a wild violet-red.

Leonel flipped his palm, causing a familiar black rhino's horn to appear.

He brought it slowly to his lips, his blood boiling and his skin flushing crimson as bronze runes danced across it.

'That's a nice formation you have there, would be a shame if someone ruined it.'

These birds might seem mighty and menacing, but these were exactly the kind of beasts most susceptible to outside influences.

Seeing such odds before him only made Leonel want to win even more.

It was exactly then Leonel blew on the horn with all his might, pouring his Spirit Pressure into it.

The people of Terrain had pissed him off many times already. Leonel even believed that the so-called 'fugitives' they had bribed Shield Cross Stars into looking for were those who wanted to blow the whistle on this maddening plan of theirs.

Unfortunately, before those fugitives could do much of anything, Earth's evolution was accelerated, causing them to enter the Fourth Dimension before anyone predicted.

Leonel remembered how he had been treated just because he was weak. He remembered how Jerach refused to tell him what they were hiding even after he spared his life. He saw the way they tried to humiliate Aina — his Aina.

Since they wanted war, he would give it to them.

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The blaring sound of a horn tore across the skies.

The perfect formation of predator birds was instantly shaken. Their riders, which had spent years learning how to tame these wild beasts, were suddenly at a loss. It felt as though they were riding bucking bulls.

White Knight Diore's gaze sharpened. Despite the while reaction of his predatory bird was equally as wild, his feet remained attached as though they had been sown together.

'This noise.'

Khaled locked onto a particular direction. Even though his eyes saw nothing in that spot, he trusted his senses. There was most definitely an enemy right there.

Leonel felt the White Knight's aura lock onto him. The feeling was like being gripped by the hands of death.

He knew from the very beginning that [Light Refraction] wasn't infallible. But, it only made it worse now that he was funneling the abilities of this horn right toward the flock of birds. Even if the sight of him didn't give him away, the direction in which the blaring horn was coming from most definitely did.

But, Leonel didn't stop blowing. From behind his [Light Refraction] spell, he locked eyes with Khaled, his blood boiling.

The White Knight stomped down hard on his predator bird, sending a violent shock through its body and waking it up. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

By now, the perfect formation had devolved into a wild flock of birds flying in every which direction. In fact, out of their control, many on the backs of these predator birds fell from their backs.

Without a choice, they pulled out an inconspicuous short pole from their harnesses. With a few clicks, they became gliders.

Watching so many fall from the skies, Leonel sighed a breath of relief, thinking they would have no choice but to return to White City. But, to his astonishment, as though they were assigned a life and death mission, these gliders continued forward toward their original destinations, not gazing back toward White City even once.

Leonel's heart froze over. This was the first time he truly felt the resolve of these warriors.

'Dammit.'

Leonel put his horn away and pulled out his black bow and slipped on his bowman gloves.

It was a palpable pressure, it was the kind Leonel hadn't felt before. In all his life, he had never faced such dauntless, fearless warriors.

The demons loved war, but they still feared death. They still stormed the battlefields, but they weren't a single unit, forged together by blood and sweat. PANDA NOVEL

These warriors were different, though.

It was impossible for them to have guessed that someone would be able to disrupt their plan before it even truly began. Yet, they reacted as though it didn't matter.

Despite the fact they hadn't sensed Leonel's location like their captain had, they still traveled toward him dauntlessly, not a single one of them cowering in fear.

Leonel felt like he was back on those French battlefields, facing those mortal men who threw their life away to protect their country in the face of an enemy they knew was impossible to defeat. It was on that battlefield Leonel gained respect for bravery and death...

Leonel nocked his first arrow, his aura surging.

'Little Blackstar.'

The little mink popped into existence out of a spinning black vortex, landing atop Leonel's head as though he had never left.

Leonel's body was coated in a thin film of dancing shadows, his goldish bronze hair dancing wildly beneath his towering Force. ρ??∪??????

Crackling lightning, sharpening winds, dancing shadows that sounded like blades gliding across his arrow...

Leonel took a deep breath and released his fingers on his exhale. As though his bow was a living entity extending from his own body, it followed his will, drawing a line from his eyes to his target.

PCHU!

Without ability to dodge, the first glider was pierced through the skull, but the others continued flying forward as though they hadn't sensed a thing.

Leonel brought out a second arrow and fired again. Then a third. Then a fourth.

In the blink of an eye, he had already sent out over a dozen arrows and reaped a dozen lives.

However, he could see it all clearly. His senses were impossibly sharp, how could he miss it?

Not a single one who lived flinched, not a single one thought of turning back, not a single one cowered.

There were simply too many. There had only been around 500 predator birds, but each had two riders, making the gliders in the sky total over a thousand.

Against a normal army, killing so many without giving them ability to retaliate would have caused them to stagger and run. But, this army didn't seem to function by normal standards.

And how could they? This wasn't a land they had come to conquer for mere wealth, this was about their lives, their future. To their backs wasn't a mere city, it was one filled with their family, their friends, those they had to protect.

This wasn't a normal invading army and the White Troops of White City weren't a normal group of men and women.

Leonel clenched his jaw.

These were all Fourth Dimensional warriors. The only reason he could kill them was because in their current positions, they had no ability to fight back. But, if he didn't put all of his strength into one arrow, he knew it would still be impossible to kill them even in this situation.

He simply didn't have any large area of effect spells he could use to deal with them all at once. And, even if he did, he wouldn't have enough Spirit Pressure to easily affect such a large area without all but killing himself.

As though the situation wasn't bad enough already, it only got worse in the next instant.

White Knight Diore had locked onto Leonel's general location long ago. Yet, despite knowing his men were dying one after another, he still hadn't made a move against Leonel... And the reason for this soon became clear...

"Quell your rage."

A booming voice shocked the wild flock of predator birds.

Leonel's heart trembled.

The birds...

It seemed that White Knight Diore wasn't designated as the head of this aerial squad without reason.

The disordered, wild flock of predator birds suddenly regained their purpose, their crimson eyes all locking onto a certain direction.

Leonel's blood ran cold.

Chapter 447

The feeling of hundreds locking onto you, each without any other expressed goal than to taste your blood and reap your life... It was something Leonel had experienced before within the Merlin trials.

But, there was something different about facing so many beasts. They didn't have a semblance of humanity, not an ounce of reason. There were no words he could use to get them to pause, nor were there any looming timers or rules he could use to pull himself out of this situation.

It couldn't have been a more primal sense of fight or flight. It was either he defeated all of these enemies or escaped them, if not... he would die.

Leonel suddenly felt a wave of interference play against his [Light Refraction] spell, distorting it. In the blink of an eye, it became a useless decoy hanging in the skies, exposing him to the senses of thousands.

A shudder ran through Leonel's spine.

This hadn't happened because he was careless or even because he had run out of energy. This was an ability.

'The birds...!' PANDA-NOVEL.COM

All this time Leonel had had the thought of being careful at the back of his mind. Though it was somewhat more difficult for a unit of warriors to use their abilities as freely in such a structure where the power of the whole was more important than the individual, Leonel knew that unexpected abilities were one of the things he had to pay attention to the most.

In this aspect, Leonel was perfectly correct. The actions of White Knight Diore proved as much without a shadow of a doubt.

What Leonel didn't expect, however, was for the abilities of the predator birds to be maybe even more important.

All this time, Leonel had been so focused on their menacing exteriors that he never considered the fact their internal abilities were what truly should have struck fear in him.

Leonel rapidly retreated, placing his body almost parallel to the ground as his jet-black surfboard sent him soaring backward.

He quickly pulled out the dictionary, using the base of the surfboard to hide his actions. PANDA NOVEL

"Those birds, what are they and what are their abilities?"

[*Ping*]

[Replying to Seed, these birds are a sub-species of specially bred Decoder Beasts known as the Jagged Beak Predator Ravens. They are known for two main abilities, one related to their oddly shaped beaks and the second related to their pupils.]

[Jagged Beak: Ability to disrupt Force organization]

[Predator Pupils: Ability to disrupt Force organization]

Leonel's heart trembled. ρ??∫??????

The drawing of Force Arts was a delicate operation. Every Force Art type was a different language that spoke in a different way. But, in order to convey a certain message, it had to be exceptionally particular. This much was proved by when Leonel modified Camelot's Force Art in order to draw them faster. Doing just this small action caused the strength of these Force Arts to plummet.

This was all to say something very simple. If these Predator Ravens could disrupt the organization of Force Arts... then spells were all but useless against them!

Leonel now understood why it was that these birds were sent as the centerpiece of the first attack. Any large scale formations Camelot wanted to put up to protect themselves would be absolutely useless before them.

Even though the Predator Pupils were weaker than their Jagged Beaks in formation breaking, when 500 of them stared at a single point, what chance did a formation stand? And, beyond that, what if they began attacking that already weakened point with their beaks?!

KKKWWAAAAAA!! KWWWAAAAAA!!

Leonel's expression changed. His Internal Sight swept out, only to find that the distance between him and the flock of Predator Ravens had already halved. Their speed was inconceivable and clearly far beyond what his surfboard could muster. Maybe if it wasn't for the heavy crossbows still strapped to their backs, they would be even faster!

Leonel locked eyes with the commander in the midst. He still stood tall, his hands clasped behind his back and his black robes fluttering wildly beneath the speed of his Predator Raven.

In truth, White Knight Diore was inwardly surprised despite his indifferent expression.

For one, he recognized Leonel. They would be foolish to not know of the talents of Earth before coming to invade them, but even beyond that, even if it wasn't about invading Earth, he would have heard of Leonel. After all, the rumors of him joining Valiant Heart Mountain without having to pass the trials had already spread like wildfire.

But, this was only a secondary reasoning. What shocked him the most was that despite 500 Predator Ravens locking onto Leonel at once, all they managed to do was distort Leonel spell. Had it not been for Leonel dispelling the Mage Art himself, Khaled might still be looking toward a distorted image of Leonel.

The White Knight narrowed his eyes.

This was good. Now that Earth had evolved into a Fourth Dimensional world, those who were born within it should be experiencing a evolutionary growing phase right now. Within the next few weeks to months, many of Earth's greatest talents would experience explosive growth in their abilities.

This was why it was so important for them to be swift in their approach. This wasn't only about keeping the element of surprise, but it was also about ensuring that Earth didn't get any more chances to grow.

Earth didn't have the foundation of cultivation. All they could rely on was technology and their gifted abilities. The evolution to the Fourth Dimension would already guarantee the near uselessness of technology, so they only had the latter to worry about.

With a talent like Leonel before him, how could Khaled possibly allow him to live? Leonel was most definitely one of the greatest roadblocks standing between them and claiming this world for themselves.

How fair was it for Earth to have so much potential and for Terrain to have reached the end of its own? How fair was it for them to have to scratch and claw for everything while the people of Earth could be

gifted the world? How fair was it for them to have to deal with people of their own world that would rather be the dogs of others rather than forging something for themselves?

The truth was that there was no fairness in the world. Since that was the case, they would snatch what should be theirs themselves.

And in White Knight Diore's mind, killing Leonel was the first step.

“Swarm him to death.”

Chapter 448

Leonel's feet shifted, slowing his black surfboard to a grinding halt. He pulled out the horn once again, but Khaled only sneered.

Seeing his reaction, Leonel put the horn away without even blowing on it. Now that he understood the situation he was in, his mind flowed like water, jumping from idea to idea without pause or rest.

It was already impossible for him to stop the gliders, but he had at least bought the Baronies and Camelot time. By now, information about what was happening here should have long since been disseminated. A city falling from the sky was not something that could be missed and Leonel had made certain of that.

Leonel's goal had already changed.

Assuming that he would be able to stop an entire army by himself had been foolish. Since he knew that he couldn't, he would focus on what he could do.

His first priority was to survive. His second priority would be to kill this commander.

Though Leonel set this second priority, he didn't spend any of his time hoping for it. He could sense that this commander was much stronger than he was. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

At his current level, Leonel couldn't even deal with the likes of Jilniya and those Heirs of Powers with any sort of assurance. At most, he could deal with exceptionally weak Fourth Dimensional existences and those who couldn't defend themselves like those gliders.

But, against someone like White Knight Diore... well, it was safe to say that if this battle was happening on the ground and not the air where Khaled could not directly track down and kill Leonel himself, Leonel would likely already be dead.

Leonel's emotions seemed to vanish, his cold, calculating eyes locking onto the flock of birds around him as though he could no longer sense the gliders flying by below him. His mind reached an unprecedented sense of calm and seriousness that made the White Knight frown for the first time since this battle began.

Leonel stood absolutely still in the air. Using his flying treasure as his base, he nocked another arrow, his breathing calm and steady.

The way his eyes locked onto White Knight Diore made the latter feel as though there was nothing else around them, as though in this world there were only the two of them, as though if he made the slightest mistake, miscalculated just the smallest bit... that his life would be over.

A halo of bronze appeared above Leonel's head, wafting out a majestic violet fog. It seemed to coat Leonel in the air of a King, even causing the atmosphere to become several times heavier. PANDA NOVEL

In the past, the gravity field ability of Leonel's Metal Synergy Lineage Factor had been exceptionally weak, barely increasing the gravity by a few percentage points, if that. But, after absorbing so much Urbe Essence, just the presence of Leonel's halo alone increased it by 20%, giving a 1.2x effect at no expense to Leonel's own stamina.

This might not seem like much, but aerial beasts were especially reliant on their light weight. Small changes could cost them a drastic amount of speed. And, at this moment, Leonel would take whatever advantage he could get.

SHUUUU!

A Predator Raven swooped down at Leonel, its eyes a furious shade of crimson. But, almost in the exact instant it reached the range in order to do this, Leonel had reacted first, letting loose an arrow.

KWWWAAAA!! KWWWAAAA!!

An arc of blood sprayed from the Predator Raven's eyes. It sprawled in the air, its wings flapping about so wildly that it lost several feathers in a matter of moments. ρ??J??????

Leonel's surfboard moved at his command. He seemed to move in a straight line, but the angles he took were just out of reach of several Predator Ravens.

Without any long ranged attacks, these Ravens could only assault Leonel with their beaks and their claws. Their pupils were also useless if Leonel wasn't casting any spells.

Though they could disrupt the organization of Force, that was all. They couldn't dispel Force or negate it. This meant that against Force Arts, their abilities were exceptional. But, against normal Force attacks like Leonel's reinforced Arrows, the amount of change they could cause was next to zero.

To make matters worse for the flock of Predator Ravens, their size was simply too big. With only short ranged attacks available to them and even the smallest of them having a wingspan of five meters, nimble movements were most definitely not their forte. In fact, even if it was, with how many of them had swarmed Leonel, sudden bursts of movement would cause more problems to themselves than they would to Leonel himself.

Khaled narrowed his eyes.

He thought that since he was facing a child, all he had to do was intimidate Leonel into making a stupid mistake with the use of his overwhelming numbers. He thought that Leonel wouldn't have the presence of mind to realize that he was keeping the Predator Ravens spaced out so that they wouldn't collide with one another.

Yet, not only had Leonel realized this, he realized it immediately and even boldly acted upon it even to the point of allowing the flock of Ravens to surround him.

If things kept going like this, without the room to even turn around, they would end up flying by Leonel and ironically letting him escape.

But, Khaled wasn't a fool. In fact, he was one of City Lord White's most trusted White Knights. If not for this, how could he be allowed to man one of their most important missions?

"Disperse." He commanded calmly.

In one swift motion, the Predator Ravens that had already passed Leonel by flapped their wings and spread out. Instantly, they had formed a large encirclement of Leonel, effectively cutting off the surrounding 500 meter space for their battlefield.

Those Ravens that were still surging toward Leonel spread their wings out wide, coming to grinding halts as they either shot up or down.

Despite feeling that he could kill Leonel with a single strike if he got the opportunity, Khaled remained calm, retreating as well.

In the center of it all, all that was left were a group of three Predator Ravens, the smallest and swiftest of them all, assaulting Leonel from all sides.

Khaled's response immediately cured all of his formation's weaknesses. He had expected Leonel's calm expression to crack, but to his surprise, there wasn't even the slightest shift.

From start to finish, Leonel had only shot a single arrow. The rest of the time, he spent calculating the safest lines of trajectory he would take to dodge around these beasts.

Well... That was at least what it seemed like.

But, Leonel's real target had been his target from the very beginning.

A particular bird beast that now had just a single eye and was in much too much pain to follow Khaled's orders perfectly.

Chapter 449

Khaled's expression changed.

He had already commanded that Predator Raven to man the perimeter, but it hadn't listened.

'No, it's not that it wasn't listening, something's making it not listen... This boy!'

Leonel had realized long ago that Khaled's commands could be interrupted.

For Khaled to have been sent to command this aerial assault, it was likely that other than gaining City Lord White's trust, it was also due to his ability. By virtue of this, it was easy to extrapolate that Khaled had likely been the one in command of the predator birds from the very beginning.

After Leonel realized this, he already had all the information he needed. The fact that his horn could disrupt Khaled's control, even for a moment, meant that it was very much possible for external sources to do so.

So, the simple question was... what about pain?

This much was easily confirmed. Though it was just for a moment, the Predator Raven completely disregarded Khaled's commands, almost completely disrupting the formation with its erratic flight in those moments just after Leonel pierced its eye.

Though Khaled managed to regain control of the Predator Raven, there was one thing he didn't notice. Or, rather, two things packaged into one. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

The first thing was that Leonel had hidden a secondary damage spell within in arrow. And, the second thing was that Leonel had hidden a smaller version of the Force Arts drawn onto his horn as well.

The instant he realized that his hypothesis was correct, he activated the secondary damage spell, causing the Raven a surge of pain once again. And, right afterward, he activated the beast taming Force Arts to disrupt Khaled's second attempts at controlling the Raven.

When Leonel's [Light Refraction] spell was influenced, he realized a few things.

For one, the influence of a single Raven's pupils were exceptionally weak on him. If it wasn't for 500 disrupting his spell at once, it would have never distorted in the first place.

And second, when he used his surfboard to block the view of Khaled while he pulled out the dictionary, he realized that the effect the Ravens had on him were much weaker in that instant. That obviously meant that their abilities weren't area of effect, but rather truly reliant on their sight. At the very least, they had to have a line of sight to the Force Art they wanted to disrupt.

This made Leonel realized his second very important thing... These damned birds couldn't disrupt a Force Art that had already been shielded and definitely couldn't disrupt one too small for them to lock eyes on.

At this point, though Khaled was startled, he still didn't understand what Leonel's plan was. He could tell that something was interrupting his control and that this thing was most definitely the arrow still lodged in the Raven's eye. But... what was the purpose?

There were over 500 Jagged Beak Predator Ravens, all of which had long since surrounded Leonel and were waiting to taste his blood. What good was there to mess with just a single one? PANDA NOVEL

But, Khaled's expression changed again when Leonel abruptly changed directions to, seemingly by coincidence, cross paths with the erratically flying bird.

With a flip of his palm, Leonel's bow disappeared, only to be replaced by a pitch-black spear.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

'Chain Domain.'

The Predator Raven was suddenly tightly bound in the sky, its wings pinned to body and its claws pressed flush against itself.

Veins popped out across Leonel's forehead, but he didn't retreat.

His back flexed as the Predator Raven hung in the air beneath his might. He could see its enraged eyes trying to bore into his soul. One was a blood red while the other dripped with crimson, its precious life dripping to the ground far beneath them.

However, when it saw Leonel's cold, calculating eyes looking back toward it, the bird felt fear for the first time in maybe its life. It suddenly stopped struggling, its blood running cold. ρ??ϕ???

In a lot of ways, beasts were just more of what humans were innately but tried to hide. Their sense of strict hierarchy was even more damning, even more rigorous, even more demanding.

When facing a being superior to you, beasts lowered their heads...

Even if it meant certain death.

Leonel's spear shot into the Predator Raven's eye, an undeniable callousness in his gaze as he felt his blade run deep into its skull and through its brain.

Spear Force burst out, mincing the insides of the Predator Raven in an instant. But, it was what happened next that made Khaled's heart truly seize.

Leonel pulled out his spear, blood spraying through the air as he thrust forth once more. But this time, his target wasn't the dead Raven but rather the crossbow machine strapped to its back.

The strap was severed in a single strike, separating out from the Predator Raven's.

Leonel's Chain Domain released the beast but latched onto the crossbow, causing it float before him in menacing fashion.

Just like that, in what felt like the blink of an eye, the entire situation had shifted.

All around, there were hundreds of Predator Ravens, each outfitted with a crossbow, but not a single one with the capability of firing one.

And then there was Leonel. He was just one man, but he had suddenly become the center of the battlefield.

His gaze still cool, suffused with indifference, he used his Chain Domain to load the first bolt, his eyes locking onto Khaled once more.

A wave of danger seized the heart of the White Knight. Before, he felt his movements were clever. Clearing out the Predator Ravens to surround and suffocate Leonel seemed to have been the perfect move at the time. But now, he felt as though he had cosigned his own death.

The irony of it was that as a commander, he didn't even have a crossbow of his own.

The indifference in Leonel's gaze was almost beginning to drive Khaled mad. There was no sense of achievement or victory or even complacency or happiness in his eyes. It was as though what hovered before him wasn't a human, but rather a series of data points to be callously observed.

And then... Leonel released the bolt.

SHUUUUU! BANG!

The sound barrier shattered in an instant. It happened so quickly that by the time it was registered, Khaled was already trying to dodge out of the way.

But, unfortunately for the White Knight, Leonel's target was never him.

KWWAAAA—

It was a devastating sight. The cry of the Raven hardly sounded before its head imploded into fleshly bits of crimson gore. The bolt was so powerful that it continued without losing momentum, piercing through the heart of another Raven several hundred meters behind the first and causing it to implode as well.

White Knight Diore found himself falling through the skies, a half-stunned expression on his face.

He lost?

Leonel looked on from up above, his gaze locking onto Khaled's falling figure as his Chain Domain adjusted the aim of the crossbow toward the White Knight.

Today, he would send a resounding message to the people of Terrain.

Chapter 450

Khaled felt his heart seize. Something told him that no matter what he did, it would be impossible to dodge out of the way of this strike.

The White Knight roared at the top of his lungs, unleashing all the Force he had. There was simply no point in keeping anything in reserve. What good was reserve strength if he was dead?

He didn't bother to pull out his glider. At this moment, he didn't want anything slowing his descent toward the ground. In fact, the faster he hit the ground, the better. As for whether he could survive such an impact, he would deal with just a single problem at a time.

BANG!

The sound barrier shattered. Roaring winds shot in every direction, clearing out a path for the released bolt. It felt for a moment as though it was cleaving the clouds with a single sword strike.

Khaled flipped a palm, causing a spear to appear.

He poured all of his Force into it, striking out with all the might he could muster as he fell from the skies. PANDA-NOVEL.COM

At the same time, he kicked hard at the air, flipping himself upside down to careen toward the ground even faster.

He hoped that the fact he was falling in the same direction as the bolt along with the fact he was putting his all into stopping it would dampen the strength somewhat. But, reality was cruel.

Though he was correct in his assessment, the diminishment in strength was practically negligible.

Khaled's spear point met the bolt, his eyes practically bulging out of their sockets under his strain. In that moment, he could swear that he had never put so much strength into a strike before. But'

His spear point splintered apart like dried weed. The bolt continued forward as though cutting through air, blasting a bloody hole so large in his shoulder that it took his arm along with it.

White Knight Diore paled. PANDA NOVEL

His arm spun aimlessly in the air, sparkling droplets of crimson dancing around it. It looked as if a canon ball had taken a quarter of his body with it, trying its very best to reap his life.

In that moment, his spinning arm was sheered apart by the harsh winds left trailing the bolt. Had it not been for the Force Khaled had protecting his body, his head might have suffered the same force.

Leonel coldly looked on from above, nocking another bolt.

His senses swept over it all. It seemed that every crossbow had only been outfitted with three bolts. But, judging by their strength, Leonel understood why. With such devastating power, it was unlikely for any

formation to survive the combination of the Predator Ravens' abilities and this crossbow assault. In addition, weight was a huge issue when it came to such an aerial assault and each one of these bolts rivaled even the crossbow itself in heft.

But just one more bolt was fine. Since Khaled had given him such an opening, Leonel didn't believe he wouldn't be able to kill him.

Leonel coldly aimed for the last time, watching the White Knight's falling figure. ρ??∫???????

At that moment, several of the Predator Ravens had swarmed once again, trying to obstruct Leonel's sight toward their commander. But, Leonel didn't flinch. If Khaled thought that he would lose sight because of this, he was sorely mistaken.

From start to finish, Leonel's Internal Sight had been completely locked onto Khaled. Beyond this, would the bolt really be stopped by just a few bodies considering its strength?

Leonel's chest expanded with an even breath. As though he was syncing with the crossbow, he released the moment he began to exhale, his calm breathing contrasting with the shattering boom of the bolt's speed.

KWWAAA!!

The bolt instantly tore through three Raven bodies in the blink of an eye, showering the skies in crimson.

Panic gripped Khaled's heart. He continuously kicked the air, trying to quicken his descent. Every time he did, he left concentric circles in the sky, accelerating himself downward with each attempt.

But the bolt was simply too fast. He realized at that point that obstructing Leonel's vision had been useless. In fact, using so many Ravens to block him only gave him easy access to more bolts.

A strong feeling of helplessness gripped at Khaled's heart, but his expression remained the same as all others who had died to Leonel's hand on this day.

He looked up toward his murderer, his gaze locking onto Leonel's. All he received in return was a plain stare, the same one that told him he was nothing but a data point, the same one that didn't seem to care for who he was as a person.

SHUUUU! BANG!

There was no sound when the bolt shot through Khaled's chest. In fact, it seemed as though the bolt had only flown through another patch of air.

Rather, the huge crashing sound came from the bolt colliding with the ground and leaving a crater that rivaled the impact of a small meteor.

For a moment, there was only a bloody hole. And in the next, Khaled's body imploded, shattering from the inside out into a rain of blood and gore.

Having realized he made another mistake by calling the Ravens to come and protect him, Khaled didn't bother to protect himself in the end, opting to simply stare at the man who ended his life. It was the kind of look only a man dauntless of death could form in his final moments.

Maybe, from the very beginning, Khaled's anxiousness, his panic, his trembling, never had anything to do with the danger his life was in and everything to do with his unwillingness to fail the mission he was given.

Leonel took a deep breath before releasing the crossbow in his Chain Domain and gasping for breath. He coughed several times, his lungs screaming beneath the strain.

“Yip! Yip!”

Leonel's chest heaved as he tried to give the little mink a reassuring smile.

Calculating the trajectory of such a fast bolt hadn't been a problem for Leonel. Others couldn't guarantee such accuracy and could only use these crossbows as siege weapons, but Leonel was different.

This was all to say that the reason for his fatigue wasn't this, but rather his use of his Chain Domain. But, it couldn't be helped, his surfboard couldn't fit such a large, heavy crossbow onto it.

Leonel shook his head, turning his gaze toward where the gliders had disappeared to. By now, they were definitely closing in on the first Barony. Even without the Predator Ravens, that city didn't stand a chance against so many Fourth Dimensional existences.

” | Dammit.’