

Descent 841

Chapter 841

Dream Path took inspiration from both the Ability Index and Aina's ability. Leonel had always found it fascinating that Aina was able to intuit the next step of her progression and had wondered what it would feel like to have such an ability.

Of course, Leonel was under no illusions that Dream Path would be anywhere near as good as Aina's own innate ability. At best, it could simulate maybe 1 or 2% of the effect. However, Leonel still felt that this was enough of a helping hand to push his teammates in the right direction.

It was clear that they were growing well on their own. If one was purely looking at their Dimensions, they had already left him far behind. But, Leonel wanted to give them more focused growth.

"Joel, you fall into the Blade Affinity Ability Index, right?"

Joel nodded. In the beginning, he could only add a sharpened aura to his weapons. But now, he had grown far beyond just that. The only difference between himself and Emna from Crimson Hall was that the latter specialized in short blades and daggers while he preferred polearm weapons like his pike, or a halberd or spear.

At the moment, he still used the same D-grade Pike he had earned from his very first Zone. But, this was still enough to leave him among the average in terms of weapons. He had mostly not changed it due to sentimental value.

"How far along are you in comprehending your Universal Cycles?"

"I've comprehended Winter and Summer on my own. But, I'm having trouble with the milder Spring and Fall."

Leonel continued to ask Joel several questions before he fell into silence, closing his eyes.

After several minutes, Leonel extended a finger forward, pressing it to Joel's forehead. In that moment, Joel experienced what felt like a dream, but it was as though he was lucid for every moment of it. Everything was so vivid that he almost began acting out every step of it.

The dream didn't have any words or any expressed advice. It was more like a feeling... Joel felt like he was experiencing years of life and becoming wiser with every passing moment. By the end of it, he 'felt' as though he could see a vague path forward.

Leonel exhaled a long breath as he retracted his finger.

If he wanted Joel and the others to comprehend everything on their own, he couldn't just give them comprehension. What he could do instead was give them a vague feeling of the path forward that made an unfamiliar path seem familiar to them.

At the moment, Leonel was able to simulate about a year ahead for them. This would be able to streamline the process they would have made in a year into a fraction of the time. This was Dream Path.

Leonel knew that he could likely simulate more time, but the more he pushed, the less accurate he would become and more likely it would be for them to stray off course. This was the best outcome for his current level.

Once he was finished with Joel, Leonel moved on to Milan.

"Milan, your Energy Shield Ability Index is almost at the Reflection Stage, correct?"

"Mhm." Milan nodded. "Very close. But, I doubt that if we went up a Dimension that it would even be at the Nullification Stage."

"And your Universal Cycles?" $\rho \int \dots$

Milan scratched his head. "I've never really thought about it. Isn't that just for weapons and elements? I wouldn't even know how to integrate it with my ability if it was possible to integrate with an ability at all."

Leonel nodded, fell into silence then pressed a finger onto Milan's forehead as well before moving on to Raj.

“Raj, your Earth Affinity Ability Index is a bit unique... It's difficult to rise it up to higher levels on your own...”

The Earth Affinity or any Elemental affinity ability could be separated into multiple potential branching evolution paths. Some paths focused on volume of the Element that could be moved, others focused on evolution of the Element itself say from red flames to blue flames, and still others focused on auxiliary abilities that could be produced. For example, Supreme Monet's Fire Affinity Ability Index evolved abilities that could heal her. This would fall into the third category

As for Raj, Leonel believed that his fell into the second category: the evolution of the Element. This meant that Raj's strength wouldn't be in the volume of earth he could move, but rather in the quality of earth he could produce.

Something like Elthor's Chaotic Particle Force would be at the highest end of what Raj could achieve. As for at the simplest end, it would be the normal earth beneath their feet.

However, this is just an example. Leonel knew that Raj's evolution path was especially tied to carbon. If the Third Dimension was his peak, he would be aiming for something like Diamond, Graphene or Buckypaper.

In higher Dimensions, there would be even more unique structures to form and it would all rely on Raj's training and ingenuity. The unfortunate part was that Raj wasn't the sharpest tool in the box. Even until this point, he was still using normal earth as though this was his limit.

If one took an objective measurement of all eight of them, Raj's ability definitely had the greatest potential and was one of the few Ability Indexes that didn't have a simple five step journey to the top.

But, ironically, this difficulty for Raj made it the easiest for Leonel to guide. Unlike everyone else who Leonel had to be subtle with, with Raj, Leonel could just etch the step by step progression into his mind.

Raj would never understand the nuances of the chemical structure. However, Leonel could make him understand the 'feel' so that he could do it naturally.

If there was anyone who could guide Raj in the subtleties of minerals and rocks, it was Leonel. Not only this, but Leonel could also simulate unique structures for Raj to create and make use of that might not even exist naturally in the world. It was almost a shame that this ability was born within Raj and not Leonel himself.

Leonel was certain that by the time he returned, Raj would probably be the strongest of the eight of them.

“Ah! I could do this?! Why didn't anyone tell me?!”

Raj smacked his own forehead with a meaty palm, causing Leonel to laugh beside himself.

Wiping tears from his eyes, Leonel looked toward Allan.

“Allan, you've always wanted to become a programmer, right? How about I help you with that?”

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Allan's eyes glowed beneath his glasses as he stared at Leonel with a little too much passion. One would have thought that he had every intention of jumping over the table like Gil almost did previously. Except this time, there didn't seem to be anyone prepared to stop him.

“Do you have something, Cap? Everyone is so stingy. I can't find information I want at any time like we could back on Earth. Even if we couldn't take it back home, at least we had everything at school.”

Allan's excitement turned down into a frown. Leonel's brothers had no idea what kind of background he had, especially since Leonel hardly understood as well. Leonel didn't see the Morales or Luxnix families as backers, he rather saw them as connections he would have to take control of in the future. With how this Dimensional Verse worked, he was under no illusion that these families would just accept him with open arms.

Since even Leonel was in a limbo, his teammates were even more so. Though Leonel was more powerful than they were and clearly more talented, there was nothing certain about his accumulation of resources.

Back on Earth, as students of the third ranked Academy, they had more information at their finger tips than they could consume in an entire lifetime. Though there were restrictions about taking this information off campus, that could be fixed with a single late night stay at the library. The only reason Leonel hadn't done this and was thus ranked third in his class behind both Aina and, ironically, Allan, was because he had a schedule to keep in order to return to his Paradise Island.

The Dimensional Verse was the exact opposite. Anyone with information always hoarded it, and even organizations placed them behind gates that required 'merits' or 'contributions' to access. There was even some information that no number of merits could ever get you without an equivalent amount of status.

It was clear, then, why Allan would feel so stifled. The fields that could relate to programming or coding in the Dimensional Verse were amongst the most gate kepted. Things like Force Crafting or Force Pill Crafting, or any number of branching fields, were especially protected by their owners. It was because of this that Kaela had been taken advantage of by Jac Beinala for so long.

Leonel smiled at Allan's question. Rather than answering directly, he asked a question of his own.

"What is your ability?"

"I have a magnetic ability. I can apply magnetic fields to any surface. It works best on inorganic materials, but I can do it on organic materials as well like skin. But, it functions best on my own skin. If I wanted to apply a field to someone else, it would require touch because usually my ability could be repelled by Force Skin if I tried to apply it from a distance."

Leonel's smile widened into a grin.

"You were first in our class but you can't see how useful such an ability would be?"

Allan pushed up his glasses. "You want me to use it for something other than just making battle more convenient?"

Allan's use of his ability was actually quite skilled and clever. He applied his magnetic fields to surfaces to increase his speed and attack power. He could also apply them in reverse to act as a defensive barrier that could slow and sometimes even stop attacks entirely. And, in addition to that, he was working on an absolute death domain of sorts that could make use of his ability in a longer ranged sense.

It could be said that while Raj's ability had the potential to become the most powerful, Allan's intelligence and ingenuity in using his ability would likely put him above the former. Raj's thinking was simply too simple and that couldn't be changed just because of a few tips.

As far as Leonel was concerned, though, with his guidance, they'd all become that powerful. $\rho\sigma\tau\upsilon\phi\chi\psi\omega$

"You're practically a living, breathing battery. Magnetic fields can be used to form anything from electricity all the way up to nuclear fusion."

Allan raised an eyebrow. "I know this, but Earth's technology is useless in the Dimensional Verse. What would be the point in using it that way?"

"Well, it's only as useless as you allow it to be. If you didn't have such an ability, I would probably tell you to give up. But, the fact you do makes it a different story entirely.

"You know what I noticed on my trip here?" Leonel smiled mysteriously. "Even Fifth Dimensional stars undergo nuclear fusion. The energies they produce are different and the process might have a few differences here and there, but the core of the process doesn't change."

Allan's eyes suddenly lit up. "You mean..."

"As your ability grows, I have a feeling that the magnetism will continue to have similar effects to what it once had on Third Dimensional Earth. You just might have a shortcut to bringing Earth's technology to the higher Dimensions."

“Ah...”

“Don’t get too excited.” Leonel laughed. “I have a feeling that you won’t really be the first. I doubt that there’s a complete absence of technology at the very top, and if there is, that only means that it would be even more difficult than we think to accomplish it.

“But, we have an advantage. There should be very few if any worlds that reached our level of technology before entering the Fourth Dimension. Our Third Dimension technology was even capable of harming Fourth Dimensional existences.

“Second, we come from a very talented world, the most talented if the information I have is correct. That means if there’s anyone who can do it, it would be us.

“And finally... Even if we fail to form the technology itself, if you can become what essentially amounts to a sentient star reactor...”

Leonel didn’t finish his words but Gil already began to complain.

“Damn, who gave four eyes such an OP ability?”

Leonel laughed and pointed a finger to Allan’s forehead before he focused his attention on Gil. He might as well do him next.

Chapter 843

Gil’s ability was related to the Lightning Element. But, rather than falling into the second category like Raj, his own fell into the third category like Supreme Monet’s. Instead of gaining access to volume, power or an evolution, he gained access to special abilities as his Lightning progressed.

From what Leonel could tell, these abilities were all related to speed, making Gil a speedster, albeit not a Pure Speedster, but one that relied on the Elements.

Still, after some inspection, Leonel realized that Gil's ability was more subtle than that and worked especially well on the nervous system. The good news was that it didn't just work well on his nervous system, but that of others as well.

Having come to this conclusion, it was easier for Leonel to map out Gil's next steps with Dream Path. He would focus not only on his speed, but also preventive measures in battle. He would be very effective at area control alongside Raj and Milan.

Following this, Leonel moved on to Arnold. After a while of observation, he couldn't help but be intrigued.

"Explain your ability to me, Arnold."

Arnold held up his large hands. The simple action caused the rippling muscles and veins along his arms to flex and pop. One would have thought just from this sight that he had a strength based ability, but this was far from the truth.

"I'm not sure what to call it," Arnold started in his gravelly voice, "but my palm shoots out energy that has strong vibrations."

Leonel couldn't help but smile at Arnold's simple and direct answer. One would have thought that his deep, raspy voice hurt his throat to use because this was about as many words as he would say in a single sitting.

"Do it." Leonel said.

Arnold blinked but didn't think much of it as he shot a palm toward Leonel.

Leonel's pale violet eyes glowed as he matched it with his own palm.

BANG!

The table beneath their blow splintered and shattered.

“Ah! No!” Raj dove after the food, displaying a nimbleness his large body had no business having.

Leonel’s eyes widened. The sleeve of the tracksuit he had swapped into was torn to shreds, revealing the toned arms beneath.

Unable to hold it in, the chair beneath him shattered, sending him tumbling backward.

Even after Leonel’s hand separated from Arnold’s, he could still feel it trembling on an almost cellular level. If it wasn’t for his Metal Body, his arm might have already burst at the seams, but he could tell that Arnold had most definitely held back.

“Wow...”

Leonel felt that Arnold’s ability fell into a unique category.

Every so often, an ability without an Ability Index would appear. Sael’s odd flower pupil ability was among these. There was no strict Ability Index for her and she could only gradually strengthen her ability and find out its particular quirks on her own.

At first glance, Arnold’s ability seemed similar to Big Buddha who had been killed by Leonel in the Camelot Zone. This ability would fall into the Palm Affinity Ability Index and be categorized by power, size and the quality of Force it produced. $\rho \int \sqrt{\rho \rho \rho \rho \rho \rho}$

However, there were many problems with this categorization.

Firstly, Big Buddha’s hand physically expanded, but Arnold’s did not. And, second and most importantly, this unique Force that Arnold produced was on a level all to its own.

It was one thing to induce vibrations, but to do it on a cellular level was a different beast entirely. What if Arnold’s ability increased to the point he could do it on a molecular level? What about an atomic level? What about an even deeper level than that?

Of course, it had to be considered that Leonel's body was only at the Fourth Dimension, so Arnold might not have such an affect when facing someone at the Fifth or higher Dimension. But, the potential was striking nonetheless.

'Fascinating...' Leonel's eyes glowed.

"And your Universal Cycles?"

"I mastered them all." Arnold replied simply.

The group of brothers all looked toward Arnold as though he was some sort of monster. Even the best among them, Joel, had only mastered two. When was he planning to tell them that he had already grasped all of them on his own?

Leonel began to laugh beside himself. This was just like Arnold. He didn't present information that wasn't asked for. And, even then, it would depend on how much he liked you. If you weren't a friend of his, he wouldn't even bother to answer a question that had been asked.

This was probably why Arnold wasn't among the seeded geniuses. His organization probably had no idea how powerful he was.

"And have you touched the Heavenly Body Realm?"

Beyond the Four Seasons Realm was the Heavenly Body Realm. Knowing Arnold, even if he did succeed, he wouldn't say a word. So, Leonel decided to purposely ask.

Arnold wasn't the smartest in the room. However, there was something about his straight forward and stoic personality that made him an absolute beast when it came to comprehending such arts. He knew what he wanted and he never overthought things. This was a deadly combination when it came to reaching Realms that often relied on feel...

So, when Arnold gave his answer, Leonel wasn't surprised in the least.

"I have a small grasp of The Meteor."

Leonel exhaled a light breath along with everyone else.

While the Four Seasons Realm was split into concepts of Summer, Winter, Spring and Fall, the Heavenly Body Realm conceptualized four levels of Heavenly Body... The Meteor, The Moon, The Planet and The Stars.

To be within the Fourth Dimension and grasp The Meteor through self comprehension placed Arnold among the best in the Dimensional Verse in terms of Universe Cycle comprehension.

"One more thing, Arnold," Leonel continued with his eyes narrowing slightly, "did you comprehend to supplement your Palms or your Body?"

This was maybe the most important question Leonel could ask. To have comprehended it just for his Palms would be impressive enough. But, if he was like Leonel and could apply Universal Force freely... It was a different matter entirely.

Chapter 844

Arnold blinked, showing the first hints of an expression: confusion. He wasn't sure what Leonel meant by that.

But, this only made sense. Even Leonel hadn't known about this. It could be said that he had randomly stumbled upon it out of luck.

That day when he first learned about Universal Cycles and exited the Camelot Zone to speak to Uncle Montez, he had off handedly said something about applying Universe Force to everything from his spear to his bow to his movement techniques. He hadn't realized it then, but he had already planted a seed for what was to come.

After stepping into the Dimensional Verse in earnest, though, Leonel had come to learn that his thinking was radical. In this part of the Dimensional Verse, at least, no one spoke of Universal Cycles outside of their use with Elements and Weapons.

Due to this, Arnold's scope of comprehension had been unwittingly cut off by the ignorance of those around him, limiting his growth. If he grew too far, it might have even become impossible to reverse at all.

In that case... Leonel knew exactly how Arnold should progress.

Leonel brought out a new table from the Segmented Cube and helped Raj order more food before he cried too many tears. Then, he pressed a finger to Arnold's forehead.

Arnold's expression changed numerous times in the span of just a few seconds. He had never known that Universal Cycles could be comprehended in this way. If it was possible, the boost to his strength wouldn't be small. But, if he wanted to do this, he would have to give up his conception of The Meteor in order to take a step back and rebuild his Four Seasons conceptions.

At the same time, though, Leonel learned something from Arnold as well.

Leonel had never really been trying to progress from the Four Seasons Realm toward the Heavenly Body Realm. That said, he had always subconsciously believed that something was missing. What he hadn't known, though, was that what was missing was so blatantly in his face.

Whenever others used Universal Force, their conceptualizations would cause phenomena to appear in the form of the blazing heat of Summer or the blistering cold of Winter, as two examples. But, whenever Leonel used his own... nothing happened.

Leonel had previously thought that this was because he had transcended the need to do this, but now that he thought about it, that made no sense. If the true form of the Four Seasons Realm had nothing to do with the Four Seasons, then why did it even have such a name to begin with?

It would be one thing if it was only known as such in this corner of the universe, but even his father's dictionary called it the Four Seasons Realm, and Uncle Montez did as well. Obviously, he was missing something important.

Feeling the subtle use of Universal Force Arnold had and even how powerful his conceptualizations were left Leonel in awe.

He realized then that his Universal Force use might have been more powerful than others, but it was ultimately still just a shell. He was at the very beginning of a Realm with endless depths and he hadn't even bothered to take a single step forward. How foolish...

That fear of missing out on something important Leonel had formed two years ago suddenly came back in full force. He realized that he needed to be more diligent and conscientious. He couldn't allow such big holes in his comprehension to continue on for so long. ρ??∪???????

Once Leonel removed his finger from Arnold's forehead, the latter suddenly smiled.

"Huh? Am I seeing things?" Milan rubbed his head. "This block head knows how to smile?"

Arnold swept a gaze over toward Milan, clearly filled with silent disdain.

"You want to go, meat for hands?!"

Arnold once again didn't respond, ignoring Milan completely.

It seems that it was inaccurate to say that Milan and Arnold had a rivalry similar to Franco and Gil. Milan had been losing for years and it seemed he would never turn it around. What kind of rivalry was that?

Leonel chuckled and looked toward the final two, Drake and Franco.

Drake had a top tier marksmanship ability. Unlike Double Shot, his own came with a homing ability.

The Marksmanship Ability Index was split into multiple categories. Drake, though, seemed to gain the abilities from two, making him what was called a Pure Marksman.

The categories were as follows for a Pure Marksman: Sharp, Lock, Curve, Homing, and Marksman.

Sharp gave one a heightened sensitivity to the environment and how it might affect a shot. Lock allowed one to tag an enemy with stronger senses than what one would have in Sharp, giving one at this level a small predictive ability along with the prowess to not lose sight of an enemy within a certain range.

Curve branched the senses of a marksman toward more telekinetic abilities. The difference here is that it relies on communication between the sensory Lock and the marksman. The deviation allowed was very small compared to the next level.

Homing allows for far more freedom and a projectile from a marksman at this level can even follow an enemy through a weaving path for an extended period of time without losing power.

Finally, there was Marksman. Unlike most Ability Indexes, this was not reserved for Savants, though its highest levels were. Marksman allowed near omniscient predictive abilities about what an enemy would do next and how they would react. It was eerily similar to Leonel's own Dream Simulation ability.

At the highest level, reserved for Savants, they could practically see into the future. At the lowest, it was possible to see a few branching paths and their probabilities.

The main difference between Leonel and someone at this level was that the latter would be completely reliant on their eyes, this would not extend to their Soul Force.

At the moment, Drake was doing quite well and had stepped into the lowest levels of Homing within the Fifth Dimension. This was excellent for a Fourth Dimensional existence and Leonel had high hopes for him.

Chapter 845

Finally, there was Franco. He looked toward Leonel with anticipation, hoping that his outcome would be as great as everyone else's.

His ability was quite simple, it was a pure physical boost. However, it wasn't as simple as the most common increases to strength, speed or the like. Rather, it was a holistic upgrade in everything from his senses to his speed to his reaction time.

Franco would probably benefit the most from comprehending all encompassing Universal Force, but Leonel understood that such a thing couldn't be expected. There would be very few people like him and Arnold. He had to be careful with setting the bar too high or else Franco would be the one to suffer most should he fail.

Rather than doing this, Leonel tailored Franco's future path to what he loved.

Franco seemed to think that the broad sword was the coolest weapon that there was, so Leonel allowed him to continue along that path. At the same time, he incorporated a mandatory daily routine for flexibility.

"Cap... You don't really want me to do this... Right?"

Leonel grinned. "What's the matter?"

"I would rather die!"

"Oh come on, it's just a little stretching."

"A little stretching in preparation for what?!" Franco was almost speechless. "I don't swing that way even for you, Cap!"

Leonel's lip twitched. He was just trying to help, how did this become a question of his sexuality. Franco really had an overactive imagination.

“Stop complaining so much, if you want to maximize your ability, your limbs need to be limber. If they aren’t, you’ll only be impeding yourself. Also, be sure to only perform the stretches after weight training. If you do it before, you’ll affect your performance and increase chances of injury. If you do it after, you’ll be able to loosen up tightened muscles and promote more healthy growth.”

“Agggghh! Why couldn’t I get a cool routine like everyone else!”

“What did Cap ask you to do?” Milan asked curiously.

“Fuck you! I’m taking this to the grave!”

Light laughter filled the table as the nine of them talked and chatted. Finally, Leonel felt that it was about time he left.

“... I’m going to give each of you two treasures that suit you. But, you have to remember to only use the more valuable of the two if you’re in a life or death situation. Don’t go around showing off unless you all want to be buried before your time.

“I’m not entirely sure how long I’ll be gone... But I don’t think it will take much time. The person who gave me the map didn’t specify too much, so I assume that since I can read it, I’m strong enough...”

Leonel casually explained some things before he began to Craft. It was clear he had no idea the level of commotion he was about to cause, nor the kind of sparks he was about to light ablaze. ρ??∫???????

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Days later, Leonel found himself on the same small ship he had left behind on a deserted planet. He sat in silence for a long while, seemingly organizing his thoughts. His heartbeat was steady, his blood flowed smoothly, and his breathing had a calming cadence to it.

The items that Aina had left behind sat on his lap without making a single sound. He had already checked, but there was no final message, no apology, and not even an enraged rant about how terrible of a boyfriend he was.

Even if one pried Leonel open to the point of being able to read his mind, one would never guess that he was going through a breakup. Maybe even Leonel's own Dream Simulation wouldn't be able to pick up on this at all.

'I wonder how long dad has been away from mom... At least 18 years, right? Did they talk in that time? Did they miss each other? Why did they separate at all? Was there a good reason? Or was the reason as terrible as this one?'

Leonel wondered... His dad had left him without even a word of goodbye. Well, if his holographic messages were excluded, anyway. Could that be because he was so excited to reunite with his wife? Or was there another reason?

Now that Leonel thought about it, he wasn't even certain that his parents were still together. For all he knew, they were divorced.

'It would be nice if you were here, old man. You really know how to disappear at the worst of times.'

Leonel didn't even bother to try and speak to the dictionary. Although it had his father's voice, it sounded too synthetic. It would piss him off more than it would help him.

Before him sat a split path between Duty and Love. Somehow, Leonel almost knew that this same split road was what had separated his parents for so long. It was a cruel choice, indeed.

Leonel leaned his back into his chair and closed his eyes. Deep, rhythmic breathing filled the quiet ship.

Like this, a lone young man sat upon a desolate planet, being the only living soul within dozens of light years.

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Within the depths of space, a small ship tore through the Fabric of Reality. It rattled and shook, but eventually pierced its way through. And what it saw on the other side was nothing short of maybe the most spectacular scene the three women on board have ever witnessed.

There wasn't just a single planet ahead. Rather, there were three. They slowly rotated around one another as though they were each others' moons while simultaneously having numerous smaller true moons hovering around them.

One planet was covered in deep violet oceans and had light lavender clouds to match. Its continents were endless expanses of silver that twinkled even in the night.

The second planet looked like a golden marble matched with swirls of the whitest white. The clouds formed gorgeous patterns across its body, making it look like a delicately sculpted pastry or a beautiful piece of abstract art.

The last planet was covered in mountains so tall that they protruded like horns out from its surface, through its clouds and past even its atmosphere. These monumental mountains stood proudly as the lush blue oceans and delicate white clouds circled its feet.

Each one of these planets had a unique character to it that could shake one to their core. And this was the first sight these three women saw the moment they stepped into the Sixth Dimension.

Aina gazed out of the window, her red eyes having receded and her expression having become more neutral.

How long had it been...? How long had it been since she saw her father?

Chapter 846

Leonel opened his eyes once more, a pool of calmness resting within their pale violet depths.

Funny enough, what he most struggled with wasn't the emotions themselves, but rather the decision to abandon them or not. With the balance having been even, the choice was left to him. The 'logical' decision was to leave things as status quo. After all, a tie was usually dealt with in that fashion. But, such a decision also meant that he would have to carry this around and he almost... didn't want to.

It was impeding his thought process too much, taking up too much of his time. In the end, Leonel was forced to compartmentalize his distracting thoughts. However, somehow, one mind didn't seem enough to do that. He was forced to assign over a hundred before they were satisfied, and that left him at a 10% deficit he wouldn't normally have.

Still, Leonel paid the price. Anything so that his mind would be clear and free. If he hadn't done this, the impact to his cognitive function would have been even worse.

At least now he could split his mind more than a thousand ways. Since he had gotten by with just a few dozen in the past, if he couldn't wreak havoc with over 900, then he might as well give up all his goals right this moment.

With that done, Leonel took out the piece of polished Memory Ore. It had been with him for years already, but this was only the second time he had it in his hands like this.

It had a gentle oval shape to it and it was such a shimmering silver that Leonel could see even his own reflection with astounding clarity. And yet, it felt rough to the touch.

Leonel was certain that the Memory Ore hadn't felt like this when he first got it. But, now something had changed... After eliminating several possibilities, Leonel realized that it must be that his own sensitivities had evolved.

Not only did Leonel's Tier 9 Metal Body make him far more sensitive to Ores and their refined metals, but the habit Leonel had built in splitting his minds to increase his sensory perception was also coming into play as well.

Leonel realized at the moment that his Internal Sight wouldn't be enough to read this map. Even though he had entered the Fifth Dimension with his Dream Force, it was being weighed down by his true Dimension. He would have to rely on a combination of his Variant Earth Affinity and his Internal Sight to accomplish his goal.

After observing the Memory Ore for a moment longer, Leonel focused and began to read it.

According to Uncle Montez, this Memory Ore was a map. But, Leonel knew that Memory Ore was capable of housing so much information that the computer chips of even 25th century Earth would run out of space before even a dent could be put into it. And that was ALL the computer chips to ever exist and would ever exist. The difference was that exaggerated.

Leonel found it hard to believe that a map would need so much space. And, if it did... How could he ever read it? ρ??∫???

A Memory Ore would be capable of housing a map of the entire universe. But, if this was really what was in here, Leonel might as well give up and choose a different technique to enter the Fourth Dimension with.

How would he even begin to orient himself on such a large map?

Leonel could only hope that while the Memory Ore had such great capacity, only a fraction of it was being used. Maybe it was just a habit of large families and organizations to waste Memory Ore like this? Even on Earth the rich like using precious metals in places they had no business being... like toilets.

What Leonel actually found, though, left him stunned.

‘This isn’t a map... There’s not even any information in here... What is this? A clue? An encryption?’

The image Leonel was seeing was blurry at first. One had to remember how difficult it was to use Memory Ores. It required an incredibly subtle use of Soul Force to disrupt its chemical structure. This disruption could then be decoded as a message by the next individual.

The issue with this, though, was that reading a Memory Ore was like wading through a mine field. If you were too forceful or not careful enough, you could disrupt the chemical structure and thus destroy the information you were trying to read.

Of course, Leonel’s own Dream Force was still too weak to inspire grand changes in such a high level ore, which was ironically why it was still possible for him to do this with little experience. However, even if he caused a small shift... In a map that was meant to point to a position in the vastness of this universe, he could very well end up tens of thousands of light years off course.

So, Leonel was careful. Even with how confident he was in his Dream Force control, he was even more careful than he had to be. He was taking no chances.

The result was that by the time he could see the first layer of information, he was stonewalled by the fact it wasn't information at all. Or... It wasn't exactly information just yet, more accurately.

Information could be stored in the Memory Ore at several levels. The deepest and most difficult level to read was at the near atomic level. The easiest, though, was stored in about the size of a cell on the human which contained about 100 trillion atoms. So, the disparity was clear.

The good news was that this encryption was on the cell level, so Leonel, who had been working with things that size since he began practicing [Dimensional Cleanse] to begin with, could see it clearly.

The bad news, though, was that that was where the familiarity and ease came to a grinding halt.

Still... A smile curled Leonel's lip.

Chapter 847

Encryptions? Puzzles? Codified games? This was what he was best at.

Leonel ignored the first layer of encryptions and sunk deeper. The first layer was on a scale of 100 trillion atoms. The second was on a scale of 10 trillion. The third was on a scale of a trillion and was the final layer.

The interesting thing about the Memory Ore was that it had no blockades toward looking toward a deeper level. However, the deeper one delved, the more convoluted and difficult it would be to pick out the layers, almost as though one was trying to untangle a pair of earphone cords with a single pull.

However, for Leonel, it felt like he was staring down this tangled mess of cords, his eyes flashing as he followed the snaking path of one wire at a time.

'I see... So if I had just stepped in and completed the first encryption layer, I would have ruined the rest of it. At best, I would end up completely off course and never find the later portions of [Dimensional Cleanse]. At worst, I would end up in some blackhole somewhere and never be seen or heard from again.'

Leonel chuckled at his own dark humor.

If there was one thing he loved to do, it was win. But, he was also a softy at heart and often took a backseat so he wouldn't hurt the feelings of others. This led to an odd imbalance where sometimes he would go all out, and sometimes he would seem as though he was just taking a leisurely stroll and couldn't be bothered with the outcome.

But, single player games like this one were different. There was no one to 'hurt' the feelings of here. It was him versus a puzzle some old man had probably had a lot of fun putting together. So, for a moment, he forgot about all his worries.

Leonel had almost made the very same mistake he had just warned himself against. The moment he had seen the first encryption, he had already thought of a solution and it was probably the easiest solution available. But, his instincts told him that things probably shouldn't be so easy.

As intelligent as Leonel was, he was also aware of what was considered difficult for others and what was not. This perspective was incredibly important, especially if he wanted to be a King. He couldn't just simply assign people impossible tasks because he thought they were 'easy enough' to complete.

Luckily, Leonel had good EQ and an objective, almost too systematic, view of the world to pair with it.

That first solution was something everyone but Raj would be able to think of within the first ten minutes of seeing it. And, even Raj might be able to fumble his way through in about five more minutes as long as he didn't give up.

Simply put... the solution was too easy.

So, Leonel grew suspicious and looked deeper. As expected, it was a layered puzzle. Shifts in the first layer impacts the next and subsequent layers.

But, this made perfect sense. The Memory Ore was a whole and solid piece. It had a chemical structure that was entirely interdependent. Of course a change at the beginning would impact the rest.

The irony of it all was that if Leonel went with the first solution, the second layer would untangle in a way that made it even easier to solve. And, should he go with the first solution he thought of for the second layer, the third layer would follow the same pattern.

But, if Leonel then followed suit and completed the first solution for the third layer, the second layer would deform into a more complex form. And if he solved the second layer again, the same would happen to the first.

It would result in a cycle of ever increasing complexity without end.

The good news about accidentally following this path was that, as far as Leonel could tell, it was possible to undo it by backtracking. But, the bad news was that backtracking couldn't be done by simply doing the reverse of what you had done.

Leonel placed down the Memory Ore on his lap and entered his Dream World. With a thought, a replica of the first three layers formed.

The first thing he did was begin to count the number of solutions for the first layer. But, after he got to ten thousand, his lip couldn't help but continuously twitch.

Not only did each subsequent solution become harder to find, but Leonel had a feeling that there truly were an infinite number. If he tried to count them out and choose the best, he would be here for a lifetime.

'What a clever puzzle...'

The three layers floated in space almost like chemical model made of sticks and balls. Every shift, even if it was just in one, interrupted everything else, making the task especially daunting.

At that moment, Leonel's eyes glowed.

‘Every shift interrupts everything else... In that case, why bother starting with the first layer? No, more accurately, there’s no obligation to start there.’

If Leonel looked at each layer individually, they all seemed to have countless solutions. For every solution he thought of for the first layer, he would proceed to the second layer to count its solutions, and then do the same for the third.

The result was what felt like an overload of information. If not for Dream Sculpt to keep track of everything, Leonel would have long since been overwhelmed.

However, what would happen if he ignored the first layer and started with the others instead?

‘Interesting. The second layer still has hundreds of solutions, but it’s far less than the tens of thousands I already found for the first layer. And, better yet, there is a hard cap.’

‘If I ignore the first two layers and start with the third, there are just a few dozen solutions. And, once again, there’s a hard cap...’

Leonel’s eyes glowed, calculations spinning about in his mind at an ungodly speed.

‘There it is. The real solution.’

Leonel’s eyes flashed open, his Dream Force surging into the Memory Ore.

Chapter 848

The moment things clicked into place, Leonel felt that the rough surface of the Memory Ore had suddenly become smooth once again. He smiled lightly, knowing that he had come to the right conclusion.

Now that Leonel thought about it, he probably could have asked the dictionary to do it all for him. On a distant world, Uncle Montez was definitely choking on his drink.

The test of the Memory Ore was meant to be completed individually. The dictionary was definitely something the person who created it wouldn't have taken into account and it would have been nothing short of cheating to make use of it.

Either way, the dictionary might have been able to direct a solution, but the deft control of Dream Force it took to implement it was a different story entirely. There was nothing that it could do about that.

Leonel's mind delved into the Memory Ore once again. This time, however, it felt as though he was witnessing the birth of a gorgeous and clear picture. Compared to the jumbled mess there was before, it felt like Leonel was going from reading the scribbles of a toddler to the master works of a world renowned writer.

Leonel had always thought that a Memory Ore had to be 'read'. But now he knew it was something you experienced and felt.

The best way he would describe it was like ringing a tuning fork. Depending on the size and material, a resonance of sound would be produced. A Memory Ore was like this... But for the mind's eye.

The Memory Ore resonated like it had been rung under the influence of Leonel's Dream Force. The result was a vivid picture being painted in his mind. Leonel realized then that it would always be obvious when he had come to the right conclusion. Only this conclusion could make the Memory Ore sing like this.

Suddenly, Leonel didn't just have a location in mind, but he could feel it.

What was most astonishing, though, was that he didn't get the chance to go toward that location. He couldn't even react before the sparse Force around him began to resonate along with the Memory Ore.

Leonel's eyes hardly had time to widen before all the Force on the small, desolate planet he was on whooshed toward him.

A massive dust storm of red-brown sand, dirt and rock was formed. From above, it looked as though the small planet was forming an eye of its own all around a tiny spaceship barely two meters in length.

Then... It all vanished.

When the dust storm cleared, there was nothing but a small crater left. As for Leonel... He was nowhere to be seen.

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Within the depths of the Sixth Dimension, a small silver ship hung in the skies. Unlike what one would find in the Fifth or Fourth Dimensions, space travel within the Sixth was as common as driving a car was back on 21st Century Earth.

All around, there were ships of all shapes and sizes, following 'lanes' controlled by magical beams of light.

These lanes of light seemed to manifest from nothing and curved in controlled paths as though they had minds of their own. If one observed closely, they even seemed to follow orbital-like patterns of their own, slowly and subtly shifting through the deep skies as they weaved in and out of each other.

Yet, as opposed to the chaos one might expect from such a thing, it had a maddening sort of order to it that everyone involved seemed completely used to.

Some spaceships shot into the distance, leaving the orbit of the three planets. Others carefully changed lanes to reach their desired planet. And, still others like the small ship manned by Yuri, took their time to circle around the sparser regions to enter their desired path.

After a moment, Yuri managed to find a lane toward the planet violet planet with silver lands, following along the congestion. Despite the traffic, she was finally able to relax and allow things to go on autopilot.

As 'in control' as she had pretended to be this whole time, this was the first time she had manned a ship to cross Folds of Reality. Doing such a thing was incredibly dangerous and many died doing so. This was why no one casually shifted between Dimensions if it could be helped.

If one was going to do so, the easiest way would be to use a top quality talisman. At least this way, the process would be smooth. Unfortunately, Yuri hadn't had one.

Yuri her chair back to look toward Aina and Savahn. She nodded to herself when she noticed that Aina was at least more put together now. The only shame was that Aina's gaze had returned to the same coldness it had when she exited her very first Zone, the very eyes she had had when she killed Conrad. If Yuri had to pick a moment, that was the one where her determination was the highest.

Right then, it seemed that Aina was consumed with thoughts of revenge.

"This planet is controlled by the Viola family and shares their namesake. They are a powerful Sixth Dimensional family. To be honest, I don't know how adoptive father is related to them, so I can only say that we should be careful."

Savahn nodded as she stretched her limbs and fingers out one by one. She was still trying to get used to the Sixth Dimension. It wasn't as exaggerated as Yuri made it out to be—at least she didn't feel as weak as a mortal—but it was definitely far heavier than a Fifth Dimensional world. It felt like the gravity was three or four times the norm despite the fact they weren't even on a planet yet.

"Aina." Yuri called out.

"Hm?"

"You can't walk around with that pretty face out like this. The Sixth Dimension is dangerous enough without having to deal with horny men all the time, where this."

Yuri took a mask out of her spatial ring and tossed it over. Aina was speechless, but she could only shake her head at Yuri's teasing.

Still, she put the black mask on. But, at least Yuri also took out two more for herself and Savahn as well.

At that moment, the silver ship broke through the atmosphere of the planet. Down below, a certain man was already waiting.

Chapter 849

A ship docking station wasn't a simple operation. From the inside, it looked more like a honeycomb with several hexagonal compartments. From the outside, it looked like a massive glass dome one could watch the chaos from a distance thanks to.

The honeycomb like parking stations came in various shapes and sizes depending on, obviously, the size of the ship that needed them. Some were permanent and bought out by frequent travellers, merchants or various other companies. But, most were temporary stations that were rented out based on need.

If one was from a family with a decent background, it was more likely than not that that someone would park their ship within their own estate. However, only those of a superior noble standing were allowed to do this.

With so much traffic coming in and out, how could a world like this not have its own laws?

These glass domes that were dotted around the planet at various popular locations weren't just for show. One couldn't just land your ship wherever you pleased. If one wanted to travel around the planet, there were very specific and very few lanes you could take with a spaceship. Should you want more freedom, you would need different permits and also a different kind of vessel to take you as well.

Only the very rich and influential could have exclusive lanes of their own that allowed for more private and less regulated travel.

Unsurprisingly, Yuri allowed the ship's autopilot to follow along with everyone else and toward one of the many honeycomb parking stations. This was the number and location her adoptive father had told her to go toward. And, as expected, before the ship even docked, the three women caught sight of the man.

Aina's heart stopped beating for a moment, her eyes reddening beneath her mask. Even though she thought she had squeezed all the tears her body had left out, seeing her father for the first time in such a long time placed her on the verge of breaking down once again.

Even within the hustle and bustle of the docking station, this man seemed to have carved out a piece of space all to his own. The hem of his robes were unaffected by the whipping winds and ships subconsciously took the long way around him.

He had a head of fiery red hair with such volume that it almost looked like the mane of a lion. It was only accented all the more by his full face of crimson facial hair.

He had a back as broad as a bear's and a chest as wide as a gorilla's. He stood at over seven feet tall, and yet it didn't seem out of place or awkward. He filled out his frame with power and strength that made the wind around him slow by several measures.

His pair of ruby red eyes almost seemed lazy. But given the rest of his appearance, it was like he was giving the world a chance to breathe. If even they had been sharp... Maybe the whole of the docking station would have been frozen in place, unable to go about their day with any sort of ease.

However, what Aina saw wasn't the scary sort of projection, or a stifling, grueling portrayal of what a man could be...

She just saw her father.

She leapt out from the spaceship before it could even settle down.

When Leonel's vision cleared, he found himself still in his small ship, but the surroundings felt completely different.

'What...'

Were Memory Ores meant to be capable of teleporting individuals? From Leonel's understanding, the answer to that question was no. But, if he thought about it a step further than this... Maybe?

The resonance of the Memory Ore when it entered that perfect state was quite resounding. What was a Force Art if not resonance of energy?

Force Arts used various languages written with Force in order to induce specific and practiced reactions in the world at large. Who was to say that a Force Art cleverly hidden within a Memory Ore couldn't produce the same affect?

In fact, in order to draw more permanent Force Arts like Leonel did when he created treasures, didn't he have to use precious ores and materials? What was a Memory Ore if not a precious material? In fact, using it to draw in Force to accomplish this feat may very well have been overkill.

May have been, anyway. Leonel wasn't certain if it was because he had no idea where he was. What he did know, though, was that this was the heaviest pressure he had ever experienced.

Even when Leonel entered a Fifth Dimensional world as a Third Dimensional existence, it had felt no different from a spring breeze. But, the moment his body became aware that it had reappeared in wherever this place was... he had actually had trouble breathing for a moment.

Unlike other ships, Leonel's didn't have windows. He had built it with speed, escape and defense in mind, so how could he leave such an obvious weakness? He had instead used his Internal Sight and the dictionary to make up for this deficiency.

But at the moment, that choice left him blind for the first few seconds he had spent in this mysterious place.

Taking a deep breath, Leonel steeled himself. He couldn't just stay in here forever, right?

Somewhere deep inside, he felt like he needed to see what was out there with his own two eyes. His instinct told him that this was a feeling that had to be experienced in the rawest of forms.

The hatch slowly opened, the compressed air sizzling out in a low, drawn out steam. Leonel couldn't help but take a breath when he saw what was before him.

It was a road. However, this road was formed of sparkling, white motes of light and extended toward what felt like infinity.

It was about ten meters in width and was surrounded by nothing but endless darkness. Leonel didn't need to be a genius to know that if he took one step off, his life would be forfeit.

In the far off distance, a blue star hovered in silence. It was maybe the most gorgeous blue Leonel had ever seen. A wide expanse of skies or a cool, transparent ocean didn't seem capable of measuring up. Maybe only a delicately sculpted and polished sapphire gem could even begin to compare.

The star was caged by an enormous Dyson Sphere Leonel assumed his road of light connected to. It was the sort of picture Leonel could have never thought he would ever see just five years ago...

And with it came a spine tingling alert of danger Leonel had never experienced before.

Chapter 850

Leonel took a cautious step outward, his hair standing on end. However, no matter how he swept his gaze or his Internal Sight, he couldn't catch a wisp of anything. As far as he could tell, there really was nothing but a single expansive road headed toward that beautiful blue star surrounded by a cage of rotating silver.

The Dyson Sphere was something Leonel had only read about in science fiction novels. Even 25th century Earth had never been able to accomplish such a thing.

According to a scientist by the name of Kardashev, civilizations could be separated in strength by their energy resources. At the lowest Type I level, a civilization could be capable of making perfect usage of Nuclear Fusion, the energy of the stars. By this logic, Earth of the 21st century was not yet Type I as it could only use the much less efficient Nuclear Fission.

Beyond the Type I level was the much grander Type II, and that was where the Dyson Sphere came into play. Such a civilization would be able to harness the energy of their star or stars with the use of the cage Leonel was seeing right this very moment.

A Dyson Sphere was a spherical cage that could wrap around an entire star to gather its energy. This particular Dyson Sphere was constructed of numerous silver rings spinning about one another like the rings of a planet... It was a truly fantastical scene.

Of course, as a young man born in the 25th Century, old enough to witness the Metamorphosis, Leonel now knew that while Kardashev's ideas were quite good, they were ultimately wrong because he had no way of knowing about the evolution of Dimensions.

Earth never got the chance to progress beyond Type I. And, at the same time, Type III civilizations beyond Type II might not be necessary considering the ever increasing strength of stars as they progressed through the Dimensions.

This was all to say that a world capable of harnessing a Fourth Dimensional star's power would likely be more powerful than even the Type IV, V, or beyond civilizations that Earth had posited.

This painted a perfect picture for why Leonel was so stunned. After all, he was seeing something that he had only ever 'witnessed' in fictional novels and movies right in front of him. But, none of this explained why his hair was standing on end or why his foot had stopped half way down from stepping out of his space shuttle.

Leonel took deep breaths. Rather than pushing himself forward, he pulled his foot back. He had a feeling that the moment he stepped down, an event would begin that he would have no chance of stopping until he walked to the very end.

In the past two years, Leonel had managed to master every Quasi Bronze and below spear within Spear Domain. It could be said that his comprehension of the spear had reached a godly level amongst those at the Fourth Dimension and even experts at the Fifth. The only shame was that his ability had also grown so powerful that when he fought, he rarely if ever had to lean on this skill at all.

The reason Leonel was remembering back to this now was because during that time, the number of primitive consciousnesses that he had absorbed were almost too numerous to count. With that, the

instinct Leonel had fostered within himself likewise grew to a point where it almost became a second ability of his.

Panda Novel Leonel felt that there was a reason the Spear Domain was constructed like this. It was built on a philosophy that skill, senses and power weren't enough to make a true master of a weapon. What one needed to complete the cycle was an ingrained reaction and experienced instinct to react to even situations one had never seen before. $\rho \int \sqrt{\dots}$

It could be said that Leonel's own philosophy clashed with this. The same way he had chosen the spear out of convenience rather than love like Old Man Hutch had, he didn't like the idea of relying on something so vague. But, at the same time, he was logical enough to understand just how many times this instinct had helped him to this point... That could not be denied.

Leonel closed his eyes and adjusted himself.

When he opened them once more, he began to move. He didn't know why, but amidst a sudden wave of nostalgia, he pulled out the same pair of sweatpants and long-sleeved compression shirt he had worn when he entered his very first Zone.

Compared to back then when it stank to high heaven, it had a faint touch of a lavender scent to it that made it clear that it had been cleaned.

Leonel slipped the grey sweats on and rolled the tight compression shirt over his toned torso. Bending down, he tightened a pair of worn sneakers, his heart feeling lighter and lighter with his every action.

Finally, Leonel slipped on a simple chain necklace that seemed formed of stainless steel. This was a third treasure he had formulated for his teammates and would be the only defensive treasure he wore. But this... Just felt like enough.

Standing upright within his open shuttle, Leonel stretched his limbs.

“Yip! Yip!”

Leonel smiled. Seemingly having sensed the danger, Little Blackstar had come out of the Segmented Cube. The little guy had been obsessed with ordering Candle and Vice around recently.

“I’m going to have to do this one alone, buddy. Don’t worry, I’ll be back soon.”

Little Blackstar blinked, staring into Leonel’s eyes. It took a while, but the little guy soon disappeared as well.

With that, Leonel’s gaze steeled, his ship and the bits and pieces of earth that had been swept up along with it vanishing as his feet made contact with the road of light. At that same moment, a monstrous double sided spear appeared in Leonel’s hands, his body limber and ready.

It didn’t take even a moment for the road to suddenly begin to tremble, a shimmering figure beginning to manifest.

What Leonel didn’t know, though, was that all around, facing the brilliant star from directions so far from him he couldn’t even sense them... Were numerous more youths just like him.