

Descent 881

Chapter 881

Leonel's steps slowed, his mouth shaping into a small 'o' as he sucked in a long breath.

The wind reacted to his action, a vacuum of swirling blue moving about as his chest expanded. Even before he stepped into the range of the two young men before him, his body was filled to the brim with Force.

The two young men looked at one another. Much like Kira, they had been waiting here for a long while. They couldn't exactly be considered as friends and were just acquaintances. However, what they did have was a tacit agreement.

The easiest target here was as bright as day. Who else could it be if not the man who hadn't had a chance to rest?

In a three way battle, the number of variables were too numerous to account for. It was much easier to deal with what might come their way if they only had a single other person to worry about. In the end, the choice was obvious: kill Leonel first.

The two young men slowly rose to their feet.

"... He's in the Fourth Dimension, Rychard."

"All the more reason to get rid of him as soon as possible."

"What are the odds, though, that he managed to meet up with someone weaker than himself during the first round. Something smells fishy."

Rychard's gaze narrowed. Now that he thought about it, making it through round one wasn't the only challenge in getting to this place. There was a month worth of battles to survive through as well. Though

those battles were scaled by your own strength, helping you slowly squeeze out your own potential, by the time you got to this point, strength at the Fifth Dimension was a must.

For most who entered this trial, succeeding in this second round was their goal. The three foundational layers of [Dimensional Cleanse] along with the potential to birth up to Nine Stars was what was most enticing.

As a result of this, it could be said that the first and second rounds were a massive filter. The creator couldn't just allow people a chance just because they wanted one, right? That wasn't how things worked.

But, it was exactly because this was such a great filter that Leonel's being here was so baffling.

The moment Leonel's breath ended, his aura suddenly blazed. His Runes burst to life, a gaseous Star Force emitting out from his hair, skin and even eyes.

It was clear that in the last three months, his [Star Fusion] had grown even more powerful. In fact, it had grown powerful to the point he knew that without opening the Fifth Dimensional Gates of his Metal Synergy Lineage Factor, he didn't stand a chance at using it outside of this world.

His hair became a long, gaseous, almost illusory river of Force. His eyes lost the distinction of its irises, pupils and whites, becoming an orb of blue that encompassed it all. His body was wrapped by a beautiful blue fog, his Runes shining a brighter and brighter diamond blue. ρ??√???????

The pupils of the two young men constricted, but Leonel had already bolted forth. If they could make the deduction that Leonel was the easiest target, how could Leonel not deduce what they were thinking? However, as far as he was concerned, it simply didn't matter.

In this place? Against those of the Fifth Dimension? He was invincible.

Rychard pulled out a long rod. It was pitch black to the point it seemed to warp all the light that hung around it. Just by gazing upon it, one could feel its weight and heft.

The second young man—who went by the name of Higlís—reacted just as quickly, a large hammer appearing with just a flip of his palm.

It only took a single glance for Leonel to tell that these two were well into the Fifth Dimension. In fact, both were at Tier 7. Their strength was undeniable, and yet still several measures beneath Kira. It was clear to Leonel that neither was from a family anywhere near as strong as Kira's. Either that, or their talent simply couldn't match up.

At least... The second was still a possibility until Leonel activated his Spear Domain Lineage Factor, causing his forehead to shimmer with a bright gold amidst all the sparkling blue. The moment he saw that the two before him didn't seem to recognize his Lineage Factor, it became obvious that the former was true.

The only chance these two had was if their teamwork was seamless. Unfortunately...

Leonel appeared before Higlís, his aura blazing. He had swapped a heavy spear into his hands, his momentum causing the air to fizzle and crack as it raced to get out of his way.

His spear descended from above, his swing so forceful that even its sturdy polearm warped.

Higlís' expression was unsightly. This level of strength, he would be hard pressed to find it even in a person a half step from the Sixth Dimension. What the hell was this nonsense?

He had heard of geniuses that were capable of relying on Universal Force to cross Dimensional barriers. But, this was very clearly not Universal Force. In fact, the Universal Force he could sense was at the mere Four Seasons Realm, not nearly enough to cross such a large gap between them.

Higlís had never felt so humiliated in his life. He had always had the utmost confidence in his strength, and yet that was what he was about to lose in?!

**BANG!**

Higlis' expression changed as a weapon cracked and shattered to pieces. He would have bet everything that it would be his own, and yet it was Leonel's own heavy spear that couldn't withstand the impact.

And yet... He didn't even have the time to celebrate. It was right at the moment of his elation that the wall of pressure slammed into him.

His legs bent to the point his back slammed onto the road, the polearm of his hammer was pressed into his chest, threatening to split his body in two, and worse of all, he felt his orifices burst beneath the pressure, his body feeling as though it might implode from the inside out.

## Chapter 882

Higlis violently coughed up several mouthfuls of blood. But, due to the fact he was facing the sky, he nearly choked on it all to death a moment later.

Rychard, who still had his rod brandished, couldn't help but narrowed his eyes, gazing at Leonel who was currently looking at the now bladeless spear in his hand.

Leonel sighed and shook his head. He knew that this heavy spear of his was only at the Quasi Bronze level, but he hadn't expected for just a single blow to leave it in such a state. Luckily, it had lasted just long enough to leave Higlis in a state where he could obviously no longer battle, or else maybe he would have been on the losing end.

Higlis rolled his head to the side, continuing to cough. His blood, which should have pooled on the surface of the light road, was instantly purified, vanishing into thin air without even the slightest puff of smoke.

Such a sight left Leonel sighing. How many people had died on this road, only to be purified away in that exact fashion? There weren't even any lingering markings remaining of what once was.

Leonel gazed down at Higlis. At the moment, the young man had still not begged for a word of mercy. Truth be told, Leonel didn't plan on killing if he didn't have to. It wasn't like they were meeting on a battlefield, they were forced to go head to head for the sake of this technique.

Still, the fact he hadn't gave Leonel a faint amount of respect for him.

With a single movement, Leonel hooked his foot at Higlís' hip and kicked him over the side of the road.

Of course, he had no idea if this was an act of mercy or not. For all he knew, this was Higlís' second attempt and not his first. If it was the second, that would mean that Higlís would die. But, there was nothing that Leonel could do about that. He had no intention of giving up a chance to complete [Dimensional Cleanse] just for the sake of kindness.

He was slowly learning how to balance his morality with what he felt like he had to do. Ultimately, he knew well that if Higlís had the chance, he would have killed him. So, this was the best Leonel could do for such an enemy.

Higlís, obviously, couldn't fight back. But, his gaze seemed to lock onto Leonel in those final moments as though trying to sear the memory of his face into his mind.

Leonel turned his attention toward Rychard. The latter was a well dressed young man with long cascading black hair and deep violet eyes. The rod he held trembled slightly, but it seemed to be more due to its heft than fear. Leonel felt that this young man had probably taken out a weapon beyond his ability to control after he realized just how powerful Leonel was.

With a movement, Leonel put away his heavy spear. He wasn't worried about it being broken since the Spear Domain Heirloom had the ability to repair breaks to spears it had recognized.

It seemed that he had gone a bit overboard. With [Star Fusion: Infusion], the version he had used against Kira, he could have already defeated these two. However, he was using the second version, [Star Fusion: Combustion] at the moment, which was most definitely overkill.

It was unfortunate. He had wanted to test the third version he had come up with, but it seemed that he wouldn't get the chance to this time around.

"May I know your name?" Rychard asked, a smoldering fury hidden within the depths of his eyes.

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He had really needed to succeed here. He just had one step to go, yet such a roadblock had appeared. How could he not be infuriated?

However, he was a person used to setbacks. He had been fighting against his brothers and cousins all his life. After many decades of hard work, he finally managed to get his hands on a map to the [Dimensional Cleanse] trials and had prepared for years for this very moment.

The trouble was that even though this was just his first attempt, who knew when the next round would begin?

Leonel thought that he was alone initially precisely because the trial began the moment he solved his puzzle. So, how could he not think this?

But, the truth of the matter was that this trial would only begin after a certain number of individuals activated the map. Leonel thought the world revolved around him when it was just that he just so happened to be the last to activate his own.

One might think that this was a simple task, but this couldn't have been further from the truth. There were more maps than there were the number of people who could enter the trial at any given time. However, this didn't mean that meeting the quota was simple.

How many were on their first try currently? How many would dare to start up their second trial immediately after the first despite knowing the risks? Wouldn't they take their time to grow much more powerful before trying again?

How many were on their second trial currently? What would happen to their map pieces after they were teleported out of here? Whose hands would it fall into? How long would it take that person to decipher the puzzle?

Most would enter from a safe, secluded place... So who knew how long it would take to find their map fragments again?

With all these variables in place, it took an average of a hundred or so years for the trial to reset itself and begin again. At the shortest, it was a decade. At the longest, it could even take a millennia or several of them.

Leonel had no idea about all of this, or else he would have been in awe of Kira's integrity rather than making fun of her for not keeping her word. At the same time, he would also understand why Rychard was smoldering with unwillingness and rage at this moment.

“My name is Leonel Morales. And you?” Leonel asked politely despite the fact he didn't particularly care.

Rychard frowned. Morales? It felt both familiar and foreign to him for some reason...

“My name is Rychard Viola, let's have a good battle.”

## Chapter 883

The two shot forward simultaneously. Though he knew that it would be overkill, Leonel didn't want to waste another spear. He could tell how powerful Rychard's rod was and it was made of a material that reminded him of Elthor's Chaotic Particle Force.

It had heft, an almost tangible gravitational pull to it, and it seemed like an endless void fashioned into a pole.

However... it didn't seem to matter very much.

Leonel could tell that Rychard's skill was top notch, even beyond his own. Leonel was still refining his Spear Domain and hadn't touched many spears at the Fifth Dimensional level. In addition, he had spent much of the past few months tweaking and refining [Star Fusion] because he knew how important it would be to his combat prowess in his world.

However, though it was faintly beyond him, the gap wasn't enormous. And, while there was a small gap in skill, the gap in power was an almost endless abyss. Rychard's skill wasn't great enough to pin Leonel down and his strength was far too weak to last more than a few dozen exchanges.

After just several minutes, Rychard found himself standing on the edge of the road, his heels not even touching ground anymore.

He continued to glare at Leonel through the striking of their weapons.

In this place, he couldn't make use of even a single percent of his true strength. His body was heavy, his Lineage Factor and ability was sealed away, and to make matters worse this young man he was fighting didn't seem to have any of these limitations.

He could tell that Leonel was holding back for some reason. And, even though he didn't know what that reason was, it only infuriated him more.

He was so close. There was just a single person blocking his path toward securing the Viola family's Heirship for himself. And yet, he had actually run into such a roadblock.

'I should...' Rychard grit his teeth and shook his head.

It wasn't worth it. If he used it now, he would waste it and his intuition told him that it wouldn't fix much of anything. The gap between his current self and Leonel was far too wide. However, he held on so that he could continue to analyze Leonel.

If there were two things he was, it was patient and vengeful. He didn't know if he would ever run into this Leonel Morales again, but when he did, he would pay him back a hundredfold. p??J??????

'He likely has either a Star Force Lineage Factor or ability. It gives him a massive leg up in this place. But, outside, he won't have nearly as much Star Force to work with...'

The only way to match up to this density of Star Force would be to battle near a Star. However, unless you were in the Sixth Dimension, you couldn't even consider battling in space. And, unless you were in



the Seventh, approaching even a Third Dimensional star was asking for death without appropriate protection.

Stars, blackholes and other celestial bodies were among the existences in the Dimensional Verse that were dangerous regardless of their Dimension... Depending on how you looked at it, this could either be an intriguing mystery, completely irrelevant, or something that made little to no sense...

When Rychard found he could no longer hold on, he didn't give Leonel even the chance to kill him. He slipped a foot back, hooking his toes beneath the light road before pushing back with his remaining foot.

His rod spun in his hand as he swung at the bottom of the road with all his might.

Like an arrow out of a canon, he shot into the abyss below, his two flickering violet irises the last things that were visible before he completely vanished.

Leonel didn't react much to this, he hadn't been planning on killing Rychard to begin with. That said, he hadn't been holding back to spare him but rather to focus on his [Star Fusion] and see if there was anything that could be tweaked and fixed.

At that moment, a flood of information entered Leonel's mind, causing him to close his eyes. He took long, steady breaths, his mind assimilating it all very quickly.

Compared to the Fourth Dimension segment, the Fifth Dimensional was a lot more involved. Ironically, though, also compared to the Fourth Dimension, cultivation within the Fifth Dimension was far easier as well—especially for someone like Leonel... Depending on how you looked at it, that is.

Even as early as the Third Dimension, one had to restructure their body on a cellular level. This was a massive leap for anyone. The difficulty was already beyond the understanding of most.

Within the Fourth Dimension, this became even more complicated. Rather than just forming Nodes and the connection between them, one had to essentially form a completely new circulatory system that could connect, fuse and make use of all of their inner organs, muscles and bones.

Back then, just for the sake of adding a Node to his Brain Stem, Leonel had to rearrange the pathways of tens of thousands of his neural cells. Now, one could imagine the level of rearranging that would be necessary for someone to make a new circulatory system for themselves.

However... The Fifth Dimension didn't require any of this. In fact, it could be said that the reformation of the body could be considered to be complete, for now.

The Fifth Dimension was entirely focused on the mind and eliciting growth within it. There were no new cells or nodes to form, one could entirely focus on increasing the size, durability and strength of their Ethereal Glabella. It could even be said that from now on, one's Ethereal Glabella would only become more and more important.

Leonel had been disappointed that his number of minds had only increased to 50 000 after reaching the peak of the Fourth Dimension. This might sound like a lot, but when he already had a thousand at the peak of the Third Dimension, the number seemed too small. How could there only be a 50x difference between the Third and Fourth Dimensions, let alone that being the gap of their Peaks?

But now he understood... The Fifth Dimension would be where the shackles of his mind were truly released.

Chapter 884

Leonel's eyes opened, his gaze narrow.

'I'll be ready soon.'

If there was anything staying in the Third Dimension for so long taught him, it was that there was always far more potential left to squeeze out than he thought.

There was a point in the Third Dimension where he thought that his limit was 60 split minds, only for him to end up with over a thousand.

Of course, this wasn't to say that Leonel planned to spend several more years in the Fourth Dimension. In fact, he planned on breaking through on this road so long as he was forced to. If he wasn't forced to, he would breakthrough the moment he left this place.

His reasoning was simple.

The reason he had been able to go from 60 to a thousand split minds wasn't because he had that much potential to squeeze out but rather because his mind was already in the Fifth Dimension. It had long since been far more ready to reach that level than he had given it credit for. Such a large difference could be explained by his body slowly acclimating and growing stronger within the limitation of the Third Dimension.

Leonel had a feeling that even if he had broken through back when he only had 60 split minds, he would have still gained more than ten thousand after reaching the Peak of the Fourth Dimension.

Still, the reason Leonel wasn't breaking through immediately wasn't for his mind. He felt that no matter what, he would be able to bring it to its full potential. Rather, the reason he was holding back was due to his body.

He had barely tasted Fourth Dimensional Force and he was still acclimating himself to it. His [Star Fusion] and these last three months had sped up the process tremendously, especially the former. He felt it wouldn't be long before he spilled over in the Fifth Dimension much like he had the Fourth.

'I've spent a lot of time here, it's probably time to speed up a bit...'

Leonel shot forward. 'It's interesting, though. I feel like I could tell anyone I want about the Fourth Dimensional layer of [Dimensional Cleanse]. But, for some reason, there's a barrier when it comes to the Fifth...'

Kira had jumped off before Leonel got a chance to call out to her. But, he had wanted to give her the Fourth Dimensional layer at least before she left. He hadn't felt anything stopping him, so he thought it would be the same for all the layers.

And yet, he found that the Fifth Dimensional layer was locked away in his mind with no intentions of allowing him to speak of it. In fact, Leonel got a small headache whenever he tried.

‘Is it because I comprehended the Fourth Dimensional layer on my own...?’

Leonel frowned. When he heard that [Dimensional Cleanse] could be practiced alongside other techniques, he had already had thoughts of passing it down to his brothers. But now, it seemed that things weren’t so simple.

‘... What if I dissect and comprehend the Fifth Dimensional layer on my own, too? Would that be possible?’

Leonel wasn’t sure, honestly. Could you ‘learn’ something you already knew? Leonel felt that there was a subtle difference he might be able to take advantage of.

Of course, what he didn’t seem to realize was just how utterly ridiculous what he was thinking of doing was. Comprehending the Fourth Dimensional layer on your own was shocking enough. But, to even attempt to do so for the Fifth... ρ??∪??????

Suddenly, Leonel’s eyes widened.

He crossed the barrier at which a spirit warrior should have appeared. By now, they were appearing every 20 or so meters, so he had already been prepared to go all out. But, the reality was different from what he expected.

A spirit hadn’t appeared at the 20 meter mark. In fact, even after traveling over a kilometer, he didn’t find one.

When he was about to hit ten kilometers, Leonel’s senses caught onto the faint traces of a barrier. It was the same barrier he sensed whenever he had yet to defeat a spirit and also the same barrier he sensed during his battle with Kira and those two young men from before.

But, this time, there was no spirit warrior.

'A puzzle...?'

Leonel blinked before his lips spread into a wide grin. This was what he was best at.

What he didn't expect, though, was that for the subsequent puzzles to take all 50 000 of his split minds to complete. There was nothing simple about this trial in the slightest.

However, Leonel's speed compared to others at this point was like a night and day switch of before.

By the time he made it to 'round three', there was no one around but himself. He had actually managed to bridge a gap of almost half a year in a single round.

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On a moon covered in red dust and sand, a portal opened up. Slowly, but surely, several figures walked out, each more ravaged and injured than the last.

Even still, many of them could only look toward the back of a particular young woman with reverence clear in their eyes.

Her armor was caked with blood from top to bottom, some of it having yet to completely dry. The grip she had over her battle ax hadn't weakened not even a single measure in all this time. And, even now, her back was straight and true.

The depths of her eyes carried an emotionless cold that was hard to meet with any gaze.

Samson was among the last to come out. In truth, he seemed to be in the worst condition, even having lost an arm. He would have died had it not been for Aina being far stronger than any of them thought. In fact, all of them would have died.

He looked toward her back with a hint of worship. He had never managed to catch a glimpse of her face, but maybe that was for the best. He felt that such a warrior shouldn't be blasphemed in this way just because she was a woman.

'It seems that the Brazingers will be yet another hereditary Vassal family... I will have to tell Rychard about her as soon as possible. The girls by her side aren't bad either... Who would have thought that this would have been a Unique Zone...?'

## Chapter 885

Rychard appeared back within a familiar space, his expression the mark of coldness. Every one of his features seemed to have been etched out of a slab of marble, remaining unmoving for several moments past what was natural.

It was only after half of an hour passed that he took his first breath, expelling all of the rage that had built up within him. Looking down at the map piece in his hand, he stored it within a hidden spatial compartment in his belt, his expression returning to a normal baseline as though nothing had happened.

After another deep breath, he steadied himself completely.

There were still a few years left. He already had a lead amongst all the other potential heirs and this would have just placed him far above them. But, since things had ended like this, he would have to find another way to end this competition for good.

He had still managed to gain the Fourth Dimensional layer. If he combined it with the Third Dimensional layer, should he be lucky enough, he might not have to worry about not having received the Fifth Dimensional layer.

'By now, the others should have found the stars I'm looking for. I'll complete the first two layers first before moving on with the next step of my plan.'

Rychard was about to make a move to communicate with his subordinates covertly, not wanting anyone to know that he had returned just yet, when he realized that he had actually already received a message. Toward this, he couldn't help but raise an eyebrow.

Anyone with the specifications of this talisman knew that he didn't want to be disturbed. The only reason they would dare to reach out to him anyway was if the matter was of the utmost importance.

As expected, Rychard had hardly begun reading into the specifics when his pupils constricted.

'A Unique Zone related to the Silver Empire?!

Even for Rychard who had seen a lot of things in his life, such a thing couldn't help but make his heart skip a beat.

The truth was that Silver Empire Zones were not rare. It might have collapsed long ago, but its territory had been wide and expansive. The number of situations that would have occurred in such a large region to trigger the creation of a Zone into the future was enormous.

However, any Empire of that size, as a form of protection to themselves, would have numerous fail safes against the formation of Zones. Although they wouldn't be able to stop them from being formed, what they could do was twist and distort the connection, making whatever 'gains' one could make in their Zones bordering on useless.

One might wonder what the point of all of this was. But, the answer was plain as long as Leonel's experiences were taken into account.

When Leonel entered the Joan Zone, he had truly stepped foot into medieval France. If he had wanted, he could have learned what most historians would spend a lifetime unearthing just with a few moments of patience.

He was able to fight in wars they could only speculate about, meet Joan of Arc who they could only deify, and he had even shared a building with a King that had died centuries ago. If he had wanted, he could have learned even what underwear Joan wore on a daily basis, it was just that all of this information was meaningless to him as a person from the 25th Century. p??(???????)

However... What if the target in question was an almighty Empire who, at the height of their powers, ruled over several galaxies and stood atop Seventh Dimensional worlds? In that case, wouldn't a single Zone be a gateway to a wealth of information they could only dream about?

The concept was the same for Earth, honestly, depending on the situation. Some conspiracy theorists believed that things like the former Egyptian Empires were formed by aliens, some others even believed in lost cities of gold or mythical cities like Atlantis.

Wouldn't such pivotal events be stored in Zones as well? What sort of secrets might be hidden in the tale and legend of such events?

This ultimately led to a problem.

It was fine if an Empire was already destroyed. But, if these Zones were popping up erratically all over their Empire while they were still reigning, wouldn't these Zones also give their enemies a chance at their secrets?

One might say at this point that it wasn't like Zones were safe havens. After all, if Leonel had wanted to learn the secrets of the French, he would have still had to put his life on the line. This was even more so for an Empire like the Silver Empire.

However, think of this for a moment.

When an Empire is growing, they obviously start at the lowest levels. They might start as a Bronze Organization before becoming a Silver Organization and finally growing to a Gold Organization or Empire like the Silver Empire had.

What if the secret to your success had been with you since the very beginning? What if there was an ability you wanted to hide, a Lineage Factor you wanted to keep secret, an unworldly treasure you didn't want others to know of?

But, as you grow, wouldn't the enemies you had to face also grow stronger? If those enemies targeted Zones where you still had the strength of a Bronze Organization while they had the strength of a Gold one, wouldn't all your secrets be laid bare?



This was exactly why powerful organizations, families, Kingdoms and Empires all chose a completely different path.

By using an unfathomable amount of resources, they were able to distort what one would find in Zones. These distortions made it impossible to tell what was true and what wasn't, leaving their enemies with no information at all...

These Distorted Zones were useless for information and could only be used for training. Unless...

It became a Unique Zone.

## Chapter 886

By definition, Distorted Zones were technically Unique Zones to begin with. Unique Zones were Zones where outside influence changed the initial difficulty. Distorted Zones were Zones warped by outside influences as well, it was just that their difficulty didn't tend to change much at all...

However, there were exceptions to this rule, and that was reserved for Zones formed as the fall of an Empire neared or its formation was nigh.

At these two opposing points in an Empire's history, its impact on the timeline was the greatest, making any attempted distortion very difficult. The result would be a Unique Zones whose difficulty was far and above away what it should have been. Not only would the distortion fail, but the likelihood of death would skyrocket.

Even still, many would clamber at the chance to enter such a Zone, some even more so than Mythological Zones. After all, a Mythological Zone was a random spin of the wheel, there was no telling if you would get a magic system that was powerful or weak. However, a Unique Zone that had been distorted was almost a guaranteed jackpot as long as the Empire was powerful.

By now, Rychard's reaction to it all was more than just a little bit justified. The Silver Empire more than fit the bill for what was worth it. However, he soon calmed himself.

For one, the timeline that Aina and the others had entered had been the Empire's infancy, not near their downfall. Samson had long since said that they would be meeting a young General Fye, that alone spoke for itself.

Though it was possible for the Silver Empire to have grown off the back of some ultra treasure that this Zone would unveil the existence of, the likelihood was small. Most Empires didn't rise like that so Rychard wouldn't put his hopes into such a thing. Many of an Empire's trump cards came later as they accumulated wealth over thousands of years.

The second reason Rychard calmed himself was because of the rules of the Viola family.

He could probably ignore them usually, but Samson had been tasked to do a duty that he was meant to have done. Obviously, this meant that all those who participated were high profile and exactly the people the rules were created for.

Simply put, he couldn't just snatch their gains because he felt like it.

It would be one thing if Samson was the one to accumulate all the wealth of information, but from what he could tell from this recounting, the one to having likely benefited the most was a woman by the name of Aina Brazinger.

Rychard's eyes narrowed.

Samson had left behind a glowing assessment of this woman and he trusted Samson's judgment. She also seemed to be the daughter of Vassal Miel Brazinger, which was good because Miel hadn't chosen a side yet. He seemed to have wanted to stay neutral.

If Rychard could get Aina to his side, wouldn't it be like also having Miel as well? Even if Miel didn't see it this way, what would the other Heirs think?

'This could work. But, geniuses like this are often haughty and she seems to have the right to be. Samson describes her as cold and detached, approaching such a woman would border on impossible.'

Rychard wasn't foolish enough to believe that he could charm his way through such a situation. Even though he was quite confident in himself in this regard, to have such a woman warm up would take years. In fact, in his experience, unless you got to her quite young, it would be almost impossible.

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At the same time, though, depending on the kind of cold and detached she was, things could also be easier.

If she was the prideful type, then Rychard could forget it. But, if she was simply the cold and unfeeling type, she would be easy to convince with logic and reasoning. The latter type of woman wouldn't hesitate to even marry him so long as his pitch was convincing enough to her.

'One step at a time,' Rychard thought as he read the information to himself all over again. 'This 'Yuri' seems like the best bet. She is far more social and open than Aina is.

'Also, this Aina seems obsessed with training as well. For now, I don't need my training resources, giving them to her in exchange for her joining my side might be something she finds easy to accept as well...'

Rychard thought of many plans, all of them he felt were viable. So, he put several into motion.

Once he was finished sending out orders, his gaze flashed with a cold light.

<See if you can find a Leonel Morales for me. He should have either a strong Star Force Lineage Factor or ability. He uses a spear as his main weapon of choice. I also believe that he has a body related ability or Lineage Factor as well. It's likely that he comes from a family as powerful as ours if not more so, so be covert about it>

<Also, you know what to do. There are too many people who know about this Unique Zone. Either shut them up or have them 'succumb' to their injuries>

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Leonel looked around, baffled. There really was no one else around. But, looking at the roads, it seemed that... six people were supposed to meet together? Was this supposed to be another battle like before? Or was everything going to be related to puzzles now?

Leonel was actually quite eager for the Sixth Dimension layer. He had been analysing the Fifth Dimensional Layer for a few weeks now and the more he delved into it, the more fascinating it became.

Practicing the Fifth Dimensional layer, unlike the previous two, was like an act of silent meditation. It all happened in the mind and one's concentration and comprehension of the technique decided how fast it went and how pure the Force you absorbed was.

It was just that Leonel had never expected it to grow so complicated. But, the more and more he observed it, the more he got the feeling that the Fifth Dimensional layer reminded him of something oh so familiar, something so familiar that he practically worked with them everyday.

Force Arts!

## Chapter 887

The first step of the Fifth Dimensional layer was to clear your mind of distracting thoughts. After this was the visualization.

Back on Earth, even in the 25th Century, there were entire sciences based around state of mind and its importance. In order to understand, one only need to look toward stories of mothers lifting cars up and off of their children. In those moments, it wasn't about whether or not they could accomplish it, but rather they had to no matter what... Or else they would lose something precious.

Visualization was a way of artificially allowing a person to reach such a state. There were athletes and pro lifters who could place themselves in the most horrid of situations mentally all the for the sake of gaining that extra boost in strength.

Simply put... The mind was a powerful thing.

That said, the Fifth Dimensional layer didn't take advantage of this in a physical aspect, or, more accurately, not directly. Rather, it allowed the mind to reach the optimal state for large influxes of Force. This would then in turn allow the body to reach a higher state of being by proxy.

The Fifth Dimension could be seen as a process of using the mind to undo the artificial shackles on the body, bringing you to a higher state of being.

However, Leonel couldn't help but feel that the 'visualization' needed to accomplish this was eerily familiar to Force Arts.

Rather than relying on raw emotion or the imagining of terrible events to raise strength, the Fifth Dimensional layer of [Dimensional Cleanse] used a complex series of patterns.

At first, it felt like it was directing you in how to circulate your energy. But, as Leonel layered these patterns atop of one another in his Dream World and it became more and more complex, he realized that it was indeed just one big Force Art.

'Force Arts can be used like this too...?'

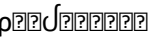
Leonel was stunned. It felt like an all new world was opening up to him and he could hardly believe it. The possibilities seemed endless.

Every time he thought that he had grasped Force Arts, it felt like an all new door would suddenly swing wide open.

First it was Crafting, then it was Mage Arts, and now it was visualizations. None of these three even mentioned the fact the first time Leonel had ever come into contact with Force Arts, it was under the ability of a person who could not only use it to control others, but even to replicate abilities!

Back then, Leonel understood too little about the world to understand just how shocking this was. But, the more he learned, the more he felt that the individual with such an ability was most definitely among maybe the most powerful existences in the Dimensional Verse without a doubt.

'If I combine this concept of visualization with Camelot's magic system...'

Leonel's gaze suddenly felt like two blazing torches. 

Raising your mind to a higher state of being before casting a Mage Art... Just what kind of effect would that have? Would it allow him to cast Mage Arts beyond his capability? Would it allow him to use less Dream Force in exchange for the same power output? What kind of effects would it have on his Knight Arts?

Leonel knew that he was getting far too ahead of himself. This was no longer a simple matter of observing and analyzing the Natural Force Art that encompassed Camelot's magic system, it would also require manipulating and changing it.

Something like that would be difficult to do without a full grasp of Camelot's magic system. And, at least with how things stood now, he was a long way away from that.

'A more realistic goal for now would be to take the next step forward in the Wisdom Branch of my Snowy Star Owl Lineage Factor.'

One had to remember that much of the reason Leonel's mind was so powerful wasn't just because of his ability, but also because he had awakened the Luxnix's family's Wisdom Branch so early on. This had allowed his mind to gain the fortitude of the Fifth Dimension immediately which basically saved him from facing any bottlenecks from the Third to Fifth Dimension in terms of Dream Force.

But now, Leonel was obviously about to reach the limit of the Snowy Star Owl. After all, it had to be remembered that they were a Sixth Dimensional beast. Obviously, its abilities wouldn't be able to help him beyond that cap.

Still, there was no use in lamenting such a thing if Leonel hadn't even reached its peak potential yet. He could worry about not having a Lineage Factor for his mind to rely on when that time came. But, for now, he had to find a way to progress first.

The good news was that Leonel already had a pretty good idea. The evolution paths for the Snowy Star Owl were quite narrow when it came to the Wisdom Branch. Leonel had already faintly touched on the next layer as well...

The Snowy Star Owl's eyes.

When Leonel evoked his Snowy Star Owl Lineage Factor, sometimes its eyes would appear to his back. It didn't take much thinking for him to realize that this only happened when he entered his most calculative states.

Leonel had been confused about this in the past, but after piecing together the intricacies of 'visualization' to the Fifth Dimension... What if the Snowy Star Owl's eyes were intricately tied with this? What would happen if instead of just manifesting those sharp eyes, he imagined and meditated on them...?

'An interesting thought... It might work...'

Leonel lulled his boredom away with countless streams of thoughts, eliminating the useless, lingering around the maybes, and latching onto the most promising.

However, just as he was ready to wait for months like he had done to others, he suddenly sensed the barriers before him vanish.

Leonel was shocked. He didn't have to fight? What was going on...?

Leonel didn't even get the chance to think very much before a flood of information that almost split his skull in two assaulted his mind.

Chapter 888

Leonel frowned deeply. Though he was soon able to spread out the trouble through his more than 50 000 minds, he still felt a slight cold sweat mat his back.

The difference between taking in the Fifth and Sixth Dimensional layers was actually so great. He felt that if he had tried to do this while still in the Third Dimension, his head would have exploded into bits of bones and gore.

He hadn't even realized that there was such a lurking danger in this place. But, he was even more surprised by the fact that there was actually no one around him at all.

What Leonel didn't know was that the reason there were so many roads connecting into one was precisely because it was so rare for many to make it this far. After the first two rounds, things only became more difficult. There weren't a small number of individuals who were forced to give up after reaching a puzzle that was far too difficult for them to complete.

Those on their second attempt who weren't confident in crossing to the third round would definitely leave after getting the Fifth Dimensional layer. As for those on their first attempt, it was rare for them to even clear the second round, let alone making it into the Sixth.

Most would drop out after gathering the first three layers of [Dimensional Cleanse] because they were all aware of one simple fact: Unless you could form at least three Stars between the first three layers, completing the Sixth Dimensional layer and beyond was impossible.

The result of all of this was the second round becoming a major watershed moment where most would drop out.

Usually, this would mean that one would gain an easy pass to the next round. However, the road of puzzles had something different in mind.

When Leonel finally regained his bearings and felt okay to move again, the first puzzle he came across made his lip twitch. The creator was truly a sadistic bastard. How was he supposed to do this?

It had already taken him up to several days to complete the last of the puzzles leading up to round three. But, just at a cursory glance, Leonel could tell that it would take him that long just to make a dent in this one. As for how long it would take him to actually complete it? At least a couple weeks.

'Unless...'



Leonel's gaze sharpened. It had been a long while since he used this. As time passed, his mind grew so powerful that he simply didn't need it. But now, it seemed that he would definitely have to rely on it again.

At that moment, a heavy, ancient aura began to accumulate around Leonel.

Auspicious Air. Ancient Aura. Heavenly Enlightenment...

Whenever Leonel gazed upon the Natural Force Art he had gained from the Force Crystal Mine Eruption, his mind would enter into a state of overdrive that even his ability alone couldn't reach.

Leonel had been worried that the affect it would have would lessen due to the fact it was a Fourth Dimensional existence while he was already in the Fifth, but he was pleasantly surprised to find that this wasn't the case. Though it was less helpful than in the past, it wasn't by an exaggerated amount.

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In fact, Leonel suddenly felt confident.

'I had only completed 99% of it in the past, yet it had this effect. I feel like I can... Finally do it.'

Leonel couldn't help but be excited. He had been stuck at this level for such a long time. Even though he had neglected this Natural Force Art, he had never forgotten just how useful it had been to him in the past. Much of his quick progression could even be assigned to it.

He felt that reaching from 99% to 100% wouldn't just be the change of a single percentage point... It would be an evolution just as whole as crossing a Dimensional barrier.

What kind of benefits would it give him?

It seemed like that bet he made in the hive all those years ago was finally about to pay off big time.

What Leonel didn't know, though, was at this point, there was only a single other person still within the trial with him. This person was also gaining the benefit of not having to fight a single person as he leisurely strolled forward, completing the puzzles with even greater ease than Leonel.

He hummed a small tune, almost carelessly swinging his sword from time to time. But, anyone who looked closely enough would be able to tell that this young man's every stroke was filled with an enigmatic mystery...

He was none other than Amery, the Sword Deity.

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“You've found the information I want?”

Rychard was a bit surprised. He had expected it to take several months to even years to receive information back about that Leonel Morales. After all, the Dimensional Verse was an enormous place, finding a single family, even if it was one as powerful as a Sixth Dimensional one, would be almost impossible—in a short time, anyway. Yet, Samson had come back to him with an answer barely a week later.

At that moment, Rychard was flying in a sleek black space shuttle. It was outfitted with the latest stealth technology. Though it couldn't hide his activity from the old fogies of his family, he didn't need to hide from them. He just needed to keep his movements secret from the other heir candidates.

From his vantage point, he could see the three planets that revolved around one another. In truth, each of these three planets was ruled by a different Sixth Dimensional family. The black and purple one was for their Viola family. The other two, the planet with the mountains that looked like horns and the other that looked like a polished golden marble with swirling white clouds were controlled by two families just as powerful.

As for the history behind this, it was long and complicated. Whenever Rychard saw the three of them like this, he couldn't help but think back to it. After hearing Samson's explanation, though, his gaze couldn't help but narrow.

<I thought it would take a long while too, Young Heir. But, I stumbled upon the truth not long after I started looking>

<That Leonel Morales' name came up in an information network related to a scandal that was buried a long while ago. According to what I could find out, for some reason, the name Leonel Morales was struck out and erased from the Ancestral Lineage Tomes of the Luxnix family>

<The parameters you mentioned fit perfectly, even down to the Star Force related Lineage Factor...>

Rychard suddenly couldn't take his eyes off the golden-white planet even as his ship sped into the distance.

## Chapter 889

The Viola family. The Torra family. The Luxnix family.

The three revolve around one another, maintaining a balance within this region of their Tri Pillar Galaxy. It could be said that they were friends, rivals and enemies all in one, each keeping the other in check but all three being interdependent on one another.

In his wildest dreams, Rychard never thought that he would run into such a matter. In fact, it was even more shocking that such a matter had been hidden from him for so long. The potential implications of such a thing weren't simple at all. If he used it properly, this bit of information could be even more useful to him toward claiming heirship than even the Fifth Dimensional layer of [Dimensional Cleanse] would have been.

Of course, that was also depending on the details surrounding this case as well. However, Rychard felt that he had grasped 90% of the story the instant Samson passed this information on to him.

What was clear and obvious immediately was that Leonel didn't share the Luxnix name. This meant that it was the maternal side of his family. This point alone made a lot of things make sense, especially since it coincided with some things that the Luxnix family hadn't managed to hide so well.

Wasn't such a thing all too common?

Woman of a powerful family falls in love with a weak man. The result is a child out of wedlock that is looked down upon by his family. Ultimately, the man and son are either killed off and chased away, while the woman is locked up under house arrest as a reminder to future generations to not dare to make the same mistake. All the while, the son's name is stricken from the family records as an undying stain on his life and legacy.

Panda novel This story was simple enough and it lined up with quite a few things.

About 50 years ago, the Luxnix family suddenly came out guns blazing with a genius on the level of which the three families had never seen before. The most shocking part was that she was a member of Rychard's generation, so he had personally lost handily at her hands once before. It was the kind of loss that left an untenable mark on his psyche that he hadn't managed to leap over even after all this time.

To make matters worse, back then, he had already been well into his teens while that little girl was barely over 10 years old!

However, that girl also vanished years later without word, rhyme or reason. The Luxnix family seemed to have completely 'forgotten' about her as though she never existed.

If those two timelines were fused into one...

Rychard's eyes suddenly glowed with a fierce light. ρ??∫??????

Would he really get revenge on that little girl in such a way so decades later? He had always wanted to wash that shame away, but he had always meant to do so with his fists. However, that girl had already vanished even after he became so confident in himself.

Rychard's lip curled. What a present, what a present indeed. Pa nda

No vel He had thought that Leonel was a devil come to ruin all of his plans and test his resolve. Who would have known that he was actually a guardian angel come to hand him such a victory on a silver

platter? Not only would he get revenge on a foe of long ago, he just might be able to guarantee this victory for himself.

Rychard thought for several more moments before he suddenly began to write out a detailed message.

<Leak through some covert channels... make sure that Ossan is the first to get his hands on it... set up some extra defenses around the mansion in case of potential retaliation, but don't be too obvious about it... after that fool Ossan acts, take a step back, no matter how juicy the meat looks, ignore it...>

Even as Rychard began to scheme, he had no idea that the story he had deduced couldn't have been further from the truth.

However, there was a reason he didn't bother to wait to see if his deductions would be correct or not... it was because it didn't matter.

The mere fact he could comfortably deduce this at all made it believable. And believable was all he needed.

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Leonel had no idea what was happening so far away, nor did he know what kind of storm such a casual interaction would bring about. In truth, he had already mostly forgotten about Rychard. How big was the universe? How could he ever just assume that he would have such a connection with this person? And, even if he did, how could he know that the young man would actually be petty enough to seek out revenge for something a 10 year old girl had done to him?

Of course, to be fair, Rychard was at most 14 or 15 back then. But, by now, he was a man who was almost 70 years old. At some point, you had to let bygones be bygones, right...?

Unfortunately, Rychard was a petty man who was simultaneously patient to an extreme. And, at the same time, this information was far too useful to him. Even if he wouldn't be able to get revenge at all, he would still do it. In fact, even if not a word of it was true, it would still have the very same effect. That was the beauty of it all.

It didn't matter to him whether the little girl from back then was really Leonel's mother or not. The optics of it all was all he needed.

What Rychard didn't know, though, was that it did, in fact, matter. Because, that little ten year old girl from back then had grown into a powerful woman who met a man by the name of Velasco Morales. Years later, the two birthed a child by the name of Leonel Morales.

And... Leonel Morales happened to love his mother very much.

Chapter 890

BANG!

The aura around Leonel suddenly shifted. Despite the fact he hadn't aged even a single day, the presence he gave off was old and wizened. Short of a long head of white hair, his every movement exuded a scholarly and ancient air.

It took Leonel an entire three days to complete the Natural Force Art, but the result was far outside his expectations.

He suddenly realized at that moment that visualization wasn't new to him in the slightest. Wasn't this Natural Force Art exactly that?

Just gazing upon it rose his mind to an elevated state. Even if it wasn't permanent, with Leonel's mental fortitude, he could sustain it for much longer than most others would be able to. At the same time, as long as he was in this elevated state, he felt like his mental capacity had risen by more than ten times.

Something clicked for Leonel at that moment.

'The Fifth Dimensional layer... I can't describe all of it, but I suddenly feel like if I tried, I could pass down some portions of it without being stopped by that mysterious force...'

Leonel had grasped that subtle difference between knowing and understanding. The moment he crossed that barrier, it felt like the shackles around his knowledge of [Dimensional Cleanse] had loosened once again.

'So that's how it is... The Fifth Dimensional layer is evoking a Natural Force to raise the state of the mind. It's milder than the Natural Force Art I have, but its effects are also more permanent, especially when used over a long period of time...

'I was having some issues drawing a line between my Soul and Dream Force versus what the Fifth Dimension asked of me. After all, both were related to the mind and yet my Dream Force was already at the Fifth Dimension. I thought I might be able to step into the Sixth Dimension immediately. But, it seems like this isn't the case. In fact, the more powerful my mind is, the longer I'll have to spend in the Fifth Dimension, but this will also simultaneously lead to even better benefits from the Realm as well.'

Leonel had, indeed, believed this. After all, if his Metal Body could prime his body for the Fourth Dimension, why couldn't his Wisdom Branch prime his mind? But, the functions were completely different.

In the Fourth Dimension, there was only so much Fourth Dimensional Force could do. In fact, the fact Leonel had had such a massive spike in his body's potential was more related to just how good Vital Star Force was as opposed to it being in thanks to the Fourth Dimension itself.

That said, elevating one's state of mind depended on the initial foundation one was starting with. In addition, one had to remember that the Fifth Dimension might start with the mind, but it still connected back to the body.

With how powerful Leonel's mind was, it had far more potential to release the shackles that might be found holding his body back. However, it was precisely because it was so powerful that Leonel's body would need so much time to adjust.

This wasn't a bad thing. Even though it would take more time, Leonel would also have more steps forward to take compared to anyone else, allowing his growth to be far greater as well.

Awakening his Wisdom Branch so early on had already been a great help to him in the recent years. But, it was only about to get even more useful.

'Let's finish this.'

Leonel's eyes opened, Auspicious Air still hanging around him in a heavy fog. He only had 50 000 or so minds to split, but with its help, he felt more like he had 500 000.

The weeks he thought it would take to complete this puzzle had suddenly been cut to a few hours.  
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Leonel's speed couldn't be compared to the past. He found himself sweeping through puzzle after puzzle, each more complicated than the last, with an ever increasing pace.

Although he couldn't use his Auspicious Air continuously and endlessly, it was for more than long enough to get solid breaks in between.

At the same time, Leonel was realizing that these puzzles themselves weren't so simple either—and that wasn't just about their complexity.

All of these puzzles seemed to be variations on the map puzzle that allowed him to come here. Leonel didn't believe that the creator wasn't creative enough to think of a different format. The best explanation was that this sequence of puzzles wouldn't likely be useful sometime in the future.

Unfortunately, even after completing the Natural Force Art, Leonel got the sinking feeling that he wouldn't be able to reach the end of this road.

The path toward the fourth round was growing in difficulty with every passing second. In fact, the progression of the difficulty was far faster than it had been on the path to the third round.

By now, the puzzles were already down to clusters of just a few billion atoms while the scope was simultaneously growing larger and larger. Every minute change had an exponential affect on the surroundings that was giving Leonel an increasing headache.



‘If things continue like this, I’ll be forced to break into the Fifth Dimension before I even reach the fourth round... But if I am, this how could I ever make it to the fifth...?’

The truth was that Leonel didn’t even know if there was a fifth round at all. A fifth round would imply that [Dimensional Cleanse] had an Eighth Dimensional layer, while a sixth would guarantee a Ninth Dimensional layer.

Due to the silver tablet, Leonel had already been made aware of legends of a Ninth Dimension, but even the dictionary only mentioned the Eighth. And, when it did so, it spoke of the Eighth Dimension exactly like the silver tablet spoke of the Ninth... An ethereal, mythical state that might not exist at all...

Except for the fact the Morales family’s Metal Synergy Lineage Factor also had five rounds.

But the question was, was [Dimensional Cleanse] also so transcendent?

Leonel bit his teeth hard. ‘I can’t continue. I need to breakthrough...’

...

What Leonel didn’t expect, though, was that soon after breaking through and making it to the fourth round, he would find a young man curiously observing him from top to bottom... All before that young man’s gaze landed on the Spear Domain Heirloom on his finger.

“Huh... How interesting... How did such a thing end up in your hands...?”