

Descent 961

Chapter 961

Libli found herself feeling as though she was moving through a swamp. At first, she had thought that Leonel's armor was just a simple change. After all, she could see at a single glance that it was constructed of just a few dozen parts. Compared to the complexity of her Crafts and her Radix Cube, it was sorely lacking. It was almost like comparing night and day.

Due to her innate biases, she had been lax even after it appeared. But, the moment space seemed to solidify, her pupils couldn't help but constrict.

'What is this?'

Her movements slowed by at least half and even though she didn't test it, she felt that even the range of her attacks had been cut by a long measure. If she had to describe it, it was like her sense of distance had been warped, as though one meter was now worth the equivalent of two before.

And yet, while she was suffering through this, Leonel was completely unaffected. In fact, it almost seemed like the reverse to him. For him, one meter had just become half of that. The result was Libli feeling as though she was swimming through water while Leonel was cutting through the air at an unconscious speed.

In a single blink, Leonel was already before Libli, his spear swinging downward with a violent momentum.

Libli still reacted as quickly as she could. Her left arm, the one coated with the more skin-like armor, flashed. Her fingers moved about as though she was forming special seals that her Radix Cube quickly reacted to.

The cube sprung to life, its gears and pumps emitting a wild steam for an instant before it expanded, forming a shield of spinning parts.

BANG!

The shield held strong giving Libli enough time to stretch her arm out to the left. As though she had already predicted exactly what would happen, Leonel's body vanished and appeared right before her fingers, being met with a familiar beam of bronze light.

However, what should have been an instant victory was met by nothing but a cold, heartless gaze. Libli hadn't realized that even as Leonel appeared, the flat of his blade would find a position right below her extended forearm. With just a twist of his wrist, Leonel sent Libli's laser shooting off into the distance, passing well over his shoulder.

Libli's pupils constricted, her right arm whipping toward Leonel and causing the air to shatter and collapse even as barbed bronze chains shot out from their hidden mechanisms, but Leonel had already taken the initiative.

The strength of the spatial lock increased. Even though Libli felt that she was spinning her arm as quickly as she could, it was moving at a snail's pace. The result was the activation of her chains being way off and missing Leonel entirely. PANDA NOVEL

Libli still managed to react quickly, her left hand once again forming several quick seals that turned her shield of gears into a royal sword of bronze that pierced down toward Leonel's neck. At the same time, she didn't bother to retract her chains, instead continuing to swing her arm toward Leonel as she used them as barbed whips.

The dexterity with which Libli used her Crafts couldn't be denied and she seemed to have a quick answer to everything. Unfortunately... It wasn't enough.

Leonel's spear had appeared before her forehead, piercing forward with an unquenchable thirst for blood. Libli could feel her life flashing before her eyes...

At that moment, she suddenly understood. Before the abilities of this armor before her, all her contingency plans and clever hidden traps were meaningless. What good was it all if she wasn't quick enough to use them?

BANG!

In the instant before Libli's head was pierced through, a necklace hanging from her neck automatically activated with its own mechanism, shielding her with swirling lights filled with spinning gears.

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Still, Libli shot into the distance not much unlike her fiancé, her brain shaking within its skull. Even a Fifth Dimensional existence wasn't immune from concussions.

Leonel's gaze narrowed. 'That shield is at least Sixth Dimensional. I can't pierce through that.'

He rolled his wrist. If not for his Divine Armor, he might have shattered his wrist during that pierce.

'Time to go.' Leonel decided.

In the instant before he killed Libli, he had sensed several auras suddenly pounce toward him. It was clear that they had protectors in the shadow but the spatial warping abilities of Leonel's Divine Armor had caught them completely off guard, stopping them from reacting in time.

Leonel couldn't help but be impressed. Their concealment abilities were actually good enough to hide from his senses. But, now that they had exposed themselves in a panic, worried about Libli's safety, it no longer mattered.

Now that he finally had room to breathe, Leonel quickly took out the Segmented Cube and entered its shuttle mode before shooting off into the skies. However, he had barely made it just 20 meters into the air before a rumbling took hold.

Powerful auras converged toward him from all sides, the greatest of which was at Tier 9 of the Fifth Dimension. It seems they had finally caught up.

'Cutting it close...' Leonel thought with a clenched jaw.

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Across the Dimensional Verse, another battle was still taking place. However, it was even more one sided than what had just been experienced.

On one side, there Myghell with just a few beads of sweat falling down his handsome brows. They were so few and scarce that the wind quickly wiped them away, making it seem as though they were never there to begin with.

On the other side, there was a beaten and bloodied Aina. Tears and rips littered her flexible armor, matched well by the bloody holes that ran through her body. Large patches of blood stains littered the grass and trees, all signs of location she had once stood in.

Every time she breathed, a crimson fog would escape her lips. It gave her quite a sinister appearance, but only the two of them knew that this crimson fog was none other than Aina's own vaporized blood. Her heart would have collapsed from beating too hard had she not continuously repaired it.

However, even with all of this being the case, Myghell's eyes were drawn to the chip in Aina's mask. It exposed just a bit of her lower cheek, jaw and lip. But, it was barely enough for Myghell to get an understanding of just how beautiful the woman before him was.

Myghell brandished his thin sword, having been forced to take it out sometime within the last half hour. He could tell that as Aina grew more vicious, she was actually rapidly improving. In fact...

BANG!

Aina's aura shifted once more, slamming through a barrier and spilling over into Tier 4 of the Fifth Dimension.

Myghell shook his head. What difference did that make? Tier 3? Tier 4? To him, even such a watershed step was no different from simply fighting a slightly larger ant.

He swung his sword again, ripping a huge gash from Aina's shoulder to opposite hip. Blood sprayed like a fountain, blooming in the air like a flower.

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Aina coughed violently, blood flowing out from her lips. But, she had hardly finished when she swung down her blade again. It was as though her cough was just instinctive but battle was all she truly cared about. Even if her body was on its last legs, she would still swing again and again.

Myghell's sword snaked forward, attempting to parry it. He added a small bit more strength to his strike, taking into account what he predicted would be her boost in power. However, his strike hadn't even landed before his pupils constricted further.

The moon to Aina's back suddenly increased in size. It gained rivers of blood and land of bones. It held a gravity of its own, shattering the ground beneath their battlefield and causing it to cave in.

Myghell's steps faltered slightly and the pressure Aina's swing placed on his wrist caught him off guard, causing it to fracture.

A light frown finally marred his face. Though indifference was still the greatest 'emotion', this change in him was equivalent to tidal waves in almost anyone else.

Still, what he was most off put by wasn't Aina's power, that alone was still like nothing compared to him. He was still barely using 10% of his strength. What was shocking was Aina's progress. Every time he felt that she had run into a wall, she burst through it.

It wasn't only this, but he felt that she always seemed to rapidly adjust to his battle style. If it wasn't for the fact he didn't need to bring out his true abilities to fight her and was only casually and randomly countering, Myghell had the feeling that this woman might even be in a better situation than she was now. It was a baffling thought indeed, but this woman was definitely a genius of battle.

Suddenly, Myghell's pupils constricted. A trickle of blood fell from his cheek. It was so subtle that he almost hadn't noticed.

'I'm... Injured...?'

"... Blood..."

Aina spoke for the first time. In fact, they were the very first words spoken between them.

She continued to huff out fogs of crimson, her veins having practically been lit on fire. However, on her third huff, her mouth suddenly opened wide, twin canines that glistened with a pearly light reflecting beneath the high moon.

Myghell felt a suction force he couldn't fight back against erupt from his very being. His pupils constricted as he finally unleashed his full strength. But, despite his quick reaction, a globule of blood half the size of his head was still ripped out from him in that instant. PANDA NOVEL

His expression twisted into a deep frown. If he had taken Aina as a serious opponent from the beginning this would have never happened, his Force Skin would have definitely blocked her attempt. But now, he felt that he had been humiliated.

Despite this feeling, though, Myghell quickly calmed, unable to do anything as Aina swallowed his blood entirely. As far as he was concerned, doing this was nothing short of a death sentence. Only he knew what his true power was. Someone else trying to swallow it would only lead down a single road.

Aina couldn't read Myghell's mind and even if she could, she was in a completely berserk state. There was hardly anything she could make sense of at this very moment.

She swallowed the blood whole, instantly feeling as though her throat was being burned through. She shrieked into the skies, causing Myghell to shake his head.

He had taken his time in this battle hoping to understand where that feeling was coming from. But, it seemed she would die before he got his answer.

The truth was that he felt that he might never get an answer to begin with. He had already been fighting this woman for almost half an hour and yet he hadn't gotten any clues. He was already close to losing his patience and just killing her anyway. p??J??????

Myghell was about to stride forward and take what was Aina's corpse away when he suddenly froze again.

Aina's shrieks had suddenly come to a stop, replaced by sobs. The crimson had retreated from her gaze, rationality coming back to her person. Tears she couldn't seem to control fell from her eyes, pooling both beneath and outside of her mask.

Aina's injuries began to rapidly heal. In fact, in the blink of an eye, she had returned to peak condition, something that left Myghell completely stunned. Not only had she survived... Just how high was her Blood Elemental Affinity?!

Aina looked down from the skies, her tear filled gaze locking onto Myghell.

"You're not him... You... Deserve death..."

The irrational words caught Myghell off guard. She had already wanted to kill him before, so why did this feel so much different? It was as though she had been snapped back to reality and hated Myghell for reminding her of something she didn't want to be reminded of.

However, Myghell never got a chance to understand just what was happening or just what his blood reminded Aina of because she directly lost consciousness, her body falling over as tears fell like a stream.

Just when Myghell thought this might be an opportunity to take her away, a towering shadow appeared and slung Aina over his shoulder. His crimson eyes swept over Myghell before he walked by the Heir without a single care. Yet, from start to finish, Myghell didn't dare to do anything and could only watch them leave, his eyes narrowed.

He had finally grasped where that feeling came from.

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The shadow soon made it back to Planet Viola, entering a familiar estate before laying Aina onto her bed.

“Adoptive father.”

Yuri entered the room, laying eyes on Aina.

Miel didn't look back. “Her defenses are the lowest they will ever be. You can do it now.”

“Yes.”

Yuri nodded without resistance, placing a delicate palm on Aina's forehead. This was indeed the best time. A year of patience had finally brought them to this point.

Maybe someone else would have thought that a year ago would have been the ideal time, but Yuri's experience told her that this was the moment Aina's mind was the most solid. Time had proved her right, in these recent months, Aina had shown not an ounce of emotion.

But, the things without any give were also the things most susceptible to shattering. And now, Aina had finally shattered.

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Miel watched in silence as beads of sweat began to fall down Yuri's brow. This matter shouldn't have taken so long but after the curse was mostly lifted, Aina's mental strength had take an impossibly massive leap forward to the point her previous and current power in this aspect could be compared to night and day.

Due to this increase in strength, what Miel had prepared became impossible to use.

Of course, Miel was surprised by the fact his daughter had found a method of dealing with this curse on her own when even he had no way to do so. But, it seemed that even Yuri had no idea how this came about and whenever he asked Aina about it he would receive silence in return.

The relationship between them as father and daughter couldn't be described so simply. They ate in silence with the exception of their clashing elbows. They hardly spoke to one another. And, they would often meet the other with silence even if a question was asked.

Clearly, whatever had helped Aina heal was something she didn't want to talk about. And, at the same time, Miel wasn't a person who would insist on prying into the business of his daughter. She could do as she pleased so long as she also met his standards. As for what those standards were, they could all be described in terms of strength and power. As for anything else, he simply didn't care about them.

"It's ready." Yuri suddenly spoke.

Miel nodded, his palm flipping over to reveal something that made the mansion quake for just a moment before settling back down.

Yuri's gaze locked onto it almost immediately, but just as quickly, she looked away. She felt as though needles were poking into her mind. Each one was several inches long, pressing through her cortex and reaching down toward her brainstem as though to obliterate all that was her.

"Don't try to use your abilities on this. It's beyond our understanding."

Yuri blinked, trying to regain her bearings.

Though Yuri had only displayed her telekinesis in the past, this was just the very tip of her ability. Rather, it could be said that telekinesis was just a branching power gained through her powerful mind.

PANDA
NOVEL

The core of the truth, though... Was that Yuri was not human.

When Yuri's vision cleared, she locked onto the object again, her heart trembling with reverence. The object looked simple, but she knew that anything that could throw her mind into disarray was far from that.

It was a tablet. It resonated with a bronze color and had words scrawled onto its front that Yuri couldn't quite understand, yet somehow felt the power of.

Even in the darkness, it radiated a slight light of its own, shining as though it had its own light source outside of the moon and the stars. Just its presence alone seemed to have been rooted in some ancient past and yet, at the same time, it felt to have a future that extended into infinity.

It left one not knowing whether this was the relic of a past or something that had tumbled through the bounds of time and space to return to this age. For Yuri, someone who was from a race that was especially sensitive to the subtleties of objects—and was ironically quite terrible at doing the same with real people—this feeling left her baffled. ρ??∪???????

“This tablet... adoptive father, this...”

“This is the tablet I used to send you to Earth all those years ago.”

“It can help?”

Yuri was baffled. How could this tablet have such an ability yet also be able to help Aina with her problem? She couldn't quite understand it.

“There's very little I know about this tablet. But, after having it by my side for decades, what I can say with absolute certainty is that it only really has one true ability...”

Yuri listened intently, hanging on Miel's every word. It was very rare for her adoptive father to speak so many words at once. This showed two things. He was definitely both nervous as to whether or not this would really help Aina or not, and, at the same time, he had a healthy respect for this object in his hands.

“... And that ability is that it Breaks Rules. It’s that simple.”

Yuri was stunned. These words sounded exceptionally simple but they made her tremble from head to toe. The headache she received almost made her collapse. In fact, she would have had her adoptive father not caught her.

Miel’s sturdy hand pressed onto Yuri’s shoulder, stabilizing her.

Miel had a lot of faith in this tablet, but he was also apprehensive. If this tablet was so good at breaking rules, why is it that Aina had still had her curse after so long? Clearly, this tablet had its limitations. And, even further, since they had to wait until Aina was so vulnerable, those limitations only became more obvious.

As much reverence as he had for this tablet and it playing such a large role in how he had come so far so quickly, he knew that relying on it completely and solely would only lead to a dead end.

But now... He should be able to help his daughter.

“Over the next few months to maybe years, you will need to stay by Aina’s side no matter what, okay Yuri? As her father, it is inconvenient for me to do the same.

“For all intents and purposes, Aina will become like a blank slate that needs to rebuild itself. If you want her to be the same Aina you know and love today, you need to let her grow and make mistakes on her own.”

“This tablet will erase her memories?” Yuri was shocked, instantly hesitating.

“No. But, it will erase her personality. This is the only way to reverse what they did to my little girl all those years ago. As things are right now, her Lineage Factor is flawed and will always cause her to go Berserk. At the same time, this flaw is stifling her other abilities from shining through as they should while simultaneously slowing her progress.

“This tablet will give her a reset and remove the flaw before allowing her to bloom forth once again. When her personality reawakens, she will be a force that can rule this Dimensional Verse with a fist.”

If Leonel had been there, he would have been stunned into silence. Removal of personality? Didn't this sound eerily similar to what his own silver tablet could do with shadows...?

Chapter 964

Leonel had no idea what was happening so far away, nor did he have any idea that Aina had such a flaw in her Lineage Factor. Though... It should have been obvious. Leonel had fought a small number of Brazinger family members in the past, including one who had his life on the line, but none of them had ever gone berserk like Aina had.

That said, it wasn't quite Leonel's fault that he hadn't realized this problem. Aina had only gone berserk a single time around Leonel and it had been so long ago that he completely forgot.

Of course, what Leonel didn't know was that Aina had purposely not used her Lineage Factor after that moment for fear of putting him in danger again. Even while seeking out the limit of her power, she was willing to handicap herself in this way.

It was impossible to tell how many of such decision's Aina had made for the sake of her love of Leonel since she had known him. It seemed that even as a man with such a sharp mind, he was ultimately still a man and Aina was ultimately still a woman who expected him to read her mind.

That said, maybe of all the women in the world, Aina had the most right to expect something like this of her man considering Leonel's abilities. But, it seemed that Leonel himself was still not quite perfect enough.

Still... Leonel couldn't be worrying about this moment because he was suddenly being assaulted from all sides.

His vessel shook and quaked as he rocketed into the skies, barely dodging beams of light and fire with subtle flicks of his finger.

The more Leonel controlled this ship the more he realized just how important his finger Designation was for it. If he hadn't reached his particular level, controlling it would just be a pipe dream.

The good news was that there was no one with the ability to fly and the ships they did bring were slower than Leonel's own while taking away the flexibility they would normally have. As a result, Leonel was able to make it to the flaw he picked out long ago.

At that moment, though, Leonel suddenly felt as though a gaze had locked onto him, making a cold shiver crawl down the back of his neck. His gaze narrowed, but he kept rocketing forward, shooting through an almost imperceptible gap and vanishing into the depths of space.

'You want to use me, hm?' PANDA NOVEL

Leonel's lip curled. He could tell that whoever had locked onto him definitely had at least one method to stop him, maybe multiple. But, they had chosen not to. Clearly, the only explanation was that he was more useful if he escaped.

Leonel didn't seem to mind in the slightest. They say that the best schemes were ones that the enemy knew of and yet had to walk into anyway. But, whether it was Leonel walking into this trap or Augustus... It remained that time would tell.

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Libli's eyes opened, the images before her gaze blurring. Her head swam and her thoughts felt incoherent. It was clear that she was still suffering the most terrible symptoms of her concussion right this very moment and it took her a bit to regain her bearings.

When she did, her hand shot up to her forehead, a light frown marring her features. p??J??????

Looking around, she found that her head was actually leaning on someone's lap. She didn't know what to say when she realized that it was actually the big oaf Dynmo. He didn't seem to react to her waking up, seemingly finding everything but her face to be interesting to look at.

Libli shook her head. It seemed this fool could be nice sometimes too, but he was still an idiot. She would have woken up long ago had he not insisted on leaving her on the surface of this terrible planet. Couldn't he have carried her away to somewhere cooler?

Forget it, this was about the best she could expect from him anyway.

The relationship between the Radix and Midas family had always been one of matching brains and brawn. Whenever it was that both Clans had one female and one male Heir in a given generation, they would always marry to strengthen relations between the families. It just so happened that Libli and Dynmo were both the Heirs of this generation.

The Radix family and their calculative abilities. The Midas family and their fire control.

Of course, things weren't so simple. Part of what made it so complex was that unique bronze Force that even Leonel couldn't place or name. But, maybe that was the sort of secret only the two families would know.

All that mattered now were their two Heirs had actually lost to a single young man from a fledgling world. It was more than just a little bit embarrassing.

Of course, the two were greatly handicapped on this Disaster World while Leonel seemed to be even stronger here. But, there were no such thing as excuses in the matters of life and death. Today, they had been lucky, but what about next time?

Libli rose and narrowed her eyes.

This was what they had come to this galaxy for. They had already conquered their own galaxy but there were no more growth opportunities left there. If they wanted to reach the next level and enter the stage of the true powerhouses of this universe, these were exactly the challenges they needed.

As for Leonel, she hoped that they would meet him very soon. After all, much like everyone here, they were all eyeing the same world and the same Fold of Reality. Soon enough, so long as Leonel would fight on Earth's side, they would meet on the battlefield once again.

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Days later, Leonel's ship circled around a particular planet before descending. This time, he didn't have any great hassle to go through as this was a world that emphasized the lack of exactly that. It was yet another Merchant Hub with fairly loose restrictions.

For the first time in almost a year, Leonel would meet up with Elthor.

Chapter 965

"Look at you, you're still as pale as ever."

Leonel let loose a laugh, sitting opposite Elthor who was caught off guard by his sudden appearance. Toward such words, Elthor could only be speechless. He might have already taken out his saber for anyone else who had said these words to him, but for some reason he found it quite amusing when Leonel said so.

It wasn't much of a surprise that Elthor's pretty face and seemingly sensitive skin was a sore spot. He wanted to be a General, not a male model and gigolo. Yet, he looked like the slightest bit of sunlight might leave him red the next day. It was a sad plight, indeed.

"You're one to talk, have you seen your hair lately? If it wasn't so short, I'd mistake you for a woman."

Elthor's mouth was just as sharp as his blade, though, so he hardly missed a beat.

Leonel grinned. "Oh this? You don't think it makes me look quite Kingly?"

Elthor snorted. "A King of solely women, maybe."

Even as he said the words, Elthor knew that his retort was quite weak. Unfortunately, he just felt that Leonel's hair quite suited him so it was a bit difficult to lie with a straight face. Annoyed by his failure, he

just looked away, calling for a waitress to order a large sum of food he had every intention of making Leonel pay for.

Leonel laughed, seemingly seeing through Elthor's thoughts.

Though the two hadn't known each other for long and could really only be considered to have had two real interactions, Leonel felt that he had quite a good read on Elthor.

He was a man who wanted to be seen as a man, first and foremost. But, he still had a lot of childish tendencies. PANDA NOVEL

That said, whether one could make him display these tendencies would both be dependent on how much stronger than him you were and just how close to him that you were. If someone was stronger than him and also not someone he recognized as family or friend, he'd be more likely to lash out than retort like he just had.

At that moment, the two men shared a private room in a top-class restaurant. Leonel hadn't really cared where they met, but Elthor insisted that a King should have some standards.

Of course, Elthor also complained about Leonel's choice in clothing, claiming him to be far too casual. But in the end, he was forced to give up and take it one step at a time. It was already enough of a miracle that he got Leonel to come here, the man wouldn't even touch a drink usually.

Clearly, the irony was lost on Elthor. He wanted to be a General, but he was always so concerned with his clothing.

"So, how are things going?" Leonel asked as he was half way through a beast carcass half the size of his body. PANDA NOVEL

"The movements of that woman I told you about are quite weird. She keeps attacking and claiming periphery territories of the Guild but has made any real moves toward the Guild itself. It's almost like she's stringing us along."

“Oh?” Leonel blinked. “Show me on a map.”

Leonel used the projection ability of the dictionary. Usually, he used it to navigate through the Milky Way. But, this was an excellent use as well.

Elthor reached his hand forward, pinching his fingers before spreading them out wide. The result was the 3D plane of stars zooming in toward a certain location.

“We’ve attacked here, here and here. In these months, we’ve fought three major battles. The rest of the time has been spent consolidating territory and securing routes.”

Leonel’s gaze narrowed when he saw these locations. He had already memorized the map of the Guild’s territory that Elthor had sent him previously so he knew exactly where these were and what they represented. But, that was also what made it all so fascinating... None of these territories were very valuable at all.

The best asset here was a lower level Disaster World called Planet Eistea. However, it was quite old and had already reached the end of its potential. Other than being a decent place to gather Lightning Element Ores and Herbs, it wasn’t very useful.

The other two locations were just normal trade routes, asteroid and moon stations, long with planetary hubs. But, the thing about these trade routes was that they led to Fourth Dimensional world and Folds of Reality. Their use in the grand scheme was miniscule at best.

The good news about this was the resistance the Oryx met was minimal while also giving them a chance to learn how to work like a real army instead of a bunch of powerful individuals like they normally did. But, the bad news was that Leonel couldn’t see through to the purpose of this woman.

This wasn’t a feeling Leonel liked. He was normally able to read people quite well, but he had yet to meet this woman nor did he understand her connection or beef with the Milky Way Guild. At the same time, he couldn’t make heads or tails of her actions either.

‘Interesting...’

Leonel continued to look at the map, thinking of several possibilities. But, he realized that he was missing too much to see things on as large a scope as this mysterious woman. The more he thought about it, the more curious he became about just who she was, and the more aware he became of just how little information he had.

Though he had a verbal deal with Apestus and Raylion, there was no telling if they would succeed or, even if they did succeed, just how long would it take them to do so? Unfortunately, that left Leonel flying quite blind.

‘I bet Shield Cross Stars has a lot of information...’

This singular thought began to brew some less than savory thoughts in Leonel’s mind. It seems that he had become addicted to being a madman.

Chapter 966

Elthor quickly caught Leonel up on a lot of things. Eventually, the topic came back to Leonel’s teammates and the matters related to Earth.

Leonel had learned a while ago that Earth had successfully entered the Fifth Dimension and had recalled a lot of individuals as a result. Of course, this had happened while Leonel was within the [Dimensional Cleanse] trial world. So, he hadn’t gotten whatever this message was.

The wrist watch that had followed Leonel for so long had long since been taken off his wrist ever since he was able to control Little Tolly without the use of Force Crafting Gloves. However, Leonel hadn’t destroyed it and just left it within the Segmented Cube. So, after he returned to the Milky Way, he too received the messages.

Ultimately, Leonel had just left his brothers to train and grow as strong as possible in his absence, so returning to Earth wasn’t a bad thing. After all, there was clearly ample opportunity to grow stronger as Silver Zones might begin appearing at any time. However, whether it was smart to enter those Zones as of now was still up in the air.

Regardless, Bronze Zones were an excellent chance. Not only could they hone their skills, but they could still receive rewards from higher level worlds. Even Leonel who was a Bronze Crafter himself—if his spears were ignored—only had a couple Bronze Crafts. So, this was a great opportunity for them.

Now that Leonel didn't have to worry about Aina, at least not immediately, he didn't mind returning to Earth as well. After all, as far as he was concerned, there'd come a day where Earth was the center of his territory. He had to do his part to protect it too, even if it was under the control of his grandfather for now.

“Yes, there's a lot of good opportunities on Earth right now. In fact, they have been contacting me with methods on how to deal with it all.”

“It all?” Leonel was taken aback.

“Yes. The main problem Earth is facing right now isn't the Zones, those have slowed to a lull after the breakthrough. The main issue is the evolution of the oceanic creatures.”

Leonel's gaze narrowed.

Earth never had to deal with much of an Invalid problem because Emperor Fawkes had cruelly chosen to kill over 99% of Earth's population before the Metamorphosis even began. But, there was nothing even he could do about the vast ocean.

In fact, this made Leonel wonder...

Long ago, Earth had gained great enough terraforming technology to fuse the continents into one. He wondered if that was a coincidence or by design... Maybe his grandfather always knew that the ocean would be their greatest obstacle.

Still, something about the movements of the galaxy made Leonel feel that the ocean was still the least of their worries. At the same time, he also wasn't very confident in fighting in the water. At the very least, he had no experience in such a thing...

That said, he had two solutions to this. He could use his Water Domain spears and he could also create some Crafts to counter the ill effects. Either way, he would need to assess the situation first when he returned to Earth. PANDA NOVEL

“I think that’s everything.” Elthor said, exhaling a breath.

Leonel nodded slowly. “And... How receptive do you think they would be to a human leader?”

“From the way I see it, they follow the direction of that woman just fine as long as they see what they’re getting out of it. But, it’s hard to tell... They aren’t subservient. It’s a subtle difference between being employed and being loyal subjects.

“Whether or not they would continue to follow you is impossible to say.”

Leonel nodded in understanding. This might be a bit of a delicate issue and it might be better if he made himself known to them sooner rather than later.

“Alright, here.”

Leonel tossed a spatial ring over to Elthor. But, when he saw what was inside, his eyes almost popped out of his sockets. p??∩??????

“How did you gather so much Urbe Ore?!”

Leonel grinned. “You could say I procured them.”

“...”

Leonel didn’t explain, his smile beaming as he rose to leave.

“Use this to fuel their advancements. Don’t be stingy. I want all of that money gone within the next month.”

“Month?! This is a lifetime worth of money!” Elthor was left speechless.

He was the Prince of a Kingdom, it wasn’t as though he had never seen such wealth before. But, this amount was the equivalent of what his Oryx Kingdom would spend in an entire population of millions in a single year. Yet, Leonel wanted him to use it on 10 000 Oryx in a single month. If he wasn’t a madman, then what was he?

“I’ll replace it soon enough. After all, I have a feeling that the Beast Crystals of Earth’s oceanic creatures are quite rare and valuable, right?”

“This...”

Elthor didn’t know what to say. But, he never had the chance to before Leonel suddenly vanished.

‘... He’s growing more powerful...’

Elthor gripped his fists. He was lagging behind. He needed to raise his effort.

**

In another corner of the galaxy, back on a familiar Planet Luxnix, a young man strolled out from a forest, entering the estate once again.

He looked around at the dead bodies littered around him and shook his head. It was unfortunate that this had happened in this way. Maybe he had been too careless. If he had known that she had come with such backing, he wouldn’t have been so casual about it all. But, he had thought that the Viola family would have been too scared of escalating the situation to this point.

The action of Sixth Dimensional existences means something completely different from just Fifth Dimensional ones.

Still... None of this was what took precedence in Myghell's mind. He glided through the estate, making it to a particular place.

“Yes, elder. I'm just here to meditate for a bit.”

The guarding elders nodded. Of the younger generation, there was only one allowed to casually enter this place.

Myghell descended down a network of tunnels only to find himself standing before an altar. And upon this altar... There was yet another Bronze Tablet.

However, this one was different from the one Miel held. Sitting upon a marble platform, a translation was etched into the pedestals of this one...

‘A union of Light and Darkness will reveal the Twelve Pointed Star.’

The Light character exuded an aura eerily similar to Myghell's own.

As for the Darkness character...

Myghell had finally realized that it reminded him of Aina.

Chapter 967

Myghell stared at these words for a very long time, his eyes eventually closing as he fell into a state of deep meditation.

The Twelve Pointed Star was the most important symbol of the Luxnix family. Despite the fact they called their Lineage Factor the Snowy Star Owl, for some odd reason, within their Ethereal Glabella's, their Light Elemental Embryos manifested exactly as a Twelve Pointed Star would.

Of course, this was a secret no one would know about unless a member of the Luxnix family went out of their way to speak of it. However, even aside from this alone, there were still their Feather Sword warriors who used this star as a symbol of their prestige.

There was no doubting that the Twelve Pointed Star was of immense importance to the Luxnix family and their strength. However, almost no one understood its significance and even less understood just what the origins of it was.

Myghell, though, understood that everything originated with this tablet. If it didn't exist, maybe there would be no Luxnix family today. And now, after all these years, he had finally come to grasp a clue about just what all of this could mean.

Despite the calm look on Myghell's face currently, he was doing his best to stop his seething blood.

Since his youth, Myghell had always been extraordinarily talented. However, he was limited by two major factors.

The first was that he was born in a world capped at Sixth Dimensional potential. Though Planet Luxnix was at a Peak amongst Sixth Dimensional worlds, it was ultimately still that. Compared to Seventh Dimensional worlds, it was still too lacking. And, compared to Seventh Dimensional worlds nearing the Eighth Dimension like the Morales family world, it might as well have been an ant by the roadside.

Regardless of his talent, this would always be a limiter.

The second factor that would always limit him was his Sixth Dimensional Lineage Factor. If he truly wanted to progress, there would come a time where his Snowy Star Owl Lineage Factor became not only useless to him, but even a hindrance.

Luckily, he was born with another talent that could mitigate this somewhat, but these would always be two anchors on his talent, anchors he could never get rid of... PANDA NOVEL

Of course, there was always the chance that this wasn't a prophecy and was rather a helpful clue. After all, if this tablet was what bestowed the Twelve Pointed Star upon them, then it was more of a guider than a prophesier of the future, right?

This was also a possibility that Myghell had thought of. But, he still decided on patience.

He would calmly observe things for now. If he was right, then things should organically fall into place. On the other hand, if it was a clue, he would act accordingly to the circumstances.

For now, he only had one real goal: to ensure that Aina did not die. It was that simple. This was why he hadn't alerted his family elders about the appearance of Miel and gave no resistance.

In addition to this, he chose not to tell anyone about his findings. If this was a prophecy, it was best that the maximum number of individuals acted as naturally as possible. Only if it turned out not to be one would he mobilize his family members should something beyond his control occur.

After organizing his thoughts, Myghell sank into a true meditation, motes of light slowly accumulating around him.

In the presence of this tablet, it felt like all bottlenecks would be loosened and the speed of his practice would accelerate many times over. Since he was already here, he might as well take advantage and also grasp the chance to replenish his stamina.

Myghell could feel his lane toward the Sixth Dimension spreading open and wide. If he wanted to, he could step through it at any time, but for some reason he had always held back from doing so, continuously consolidating himself within the Fifth.

Maybe only a select few number of individuals would know exactly why...

Myghell gazed longingly at the path ahead before suppressing it and focusing on rejuvenating himself.

As his senses swept through his body, checking for any weaknesses and focusing on improving, he swept over a particular location above his right hip flickering with the lights of a familiar Innate Node.

Chapter 968

Beads of sweat fell down Miel's brow as he channeled the strength of the Bronze Tablet. His strength seeped outward, pouring into Aina's body and delicately erasing much of what was her.

Yuri stood to the side, feeling very nervous. Before, she hadn't been aware of just how important this was for Aina, at least not until it was described for her by her adoptive father.

The truth of the matter was that though the Brazinger family was quite disgusting in their toting of eugenics and the importance of bloodline purity, there was a method to their madness—keyword being madness.

The Brazinger family's Lineage Factor was known as the Berserk God Lineage Factor—this was its true name. What had been displayed on Earth was nothing more than the tip of an iceberg that branch family members would be held to. However, just how berserk you were depended on the purity of your bloodline. For Aina, who was only half Brazinger on top of not receiving any of the family's special rituals or training, her Lineage Factor was far more Berserk than it was God.

This Lineage Factor was objectively powerful. In its purest form, it was a Lineage Factor that many would scratch and claw to have.

Its abilities could be broken down into a few aspects.

The first was overwhelming strength. Every single muscle fiber of a Brazinger family member's was worth more than that of another individual, even most strength Lineage Factors. Its potential for explosion and power was simply beyond reason.

The second aspect was Battle Sense. The instincts of a Berserk God existed on a separate plane all to its own. Their ability to adapt and change their combat style to counter their enemies would make it feel as though they were all combat geniuses. What Leonel had to calculate, they did on instinct and at a much faster speed on top of that depending on how pure their bloodlines were.

The third aspect was Rebirth. After experiencing terrible injury, a long fought battle, or masochistic training, upon healing, a Berserk God would have the strength of their bodies increase proportional to the weight of what they experienced.

The fourth and final aspect was an affinity for all weapons. Whether it was a sword, a battle ax, a spear, even fists and kicks, a Berserk God wasn't restricted to any weapon or martial art. They were geniuses of battle, existences created to wreak havoc on a battlefield.

This was the true ability of the Brazinger family. The only person that Leonel had ever met who might have the true Berserk God Lineage Factor was Simeon. However, he was always focused on his beast taming and genetic manipulation abilities and Leonel had never seen him fight in hand to hand combat.

PANDA NOVEL

Even now, it seemed that the Brazinger family and maybe even the other three families had hidden themselves very deeply.

Knowing this, it was easy to see that what Aina experienced was an extremely perverted interpretation of the Berserk God. She only received some of these abilities in part and without clear or purposeful direction to any of them.

But... This wasn't all her fault.

How was it that despite being half Morales and only half Luxnix, Leonel received their Lineage Factors in full while Aina did not? The answer was simple: It was done on purpose.

The curse Aina faced was just the tip of the iceberg and also acted as a cruel agitator on her mental state, warping her emotions and her reality. How could anyone be completely sane after experiencing years of torturous itching and peaks and valleys of horrid pain? ρ??∪???

It was all done on purpose to make Aina fall further and further into depravity. The fact she had even a semblance of humanity left in her was a testament to just how mentally strong she was to begin with.

The Brazinger family Lineage Factor was altered so that when met with interference with other Bloodlines, it would deviate from its predestined path. The result of this would be a deviation in the mind state that resulted in over-sensitivity.

In the beginning, this over-sensitivity would only be minor.

For example, it might be as benign as suddenly becoming greatly embarrassed when a boy you liked confessed to you... even to the point of running away with a blushing face despite the fact you were normally an assertive and confident woman.

However, as time progressed, it would steamroll and increase to the point the smallest things became enormous and the tiniest insecurities became tall mountains.

Eventually, just the most minor activation of their Bloodline would result in this person going Berserk, overdrafting their bodies, and, ultimately, dying. It could be said that if not for Aina's self-healing abilities, she would have long since fallen for the plot of this ancestor of the Brazinger family... It could even be said that due to meeting Leonel and allowing herself to fall for him, Aina had delayed the strongest onset of these side effects for as long as she could...

However, this tablet provided a unique opportunity to reset the damage done and undo this second curse the Brazinger family had placed on Aina.

When the Tablet erased a personality from a shadow, there was no living entity to cause the rebirth of that personality. However, Aina was different. She was a person with a propensity toward a certain disposition. As long as she was given time, she would become the very same Aina once again.

This was why Miel had emphasized that Yuri should follow Aina around, but that she should also allow Aina to grow and make mistakes on her own. Only in this way would Aina grow to be her most authentic self.

The story that wasn't told, though, was that it had taken Miel decades to accumulate the amount of energy he was currently giving to Aina now. As stoic as he was... As unemotional and silent as he was... As harsh as he was... The one thing that would always be true is that he loved his daughter.

That said, there was one matter that would be grating to most people.

Just who had power enough to alter the course of a Lineage Factor in this way? Who could place a curse that followed a Bloodline like a reaper, gate keeping it for generations to come...?

If Leonel had been there, especially as he watched the pieces of a Force Art break and shatter, floating above Aina's head, his Dreamscape would have sparked with several arcs of lightning.

And... When his Dreamscape settled down... he would suddenly think back to a man he had learned of in the Joan Zone... A man they called God... A man capable of copying the abilities of people into Force Arts.

Aina's eyes suddenly shot open.

Chapter 969

Earth was in a completely different state than the last time Leonel had been here. Where there had once been rubble and debris there were nothing but large stretches of greenery and nature. Whatever wreckage the Metamorphosis had left behind had long since been cleaned up, turning Earth from a concrete giant to a world that placed great emphasis on its natural beauty, something Earth, especially in comparison to other worlds, had a lot of.

The Ascension Empire had taken advantage of the boon between the Fourth and eventual Fifth Dimensions to cause this great change. In this span of time, Earth had experienced many Force Eruptions and natural phenomena of the like that greatly accelerated its growth.

Thanks to this, with just a small bit of help from humans who moved all the useless metals and artificial bricks out of the way, Earth was able to flourish in the way it was always meant to.

Like this, the only marks of old Earth and its technologies were the nine major populace hubs of Earth, one to each of the nine Provinces. This included places like the Imperial Capital and the Royal Blue Fort.

Outside of these cities and forts, there were only large expanses of greenery. There were trees that already rose up hundreds of meters into the air, there were precious herbs and grasses growing around every corner, and many beasts had been released from their experimental islands to populate and grow. Some of these beasts became food for humans, some became sparring partners, and others became a core part of maintaining the balance of Earth's ecosystem.

Just from this alone, the talent of Earth and its world was on clear and full display. It looked as though these resources had been growing for thousands, even tens of thousands of years. But, the truth was that these beautiful displays of nature had only been present for just a handful of years.

Still, these changes were absolutely nothing compared to Earth's two moons. The original still retained the name Moon while the second was dubbed Avalon by Emperor Fawkes.

Leonel knew little of the Moon and its colonies, but they were every bit as part of Earth and had also faced Terrain's attack those years ago.

Before, the Moon had to be terraformed to maintain a population. And, even then, this population was forced to stay within a climate controlled dome. PANDA NOVEL

However, after the Fourth Dimension Descended, things began to change, allowing for the dome to be done away with and for the Moon to begin to gain characteristics of a world all to its own. This was in thanks to Earth's Fold of Reality expanding and beginning to encompass larger and larger regions.

Now, the Moon had unique herbs that even Earth itself couldn't grow. And, though it didn't have large bodies of water or oceans, it had begun to have its own self-sustaining lakes in addition to its own true atmosphere.

The people of the Moon also seemed to take a unique evolution path compared to the people of Earth. Though they still looked human, they tended to be taller, more fragile, and had stronger minds comparatively speaking.

Likewise, Avalon also underwent great changes. The Kingdom of Camelot was no more and was rather taken over by Secretary Marquis Pendragon. PANDA NOVEL

The more primitive side of Camelot had been washed away in favor of more modern comprehensions. In addition, the greatest benefit Camelot brought—its population—was spread out and divided amongst the nine Provinces of Earth.

Ultimately, the people of Camelot weren't alien to the people of Earth and were easily accepted. After all, these were people created and based on themselves, how could they not assimilate well?

It could be said that the only real growing pain were the somewhat outdated and backward ideas of the people of Camelot. They had yet to learn of the progressivism of modern times. But, ironically, it was the retreat of Earth from a technologically central ideal that helped this assimilation work all the more.

In a lot of ways, the people of Earth felt like they were going backwards while the people of Camelot felt that they were being accelerated forward. This allowed the two groups to meet in the middle and reach a happy medium.

...

It was amidst all these changes that Leonel returned to Earth. Hovering high above the sky, how could he not be shocked? He hadn't expected such large, sweeping changes. In fact, he partly believed that he would come back to find the same dilapidated buildings.

At this moment, he felt like he had grasped a difference between his grandfather and him. Leonel believed that he was quite forward thinking and quick on his feet, even not hesitating to spend what an entire Kingdom would in a year just for a single month of progress. However, it was clear that working harder didn't trump working smarter.

In just a handful of years, not even quite year three, Earth's entire face had changed. And, Leonel was certain that his grandfather had planned it to be this way from the very beginning. There wasn't a single step that he had taken that was out of line of this goal.

Now, despite being a fledgling world, Earth was already in the Fifth Dimension, had no human Invalids to worry about, and had conquered all of their land without trouble.

Leonel had naively thought that while his grandfather was struggling with getting Earth back on track that he'd be able to make some headway toward catching up, but he felt more wrong than he ever had before.

Now that he was more sensitive to certain things, upon stepping onto his grandfather's territory, he felt a suffocating aura from all sides. He had to try twice as hard just to take in half the oxygen he normally would.

He didn't need to look around to understand that his grandfather already knew that he was here and that he was back... No, it could be said that nothing that happened within Earth's territory or Fold of Reality would escape his notice.

His eyes were everywhere.

Leonel's lip suddenly curled beside himself, his gaze turning toward the Imperial Capital before he shot in that direction.

Chapter 970

"HALT!"

Each one of the auras were blazing, several guards sent piercing gazes toward the air. Though they too wore golden armor, it was nothing like the superfluous garbage the guard of the Force Crafting Guild wore. Each one had an undeniable momentum that almost threatened to peel Leonel's skin back.

However, as though he hadn't heard a single word, Leonel descended from the skies, landing at the very top of the ancient tree structure that was the Imperial Capital.

Leonel strode forward, his pale violet hair fluttering and his hands in his pockets. A light smile hung from his face.

"You're not going to attack me, are you?"

“Prince Leonel! Flying in the Imperial Capital is an offense even for you.”

A hardnosed man stood forward, his demeanor unchanged in the face of Leonel’s smile.

“Oh? And why is that?”

Leonel’s steps paused.

At the moment, he stood at the base of the Imperial Palace. A large staircase of white marble and gold lay in his wake. Lining these stairs, warriors that even gave Leonel pressure stood. Despite being in the Fourth Dimension, Leonel felt that their combat experience was far beyond him. In addition, he could tell that as Earth continued to evolve, so too did their abilities. It likely wouldn’t be long before the base strength of everyone on Earth was of the Fifth Dimension.

This was the true fearsome ability of a world with so much talent.

Leonel hadn’t experienced it before since he was away from Earth, but after returning, he felt that his ability was being nurtured as well. As Earth’s Fold of Reality grew, there would eventually come a point where Leonel wouldn’t have to return in order to take part in these benefits.

He felt quite refreshed at this moment, completely unlike his demeanor the last time he had come here.

“You will be seen as a threat to be immediately taken down. Since you have broken the rules, we will have to detain you.”

“Ah, and that’s the case even if I’m not a real threat?” PANDA NOVEL

“Yes.”

The man answered seriously, not wavering in the slightest. He seemed unmoved by Leonel’s status, his smile, his charisma and even Leonel’s strength. None of it mattered.

“The former makes sense. As for the latter, you aren’t worthy of doing such a thing yet.”

Leonel’s smile brightened. “My grandfather owes me almost 22 years worth of birthday presents, I have to seek my reimbursement somehow. And, as to whether I’m worthy or not, that doesn’t matter much to me either. I will issue it either way.

“One day, Earth will be mine.”

Though Leonel said things like this, there was a hint of coldness in his eyes that made his uncle’s gaze narrow. If there was anything Leonel didn’t like, it was not being Respected. His arrogance had been buried deep within his bones for a very long time because there was nowhere for it to flourish on Earth. There was nothing worth him rising to the occasion of.

But now, things were different. He not only had a goal, there was actually someone who deemed to believe that he wouldn’t accomplish it. Though that wasn’t enough to tear into his Reverse Scale, it was definitely enough to leave an itch on it.

The moment Leonel said these words, the halberds of the Imperial Guards all rose in unison, their blades carving out a sharp path toward Leonel.

Yet, even as he faced a torrential rain of Force that could obliterate a city with just its momentum alone, Leonel remained unmoved.

At that moment, a roar that seemed to originate from the very depths of his heart manifested. Leonel didn’t even open his mouth, and yet it swallowed the momentum of the Imperial Guards and the Imperial Palace whole, making the white gold hair of his uncle whip backward as though hit with a wall of wind.

It felt like Leonel had suddenly become ten times his original size, his body looming over the Capital and his momentum causing the Earth to quake. Mists of violet fog rose around his body, a sight alone that made his uncle’s pupils constrict into pinholes.

The roar drowned all things out, even their thoughts. It wouldn't be until a long while later that they came to understand that it wasn't a roar they had heard, but rather the will of Leonel's heart.

Without another word, he turned and began to walk away before coming to a sudden pause.

“Oh right. I used my Imperial Pendant on claiming White City, if I recall correctly. I hope no one has stretched their hands toward my things.”

With that, Leonel flickered and vanished.