

Extract 791

Chapter 791 What Now?

Michael was in a good mood. He learned a lot about Major Seals, the Nest, which included how the Nest worked, how much stronger everyone was, and what they've been doing in the last few centuries. The newly acquired knowledge about Curses was almost as pleasant as the food. But only almost.

The food was extraordinary. Michael couldn't remember having eaten so well in the last 20 years.

'They should have bribed me with that food. This is insane.' He thought, almost laughing aloud when he recognized how easily he was influenced by good food.

Unfortunately, his mood was tarnished by the appearance of a familiar man. In fact, calling that man familiar was a big stretch. Michael didn't really know that man anymore. It was just that he looked the same as a decade ago. He hadn't changed.

Peter Fang, his father, appeared in the cafeteria.

He was alone and walked to the cooks, who didn't care all too much about his presence. Michael had only been talking to the cooks for a few minutes but was already closer to them than his father.

Peter Fang froze upon seeing Eren, Selena, and Eevee seated around Michael. Michael had his hair bound back to a man bun since it interrupted his meal. His hair was longer than ever and threatened to fall into the piles of dishes. Despite the different hairstyle, Michael doubted that he looked different. Well, maybe he did.

Peter Fang was unlikely to recognize him, given that Michael didn't look like the child his father last saw. Michael grew up well. Despite knowing that his father was unlikely to recognize him, Michael froze in his tracks.

Peter Fang briefly locked eyes with Michael and...grit his teeth. He spun around, got his food, and sat down in a chair far away from Michael and the others. Nobody paid special attention to Peter Fang. He ate alone and seemed to have forgotten about the world around him.

Michael could have gotten up to approach his father, but he didn't move. He was not going to take the first step toward his father. Michael did not need a father anymore.

[You are petty. Well, not that I care.] Danny murmured, his voice oddly neutral.

'Father knows that we are at the Nest. He could have searched for us.'

[Are you sure you're doing the right thing?] Danny asked, also not certain what to think about their father.

'Let's say he recognized me. Why would he grit his teeth like that? He could have approached me. I can't really think of a reason for father to glare at me if he didn't recognize me, either. That's weird, isn't it?' Michael asked his brother, trying to control his emotions.

His emotions were still a bit messy, but controlling them was fairly easy now that he was a Higher Lifeform. That was probably one of the best changes. He could control his emotions at will—somewhat.

[I'm not sure either. Dad has always been a weird one. He was obsessed with Hesta. I never understood his obsession, but given that father was our grandfather's disciple and everyone considered Hesta's Curse something powerful, he might have been obsessed with her, thinking he could earn some favors from the Nest.]

[That's a little bit far-fetched, but father doesn't have a Curse. Maybe he was jealous, which turned into obsession? Not that I would understand that. Curses are annoying, and I'm glad that you got rid of mine.]

Michael smiled lightly, a little forced, and turned back to his meal. He was still not done eating.

'Putting our father aside, where have you been? Why haven't you said anything until now? Is everything alright?'

Danny chuckled lightly, [You worry too much, brother. Your High Ascension changed a lot more than you can imagine. The Essence of Origin Sap spread through the Soul Sphere and stimulated your Soultrait

Symbols. Soul Grimoire expanded drastically. The stimulation affected my Living Soul as well. I'm stronger than before. In fact, I can probably leave the Soul Grimoire and possess some objects at this point. Not that I want that, but I could.]

[I can probably possess a somewhat compatible vessel as well now. I don't even need a perfect vessel. A slightly compatible one would be enough, I believe. Of course, an ideal vessel would be... perfect.]

"That's amazing!" Michael exclaimed, attracting the attention of the others. His cheeks flushed, and he cleared his throat.

"I was just talking to my brother. Sorry about that."

'You are ready. That's great! Now, I only need to prepare your vessel. That is so much better than expected!'

Michael had a lot more to say to his brother and wished to check the changes the Origin Sap's Essence stimulated in his Soul Sphere, but Selena interrupted him.

"The Living Soul. I remember the reports about your brother," Selena spoke loud enough to Michael, forcing him to pay attention to her. Her crimson eyes stared intensely at him, which made it impossible to ignore the Nest Leader. In the first place, it was a stupid idea to ignore her.

"What are we doing now?" Michael asked, "Can I do whatever I want, or do I have to register somewhere? Or am I already registered? I want to experiment a little bit with my power. I haven't gotten a good grasp of my powers, and it seems like a lot more than I've expected has changed. I'll have to return to the Origin Expanse to talk to some people, take care of my territory, call someone, and so on as well. Are there some lectures I'll have to attend or am I free to move around as I please?"

Michael was totally fine with staying in the Nest. There were dozens of Divine Lifeforms in the Nest. Eren and Selena were incredibly powerful. They could teach him a lot, and they certainly had a lot more resources to share than the Tritan Alliance. Michael could probably advance to Tier-5 and higher ranks in no time with their connections. That was exactly what Michael needed. The best teachers and resources. The Supreme Human Alliance wasn't going to wait for him to grow stronger.

"You look excited," Selena chuckled, "But there is also a fiery flame in your eyes. That's cute."

She got up from the chair and snapped lightly with her fingers. The sound barely resounded across the tables until they reached the trays. The trays disappeared before Michael could see what was going on.

"How strong do you think you are?" Selena asked, grinning from one ear to another, "How valuable do you think you are to the Nest?"

Michael's lips parted, but he didn't say anything for a few seconds. At last, he got up as well.

"I don't know how strong I am or how valuable I am. I need some time to find out how strong I am. I'll have to check my territory as well. Since six months passed in the Ancient Isolation Chamber...a year must have passed in the Origin Expanse. I didn't plan to stay away that long."

Michael didn't rush into the Origin Expanse because of the Links of Loyalty. Almost all Links of Loyalty were intact and incredibly tough. His presence wasn't required right now. It was almost like they didn't need him. Fortunately, Michael felt only like that for a quarter of a second. He sensed their longing for their Lord and that his True Links of Loyalty missed him.

Michael could also tell that there were many new Links of Loyalty. Many was an understatement. There were countless new Links of Loyalty. It was no wonder Michael felt like all his Soultraits were stronger than before. He had more Soul Power to tap into.

"Ah. You seem to be mistaken about something," Eevee pointed out this time, glancing at Selena, who nodded subtly.

"What do you mean?" Michael asked, still focused on his Links of Loyalty.

"The time dilation in the Nest is the same as in the Origin Expanse," Eevee clarified, still glancing at the Nest Leader from the corner of her eyes, "We are in a special place, a location far away from most enemies. I-...I won't go into detail because it's not for me to explain the Nest's location in detail."

Selena glanced at Eevee with a raised eyebrow and lightly added what Eevee didn't say, "We're distinctively attached to the Origin Expanse. That's all you have to know for now."

Michael was not sure why they trusted him so much, but it felt quite good. Still, something felt weird about their trust.

"It's great that you tell me about the Nest's location and all, but what if someone kidnaps me and finds out about the Nest's headquarters by interrogating me? I already said that I won't get a Geas," Michael couldn't help but feel suspicious, but Selena burst into laughter.

She didn't stop laughing in the next few minutes, and Michael could swear that he saw tears trickling down her cheeks...

because she laughed too much...

'How is she the Nest's leader? Who allowed someone like her to lead anyone?!?' Michael inquired in his mind, and Danny agreed.

[She is insane.]

Selena calmed down after a while. She stared at him.

"Wait. You're serious?"

Michael responded with a curt nod, to which Selena replied with a snort.

"Sweetheart, if anyone manages to kidnap you while you're anywhere close to me, I wouldn't have survived that long. I would remain long dead," She stared intently at Michael. "I don't want you to turn into an arrogant brat since you're quite a lovely child, but I won't leave you alone that easily. Don't even think about running away now. I have you in my grasp."

She laughed like a maniac, her eyes peering deep into Michael's eyes until they reached his soul, or so Michael felt. He swallowed hard.

"I know about your Soultraits, your past, your Curses, and how useful you can become to the Nest. You are the puzzle piece I've been looking for."

Michael shuddered. His hair stood up to its ends. This remained getting creepy.

"If you become arrogant, I will beat the shit out of you, though, so you better keep your head low enough until you can wipe the floor with my face – or whatever motivates you to grow stronger," Selena shrugged, turning away with creepy laughter.

[Insane woman] Danny thought, while Michael had to give his utmost not to turn around and run.

'Yup. She probably threw her sanity away a long time ago.'