

Extract 814

Chapter 814 Seed

The only thing Michael had to do when expanding his Soul Sphere was to pick the location of the newly forming Empty Soul Socket. The position would determine how many SoulStar Fragments were required to create the Empty Soul Socket.

[You will form a Soultrait Symbol by combining a bunch of Soultraits, right? In that case, you should put the Soul Socket near the center. You know how troublesome Sphere of Elements has been. It's only in the middle area where the upgrade costs are up by 75%, but it's 22 times more expensive to upgrade than Extraction and Insert. Even Cosmic Stride in the Inner Area is only three times more costly than ordinary Soultrait Upgrades!]

"I know, I know. The Healing Soultrait will be in the Inner Area as well. Don't worry," Michael murmured right before accessing the dust-collecting pile of SoulStar Fragments.

The SoulStar Fragments had been lying around doing nothing for way too long. It was time to use them again. He tapped into the pile of SoulStar Fragments and urged the first batch to follow him to the Soul Sphere, where the seed of his 12th Soul Socket formed. The seed was a tiny wisp, a mixture of energy, a portion of Michael's Soul, and the Essence that allowed Michael to be who he was.

He didn't know how he could tell apart the ingredients of the Soul Socket seed, but it was possible. The most important ingredient, the resource that made everything possible, was still missing. The first few SoulStar Fragments infused the mixture of Michael's Essence, Soul, and pure origin energy.

The ingredients swirled around each other and reacted. The pure origin energy fused with Michael's Essence, whereas the SoulStar Fragments clinged onto the tiny fraction of his Soul. Michael groaned in pain when he realized that the reaction of his body was stronger than expected. He couldn't recall the last time he was in pain when creating a Soul Socket. No. He had never been in pain for forming Soul Sockets. At least Michael couldn't remember such a time.

He frowned deeply while breaking into a cold sweat. His breathing grew rougher, and his throat swelled as the mixture of energy, essence, Soul fraction, and SoulStar Fragments reacted once more. They rotated around one another, forming two strands that clashed as they pulled each other closer. The strands twirled and intertwined upon colliding. They formed a double helix, which drilled into the Soul Sphere, exactly where Michael wanted it to be.

Upon reaching its destination, the double-helix stopped rotating around its axis. Most of its body disappeared in the Soul Sphere, leaving tiny tendrils that wiggled around happily.

Michael was on the verge of vomiting, tears trickling down his cheeks while his clothes were drenched in sweat. Despite that, he managed to break into a smile. The seed of the 12th Soul Socket had been formed.

[Now we know why you shouldn't try to create your 12th Soul Socket while you're still a Lesser Lifeform. A dozen Soultraits is too much.... Who would have thought?!?] Danny cackled in Michael's wildly thumping head.

His brother managed to break through his mental defense as he was busy surviving the torment energies wreaking havoc in his Soul Sphere. His Soul Sphere was unharmed, but Michael couldn't muster the strength to push his brother back into the Soul Grimoire.

"Is it going to be like this every single damn time I'm creating a new Soul Socket?" Michael asked in between two ragged breaths. He felt like cursing someone but didn't know who to curse.

[Your reaction is perfectly normal. It makes sense.] A loud hissing reverberated through Michael's head, worsening the thumping pain that tormented him.

"What do you mean?" Michael asked the World Serpent weakly.

[It's a little sad, but your Foundation before your High Ascension was one of the strongest I've seen. Only the Primal and a tiny fraction of the strongest races have such a meticulously crafted Foundation. But then again, most of them were never Lesser Lifeforms in the first place. Maybe being born as a Lesser Lifeform has its perks. If they have the same Soultraits and means like yourself, that is.]

[Either way, your Foundation – alongside the Origin Sap Essence – allowed you to undergo an Origin High Ascension. No. I won't explain what that is. It would be best if you learned how to research properly. I won't answer all of your doubts just because I'm taking residence in your body. Forget it. Back to the Origin High Ascension. Your Physique, Mind and Soul transformed, merged, and expanded. Your Soul is several times stronger than it used to be. You must have noticed some major changes within your body.]

"I...noticed some things..." Michael responded with a slow nod. He was still sweating buckets, but it was easier for him to breathe. He wasn't on the verge of death anymore. Fortunately.

[Even though your Soul expanded and grew more resilient to unwanted alterations, you forcefully merged our Essence traces into your being. That being said, you not only deprived me and that wolf bastard of a portion of our power, but you also chose to carry the burden of our Essences. They're only traces, so it doesn't affect that little wolfie and me too much, but you, on the other hand, unsealed close to 100 Seals and two Major Seals.]

The World Serpent hissed in enjoyment.

[Your Soul, as extensive as it may be, is filled to the brim. It's no wonder that you're in pain now that you are trying to push your Soul even further. You're forcefully expanding the remaining space of your Soul.]

'Does that mean I'm at my limit?' Michael wonder, shaking his head in denial.

[You won't be able to create more Soul Sockets because you've been too greedy. Absorbing the traces of our Essences was a mistake!] The World Serpent hissed, all while Michael continued shaking his head.

He could have sworn that the Wolf Curse would have snarled at him for being stupid or howled in joy to make fun of him, but there was nothing like that.

At first, Michael didn't understand what was happening, but he figured there had to be a reason for the Wolf Curse's silence.

"I...don't think you're right," He murmured, the corner of his lips curling upward, "I think you forgot what I have been doing with my brother's Living Soul since...like forever – well, more like since I've stored his Living Soul in the Soul Grimoire."

[...] The World Serpent didn't respond, but Michael could sense its confusion.

"You're underestimating the Wolf in me...again..."

Michael had been nourishing and growing a Living Soul in his Soul Grimoire. He had been ensuring that an exorbitant number of SoulStar Fragments were invested in Danny to make sure that his Living Soul recuperated until it reached its former power. But Michael didn't stop there. He has been supplying his brother's Living Soul with SoulStar Fragments ever since it returned to its former peak to stimulate the Living Soul and urge it to expand and grow even stronger.

Michael chuckled, "I might not have enough space left to create anymore Soul Sockets now, but I can do the same I did to Danny's Living Soul to myself. Who said that SoulStar Fragments are only useful for Living Souls? I used them to grow Aether, upgrade my Soultraits, and create the Soul Sphere and Soul Pockets. I can create new Soultraits with SoulStar Fragments as well. Why shouldn't it be possible to stimulate my Souls' growth with them as well?"

He wasn't sure if the World Serpent was trying to make fun of him, but his Soul would never stop growing as a Higher Lifeform with a perfectly fused Physique, Mind, and Soul. The only exception was if he stopped refining his War Rune or Soul. However, that wouldn't happen until the day he died.

His Soul would never stay like this, especially not now that he found out he could infuse SoulStar Fragments into his Soul to grow it beyond the norms of a Higher Lifeform.

The World Serpent's confusion was replaced with something else...something more. Oddly enough, the World Serpent didn't seem displeased with the turn of events.

[Good job.] It said before retracting, leaving Michael's mind alone.

The Wolf Curse growled at the World Serpent, probably for acting like an impudent bitch, but Michael ignored them. His Curses were weird, both of them.

However, the World Serpent, as weird as its lectures might be, helped him find a way to expand his Soul artificially. As long as he pursued the new method, Michael could fuse with many new Soultrait Symbols before his Divine Ascension. That was only possible if he kept up with the refinement of his Soul and War Rune while investing a fortune of SoulStar Fragments into his Soul.

Once again, Michael had too many investments requiring SoulStar Fragments. That became getting troublesome.

Fortunately, he had some SoulStar Fragments left to invest. It ought to be enough to create a somewhat helpful Healing Soultrait Symbol. But prior he created the Soultrait Symbol, Michael had to nourish the Soul Socket Seed. It had yet to transform into the completed Soul Socket.

There became already a Soul Socket in his own Soul Sphere, sealed and ready to be unleashed, but something deep in his heart told Michael that he shouldn't use the Soul Socket on a Healing Soultrait. It was better using the Soul Socket for something else.

A few minutes of heavy investments followed. More than 100,000 SoulStar Fragments were removed from his stockpile. It became expensive, but Michael was more than okay with which kind of price. The Empty Soul Socket in the Inner Area of the Soul Sphere had been completed.

All that became left was to create a suitable Soultrait. A perfect Healing Soultrait Symbol, customized to Michael's needs.

That was going to be fun.