

S. Lord 896

Chapter 896 Taros

The Curses' return was sudden and explosive. Michael had been thinking about his Curses for a while now, but their return was unexpected. At least Michael didn't expect them to return at such a moment. After all, he was still relatively calm even though his blood was boiling. River of Vigor's energizing serum helped him keep cool despite the rage and fury sweeping through him like a broken dam.

But maybe that was exactly what they were hoping for.

The Wolf Curse and the World Serpent released their curse essence – not curse power – into Michael, triggering his Cursed Seals and Serpent Seals. Michael couldn't even do anything before the Seals appeared all over his body. But that was merely the beginning. Their Curse Essences spread through Michael and triggered Curse Fusion as well.

They actively summoned their body parts to fuse Michael using their Curse Essence as a medicum. The shape of Michael's eyes changed slowly; his hair extended and transformed into a silky mass of long, black, and golden hair. They cascaded down to his back and hummed as traces of Curse Essence spread to the tip of his hair.

His hands cracked and threatened to transform into massive claws while serpent fangs just from his knuckles, but the claws and fangs' growth was stunned after the fangs pierced through his skin. A similar scenario unfolded with the scales growing out of his skin. The scales, black and thick, grew from his skin like usual, but they didn't cover his whole body like his serpent armor would do under normal circumstances. Instead, the serpent scales connected to the Serpent Seals and the hair all over his body.

It looked grotesque, but his hair and scales seemed to fuse, creating multiple layers of protection all over his body.

Not a single bone in his body didn't crack as the Curse Essences swept through him. Michael was certain something big was about to happen, but he didn't even grow in size. Only the serpent tail burst out of his tailbone like usual. It smashed hard on the ground, creating a resounding noise.

Michael circulated curse power through his body instinctively. He wasn't sure what was happening, but his control of the Curses' powers skyrocketed. That included 8-Star Extraction and 8-Star Sacred Constitution. It was almost like his 8-Star Soultraits were connected to his Curses. That had been the case for Extraction, but it was news to Michael with Sacred Constitution. Sacred Constitution and the World Serpent's Seals and powers were highly compatible, but they had never been in sync like Extraction and the Wolf Curse. Confusion mixed into Michael's rage and fury, occupying him for a few seconds as he focused on the Sacred Constitution Symbol. Something about it was changing. It was adjusted slightly to accept the essence and curse power of the World Serpent more easily.

'Is that what they have been trying to do? No, that can't be. The changes are not even doing much. It feels more like the World Serpent is trying to improve my Soultrait and...give me more power by tightening its connection to my Soultrait.'

The Wolf Curse had always been with Michael and had thus a tighter connection to him, especially with the Curse being part of Extraction, his main Soultrait. The World Serpent seemed to be trying to attain a similar goal. It altered Sacred Constitution...and pushed it closer to the core of the Soul Sphere, where Extraction and Insert were located.

The weirdest part was that it worked. The World Serpent succeeded! It cost much of the Curse Essence BOTH the World Serpent and the Wolf Curse had infused into Michael's body, but it worked. Sacred Constitution transformed into Michael's second main Soultrait. As for the World Serpent...it was closer to Michael than ever. It had become part of Michael, just like the Wolf Curse had always been.

"What are you doing?" Michael frowned, but the Curses didn't respond. It was almost like they returned to do something, only to disappear for a few years again.

"Speak to me!" He bellowed, his emotions getting the better of him.

Michael tapped into his connection with the Wolf Curse and the World Serpent to force them to respond, which seemed to work when his Curses stirred. But they were interrupted when the Red Dragon, hovering above the settlement, turned around to stare at Michael.

The mythical creature must have noticed Michael or the Essence of the Curses spreading through him.

Michael groaned as he activated True Vision to see what the Red Dragon and its rider, Taros, were about to do.

Instead of remaining idle, he used the moment to his advantage. The Curse Essences granted him access to tremendous power. He tapped into Cosmic Stride's power and teleported above the Red Dragon, whose head flicked up to stare deep into his eyes immediately. Taros was even faster than the Red Dragon. He got up from the saddle and smiled at Michael.

"Aren't you the kid from the Lord Rift? Seems like you've grown stronger," Taros recalled Michael, whose eyes narrowed to tiny slits.

"The dragon is from the Lord Rift," Michael noted.

"I took a dragon egg with me. That's correct." "Which enraged the dragon mother.

"Also correct."

"Killing my brother."

"...I didn't know that."

Michael studied Taros.

"Even if you'd known, you wouldn't have cared. It doesn't matter to you."

"That's true," Taros nodded slowly, his eyes never diverting from Michael.

"I expected that. Still, I had to ask," Michael shrugged, controlling the rage and fury boiling inside him precisely, "I won't feel bad killing you that way."

It might not be necessary to fight and kill Taros because he got his brother back, but Taros was one of the reasons he suffered so much. Taros made him suffer even more than Senator Keltos.

Therefore, no matter how terrifying Taros' inside looked through True Vision, the dragon rider had to die.

The abomination had to die!

"I see. In that case, let's fight until death!" Taros roared, pulling the Red Dragon's reins to release its breath and burn Michael to cinder in one move.

However, Michael did something unexpected. He teleported above the Red Dragon's snout, coiled his serpent tail – which extended suddenly – around it entirely and forced its maw shut with tremendous prowess. Taros frowned deeply. The Red Dragon was a mythical creature in the 5th Tier. It might not be the physically strongest beast among the mythical creatures since it was an energy-attuned creature, but it was certainly not that weak. No ordinary High Awakened was supposed to contain the Red Dragon's physical power, yet Michael did so easily.

It wasn't Michael's doing. He was not alone. He had the Serpent Seals and the World Serpent's Essence inside him...augmented Sacred Constitution just like the Curse Seals augmented Extraction. Michael unleashed Heavenly Beast Physique, which was highly attuned to Sacred Constitution's changes. It was more compatible with the 8-Star Physical Soutrait now that the World Serpent bonded.

Thus, Heavenly Beast Physique was all Michael needed to gain enough strength to seal the Red Dragon's maw.

But that was only the beginning.

Michael unleashed Mind Reader onto the Red Dragon to procure a single piece of information.

The Red Dragon didn't block him. Instead, it looked straight into Michael's eyes.

[Kill me...please...]

"I won't do that," Michael said, "You are not at fault." Instead of killing the Red Dragon, he chose to free it.