

S. Lord 902

Chapter 902 Trade

Sylth was pleased with the Pentagon Forts. She was the most curious about the plants Michael and his people had planted to feed his subjects and the livestock and was even more surprised when she heard Michael had a second territory. The Pentagon Forts produced too much food for the Pentagon Forts, yet Michael said they were still lacking and trying to evolve and mutate the plant life in the Untamed Jungle to produce even more food.

He considered showing Sylth the Sacred Desert and the massive Energy Vein in his territory but was happy when the Greater Demon wasn't curious about his other territory. She was most interested in the Untamed Jungle, its energy density, and how Michael used the energy density and the region's effects to his advantage. The Relic of Draka was also something she was curious about, just like the Spirit Armaments his people could create now. Thorn Merchandise had some connections to Divine Blacksmiths and Enchanters, who were capable enough to do something similar. Still, their products were expensive, and they would never create low-ranked Spirit Armaments. It was a waste of their precious time. However, the situation looked different in Michael's territory. His Underground Forging Hall – which he couldn't hide from Sylth's hawk-like eyes – was inspected, which inevitably exposed the Temple of the Forgotten. Fortunately, Sylth didn't seem overly impressed or interested in the Temple of the Forgotten. He was unsure if she didn't understand the ancient ruin's value or if she didn't care about it because she deemed her future business transactions with Michael more valuable.

The answer wasn't too important; only the result was crucial. Sylth ignored the Temple of the Forgotten and focused more on the products Michael and his people created in his territory.

He showed her the Energy Stones since she could sense the masses of energy in his warehouses either way. He explained a few things about his Spirit Armaments, some rare materials he'd accumulated, and the elemental crystals filling several warehouses.

Zeroa and her people created far more energy crystals than Michael needed. But maybe that was for the best. Other races, and even a cosmic-level merchant family like Thorn Merchandise, were interested in them.

"Despite your young age, you are powerful, in control of your curses, and you manage to keep your subjects happy and occupied. Most of your subjects are overflowing with joy, which is good but a nuisance for my kin." She shrugged, "But to think you have so many interesting products up for sale, other than your Soultrait Symbols, of course. The Soultrait Symbols are still vital to Thorn Merchandise, but I think we can also establish a long-term trade with your other products."

Sylth Thorx's mission had been to obliterate the Zentika Empire to show their business partners and everyone in debt of Thorn Merchandise what would happen if they ignored their warning letters and order to pay interest. The Zentika Empire didn't have anymore powerhouses left. The remaining powerhouses in the capital died with the destruction of the capital. Sylth could have done a little more to deal with the remaining members of the Zentika Empire, but she'd seen the forces of their neighbors. The armies of the surrounding Lords, High Beast Hordes, and native kingdoms were already on the move. Sylth didn't have anything left to do. The Zentika Empire was dead.

It had been boring, but she was happy to have gone nonetheless. If she hadn't been deployed to the Zentika Empire, Sylth would have never met Michael. He was a golden opportunity for a swift rise in her family's business and a means to gain personal strength. Thorn Merchandise could gain a lot from personally establishing an amiable relationship with Michael. They might have been connected to the Nest for thousands of years, but Michael was different. He might have been a member of the Nest, but his value was on another level.

"Are you willing to become an affiliate of Thorn Merchandise? We wish to sign several deals with you!" Sylth stared deep into Michael's eyes until he felt uncomfortable.

"What exactly do you need, and in which quantities? What can you offer in return?" Michael asked instead of going for a direct answer.

Sylth smiled, "Thorn Merchandise is willing to purchase your Spirit Armaments of all Ranks and Tiers. The same applies to the elemental crystals and the Energy Stones. Of course, the price for every Spirit Armament, Energy Stone, and elemental crystal ranges according to Rank and Tier. I will give you access to Thorn Merchandise's Daemon Shop, our hidden shop where everything we're trading with the races and organizations across the cosmos is displayed."

"You will be given Demonic Coins, which are not unlike Cosmic Coins, only that their value is greater, and you can purchase whatever you want. Of course, you would require enough Demonic Coins to purchase the things you desire, including high-ranked techniques, which cannot be purchased through normal means."

Sylth studied Michael. Her eyes twinkled in satisfaction at what she saw.

"Techniques on the same level as Primordial Bloodline can be purchased in the Daemon Shop of Thorn Merchandise."

Michael nodded slowly. That didn't sound too bad. As long as he was given a fair price for the Energy Stones, elemental crystals, and Spirit Armaments, he could see himself trading with Thorn Merchandise. However, there was one thing he would never do; take a loan from them. He shuddered at the memories of Sylth smashing the Zentika Empire's capital into smithereens.

"I can give you more precise numbers once I analyze samples of your products, but it shouldn't be difficult for you to earn a small fortune with the three types of goods. However, that's what leads me to the crucial point." She smiled at him vibrantly, but Michael could only shudder. Sylth looked like the incarnation of a Devil with that smile, "We want your Soultraits as well."

Michael suppressed a wince and nodded. That was expected.

He waited and watched her.

"First, I can offer you a heavy discount on all products in the Daemon Shop if you're willing to trade a specific number of Soultrait Symbols with us monthly. It wouldn't be too much. Five or ten Soultrait Symbols every month for a discount of 30% in the Daemon Shop. Of course, we would pay you generously for every Soultrait Symbol. The discount is an additional bonus we'll give you to maintain a steady supply of Soultrait Symbols." Michael wanted to reject the offer immediately but stopped when Sylth continued talking. He listened intently to her before returning a few questions.

"All Soultrait Symbols are either starless or 1-Star Soultraits at first. I think it's already known that I can upgrade Soultrait Symbols, but I won't do that if I'm not given enough in return. If I agree to this offer, you'll see five random 1-Star Soultrait Symbols monthly. I won't let you or anyone from Thorn Merchandise make a pick. Not even if you offer 30% off Primordial-grade techniques. They must be hellishly expensive, but I think I can be fairly confident when I say that compatible Soultraits grant you more power than a Primordial-grade technique."

Sylth was about to say something, but Michael was not done.

"Of course, a Primordial grade technique is powerful, but you can use far more complex or simple techniques when you have access to multiple techniques. I know that better than anyone. As a Tier-4 High Awakened, I can already fight powerhouses at the 6th Tier. I can dominate Tier-5 mythical creatures and tame them without the intention to tame them. And that's without Ancient grade – or higher – techniques. Once I'm equipped with a Primordial Soul Technique for every Soultrait and more techniques to use whenever I combine my Soultraits, I will be much stronger. However, I need a proper foundation to use such powerful techniques first. I can give them. All you can do is unleash the full potential of the potential I've created."

Sylth waited until Michael was done before she responded.

"It's good you're honest. If we'd signed a soul-tethered contract with the words I've used, Thorn Merchandise would have made huge losses. I asked for five to ten Soultraits but never specified their star rating or usefulness. That is true. You could have given us your most useless Soultrait Symbols to meet the requirements stated in the contract while receiving the discount and a generous pile of Demonic Coins. That was my mistake."

"I think we'll have to talk about this more in-depth," Sylth said slowly, "But let me clarify one thing: You are willing to trade Soultrait Symbols with Thorn Merchandise. Did I understand that right?"

Michael nodded.

"In that case, let the negotiation begin!"

Michael didn't expect to spend several days negotiating with Sylth, but that was exactly what happened. They didn't sleep or rest and focused on their task ahead. They came to a conclusion on the fifth day and signed a soul-tethered contract. It was a bit looser than a Soul Pact and didn't put as much pressure on the soul, which Michael liked. He didn't want to burden his soul more than necessary these days.

Sylth left once the contracts were signed, flapping her wings happily as she departed to inspect the destruction of the Zentika Empire with glee.

[That wasn't too bad. You're growing.] Fenrir commented. After their encounter with Beelzebub, the Wolf Beast God had grown accustomed to speaking as it pleased. The meeting with the Infernal God struck Fenrir much harder than it wanted to acknowledge. Michael didn't know what he'd expected, but it was certainly not the silent wolf's transformation into a talkative Beast God Curse.

That wasn't too bad, though.

"I think so too. My win margin is much greater than theirs if I play this right," Michael noted.

He might have to fulfill a monthly quota, but the quota was different from what was initially introduced. Michael had to give them a Soultrait, or multiple with a combined value of X. If the Soultrait was 'valuable' for specific tasks, Michael wouldn't have to give them many Soultraits. To be precise, he would have to give them only three Soultraits of average value. If the Soultraits were incredibly valuable, Michael had to give them only one Soultrait that month. Other than that, Michael would have to give them ten useless, starless of 1-Star, Soultraits, or one useless 3-Star Soultrait. After all, all Soultraits were somewhat powerful, even if they were labeled useless. No Soultrait was truly useless. All you had to do was learn how to use your Soultrait.

The contract was perfect for Michael. Sylth didn't know how easy it was for Michael to upgrade a Soultrait to 3-Star and how few SoulStar Fragments it cost. Of course, he didn't mention that. Sylth would realize soon enough that her extraordinary negotiation victory was but a farce.

Michael could bombard Thorn Merchandise with 'useless' 3-Star Soultraits without a problem and use the full potential of the 30% discount. But Michael wouldn't take too much advantage of the contract clauses. He wanted to please Thorn Merchandise and retain their amiable relationship just like they planned to do the same. Furthermore, Michael needed Demonic Coins, which he could earn easily by selling highly valued Soultraits rather than the 'useless' ones.

Now that the deals were sealed, Michael obtained some Demonic Coins and access to the Daemon Shop. All he had to do now was to find out what he needed the most and how to earn his first high-ranked technique. He had to find out how to increase his strength most efficiently using Thorn Merchandise's connections and the golden eggs – his Soultrait Symbols – to his advantage.

It was good that Fenrir and the World Serpent were more than willing to help him. They were oddly interested in the Daemon Shop and to aid his future growth. It was almost like they wanted him to grow into a powerhouse in no time.