

S. Lord 920

Chapter 920 Trials of a Fallen God

Michael's preparations to enter the Temple of the Forgotten were simple. He upgraded his Seer Soultrait to 8-Star and Mind Reader to 7-Star, using most of his remaining SoulStar Fragments. It wasn't enough to push Sphere of Elements to 7-Star, but Michael had to live with that.

Interestingly, Mind Reader evolved into a stronger Soultrait once it reached 7-Star. It evolved into Mind Watcher, a Soultrait that protected Michael's mind from mental attacks while also elevating the Mind Reader's portion to a new level.

Michael was more than satisfied with the abilities he gained from upgrading Mind Reader. It was worth upgrading the Soultrait. However, even more valuable was Seer. The more he could see with his 8-Star Soultrait, the easier his time in the Temple of the Forgotten would be. He would easily see through traps and discover enemies long before they appeared before him. He prepared enough proviant to keep himself and his people fed for years. Michael couldn't tell how long they would have to stay in the Temple of the Forgotten or if it was possible to leave midway, so he prepared for the worst case. Contrary to what he wished for, Tiara, Lilica, Hiraku, and nearly 100 Subordinates and subjects were unwilling to leave Michael behind. They didn't want him to enter the Temple of the Forgotten alone.

Michael was uncomfortable with that, but the Subordinates and subjects didn't care. Unwilling to command his people against their wills in such a case, Michael gave in. He allowed them to follow him.

After several days of preparing proviant and other miscellaneous items, Michael and his group walked past the Underground Forging Hall to enter the Temple of the Forgotten. The half-covered temple that had been claimed by nature and the curse of time appeared before them. Moss and vines covered the ancient stones, reclaiming them with their emerald embrace. The temple's weathered facade told the tales of a forgotten civilization, its intricate carvings whispering stories of a long-bygone era.

Moss-covered statues, a few broken and weathered, towered around the temple, guarding it from outside invaders as they looked down at the old – mostly covered – stone path leading to the temple's entrance at the top.

Michael's lips curled into a smile. He felt himself with a sense of reverence looking at the temple, but it wasn't as bad as it used to be compared to years ago. It was still like the spirits of the Untamed Jungle were still lingering within and around the temple's moss-covered stones, beckoning him, but that didn't frighten him any more. On the contrary, Michael was excited at the thought of entering a place filled with the spirit of the Untamed Jungle. Maybe, just maybe, the Untamed Jungle and the Temple of the Forgotten were connected through more means than he and the others had been thinking.

The thought of collecting something from a civilization that had been connected to the Untamed Jungle was exciting. Michael eyed the stone path leading to the entrance at the top of the temple and made the first step.

The last time he tried ascending the flight of stone stairs, Michael had been taken by surprise. A heavy pressure had descended upon him, preventing the youth from getting close to the entrance. The pressure didn't appear this time. Michael ascended the old stairs as if there had never been any pressure. "Don't leave us behind, my Lord!" A groan escaped from behind. Michael turned around and noticed only now that Tiara, Lilica, and the rest were struggling to reach him. Hiraku and others were at the front, but they couldn't speak a word. Every movement required a tremendous amount of energy... energy they couldn't spare if they wanted to reach their Lord and Master. Michael tilted his head, taking a moment to realize what was happening.

'The Untamed Jungle accepted only me, right? It accepted me as the Lord of my territory, as a part of the Untamed Jungle.'

[I think that's the point. The pressure might also be there to test those who haven't been acknowledged, but as someone who has been acknowledged, you don't have to fight through the pressure.] Fenrir pointed out.

[That's why you don't have to be a Divine Lifeform. If you were a Divine Lifeform, you could block the pressure and easily reach the entrance.] Jormungandr added.

That wasn't what Michael had expected, but he nodded slowly. If the Untamed Jungle accepted him and allowed him to enter the Temple of the Forgotten, it could only mean he met all requirements to complete the trials that awaited him. At least, that was what Michael hoped for.

[At least, it shows that the Untamed Jungle and the Temple of the Forgotten have a closer connection than you initially thought.] Jormungandr hissed.

'That is true. I wonder what awaits me.'

[The trials of a Fallen God.] Fenrir said as if it was a matter of fact. The Curse spoke confidently, as if it was the most obvious thing in the universe.

'The trials of a Fallen God? A God created the Temple of the Forgotten?!' [Yes, well. To be fair, I am unsure what I'm sensing from this place. The entire Temple of the Forgotten is connected to the Untamed Jungle, but there is more to it. I sense something familiar but cannot grasp what it is.] Jormungandr hissed, annoyed that it could not tell what was so familiar about this place.

[I can sense some familiarity as well. It's a godly existence, but it feels different from the divinity infused into the Temple of the Forgotten. It's more like something is...restrained.]

The sibling Curses chatted briefly about their perception and the like while Michael returned to his people. However, he was blocked once he was about to arrive next to Hiraku. An invisible barrier appeared around the Temple of the Forgotten, blocking Michael from returning to his Subordinates, leaving the temple's entrance area.

'So...I have to enter. There is no other way around.'

He nodded slowly and sent his people a short message via Whispering Energy.

[Take care of the territories while I'm away. I left the SoulStar Fragments and everything else I didn't need in the ancient ruins in the Jungle Shop. Hiraku has permission to use the Jungle Shop

and alter some prices if a war breaks out. Y'all can take Soultraits and Upgrades as much as you want if it's necessary to deal or stall with our enemies. Don't worry, I will be back...soon.]

Michael had no idea how long it would take until he returned, but he was feeling bad. It might take longer than he was hoping for.

He nodded slowly to himself and returned to the entrance at the top of the temple.

After taking a deep breath, Michael pressed the stone door with considerable force to open it. However, a magic circle stretched across the entire temple instead of creaking open.

One moment, the Temple of the Forgotten was there, and in the next moment, it vanished into thin air...alongside Michael.

Sealed in the deepest parts of the Untamed Jungle, a pair of eyes shot wide open when the Temple of the Forgotten disappeared.

"It's happening!" It spoke hoarsely in an ancient language, only to narrow its dead eyes as it sensed something oddly familiar. "...Brothers?"