

S. Lord 925

Chapter 925 Water

It had been a full year since Michael entered the Primordial Untamed Jungle when the situation around him changed drastically. First things first, Michael had to escape death dozens of times every day for the last two months. He was constantly on the run and had a hard time finding monsters to hunt. Fortunately, the Energy Vortex was completed, and both Fenrir and Jormungandr didn't care too much about his worries and fears. They used their Perfect Soul Techniques to absorb the surrounding energies and utilize his Energy Vortex to the fullest.

It was only thanks to their help that Michael advanced to the 6th Tier. Of course, he killed a few Divine Lifeforms as well – a lot more than he'd expected – but it was not enough to become the ruler of the Primordial Untamed Jungle. Maybe if he had relied more on his Curse Beast Gods, things would have been different, but Michael was unwilling to give Fenrir and Jormungandr too much control of his body. Michael still wanted to possess enough authority over his own being to make choices. His Beast God Curses understood his reasoning. At least, Michael believed they understood. Neither bothered him in any way. They didn't even mention gaining more control. In their eyes, something like that wasn't necessary.

One year elapsed since he entered the Temple of the Forgotten, and the first trial ended. It was just like Fenrir anticipated. Usually, the Trial of Regression would last longer, but because he had been a Tier-5 High Awakened, the Temple of the Forgotten treated him to one year in the Primordial Untamed Jungle. Fortunately, that was long enough to return to Tier-5 and surpass his old self. He advanced to Tier-6 and was stronger than ever in all possible ways.

The first trial ended with great success. He had more Seals for both Beast God Curses active, advanced one Tier, created the Energy Vortex, and improved his understanding and control of all Soultrait Symbols. But was any of that useful for the second trial? Neither Michael nor the Beast God Curses could tell. They didn't create the Temple of the Forgotten and had to wait patiently for what awaited them.

[First Trial passed successfully.]

Hundreds of voices rang through his head, overlapping to form a single voice of many genders, accents, and ages.

[Second Trial – Memories of the Dead – has been initiated.]

Michael tilted his head and was about to ask the Beast God Curses to tell him what was going on, but his head ached badly suddenly. He could instinctively tell that something scanned through his mind and memories and considered acting. However, Michael didn't act. He held back and allowed that thing to search through his mind, his memories, and the memories of the thousands of Awakened he had killed. Their memories had been etched into his mind through the Memory Orbs, which Michael had never stopped using.

[Second Trial passed successfully. Extraordinary Performance. Death praises your commitment.]

The hundreds of overlapping voices returned, but Michael was too confused to listen.

'How did I pass the trial?'

[I think the Second Trial is about the strength of your mind and souls. Memories of the Dead would have shown you the memories of the dead. Their lives, starting from scratch. Their birth, how they were raised, their awakening, training, struggles, achievements, and last but not least, their deaths. But you passed the trial since you've seen such memories of tens of thousands of Awakened already.]

[Third Trial – Heart's Choice – has been initiated.]

The voice returned, but Fenrir and Jormungandr remained silent.

'What now?'

[I don't know yet.] Fenrir revealed, honestly.

[No idea.] Jormungandr added.

That wasn't helpful, but Michael had to accept it. He waited patiently and didn't block the Temple of the Forgotten as it did two things simultaneously. First, something deep within him rumbled. A trace of incredibly pure and highly compressed foreign energy infiltrated his body and coiled into a tiny mass of greenish flickering energy next to his heart. It caressed his heart lightly and seemed to search for something.

Michael was unsure about that point, but it worried him a little. He wasn't comfortable with something else entering his body, but it wasn't like he could reject the trial after getting this far. Even if he could reject it...what was he supposed to do? He was in the middle of nowhere. The Primordial Untamed Jungle had disappeared, replaced by a vast body of water. At least, that was what it felt like.

He was still in the middle of nowhere, but this nowhere was now filled with water. His clothes were drenched and clung to his body, but that was Michael's smallest concern. He teleported through the water, trying to find the surface, but no matter how many times he teleported in any direction, the scenery around him never changed.

He was still underwater, and oxygen scarcity would be a problem in the future. It would have been a problem if Michael had not had Extraction to extract the oxygen in the surroundings.

But that wasn't necessary. Michael could breathe in the water as well. Was that even normal water in the first place? Michael learned the answer quickly as countless images popped up before him. Images of his territories, his Awakened friends...but also his family outside the Origin Expanse and Lincoln and Alice.

Michael swallowed hard.

[I am not sure which is happening. Don't even think about asking us for answers.] Jormungandr hissed, while Fenrir indicated his approval with a quiet growl.

'That is very helpful.'

Michael expected a little more from his eon-old Curses and was having a hard time not showing his displeasure. However, he had more important things to take care of now.

The images were only of those he held dear. Michael noticed that when he saw Danny in one of the pictures but his parents' faces were blurred. The water showed him live recordings of their current lives...and struggles.

Lincoln and Alice struggled the most. Their memories and Souls hadn't been cut into bits and pieces like Zeke and Kaleb's, but the Blood Incursion tormented them. They weren't in a good position and consistent fights with themselves.

Seeing Lincoln hit him hard because the young man had become a monster. Michael saw how his friend slaughtered thousands of innocent people. They were merely unawakened, but Lincoln couldn't care less. In his condition, all he cared about was to kill as many enemies as possible. He wanted his enemies to feel pain.

Seeing Lincoln was already bad. However, seeing Alice for the first time in years was even worse.

She was even more beautiful than she utilized to be. Her icy cold exterior and emotionless attitude remained the same, still that was even more reason for his warm memories of Alice to resurface. He remembered her warm touch, her soft lips, and her tight embrace.

Michael sighed deeply.

'So that's which this is going to be?' He groaned, but he spent the next few days following Alice's movements.

Time elapsed rapidly in the unknown water, but Michael didn't care. He observed Alice, and his mood plummeted. [At least, she isn't like Lincoln just yet. She is not a mindless murderer just yet.] Fenrir commented. Michael wanted to say something, but he remained silent. Until Jormungandr stated something, at least.

[But you shouldn't pay too much attention to Alice right now. Your people are about to get into trouble.]