

Supreme Lord 121

Chapter 121 Grandiose Summoning

Goosebumps erupted all over his body when the screech echoed through his entire territory. The pressure that accompanied the screech was more terrifying than the fear one felt by staring at the humongous Heavy Armored Elephant.

This shocked Michael and Tiara, who stopped in her tracks. She subconsciously summoned her Artifacts and prepared for a life-and-death battle when the screech reached her ears.

Her hair stood up on its end, and worry gleamed in her eyes. What kind of monstrous existence was about to attack them?

What neither of the two realized was that the screech had actually originated from the inside of the Summoning Gate and that another fierce Monster was about to step out of the Summoning Gate's energy pool.

A black-feathered Eagle the size of a big battle horse emerged in front of the Summoning Gate. It screeched out loudly and spread its marvelous ten-meter-long wings for everyone to see before it shot in the air.

It was fortunate that the clearing was void of tree branches, otherwise, the huge eagle would have crashed into the tree branches and destroyed everything around.

"A Greater Eagle with black plumage? And this pressure... is that something I can summon with a Mythic Summoning Scroll?" Michael murmured to himself.

He noticed that the Heavy Armored Elephant retreated a few steps and sought protection behind him, but that amused him a little. It must look funny for others to see a 12-ton-heavy Monster hiding behind a bald man, whose weight didn't cross 80 kilograms, but nobody could laugh just now.

The appearance of the black-feathered Greater Eagle was enough to frighten a humongous monster such as the Heavy Armored Elephant. This had to be taken seriously!

"Please come down without destroying anything," Michael requested loud enough for the Greater Eagle to hear. The Greater Eagle steered itself towards the ground again after circling the clearing and dived down.

It elegantly reached the ground and flapped its wings right in front of Michael where it screeched much quieter than before.

"Thank you," Michael said sincerely while trying to ignore the goosebumps all over his body.

While looking at the majestic monster in front of him, and feeling its pressure weighing solely on him, Michael could barely move.

"The Black Bear's pressure is not as intense as yours is, big guy. It's just that you are a Tierless Monster because you've been resurrected recently. Your pressure and body are the only remains from your past life!" Michael said, forcing himself to withstand and overcome the Greater Eagle's pressure.

It weighed hard on him and nearly made him succumb, but Michael didn't surrender. Who would ever want to follow him, if he couldn't even endure the pressure his subjects exuded naturally?

He grit his teeth and lifted his right hand despite the pressure. Michael used Lesser Enhancement on his right arm as he raised it high in the air.

His hand slowly approached the Greater Eagle that was just staring blankly at Michael. The Greater Eagle tilted its head as it stared deep into Michael's dark abyss-like eyes. Their depth seemed endless and so was the determination shining vibrantly in his eyes.

The Greater Eagle lowered its head, giving Michael permission to touch it.

Michael's fingers slowly caressed the Greater Eagle's soft plumage, and a faint smile blossomed on his face. The pressure weighing down on him decreased drastically as the Link of Loyalty formed between Michael and the Greater Eagle.

He took a deep breath to calm his wildly palpitating heart.

Michael's biggest worry had been that the Greater Eagle would simply deny his authority and wreak havoc in his territory before the Link of Loyalty had formed properly.

That had also been his worry when he summoned Fenrir first. After all, controlling Summons with higher star ratings was a tough task and even a single mistake could lead the new summon to raze everything to the ground.

If the high-ranked Summons were violent, or their compatibility with the Lord was abysmally low, the Link of Loyalty would be frail and could be broken easily.

Strengthening the frail Link of Loyalty was possible, but it would take a while. In Fenrir's case, the Link of Loyalty had been as thin as a thread, and it wasn't strengthened even after they spent two full days together.

It was common knowledge that firm Links of Loyalty were rare to form between a weak Lord and Summons with a high star rating since Summons with a high star rating had rich past life experiences where they had to fight beings as strong as them or even a bit stronger than themselves.

Only by overcoming various ordeals and becoming stronger through painstaking efforts were they able to amass achievements and reach the thresholds to be resurrected and summoned with a high star rating after they died.

Michael was not too worried about his Links of Loyalty with most of his subjects. They formed properly and weren't as fragile as his Link of Loyalty with Fenrir had been.

Michael was much stronger now than he had been when he first entered the Origin Expanse. He was a Tier-1 Lord and had grown after experiencing life in the Origin Expanse for more than a month.

The incidents he had encountered inside and outside the Origin Expanse since his War Rune manifested were abundant, and taught him much more about life and leadership than school ever did, allowing him to mature and become a better version of himself!

"I will take good care of you. You and everyone else will grow much stronger than ever as long as you follow me closely. Let me show you the path toward a bright future!" Michael mumbled as he continued to caress the head of the Greater Eagle.

It screeched softly as if it agreed readily and trusted its Lord wholeheartedly.

Michael forgot about the Mass Summoning temporarily. He was focused on the Greater Eagle and tried to communicate with his new summon using their Link of Loyalty.

This worked more or less as the Link of Loyalty made it much easier for both parties to communicate with each other even if they had never learned each other's language.

Time passed swiftly, and Tiara reappeared next to him after a while.

Her arrival made Michael recall what he had been doing before the Greater Eagle arrived.

"I finished the task. There are two reports for you. One is a summarized list of all subjects that joined our territory today. The other list is more detailed," Tiara explained swiftly before handing him a report that had only four paragraphs and a second report with several pages of detailed information about his newly summoned subjects.

Michael merely nodded his head and smiled faintly before he sent the Greater Eagle away.

"Thank you. Please help me tend to the new subjects to make sure that they will quickly settle down and feel at home in our territory!"

Michael gave Tiara a new task before he took a glance at the summarized report. The appearance of the Heavy Armored Elephant was shocking enough to make him forget inspecting the other 2-Star Summons

as they stepped out of the Summoning Gate. Weirdly enough, the appearance of the Greater Eagle was exactly the same.

Because of the Greater Eagle's show, he didn't even pay proper attention to the other 2-Star Summons.

[Mass Summoning Report]

–Starless Summons: 206 Summons – (95M:111W)

–1-Star Summons: 59 Summons– 1 Carpenter, 1 Potter, 1 Artist, 1 Tailor, 1 Pub Owner, 1 Financial Manager, 1 Cook, 1 Librarian, 2 Masons, 2 Weavers, 2 Surveyors, 2 Craftsmen, 2 Gardeners, 4 Assassins, 5 Vanguards, 5 Cavalry Riders(Battle Horse included), 8 Archers, 8 Spearmen, 11 Warriors

–2-Star Summons: 16 Summons – 1 Summoner, 1 Earth Mage, 1 Priest(Minor Healing and Poison Purification), 1 Weaponsmith, 1 Doctor, 1 Architect, 1 Heavy Armored Elephant(tamed), 1 Demi-Human(Typhoon Eaglefolk), 1 Demi-Human(Speedster Rabbitfolk), 2 Berserker, 2 Knights, 3 Merchants.

–3-Star Summons: 3 Summons – 1 Greater Eagle(tamed), 1 Master Alchemist, 1 Botanical Magician(No Combat Power. Spells related to Botanics only!)

–4-Star Summon: Nature Spirit]

Michael's expression was full of gleam and joy as he read through the summarized report of today's mass summoning.

He had been way too lucky today.

But there was one thing that confused him a lot.

"I...I summoned a 4-Star Summon?!"

"When? Where? Who? What? How?"

Chapter 122 Timid Spirit

4 Stars!!!

It was already beyond his expectations to summon two Demi-Humans, two tamed Monsters, and a total of three 3-Star Summons, but there was also a 4-Star Summon amongst his new subjects – a Nature Spirit at that!!

There was a low chance to summon a 4-Star Summon with a Mythic Summoning Scroll, but it was extremely rare. Even the chance to summon a 3-Star Summon using a Mythic Summoning Scroll was relatively low at 10%.

Michael was quite fortunate summoning three 3-Star Summons, but that kind of luck was not out of the world.

However, summoning a 4-Star Nature Spirit was something else, especially in a place such as the Untamed Jungle.

The Untamed Jungle was flourishing with origin energy and beautiful nature. The growth of plants and monsters was fast in the Origin Expanse, but it was even faster in the Untamed Jungle.

The flowers, herbs, and seeds that had been planted in his territory not too long ago were already fully blossomed, and ready to be harvested. The growth of plants was more than 50% faster inside the Untamed Jungle than anywhere else.

By adding a magical helper such as a 4-Star Nature Spirit to aid the growth of herbs and plants, the time required for herbs to grow would be cut even shorter. But that was not all. A Nature Spirit's green finger would increase the quality of nature in its range drastically.

Fruits would taste better, herbs would have a stronger medical effect, and the potency of mythic plants would be elevated as well.

Nature Spirits can control the nature around them as well. The stronger a Nature Spirit the bigger their range, and the stronger their control of the surrounding area.

Inside the Untamed Jungle, where everything was densely grown and overshadowed by nature, a 4-Star Nature Spirit could be considered a disaster for everyone who chose to be foolish enough to attack it, or the territory it lived in.

Furthermore, if used properly, Nature Spirits could turn into powerful Combat Units with great support and crowd control skills. This was especially the case for a 4-Star Nature Spirit that ought to have gained great achievements over the course of its first life.

The thought of adding a powerful Nature Spirit with the capability of controlling the movements of large monster groups within the Untamed Jungle seemed like a dream. It was exciting and caused Michael to act immediately.

Michael began to search the Nature Spirit as he realized that he missed the summoning of the most important Summon.

He used his Link of Loyalty to pinpoint the direction of the Nature Spirit and found it quickly.

However, what he found confused him. It was totally beyond his expectations.

The Nature Spirit was a small inconspicuous tree sapling with tiny roots, which it used to walk around slowly.

Nobody paid any attention to it until now, which was also why it had to hide near the Summoning Gate, trembling in fear. Everyone was so huge and trampling around the Summoning Gate, nearly causing it to be bulldozed several times in the few minutes that passed since it was summoned to the Untamed Jungle.

It couldn't even ensure its own safety because the nearest bushes and trees were too far away from the center of the clearing, otherwise, it would have used its power to protect itself and push everyone aside

When Michael bent down to look at the Nature Spirit, the Nature Spirit issued a loud creaking noise. Michael felt like the Nature Spirit was complaining to him and crying loudly. It jumped straight in Michael's arms, seeking safety in his embrace.

'What the...'

Michael was a little shocked when he realized how timid the Nature Spirit was. He didn't expect something like that from a 4-Star Nature Spirit.

"Why are you so tiny? You look like a Starless Nature Spirit," Michael asked, slightly confused.

His knowledge about Spirits was not great, but he knew enough to know that most Elemental Spirits would take on the appearance of something closely related to their Element.

Starless Elemental Spirits usually looked like ordinary flames, a ball of water, a rock, or a Seedling. However, the higher the star rating, the stronger Elemental Spirits were – usually. Elemental Spirits gained strength by developing their form.

Fire Spirits would grow stronger flames and expand at first. After its flames grew to a certain extent, their form would change.

Under normal circumstances, a 3-Star Elemental Spirit would change its form and develop continuously. It would become stronger as its form evolved to the next level.

But the Nature Spirit in front of him was nothing like that. It could use its tiny roots to walk, but that was already the only advantage it possessed compared to a Starless Nature Spirit. At least, that was what its appearance suggested.

Furthermore, the Nature Spirit was timid and overly clingy. Its roots coiled around Michael's arm as if it would never let go of him.

Michael's dream of using the Nature Spirit to aid the Combat Units in hunting in the Untamed Jungle – which could be considered the best region for Nature Spirits to use their powers – shattered into oblivion.

"You don't really want to fight, do you?" Michael asked, still holding onto the last straw of hope.

However, the emotions spread through the recently established Link of Loyalty were so overbearing, filled with fear and denial, that Michael could only give up.

"It's okay...you don't have to fight," Michael said calmly.

He was a little bit disappointed that he couldn't use the Nature Spirit in combat since it was a great loss but forcing it to join fights when it was THAT afraid of fighting would create chaos. The Nature Spirit might even end up hurting its allies and turn the tide of the battle against them.

"I will give you a nice place where you can spread your roots and grow freely. However, you might have to protect yourself and the territory if enemies attack. You won't be able to avoid defending yourself in that case!"

As long as the 4-Star Nature Spirit could develop into a Tree Nature Spirit, it would be able to control a bigger range of the Untamed Jungle around the clearing. That way, the Nature Spirit could be used as an additional layer of defense.

The Nature Spirit should also be able to help him develop his territory in the Untamed Jungle once it has grown up a little. It was still the Lowest-grade Tier-0 Nature Spirit and could improve a lot.

Furthermore, its presence was enough to affect the environment around it. The blades of grass next to the Summoning Gate had already begun to grow, demonstrating just how great the Nature Spirit's potential was.

Michael had yet to test the limit of its power, but as a 4-Star Summon, it had to be special – even if it couldn't fight.

Combined with the Orb of Hostility, and the installed traps and arrays, it could detect and protect the territory, while simultaneously accelerating the growth of the Tiatcha, Cocoa pods, various herbs, and other plants.

Adding fertilizer, and the 3-Star Botanic Magician, whom Michael had summoned today as well, it wouldn't be much of an issue to grow multiple sources of income. That was especially important!

"It's okay," Michael repeated while patting the trembling Nature Spirit.

'It's okay, after all, I gained more than enough combat units to change my future plans!!'

Chapter 123 Changes

As a human Lord, Michael had an increased chance of summoning his own kind. This chance was increasingly high for Summons with a low star rating.

Only with the expansion of his territory, and an upgraded Summoning Gate would the probability of summoning tamed Monsters, Demi-Humans, and other races increase.

Nonetheless, Michael was quite surprised that he had yet to summon a Gogi. By installing the Gogi Lord's Summoning Core, the probability of summoning a Gogi should have been higher than the chance of summoning Demi-Humans, tamed Monsters, and the Nature Spirit.

Now that the population of his territory expanded so quickly, Michael had to distribute tasks more carefully. He had to tend to the various needs of his new subjects, whether they were human, demi-human, or monsters.

'With what should I start now that the arrays and traps have been installed?' Michael murmured to himself, 'Making most use of the 2-Star Summons is important, but I summoned many new 1-Star Summons today as well.'

He had to plan everything thoroughly and slowly. Michael didn't want to make a big mistake just because he was impatient and hasty!

'The monster population inside the Untamed Jungle is way too high. Even after hunting them for more than a month the reports never mentioned a lack of monsters. In fact, Tiara and the others always mentioned that they had to avoid the monster habitats because there were way too many for them to handle. That should be different now. She'll be able to handle it with the territory's military power.'

Now that he summoned many combat affine Summons, they could make up new battle strategies and hunt together to improve their teamwork. Once their synergy in battle was high enough, attacking the habitats of big monster groups won't be suicidal anymore.

Fortunately, they weren't in a rush and could slowly create unfathomable teamwork and increase their strength at the same time.

The military power in Michael's territory would be busy for a while, which gave Michael enough time to plan the following steps of his territory development thoroughly.

The Financial Manager, the Merchants, and a group of Starless Summons formed the Economic & Logistics Department. They had to take care of the goods in the territory, organize everything in the warehouses that were about to be constructed, and the territory's finances. Their task was to plan where the territory's funds had to be invested, and what to sell for which price once they created a trail outside the Untamed Jungle.

After all, they could easily use the Battle Horses, Bilroxs, or even the Heavy Armored Elephant to carry large carts to Xiltra once a proper trail – preferably a street – was constructed.

The Tamers in his territory didn't have to do anything new. They raised the Bilroxs and took care of the newly summoned monsters.

The Alchemy Master made a list of the potions he could produce, and the ingredients he required to concoct them, while the Weaponsmith shared in a detailed report what weapons he could create, and which ores and monster parts would be most suitable to forge them.

With the arrival of the Alchemy Master and the Weaponsmith, the production of Weapons and potions was bound to increase by many times. This decreased Michael's expenses by a large margin and increased the possibility of earning a fortune from selling goods they didn't need.

It was planned to construct an Alchemy House, an Enchanter's Lair, and a Smithy. However, there was more. Michael wanted a large pub to be built, and a humongous garden to utilize the abilities of the Nature Spirit, and the Botanic Magician.

After careful consideration, Michael planted the Nature Spirit in the center of the clearing. Because the Nature Spirit was still weak, it couldn't control the densely grown nature around the clearing yet, but that was fine. Given some time, the Nature Spirit would grow stronger in the near future.

It would become the centerpiece of his territory and turn into a ginormous Tree Nature Spirit. Now that he knew how timid and frightened the Nature Spirit was, he could only hope that the Nature Spirit would man up and develop into a Sacred Tree such as Yggdrasil.

Many tales about the Elves' Sacred Tree reached mankind over the last 500 years. They seemed exaggerated and unlikely to be true at first glance. However, if the tales were not exaggerated, it would be great if his Nature Spirit could develop into an existence similar to Yggdrasil!

Michael looked forward to the Nature Spirit's development. It was exciting, just like the development of his territory.

As the Lord of a territory, Michael had a lot of work to do. After all, his territory was still underdeveloped. It didn't look like anything special and lacked proper infrastructure.

Nonetheless, he was proud of the things he achieved in such a short period. He overcame many hurdles already.

Of course, it was just the start of his journey. Michael was not even close to the end!

Understanding that he was just at the starting point, Michael changed his daily routine once again. He didn't go out to hunt but trained hard using the Berserker Physique body refinement technique, and the Sun Soldier's Breathing technique.

Even if the techniques were rather cheap compared to what he could afford, changing his breathing fundamentally was something not many techniques made possible. Michael had already proven to

himself that a slight change in his breathing was very helpful in the replenishment of his Stamina. It didn't even require origin energy to replenish his Stamina much faster!

On the other hand, the Berserker Physique first stage had to be completed before he could switch to another body refinement technique. He didn't want to risk damaging his body by switching to a more complex body refinement technique when his body was only half-refined.

Michael focused on the foundation of his body for the next few days. He had already adapted to the changes in his body after his War Rune reached Tier-1, but he still felt a little bit uncomfortable.

He made too many gains in the past few days, fused with two new Soultraits, and he upgraded three out of four Soultraits as well. Furthermore, he obtained a new weapon; Seron Voulge. Michael had to study his body, the true limit of his Soultraits – including all changes that happened after upgrading the star rating of his Soultraits –, and he had to pay attention to the development of his territory.

It was important that he paid equal attention to all of the above and neglected neither of them. Michael didn't want any major issues to happen.

As such, three days passed in the blink of an eye. The territory development progressed smoothly, and the citizens found joy in finding out more about their new friends and companions.

Everyone grew closer to him, which was reflected in the strengthened Links of Loyalty. They represented how loyal the subjects were to their Lord and territory, and how much they believed in him.

The Links of Loyalty also showed clearly how much they loved being in the territory. Their satisfaction was also a factor that determined the firmness of their Link of Loyalty!

That was also part of the reason why Michael worked so hard to ensure that everyone felt welcomed in his territory.

Michael was usually present to welcome two new 1-Star Summons into his territory. It was part of his routine to ensure that his subjects would get to know their Lord and that the Links of Loyalty would form properly.

But on the third day, something unexpected happened.

A 2-Star Berserker stepped out of the Summoning Gate.

Michael received a 2-Star Berserker from his daily summoning!

"That's actually possible?!?"

Chapter 124 Brothers

Removing the impurities of the Summoning Cores had a great effect. It was even possible to summon 2-Star Summons now though the probability was extremely low.

This was good to know for the future. And the benefits made Michael's desire to procure more Summoning Cores increase drastically. Unfortunately, it was not that easy to get more Summoning Cores. Nobody would sell their Summoning Cores, at least not if they had even a shred of sanity left in their mind.

Michael could only wait and stay up to date with the Starnet market, hoping to be lucky enough to find a Summoning Core being auctioned.

To stay up-to-date, Michael had to leave the Origin Expanse every day. However, that was something he would have done regardless.

Michael wanted to spend some more time with his brother before it was too late, and he had to leave for the academy. He had been notified that he got accepted into the Sapphire Lake Military Academy and that the accepted students would depart at the end of the month. That meant they had only a week left and Michael wanted to make good use of it!

Thus, Michael sent his brother a message whenever he returned home. He used his time efficiently and made a few trips to the Central Trading Hall to sell goods and purchase more ingredients for the Master Alchemist, ores for the Weaponsmith, and enough seeds, herbs, and other plants he wanted to grow in his territory.

However, his shopping trips were merely an excuse to spend more time outside the Origin Expanse. Michael hoped that his brother would return and respond to his messages while he was also outside the Origin Expanse and in the Central Trading Hall.

Unfortunately, stalling time didn't provide any fruitful results. Danny seemed truly busy and didn't return home, so Michael went back to the Origin Expanse gloomily.

It was only three days later when Michael finally received the message he had been looking forward to.

[Danny: Little fool, aren't you a bit too anxious? And here I thought you'd gotten calmer. Looks like I need to test my eyes again!]

Danny was clearly joking with Michael, but Michael felt like throwing fists. Yet, instead of throwing insults at his brother, he snickered and typed a short message.

[Michael Fang: Where are you? Let's meet up!!]

After a little back and forth, the brothers found a nice place to dine. The gluttonous brothers knew that they would talk for a while, which is why they chose a big restaurant chain with savory meals and a private dining room to chat without anyone bothering them.

They met up after half an hour and took their seats at the dining table, and Danny started with a big order of more than a dozen dishes.

Meanwhile, Michael observed his brother from head to toe. Danny had gotten much taller than before, and his hair had grown a lot. However, he looked sleep-deprived and exhausted.

"Did you not sleep since our last meeting?" Michael asked worriedly. He couldn't believe that his brother looked so exhausted and pale and felt concerned about his health. This appearance of Danny was far from the usual.

"At least, I don't look like a baby. Just look at you. Did someone throw you into a furnace, or what?" Danny retorted, ignoring his younger brother's question.

Danny may be tired, but he was not blind. He also knew that Michael would never shave his head, forget about his eyebrows.

Either Michael had been bullied during the aptitude assessment, or something happened to his territory. But Danny did not have to wait long for the answer.

"A group of Lionhearts Adventurers invaded my territory before the aptitude assessment. I was almost too late with my breakthrough," Michael answered in all honesty. His expression turned sour and he sighed deeply, "Too many brave subjects died to stall time and make sure that I can complete my first natural cleansing without any worries."

Danny turned serious when he heard what his brother said. He had hoped that Michael wouldn't have to face the invasion of other Adventurers that soon. Unfortunately, it was not an uncommon occurrence.

Michael was lucky to be in the territory and that he broke through to Tier-1 just in time, otherwise, things could have gotten worse.

"Did you already install a large-scale Orb of Hostility? If you don't have one, make sure to buy one. I can give you a few modification codes. That way, you'll be informed when many hostile lifeforms invade your territory. This works outside the Origin Expanse as well," Danny advised Michael before he carefully added,

"The energy consumption of the Orb of Hostility will increase drastically, but you will be glad to be informed if your territory is under attack even when you're outside the Origin Expanse."

Michael's ears perked up.

"I'll take the modification codes. Thanks!" He agreed immediately.

Danny smiled, opened the holographic screen of his crystal watch, and sent Michael a few documents.

"If you need anything else, just tell me. I gained a lot from the expedition. It was a great success," Danny revealed nonchalantly.

However, Michael could only shake his head.

'You look like you're on the verge of collapsing. Take care of yourself first!' Michael shouted in his mind, but he said something else out loud.

"I can take care of my expenses now. You don't have to worry about me!"

After that was said, the two brothers talked about all kinds of things. Their topics were mostly related to the Origin Expanse, their experiences, and their future plans.

Danny revealed less about his future plans and mostly listened to his brother.

"By the way, I think it was a good choice for you to join the Saphirelake Military Academy," Danny said suddenly, "I researched the Saphirelake Military Academy a little bit and found out that most instructors and professors are high-ranked Lords and renowned Adventurers.

The Academy didn't shy away from spending a fortune to ensure that the youngest generation will be taught with the best resources and aided by the cream of the crop. As long as you can ensure that someone takes note of your hard work and progress, you'll have it much easier. If you can become a Battle Representative and defeat some Berserker or Warlock Centaurs, the teachers and instructors will give you special treatment.

You won't have to worry about resources, forget about your military rank by then!"

Danny was excited right now as he spoke about his younger brother's future. This was a rare sign, and it was confusing.

'If you're so excited for me, why didn't you apply as well?' Michael wanted to ask, but he didn't dare to.

He knew that Danny was not the same as him.

Danny was cold and distant from anyone other than him. Michael was the only person Danny was close to.

He wouldn't allow others to order him around, no matter how much authority the other party had, or how strong they were. Furthermore, Daniel Fang hated the corruption rampant in the Big Five Universities and the Great Three Academies. He had heard enough stories about the attitude of the Great Clans, Supreme Families, and the High Nobles, and how they could do as they pleased as long as they used their power and influence.

It was disgusting.

Yet, at the same time, Daniel Fang loved the extraterrestrials. He was very intrigued by the Tritan Alliance, the Berserker race, and the Warlock Centaurs. In fact, he was already acquainted with some of them, and he loved their culture and behavior.

In the future, Danny planned to travel to Kelta and make his way to the Berserker and Warlock Centaurs. That was one of his big goals!

Michael was also very interested in extraterrestrial races. However, his curiosity was different from Danny's.

He knew about corruption and favoritism from an early age along with being aware of how powerful big families could be. Their influence was enough to suppress weaker families and force others to obey their commands. Despite that, Michael would rather face his opponents head-on than avoid them.

He had been bullied in the past but had overcome this ordeal through his hard work and tenacity.

Furthermore, not all big families were bad. Alice Zenovia was kind and straightforward. She may look cold and fierce on the outside, but she was a good person.

Michael didn't want to give up on humanity and travel to other races with the thought of migrating just because some people treated him badly at his home planet.

That didn't sit right with him.

Danny noticed that Michael was deep in thought.

He smiled mischievously and flicked his younger brother's forehead with great force.

"Little Fool, are you down for a spar?"

Chapter 125 Spar

"I will restrict my strength to the Lowest-stage of Tier-1 since my Soultrait will still be stronger than yours," Danny said lightly as he stepped out of the changing room.

After filling their stomachs to the brim, they searched for the closest training hall where they could rent an arena to spar.

Michael was already in his combat clothes while wearing the Onyx Dragon Armor Set on top. He wielded Seron Voulge in one hand and swirled it around playfully.

His stance changed once Danny entered the arena wielding a wooden sword, and he turned serious.

Danny might not use an Artifact, and he restricted his strength drastically, but that didn't mean Michael could take this spar lightly. Michael knew that his brother's 5-Star Soultrait was not something that could be taken lightly, especially not after it had been nourished by a Peak Tier-2 War Rune, and the Links of Loyalty of far more than ten thousand subjects.

Danny had even a few subjects with a True Link of Loyalty.

His Soultrait was most definitely greatly nourished and extremely powerful! Even an ordinary wooden sword became a deadly weapon in Danny's hands.

"Show me how much stronger you have become since our last spar!" Danny exclaimed while also changing his combat stance.

He pulled his sword-arm back and stretched his other hand out. His left foot moved forward and the heel under his right foot separated from the ground a little.

Danny took a deep breath and exhaled heavily. As he exhaled, a silver membrane shrouded the wooden sword. The wooden sword looked like it had transformed into a mythical silver sword as it began to exude terrifying pressure.

Michael felt as if inertia increased suddenly as Danny began to use his 5-Star Soultrait [Reinforced Sword Qi].

It was not the first time Michael saw Danny's Reinforced Sword Qi, however, it was the first time that Danny aimed his Reinforced Sword Qi at him.

Right now, they were not brothers, who held each other dearly. No, they were opponents with the desire to win against their opponent.

Michael swallowed his saliva hard and activated Lesser Enhancement on all of his Artifacts to increase his strength as much as possible. He exerted the Eagle Eyes Soultrait to its full capacity as well.

Danny could only see a golden shimmer in his brother's black eyes, and the white hue shrouding Michael's Artifacts.

"Multip—...." Danny started, but he was interrupted by the countdown that the arena's AI started automatically after the brothers had changed into a combat stance.

[3!]

[2!]

[1!]

[Fight!]

Michael burst forth like a lightning bolt the moment the battle started. He thrust Seron Voulge straight at Danny's throat the moment he was in his brother's range.

Danny reacted in time, diverting the trajectory of Michael's thrust with the wooden sword. He strode forward and smacked his empty hand against Seron Voulge's shaft.

Simultaneously, he swiftly changed the wooden sword's position and slashed down at Michael.

Michael wanted to move Seron Voulge to block Danny's attack with the shaft, but the flick against the Voulge's shaft shattered Michael's rhythm and momentum.

He reacted instinctively using the subtle details he could see in Danny's movements and twisted his body. Simultaneously, he used his remaining momentum to kick Danny.

Danny terminated his attack to evade Michael's kick. He changed his strategy and regained his momentum in an instant and started the second attack.

Michael used the opportunity to step back, swirl Seron Voulge around his body, and regain his momentum. He could subtly determine where Danny was heading and what his next move would be. The way Danny moved, the way he held his weapon, and the way his eyes subtly glanced in the direction he would move next provided more than enough information to initiate a counterattack even before Michael was attacked.

He used Seron Voulge's mid-range and lengthy blade to his advantage and kept Danny at bay with a slice in his direction. Danny evaded the attack and shot toward Michael. However, Michael had predicted that.

A voulge was not only a saber-like weapon but a mix between a staff and a curved blade. Michael moved Seron Voulge around and smashed the blunt lower end against the wooden sword's flat side.

The impact of the wooden sword shook Michael heavily. He expected Danny to be the one, who suffered from the hard impact, but Danny's Reinforced Sword Qi burst forward. It reflected the force and pushed everything onto Michael.

Following that, Danny's empty hand shot forward, shaped like a blade and mantled in Reinforced Sword Qi.

'Your hand is not a fucking sword, bro!' Michael shouted in his mind as the silver Reinforced Sword Qi shot closer to his abdomen. Danny's flat hand was about to pierce the Onyx Dragon Armor Set when Michael's mind and body reacted simultaneously.

First, several Spirit Whips appeared out of nowhere and whipped Danny with full force simultaneously.

Second, Michael's body began to creak as he used his highly advantageous agility and perception to twist his body at an uncomfortable angle.

Michael evaded the attack, and Danny staggered – surprised by the sudden mental attack.

Spirit Whip was only a 1-Star Soultrait with short range and weak power output. However, it was also extremely cheap to manifest a Spirit Whip, and it didn't require much mental power to control them.

Michael only had to target someone while activating Spirit Whip to lash out at them. Using Spirit Whip several times in the same instance was also possible – though the energy consumption increased exponentially.

Danny restricted his strength, but he never restricted his willpower and mind's natural defensive mechanism. He was not prepared against the Spirit Whips, but they weren't lethal to someone like Danny either.

Their strength was merely enough to startle him once.

But that was already enough for Michael. He used the momentum to thrust Seron Voulge deep in his brother's stomach. At least, that was what Michael intended to do.

Danny's body suddenly disappeared as silver fumes filled the air. A huge human-sized silver sword had manifested in front of Danny surprising Michael. Danny had condensed the Reinforced Sword Qi to create the sword, which blocked Michael's attack easily.

The human-sized sword dispersed in all directions before it reshaped itself into ten short-swords. They were all levitating mid-air and moved according to Danny's will.

Danny just smiled seeing Michael's wide-open eyes. He dashed forward while giving the Reinforced Sword Qi short-swords the same order. They shot toward Michael with terrifying velocity and impacted in the next moment.

Danny didn't even think of terminating the onslaught of attacks when he saw the protection enchantments all over Michael's Onyx Dragon Armor Set shining brightly.

Michael used most of his energy to activate the protection enchantments to block the Reinforced Sword Qi that impacted hard all over his body. He stayed focused on Danny and slashed at him. However, Danny disappeared from sight once again.

Not even his Eagle Eyes could find Danny anymore.

His brother had just disappeared into thin air.

But In the next second, something blunt smacked hard against his body.

Blood splattered through the air and his entire field of vision was filled with swords manifested from silver Reinforced Sword Qi.

The next second, a wooden sword pressed against his neck from behind.

"Not good enough, little fool!"

Chapter 126 Last Week

After their spar, the brothers decided to spend more time together until Michael's departure.

Danny grew increasingly interested in Michael's Soultraits, and the fact that his younger brother possessed multiple Soultraits. Meanwhile, Michael was more interested in Danny's stories about the Primedival Pyramid, and everything related to it.

Michael wanted to use Danny's combat prowess as a threshold to roughly determine how strong he had to be to conquer an ancient ruin on the same level as the Primedival Pyramid –without turning the conquest into a suicidal attack. He presumed that the Temple of the Forgotten was, at least, as dangerous as the Primedival Pyramid, if not more dangerous.

The problem was just that the Temple of the Forgotten was much older than the Primedival Pyramid, yet it was still intact and emitting terrifying pressure.

Learning more about the Primedival Pyramid and its dangers was very important to Michael. Thus, Danny began to tell him more about his most recent experiences, and the death of thousands of powerful and loyal subjects.

Compared to last time Danny revealed something about the Primedival Pyramid's outer perimeters, this time it was far more terrifying. Danny had lost more than half of his military might, and he had to rebuild his army now.

Michael was forcefully dragged out of his dreams to conquer the Temple of the Forgotten in the next few weeks as he heard Danny's experience. It was simply not feasible to conquer the Temple of the Forgotten without more thorough preparations!

The two brothers met up daily over the next few days. They met and spent half the day together talking about all kinds of things, including their Soultraits, Michael's future in the Sapphirelake Military Academy, and Danny's expedition.

The two sparred together daily, and they conducted research together as well. Their research was about the old tongue, and who could know more about the time before the Third Epoch.

Their research result was nothing surprising. The most astonishing find was that the Bersekers and Warlock Centaurs were much older than expected. The Awakened in their oldest generation might know something about the period before the Third Epoch, and the language used in that era.

Danny was not satisfied with the result of their research, but Michael didn't mind. He was just glad that he could spend some more time with his brother.

Ever since Danny became a Lord four years ago, they hardly found time to spend together. Michael understood that because he learned early on that Lords had a busy life filled with dangers.

Danny didn't think that it was important to meet up every day of the week since they could always make a video call, but Michael forced his brother to make sure that they spend as much time as possible together. Video calls were not the same as meeting in person.

Others may not agree with that, but Michael didn't really care about the opinion of others. They should mind their own business.

Thankfully Danny wasn't able to resist Michael's puppy eyes. They separated their schedule into two 12-hour periods and spent one of them together, while they used the other period to take care of all business within the Origin Expanse. Half a day outside the Origin Expanse was worth a full day inside.

24 hours were more than enough to sleep, manage the territory, spend some time with his subjects, workout a little, and train the Starless Summons that were willing to grasp a weapon and fight for their Lord and territory.

Michael was certain that the final week before his departure was one of a kind in his life. At least, it was the best week he could remember.

In this short span of seven days, he had grown much closer with Danny, who, in turn, had grown more comfortable with revealing more information about his territory, the way he reigned his subjects, and that he was known as the Lone Wolf of the Sacred Desert.

Michael learned about Danny's lord title, and the name of his region for the first time. Feeling curious, he researched his brother's region and his title in secret.

The research was quite fruitful. Michael got to know more about the Sacred Desert, and his brother, the Lone Wolf.

The Sacred Desert was a humongous region with various tribes, nomads, and unique Desert races. Various monsters lived in the Sacred Desert, the weakest being Mid Tier-0 Monsters living in large groups.

Most lone Monsters were Tier-1, and there were many stronger Monsters closer to the center of the Sacred Desert.

Apparently, the Lone Wolf of the Sacred Desert conquered the southern outskirts of the Sacred Desert, turning everything into his territory. Many stories revolving around the Lone Wolf existed, and they were both terrifying and extremely interesting.

The stories showed Michael clearly how powerful his brother had grown in merely four years, and how terrifying his reign was to the Lords and tribes living near his territory.

He obliterated all of his opponents without mercy and punished those who were brazen enough to offend him.

Danny was still only a Tier-2 Lord, but that was mostly due to the foundation of his territory. The Lone Wolf spent most of his time inside the Origin Expanse to create an indomitable foundation for his territory. This foundation was what allowed him to wage war against an alliance of Tier-3 Lords and emerge as the sole winner.

The Alliance of Tier-3 Lords died miserably, and so did their army. Their territories were bulldozed and conquered by the Lone Wolf and the survivors of his Desert Corps.

That was crazy.

Michael and his subjects would have to suffer a lot upon encountering an unscathed Tier-2 Monster, even after the mass summoning. That was how strong Tier-2 Monsters were, and how important it was to make sure that your Summons were given enough time to increase their refinement degree, and Tier.

Yet, Danny fought alone against an Alliance of Tier-3 Lords, and he emerged victorious!

That was simply mind-boggling as well as exciting.

Michael saw his brother in a different light from that point onward. It was like Danny's aura changed suddenly.

Unfortunately, the week was way too short. The last day of the month arrived much faster than expected, and even Danny was at a loss.

He didn't expect time to pass this quickly. It felt like their sparring session had just started, and it was already over.

The week felt like a blur; now, the brothers would be separated. Danny was glad that he listened to Michael's proposal. He felt like he would have regretted it if they hadn't met up that often before his younger brother's departure. It was truly worth it to postpone a few meetings in the Origin Expanse to spend more time with Michael.

Who knew when they would meet again?

"Why didn't you join the Sapphirelake Military Academy as well?" Michael complained quietly to his brother when it was about time for him to depart.

He had to reach the spaceship harbor and meet up with the other soon-to-be freshmen.

"I'm almost at the 3rd Tier, and I have to put my entire focus on the Primedival Pyramid. Plundering the Sarkophag of the Forgotten Pharaoh will take up most of my time. I might have to spend years to reach the core region, and splitting the little bit of time I have to study in the Saphirelake Military Academy will be a waste of time for me!" Danny explained resolutely.

Their situations were different.

Danny always took care of himself. He spent years studying, procuring knowledge, and learning various martial arts from all over Elyra. Danny even paid Adventurers from other races inside the Origin Expanse to teach him their martial arts. He spent a fortune and much more time than necessary traveling and learning from people, who were not even Instructors.

They shared their experiences while practicing their Martial Arts, rather than the most efficient ways to master them. Danny found this approach to be far more interesting than things taught by instructors.

That was why he was not too keen to enroll himself in the Saphirelake Military Academy. The Instructors were mankind's cream of the crop, and the network system possessed the vast majority of books and tomes collected by mankind.

Michael was in dire need of more knowledge. He didn't want to spend years traveling around – possibly without any results and it wouldn't harm to reap more benefits from the Saphirelake Military Academy either.

Thus, he told himself to broaden his horizon by joining the Saphirelake Military Academy.

It was the path that was the most efficient, and offered most opportunities!

Chapter 127 Harbor

"Good luck!" Danny said when Michael departed.

His expression turned sour as he saw Michael's fleeting back and he was at a sudden loss.

"If you die, I will come and find you in hell. So don't even think about it!!!" Danny shouted, his voice echoing loudly through the hallway.

Michael's entire body shook when he heard his brother's words, but he didn't turn around.

He knew that his resolve would crumble and he would dissolve in tears if he turned back to see Danny one more time before departing, and he didn't want to cry.

'It's only a few years. That's nothing.' Michael told himself.

'Just call him every now and then, and it will be fine. Nothing much will change compared to the last few years.' He reassured himself before he slapped his cheeks hard.

'Don't be a crybaby and get your act together!'

Michael reached the ground floor, entered the shuttle he had hailed, and they departed.

Overwhelmed by his emotions, Michael kept staring out of the window for the next two hours. The shuttle left the city in ten minutes and began to accelerate until it reached a speed of more than 600 kilometers per hour.

Michael didn't want to dwell too much on his departure from home. Thus, he focused more on what to do next once he stepped inside his territory.

The territory expanded fast, and the Bilrox younglings had fully matured by now. The Bilrox ranch had been expanded as well, and it was about time to make use of it.

For now, Michael didn't want to conquer other territories or wreak havoc in the Untamed Jungle. Instead, he believed that it was far more important to create an indomitable foundation just like his brother did.

Contrary to Danny, Michael was in possession of the Extraction Soultrait. This provided various benefits, including a vast influx of Summoning Scrolls, blueprints, the ability to dissect corpses perfectly and harvest a huge pile of resources in no time.

Michael's foundation would be different from the indomitable foundation Danny had built up over the course of several years. Of course, that didn't mean his foundation would be worse.

In fact, Michael was certain that he had the means to build an even stronger foundation than his brother!

The only issue was that Michael hadn't heard any news of the powerhouse backing the Lionhearts so far. Most people believed that no news was good news. However, Michael would rather be up-to-date and informed about his opponents than stay an ignorant fool – unprepared and standing on the edge of a cliff without even realizing it.

'It's about time that I travel to Xiltra,' Michael told himself in the shuttle.

Lilica was the only one who might know something about the person backing the Lionheart Adventurer Team, and her EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team was stationed in Xiltra.

'But let's settle down in the spaceship first.' Michael reminded himself as a ginormous construction entered his sight far away at the horizon.

The immense structure of Elyra's spaceship harbor was situated within a colossal, domed structure spanning several square kilometers.

The dome was constructed using advanced, translucent materials, allowing natural light to filter through. The exterior looked sleek and streamlined, which was different from the huge metal pipes and rough structure Michael had expected to see.

As the shuttle approached the spaceship harbor, Michael realized many things.

The interior was designed to maximize the usable space, with support beams seamlessly integrated into the structure. There was more than enough space for dozens of shuttles to pass through the entrance simultaneously.

The shuttle slowed down upon entering the perimeter of the spaceship harbor. Security drones appeared around the shuttle, requesting Michael to identify himself and state his reason for arrival.

Michael wasn't surprised by this. He had already been given the Security and Defense protocol document which included a list of rules, and documents one had to bring to be allowed to leave the planet.

Michael had prepared everything, so he quickly passed through the identification with his Lord ID, travel documents, biometric scanners, and so on. It might seem like a hassle to some, but it was actually convenient. He didn't even have to leave the shuttle.

Once he passed through the security check, Michael's gaze took in the spaceship harbor and he looked around with wide eyes. It was truly fascinating.

Not only was the defense system of Elyra's spaceship harbor one of the most advanced autonomic defensive systems created by mankind, but the spaceship harbor was also one of the safest in the solar system.

Energy shields capable of blocking psionic beams and attacks of planetary-level powerhouses were installed, and a highly trained security force to maintain order was also present to act swiftly in case of an emergency.

Michael felt safe and sound as the spaceship made it inside the spaceship harbor, which boasted of a futuristic aesthetic just like one would imagine. Sleek lines, polished surfaces, and minimalist design. Holographic displays and interactive interfaces were integrated into the walls and walkways next to the shuttle hallway, providing real-time information and navigation assistance.

Overall, Michael felt as if he had been transported to a different world.

Laki was already one of the most modern cities on Elyra, and the spaceship harbor was on a completely different level.

The entire ambiance exuded a sense of the extraterrestrial – or how Michael imagined outer space to be like. It made his heart beat faster and ignited the excitement of exploring outer space.

"Amazing!" He blurted out in awe as the shuttle took a turn to the right, where his destination was waiting for Michael.

He was greeted by an array of docking bays, each capable of accommodating multiple spaceships simultaneously. The bays were spacious, one bigger than the other, with towering walls and a high ceiling.

'None of those spaceships is for us...just how big will our spaceship be?' Michael wondered as he looked at the serial number of the spaceships they passed by, wondering which one was theirs. One was bigger than the other, yet none of the serial numbers corresponded to their spaceship.

Only a few spaceships were left at the docking bay, and they were the biggest. The spaceship they would use to travel to Kelta had to be the size of a small town!

Michael's heart skipped a beat when he thought about traveling in a town-sized spaceship. It had always been one of his goals to travel to space, and he was finally about to achieve one of his bigger goals.

It felt like a dream came true. He was excited like a little child, grinning from ear to ear at the sight of the humongous spaceships.

Meanwhile, the shuttle continued to fly through the humongous spaceship harbor, looking like a tiny ant.

After a few minutes, they reached the end of the docking bays. The shuttle stopped and descended to the ground.

Michael stepped out of the shuttle where he was greeted by a crowd of people exuding terrifying pressure, and a large group of serious-looking young men and women.

'So it's already starting?' He mused to himself.

Michael swallowed his saliva sensing the seriousness hanging in the air.

Chapter 128 Freshman

Most freshmen, who made it past the aptitude assessment in Elyra, had already arrived in the spaceship harbor. Their bodies were tense and they were impatiently waiting for the boarding command.

The Professors, Instructors, and remaining staff, who had supervised the aptitude assessments had already arrived as well, but nobody boarded the metallic gray spaceship.

Michael, who had been excited and smiling brightly like a little child, was feeling pumped up and looking forward to this new chapter in his life.

He looked at his fellow freshmen and felt goosebumps spreading all over his body.

'This is much more serious than I expected. It is about to get real.'

Michael thought that the competition between students would be harsh, but he never expected everyone to think of each other as rivals even before they arrived at the academy.

Wasn't it better to stay amiable in the spaceship at the very least?

Michael was glad that his crystal watch rang as his gaze moved through the crowd of students and Instructors. It pulled his attention away from the tense atmosphere around him.

However, the notification he received was not what he expected.

'A message from Alice?'

Curious, Michael opened the messenger.

[Alice Zenovia(fierce beauty): Make use of the time you spend in space. Most groups and cliques are formed on the way to the academy! It will be much easier to have a friend or two for future group assignments!]

'?'

Michael stared at Alice's message for a while, confused and unsure what to do with this information.

Traveling to Kelta would take roughly 30 days according to the documents he received from the administration of the academy. That meant he roughly had 60 days to spend inside the Origin Expanse. Was it really necessary to go out of his way and make friends with other Lords and Adventurers right now? It was not as if he couldn't do that later as well.

Furthermore, he was busy and had a lot to do in his territory.

He typed something on the holographic screen in front of him when he noticed a commotion in front of him.

The staff had formed a line and were slowly boarding the spaceship!

Michael closed the messenger and diverted his focus to the boarding staff and the spaceship.

He saw a few familiar faces, including Silverian Schild, and Harry Baren boarding the spaceship. However, his attention was quickly pulled over to an even more familiar face. A fierce beauty was under the spotlight and everyone's gaze was upon her.

It was Alice Zenovia, and she was boarding the spaceship to Kelta.

"What the..." Michael blurted out loud before he shut his mouth tightly.

'What the hell is Alice doing here?'

Michael stared blankly at Alice Zenovia as the fierce beauty boarded the spaceship. He was confused, to the extent that not a single coherent thought formed in his mind for a while.

His brain was malfunctioning, and it took him a while to put the pieces together.

'So that's why it was so easy for her to apply to the Sapphirelake Military Academy in my stead? She is one of the Professors or a Combat Instructor!'

Michael also saw Kaleb Zenovia boarding the spaceship right after Alice, but he didn't pay much attention to Alice's idiotic brother. He was more interested in Alice, the other Professors, and the staff who had supervised the aptitude assessment across Elyra.

'Why are there so many Professors and Combat Instructors present? It's not really necessary for all of them to travel across space just to have them supervise the aptitude assessment and pick up the freshmen that were accepted. That's just weird.'

Michael was sure that there were some reasons behind it, but he didn't waste his time pondering over it. Once the time was ripe, he would naturally get to know what was going on.

Hence, he focused more on the Dekalos-class spaceship. It was known for its imposing appearance, living up to its glory of being a formidable interstellar spaceship.

Its angular design exuded a sense of power and advanced technology. The exterior was constructed with the combination of metallic alloys derived from the Origin Expanse, giving it a robust and durable outer shell, and the means to engrave enchantments across its entire hull. The Dekalos-class spaceship featured a distinctive forward section with a bulging structure housing the primary bridge.

The bridge was adorned with a network of control consoles and advanced holographic displays, allowing the crew to monitor and operate the ship's various systems with precision.

The main body of the spaceship was huge and it extended further with a series of sleek and angular sections. These sections housed a range of vital components, including the engine compartments, weapon systems, and hangar bays. The hangar bays, positioned on the sides of the ship, were enclosed by a massive blast door that could be opened to employ smaller spacecraft or retrieve personal supplies.

The propulsion system was located at the rear, consisting of powerful origin sunlight, and catalytic suntar hyperdrive engines of the Hyper-Beast series. These engines enabled the ship to achieve incredible speeds, allowing interstellar travel and to leave the solar system.

Why did Michael know all of that?

It was very simple.

Michael loved the Dekalos-class spaceship, and he had researched a lot about it before he awakened!

He had sworn to himself that if he wouldn't manifest a War Rune, that he would become the Captain of a Dekalos-class spaceship.

Now that he was a Lord, Michael obtained the chance to board a Dekalos-class spaceship and inspect it from within.

How lucky!

Michael ignored everyone else around him, and he completely forgot about Alice – and her message. His entire focus was on the spaceship's interior and he couldn't stop marveling at it when it was finally freshmen's turn to enter the Dekalos-class spaceship.

Time seemed to fly and close to two hours passed in the blink of an eye. Michael found himself inside the Dekalos-class spaceship, where he was led to his cabinet.

Everyone was given a small cabinet. It was nothing special and consisted just of a small bed, a safety chair that had to be used when the spaceship set off, and during the landing, and an empty space big enough for a Runic Gate to manifest.

That was everything; a cabinet with a length of three meters and a width of three meters.

That much space was more than enough for Michael. He could wash up, brush his teeth, and shower in the big bathroom on the floor. Being able to get an isolated cabin where nobody could bother him was already great, even if it was unlikely that he would be using it often.

Sleeping outside the Origin Expanse just to sit in that small cabin was a waste of precious time. Sleeping in the Origin Expanse was far more time-efficient.

That was also why most Awakened would enter the Origin Expanse to sleep and return once they woke up.

After all, it was possible to manifest a Runic Gate in a moving vessel. The Runic Gate would be anchored to the place it was manifested, not the point in space. If Michael entered the Origin Expanse inside his small cabin, he would emerge in his cabin even if his spaceship moved hundreds of thousands of kilometers forward!

'There should be some time left before we depart, right? It won't be a problem if I walk around a bit...surely it won't!' Michael mused with a childish smile as he opened the door to his cabin.

However, it was at this moment that a stewardess walked past his room. She halted in her tracks with a professional smile on her lips.

"I know that it's exciting to travel to space in such a big spaceship, but please sit down and put on your seatbelt. We will depart soon. You will have more than enough time to inspect everything once we're in the air!" The stewardess said, still smiling.

Michael pressed his lips together, nodded, and closed the door to his cabin again. He sat down on the seat and fastened a total of three seatbelts, two around his shoulders and one around his waist.

He received a few notifications on his crystal watch, saying that it was connected to the network of the spaceship.

It was only then that he saw a few notifications in the public channel.

[Saphirelake Military Academy: Notification to all freshmen. By entering the Dekalos-class spaceship you've officially become freshmen at the Saphirelake Military Academy. Hereby, the fight for resources begins.]

[Saphirelake Military Academy: The first task as a freshman will be to increase your strength until we arrive in Kelta. A second aptitude assessment will be held once we arrive in Kelta. All information collected during the aptitude assessment will be used to determine your progress in the next 30 days.

We don't have any mandatory courses, but the Instructors will give pointers during the day. Spend your time as you wish inside the Origin Expanse and outside and be ready for the day we arrive. Tests will not be postponed and those who won't improve will receive a negative mark. We don't like slackers!]

[Saphirelake Military Academy: Of course, there will be a reward. →The freshman with the highest progress will be rewarded with a Summoning Core!]

"A Summoning Core?!?"

It was at this moment that chaos erupted... and the spaceship had yet to depart.

Chapter 129 Leaving Elyra

With an additional Summoning Core, Michael could get one more 1-Star Summon every day. There was even a low chance of obtaining a 2-Star Summon. The only thing he had to do was use Extraction on the Summoning Core!

However, Michael also knew that his progress wouldn't be fast now that he became a Tier-1 Lord. Others would advance from Peak Tier-0 to Lowest Tier-1, and they were likely to obtain more points for their progress than Michael.

After all, Michael could only advance to Low Tier-1 from the Lowest-grade if he were to put everything aside and join his small army to fight day in day out for a whole month. That was how much energy the War Rune required to advance to Low-grade Tier-1. The higher the grade, the more effort and energy required.

Furthermore, Michael promised himself to build an unbreakable foundation.

He chose to disregard the 1st prize of the competition, even though Michael would love to obtain one more Summoning Core. He had other plans to execute.

And while he was deep in thought, Michael didn't even notice that the spaceship began to shake, or that the spaceship harbor's ceiling separated. Michael was too distracted to notice as the spaceship set off. Only when they accelerated did he sense that something was amiss.

The spaceship accelerated and it shot high in the air, while inertia almost slammed Michael hard into his seat.

At that point, Michael's eyes were fixed on the window in his small cabinet. He looked outside to witness Elyra's surface growing smaller in the distance. Slowly, the majestic celestial body was unveiled in its full glory. The majestic planet Michael called his home revealed its magnificent terrain, from the jagged peaks of mountain ranges, and the vast oceans covering most of the planet's surface, to the smooth curves of expansive plains.

The hues of Elyra's surface captivated Michael as the planet grew distant.

After a while, Michael felt the pressure lifting off of him just a little. He was not pressed into the seat anymore as the gravitational force pushing him down diminished.

Michael's hand reached out to the seatbelts, but he stopped midway. He knew that it was not yet time to release the seatbelts.

His gaze moved back to the window, where he witnessed a scene of unparalleled beauty. The inky blackness of space stretched out infinitely, dotted with countless shimmering stars. They all shone brightly making it look like a blanket dusted with stars, forming a magnificent cosmic tapestry.

Glimmers of distant galaxies, wisps of nebulae, and celestial clouds, revealed the immense cosmic forces shaping the universe.

As the spaceship glided through space, Michael saw a few glistening comets passing by. They looked small and harmless, but that couldn't be more wrong.

In this vast expanse, Michael and the other freshmen were the only things that were truly small and harmless. They were but a small speck of dirt in the vast expanse of the universe, a witness to the wonders of the infinitely big universe.

Once again, Michael was reassured that his dream of traveling through space and everything he had done so far was truly worth the effort. Traveling to space was a reminder of the sheer beauty and vastness that existed beyond the boundaries of Elyra.

It shook Michael's entire being and rekindled his adventurous spirit!

After gliding through space for less than twenty minutes, the feeling of weightlessness deteriorated. The inertia generator had been activated, artificially creating inertia inside the spaceship. The weightlessness of space was nullified.

The crystal watch rang, and a notification popped up in front of him the next moment.

[Inertia 1.5x the gravitational force on Elyra has stabilized. During the next 30 days, inertia will slowly increase to 3x gravity than Elyra to train the body and make it regulate to the gravity on Kelta. You may remove the seatbelts now.]

'Inertia three times higher than in Elyra...' Michael made a mental note and nodded his head.

He removed the seatbelt and got up from the seat.

Michael figured that it was time to make a plan and find out which lessons to attend in the next 30 days, and how to make the most use of the Saphirelake Military Academy's Network.

Freshmen had only an ordinary access rank to all the facilities of the Saphirelake Military Academy. This included the spaceship's shop, the Network System, and so on. Even if he procured Saphire points – the currency used in the Saphirelake Military Academy – it was not possible to procure everything Michael wanted to obtain.

He opened the Academy's Network and researched a few particular topics to determine how valuable the ordinary access rank was.

Unfortunately, it seemed like the ordinary access rank was slightly worse than the Golden Membership access of the Bartholomew Network.

'If I upgrade my access once or twice, I should be able to find out more about the old languages...probably...' Michael concluded, feeling more or less certain about his plan.

Improving his access to all facilities could be done by various means. Either, he had to secure a place for himself in the freshman rankings by getting the best grades, or he could use Saphire points to upgrade his access grade.

The former seemed easier because Michael had yet to find a way to procure Saphire points. Thus, it was time to leave the cabinet and move to the central hall where all Instructors, Professors, and Staff introduced their lessons and curriculum to the students.

The students could sign up and receive pointers from their future instructors, and professors.

Michael didn't rush to reach the central hall. He walked slowly, allowing others to pass by him while he carefully inspected the interior of the Dekalos-class spaceship.

Michael wasn't sure when he would be able to get such an opportunity the next time, and he wanted to make the most of it. It was not as if the instructors would run away, either way.

After satisfying his curiosity by walking through the hallways of the Dekalos-class spaceship, Michael reached the central hall.

Most freshmen had already arrived. There were a total of 1500 freshmen from Elyra, yet it looked like the central hall was not even half full. It didn't seem crowded, at all. That was mostly because bigger groups of freshmen had gathered around a few particular professors and instructors, while the minority surrounded other instructors.

Interestingly enough, there were even Combat Instructors, and Professors giving non-combat lessons where not a single soul had gathered.

Michael had yet to find out what he could learn from the respective instructors. He slowly made his way through the central hall, patiently watching the demonstration videos that were being shown on big screens to help the students understand what the Instructors' lessons would look like.

Michael didn't allow anyone to rush him. He made a few notes about particular lessons, watched their videos with great focus, and asked a bunch of questions before he walked to the next instructor.

After two hours, Michael was almost done. Only the three Professors surrounded by more than a hundred students each were left. The three Professors were talking to each other, not minding the crowd around them.

'Should I just squeeze my way through?' Michael wondered for a moment before he disregarded this idea. One of the three Professors left was Alice Zenovia. He wanted to ask her for pointers, but it was not really his intention to become one of a few hundred students.

The next 30 days were important, and Michael wanted to use them to build his foundation. A good foundation required great focus, and effort, which included that his teachers should be able to focus on him and immediately point out whenever he made a mistake. That way, wrong movements, and mistakes were fixed before they could turn into habits. That was crucial. After all, habits were hard to kill once imprinted into the mind.

'Having the entire focus of a Combat Instructor should be great. But then again, most Combat Instructors have a requirement of at least two, or four students, otherwise, their lessons will be canceled.' Michael thought while his eyes moved across the combat instructors.

He halted in his tracks when he saw a familiar face. It was Silverian Schild, the Combat Instructor supervising the Real Combat assessment. He was staring at Michael while standing pridefully in front of his empty stand.

Nobody wanted to join his course, however, that didn't seem to bother him in the slightest. On the contrary, he seemed to be relieved to not have students swarming around him, asking questions.

Michael recalled having watched the demonstration video in Silverian's stall. It was a terrifying demonstration where four students fought against each other fiercely while wearing heavyweight combat suits that had 'weight' enchantments engraved upon them.

Oddly enough, Michael wasn't bothered by the thought of wearing heavyweight combat armor.

He felt that it might actually be the best for him.

Michael had noticed that Berserker Physique worked quite decently with the additional pressure of 1.5 times the inertia weighing down on his body.

The issue with Silverian Schild's lesson was something else; four students had to sign up minimum for the classes to be conducted!

Nobody wanted to sign up, and Michael didn't have anyone to ask and sign up with him.

After all, he didn't have any friends.

'To think that something like this will hold me back...how pitiful...'

Chapter 130 Collecting Fools

'Maybe I can strike a deal and work four times harder to make up for the lack of students?'

Michael felt that asking strangers to join Silverian Schild's lesson wouldn't help. They may sign up, but it was highly likely that they would give up after a few days and never return.

He was in need of some people, who were as stubborn as he was, otherwise, the lesson would be canceled later.

As Michael approached Silverian Schild, he noticed someone staring coldly at him from further away.

It was Kaleb Zenovia.

Kaleb Zenovia was still 17, and not yet an Awakened, but it looked like he was also a freshman at the Saphirelake Military Academy. Michael figured that the Zenovia family used their connections to pull some strings to make sure that Kaleb could stay with his sister and enroll as a freshman in the academy once he awoke his War Rune.

Everyone in the Zenovia family was a Lord, and it was highly likely that Kaleb would become one as well. The probability of him manifesting a powerful Soultrait was also high. Thus, he was taken in by the Saphirelake Military Academy – after a generous donation, of course.

"What are you staring at, idiot?!" Kaleb asked coldly, his voice seething in anger at the sight of Michael.

Michael just smiled lightly in return. He didn't really feel anything upon looking at Kaleb. In fact, thanks to Kaleb, he earned quite a lot so he didn't have any bad feelings.

The gains Michael made thanks to Kaleb were tremendous. Not only did he finally get revenge on his bullies from high school due to the archery competition proposed by Kaleb Zenovia, but he also obtained the Siltang Bow, Seron Voulge, and the Onyx Dragon Armor Set – for free at that.

Kaleb was also the reason Alice Zenovia arrived at the afterparty of the graduation ceremony. Without Kaleb, Alice would have never noticed how valuable Tigerfang is, and their parents would have never given him 20 Mythic Summoning Scrolls either.

How could Michael dislike Kaleb?

Thinking about Kaleb's personality, Michael's smile widened. He instinctively took a step closer to Kaleb, who noticed that something was amiss.

He instinctively stepped back as Michael strode forward.

"What?!" Kaleb asked again, but much louder than before.

Some people turned around to see what was going on, only to see Kaleb Zenovia retreating a little. His short silky blue hair and handsome appearance caused various emotions to erupt in the people around him.

Kaleb Zenovia was handsome and charming, and he hailed from one of the Supreme Families. His name was enough to strike guys with envy and cause the hearts of the females to flutter.

Of course, Michael didn't care about any of that.

Kaleb glanced at his sister as if he was a puppy seeking help from his guardian. Alice had also noticed that Kaleb and Michael were face to face once again.

However, this time it was a little bit different.

Before Kaleb could say another word, Michael disappeared from his spot. He shot forward like a cannonball, and his right arm lunged forward.

In the next moment, Michael appeared in front of Kaleb, threw him over his shoulder and walked over to Silverian Schild. Kaleb tried to use every bit of force in his body to escape Michael's grasp, but he was

just an ordinary unawakened human. His physical strength might be exceptional, but that was only the case using the standards of ordinary humans.

Michael was a Tier-1 Lord, and he could hardly feel Kaleb's struggle. He ignored Kaleb's bickering and thrashing and only put down the young member of the Zenovia family on the ground when they arrived in front of Silverian Schild.

"We want to sign up. Please give us some pointers!" Michael bowed deeply while using some force to make Kaleb bow as well.

"Is that guy an idiot?" One of the onlookers asked loudly, "Who does he think he is?"

"That fool probably thinks this is a game, or maybe he just hit his head somewhere. Either way, he is stupid to think that he can force a Zenovia into doing something. This fool is clearly waiting for a beating!" A young man added.

"Maybe he wants to attract Professor Zenovia's attention by using her younger brother?" A young female student pointed out a possibility.

The others nodded their heads in unison. They recalled that Alice Zenovia was known for doting on her younger brother. She would never allow anyone to mistreat her brother!

"Will we be able to see the wrath of the Frozen Duchess today? Amazing!" The first guy exclaimed, clearly excited about the possibility of witnessing Alice's prowess up close.

Despite the commotion caused by Michael, Alice Zenovia didn't move an inch. She merely watched Michael and Kaleb from her position and upped her sense of hearing to figure out what was going on.

Kaleb stared coldly at Michael, however, there was also confusion in his eyes.

What the hell was Michael trying to do with him?!

However, Michael just smiled at the young Zenovia.

"Are you afraid to miserably lose against me... again?" He asked provokingly.

Michael's entire expression turned into a mocking smile, which caused Kaleb's expression to twist into one of pure hatred. He ground his teeth and clenched his fists. However, not a single word escaped his lips for a moment.

Kaleb could clearly recall what had happened the last time they met. Michael had played him, and made a fool out of him – in front of his sister at that!

"Just wait until my War Rune manifests!!"

"Okay. I will take that as an 'I am too afraid to compete with you. You are much stronger, better, and more handsome, either way.' That's the correct translation, or am I missing something?" Michael asked, taunting the young Zenovia again.

He smirked and turned his attention to Silverian Schild, ignoring Kaleb's face, which had turned as red as a tomato due to the immense anger that spread through his entire being.

Meanwhile, Silverian Schild could only look at Michael confused.

He clearly recalled Michael from his Real Combat assessment, and the Instructors' meeting afterward to determine the ranks of the students. Michael Fang didn't have an extraordinary background, and he shouldn't be familiar to Kaleb either. There was no instance where they could have met and become friends.

It didn't even look like they were friends, in the first place.

How did they get to know each other?

Either way, Silverian Schild felt that the situation was quite interesting. He glanced over to Alice Zenovia, who didn't interfere in Michael's actions and cleared his throat.

"Even if the two of you want to join my lesson, we need two more freshmen to join. Furthermore, Kaleb is not yet an Awakened, so I cannot train him a lot. Professor Zenovia would skin me alive if something was to happen to him. That means we need, at least, two more freshmen to join the course, otherwise, you'll end up wasting your time here!" Silverian explained impassively.

Michael frowned deeply but he turned his head in all directions a moment later. He didn't know many people, which made him recall what Alice had messaged him. She had suggested him to get to know a few more freshmen, otherwise, some courses would become a hassle in the future.

"What an idiot. Why is he willing to sign up for the Devilish Saint's training? Doesn't he know that his training caused mental trauma to more than 90% of his class in the last semester?" A familiar voice reached Michael's ears.

His ears perked up and he turned in the direction of the voice with a wide smile.

"I found another fool!"