

Supreme Lord 171

Chapter 171 Summoning Core

Michael quickly realized that it hadn't been necessary to threaten Lilica and the four members of her team.

Lilica's words from before weren't wrong either.

The Elders of the Forest Elven tribe didn't want anyone else to know about Michael's Soultrait. Instead, they wanted to get closer to him and find out more about his Soultrait's limit.

Because they had only clues and didn't know everything about Michael's capabilities, they could only be nice to him. After all, the only connection they had with him was the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team – and they had become his subordinates.

The Elders couldn't order them to kidnap Michael, which left cooperation as the only option for the time being.

But what Michael didn't expect to receive was a gift from the Elders.

Lilica and her team disappeared for a total of three days. They left the Origin Expanse and returned just as Michael wanted to leave after finishing the last preparations to land on Kelta.

However, Lilica arrived with a request when she returned from home.

"Please install the Forest Elf Summoning Core in your Summoning Gate!" She requested sincerely, stretching out her hand that held a whitish Summoning Core with faint green hues in several spots.

The Summoning Core looked beautiful, but Michael was a little bit baffled.

'Even if they want to give me something, isn't a Summoning Core too expensive? And why is she requesting the installation rather than saying it's a gift?' Michael wondered.

The most important difference between a gift and a request was that the former came with no strings attached.

Meanwhile, a request meant that the Forest Elves needed help, which is why they were willing to use a treasure such as a Forest Elf Summoning Core in exchange.

However, Michael quickly realized that the situation was not that simple.

The Forest Elf Summoning Core summoned only Forest Elves. That meant the Untamed Jungle would also turn into a part of the Forest Elves' spawn region – even if it was far in the future.

The probability of spawning in the Untamed Jungle as Forest Elves was minuscule, but it would increase ever so slightly as the number of Forest Elf Summons increased.

It would require more than a hundred thousand, possibly more Forest Elf Summons before one would take note of the increased probability, but it existed nonetheless.

That was also why many Lords didn't like special Summoning Cores of foreign races. In the first place, many didn't like foreign races, due to various reasons such as conflicts, wars, and discrimination.

But the Elders and Lilica thought that Michael was different. He treated everyone equally. Furthermore, more powerful subjects were always welcome in his territory.

Thus, there was no reason for him to reject the Forest Elf Summoning Core.

Michael would still be the Lord of his territory, but he wouldn't be an ordinary human Lord. The probability of him summoning Forest Elves would increase drastically, and it was possible that more Elven Lords would appear in or near the Untamed Jungle in the future.

"I don't think your Elders were willing to give up a Summoning Core merely to please me, or to increase the probability to spawn in the Untamed Jungle in the future. Were you instructed to ask for something in return, or did they just tell you to make the request, and nothing else?" Michael asked sharply, not falling victim to the boundless greed that dwelled inside him.

Lilica didn't expect Michael to be overjoyed. By now, Lilica learned more than enough about Michael to tell that he was rather vigilant when it came to situations such as this one.

However, she could only say what she had been told.

"Our Elders didn't say a lot. They mentioned that Extraction seems more powerful than the eye can fathom and that the tribe wants to further strengthen our relationship. The Summoning Core should show that their trust is worth more than just empty words of reassurance."

Michael knew that the Forest Elves loved his Nature Spirits. It made them feel like they were home. Other than the Summoning Core, the five Forest Elves brought many seeds and crystals from home to hand them over to the Nature Spirit. The seedling-type 4-Star Nature Spirit was something worth being nourished with great care. After all, its development path had yet to be chosen.

One way or another, Michael could tell that Lilica and the others must have told their Elders a lot about his territory, Soultrait, and personality. Otherwise, they would have never even considered giving him a Forest Elf Summoning Core.

And secretly, Michael was quite happy even though he looked sharp at Lilica and the others.

How could he not be happy? The Summoning Core reaffirmed that the Forest Elven Elders would stay quiet about his Soultrait. After all, no race would ever want to see the fate of their ancestors in the hands of another race's Lord.

If the Forest Elven Elders were not certain that they would never sever their ties with Michael, they wouldn't have given him the Forest Elf Summoning Core. It was a sign of great trust, which was something Michael regarded highly.

After all, they were willing to take a big risk by giving him the benefit of the doubt and trusting him much more than Michael gave them.

'Is that what they're trying to do? Gain my trust? Or is there more?'

Michael was not sure, but he could tell that the Elders trusted Lilica and her team members a lot. The Elders believed that their youngsters wouldn't make a mess and that they could maintain and improve the connection between Michael and the Forest Elves.

"I'm honored to hear that your Elders trust me enough to resurrect the deceased of your tribe in my territory. I will take great care of them!" Michael spoke sincerely as he retrieved the Forest Elf Summoning Core.

He walked over to the hatch of the Summoning Gate, used Extraction to extract some of the impurities within the Summoning Core, and installed it.

The Summoning Gate released a strong pulling force, dragging Michael closer to the hatch, where he installed the Forest Elf Summoning Core in no time.

The Summoning Gate began to hum loudly. Its energy pool began to ripple and the pressure around the large structure increased drastically.

Two brightly shining stars lit up in the Summoning Gate's metal frame, and the outlines of a skinny, tall man condensed.

A beautiful man, with large green eyes, long eyelashes, long pointed ears and a vivid smile on his face stepped out of the energy pool of the Summoning Gate. He held a longbow in his hand and winked in Michael's direction when he realized where he was.

Michael was surrounded by the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team, but everyone was a little bit stupefied.

"Looks like we're quite lucky today," Michael mumbled, looking at the Forest Elf Summon, who was a 2-Star Sharpshooter Summon.

Other than just once when Michael's daily summons brought him a 2-Star Berserker Michael had never summoned a 2-Star Summon without using a Mythic Summoning Scroll, or a Fortune Summoning Scroll.

In the last 30 days, Michael had been unable to collect Mythic Summoning Scrolls either. Even his ordinary summons had been rather unlucky these days, with only a few combat units joining his army.

Lilica and the others didn't understand what Michael meant, but they knew that it was not an ordinary event to add 2-Star Summons to the territory. Thus, they were quite happy. A Forest Elf Summon would become an important member in Michael's territory!

Michael was also quite satisfied. He knew that many Forest Elves had unique talents, which could be quite useful when summoned to his territory. He was curious about the progress of his territory and awaited it eagerly.

But at the same time, Michael fell deep in thought at the sight of the 2-Star Sharpshooter Forest Elf.

Seeing a new Forest Elf appear in his territory, Michael was reminded about the little information he had found about them in mankind's database.

'Elves are said to have had access to the Origin Expanse for more than ten thousand years. In that case, the Forest Elven tribe should be a 'little' bit older than mankind as well, right?'

Michael began to wonder if the Forest Elves could help him decipher the old tongue used by the Temple of the Forgotten.

'Maybe...'

Chapter 172 Origin Tongue

Because of the trust Michael was given, he made a choice.

He chose to show the Forest Elves the Temple of the Forgotten.

Exposing the Temple of the Forgotten to the Forest Elves could turn into a big blunder and his worst nightmare, but Michael decided to trust them – just like the Elders of the Forest Elves trusted him as well.

Furthermore, Liopham had already seen the outer area of the underground ecosystem when they conquered the lizard cave. The EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team would find out about the Temple of the Forgotten sooner or later, either way.

'If they've learned the old tongues, they might be able to help me decipher the language used by the Temple of the Forgotten!' Michael hoped.

He was not confident that the Forest Elves knew the languages, but they were more likely to know something than any human.

Thus, Michael led everyone to the lizard cave. Today was the last day of their conquest before Michael's life in the Sapphirelake Military Academy would truly begin.

Simultaneously, the deeper parts of the complex cavern system seemed too eerie and dangerous to enter. Michael considered destroying the tunnels to make sure that the miners could do their job without having to worry about their safety.

The preparations had already been completed, so all it took was a command to destroy the tunnel leading down into the abyss-like darkness of the cavern system.

But before that happened, Michael wanted to take a look at the cave tunnels.

It was easy to travel through the upper area of the cavern system. They had cleared this area by now, providing full access to the workers.

The middle area was a lot more difficult to travel through. Michael and his people encountered several smaller Monster groups and two larger groups of Monsters. Fortunately, it was quite easy to eliminate

the threats of the Monster groups. The Forest Elves targeted the strongest Monsters by inflicting severe injuries in the first ten seconds of the battle before they wore down their opponents.

Michael's army had expanded a lot during the last month. They gained lots of combat experience, equipment of high quality, and created various battle strategies that utilized every unit's strong points. Their weaknesses were balanced by the strength of their comrades, creating strong synergy and minimizing the rate of casualties.

Furthermore, with people such as Michael and Tiara on the frontlines, their team's chances of sustaining grievous injuries against Tier-1 Monsters, and smaller groups of Tier-2 Monsters reduced drastically as well. This was especially the case after Liopham's Rage of the Primal affected the whole Monster group.

The Forest Elves adapted quickly now that they were willing to cooperate, and Michael noticed that their Link of Loyalty had grown even firmer than before.

Seeing that Michael could summon a 2-Star Forest Elf Summon had a strong impact on their minds and Links of Loyalty.

"I think it's about time that we clear a small spot in the Underground Ecosystem," Michael announced.

At this announcement, Tiara, Blaire, and most of the other combatants looked at him with slight surprise.

Were they already strong enough to clear the Underground Ecosystem?

Lilica's lips parted to say something, but before she could utter a single word the cavern tunnel began to tremble violently.

Rocks, loose soil, and Gloa crystals began raining down from the ceiling as the tremors grew in intensity.

'What is going on?!' Michael shouted in his mind.

His head flicked left and right, but he couldn't tell that anything was off.

'Earthquake?'

Loud explosions reverberated through the entire lizard cave, the loose soil was flung through the air, and it didn't take long before searing hot gales blasted through the lizard cave.

Michael's confusion increased exponentially. The searing hot gales were obviously scorching hot, but they didn't harm anyone. The rocks falling from the ceiling were more dangerous.

30 Minutes.

That was how long the cavern tunnel tremored, and how long the searing hot gales blasted through the cavern system. After that, everything seemed to return to how it had been before and it went deathly still once again.

"What the..." Michael mumbled, still trying to comprehend what happened.

"Looks like the cavern didn't like that you wanted to conquer the Underground Ecosystem," Lilica said jokingly, but Michael stared at her with his eyes shot wide open.

"W-What?..." She asked defensively, "Is there something in the Underground Ecosystem that could have caused...THIS?!"

The earthquake might not have affected them much – with only a few Warriors sustaining minor injuries, but that didn't mean they could relax.

On the contrary, the earthquake was terrifying. It caused explosions in the other cavern tunnels, releasing the horrifying power of nature as they were trapped inside with no way out.

Michael didn't respond to Lilica's question immediately. Instead, he sent Blaire and the other trackers to find out what happened in the other cavern tunnels, and if the workers were fine.

Meanwhile, Michael and his people slowly traveled closer to the surface of the lizard cave. They walked past the tunnel entrance that led to the Underground Ecosystem, where he stopped.

Michael retrieved a piece of paper and unfolded it. It was the same paper he showed Danny before they separated.

"Is anyone knowledgeable in the old tongues?" He asked while handing over the paper where he had written the letters that the Temple of the Forgotten had used.

Lilica thought that Michael wanted to distract them, but she glanced at the piece of paper nonetheless. A frown appeared on her face, and she looked at the paper more intently.

Following their leader's action, the other Forest Elves took a look at the piece of paper as well. They began to frown as well and stared quietly at the letters.

"By any chance..." Lilica asked, "Is there an ancient city of a fallen civilization, or some sort of ruin in the Underground Ecosystem, you've talked about?"

Michael answered with a faint nod.

"Does that mean you can read the paper?" He asked, a ray of hope surfacing in his heart.

"Yes....Well, actually no," Lilica revealed honestly, "We can read some of those letters because they're a combination of the Ancient Elven Tongue, and an even older language, which I've never heard before. The Ancient Elven Tongue imbues origin energy in every word, similar to the Dragon Tongue. However, this language is different. I can roughly guess the meaning of some words, but without feeling the intention of the origin energy in the words, I cannot really tell anything."

Michael was slightly disappointed at first, but his hopes were reinvigorated when he heard the last few parts.

"Does that mean you—..." Michael asked in excitement, just to stop mid-sentence. Lilica shook her head and interjected,

"I won't be able to read it, forget about teaching you the language. This language is extremely old, rarely used, very hard to learn, and it's an exotic version of the oldest Origin Tongue I've ever seen," She said.

"Whatever you have hidden in the Underground Ecosystem it is old, very old...and very dangerous!" Lilica said, sounding deadly serious.

She couldn't smile and her head began to ache.

Under normal circumstances, Lilica would be overjoyed to find an ancient ruin. It meant great danger, but also the possibility of procuring great treasures.

However, it was commonly known amongst older races that the Will of the Origin Expanse used a simple means to indicate the Danger&Opportunity level of an Ancient Ruin; the older and more complicated the language used in the Ancient Ruin, the higher the danger level, and the greater the opportunities.

While that may seem like a great opportunity, Lilica knew that the Forest Elves had never even recorded an Ancient Ruin on the same level as the place Michael had found.

"The Untamed Jungle is truly...wild..."

Chapter 173 Masked Saber

Michael didn't understand Lilica's worries at first.

He was glad that he told Lilica and the others about the Temple of the Forgotten, and that he could exchange information about it. It was good to have somebody to talk to about it.

Learning about the Danger&Opportunity level system – that ought to be common knowledge for most older races – didn't feel nice, but Michael was not too disappointed.

It was a good thing that he was getting closer to the truth. Conquering the Temple of the Forgotten seemed like a distant dream, however, it was something Michael looked forward to.

Even if he had to become a higher life-form, or even shed his mortal body before starting his conquest, Michael felt that it would be worth it. He was quite excited.

Lilica and the others couldn't understand Michael's excitement, at all.

First, it was way too dangerous and a bit reckless to even consider raiding the Temple of the Forgotten. And second, it was extremely dangerous to stay close to the Temple of the Forgotten. If one of the Old Ones, or races that were much older and stronger than the Elven were to find out about the Temple of the Forgotten, the entire Untamed Jungle would be turned into a bloody battlefield.

Neither Lilica nor her Elders had seen an Old One until now. However, that was their great fortune which ensured that they could still stand on their own two feet. If they were lucky and their encounter with an Old One wasn't that bad, they would only be lying two meters under the surface. At least, their tribe would be able to collect their corpses in one piece! That was how terrifying the Old Ones were.

After Michael heard a few stories from the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team, he grew more curious. He led everyone to the Underground Ecosystem and showed the Forest Elves the Temple of the Forgotten.

The pressure it exuded wasn't horrifying, and it didn't look terrifying either. But that was only an illusion as the Forest Elves' worries came true soon enough.

Lilica was brave enough to use a few steps of the staircase and step up slowly. She quickly realized that the pressure around her increased exponentially and that more words flooded her mind. By the time she took the fourth step, Lilica couldn't lift her feet anymore.

Blood trickled out of her ears and nose, and she quickly stepped down the stairs – or fell down, to be precise.

Once Lilica regained her senses, she retrieved a few sheets of paper from her War Rune and began to write down the words the Temple of the Forgotten transferred into her mind.

Lilica tried to imbue origin energy in the words just like the Temple of the Forgotten did, but she was struggling to replicate the words perfectly. The language used was way too complex.

Liopham was the second to test out the pressure of the staircase leading up to the entrance of the Temple of the Forgotten. He stopped after the third step and descended after a while.

"I read records about the conquest of the Abyss Witchery Dungeon in the Nebulus Forest. It was the greatest raid of the Forest Elven Tribe, and the biggest achievement of Yggdrasil Children at least while the Alliance between the Elven tribes still existed...but why do I feel like this Temple of the Forgotten is far more dangerous?"

How were they supposed to raid the Temple of the Forgotten? It was simply impossible!

Fortunately, the Forest Elves didn't have to tell Michael about that. He was distracted by the return of Blaire and her tracers.

They had finished traveling through the cavern system and analyzing it thoroughly after which they made a report, which could be summarized in a single sentence.

– All cavern tunnels leading to the deeper levels had collapsed!

The earthquake had taken off lots of work from Michael's shoulders. However, he was still slightly confused about what exactly happened, and why it happened.

He was willing to send a few people to find out more, but Michael was certain that it was a dead end.

Interestingly enough, the earthquakes seemed to have destroyed a few monster habitats. Many monster habitats had been buried, providing Michael and his army the opportunity to strike as long as the iron was hot.

In the next six hours, Michael's army killed hundreds of Monsters, including quite a few Mid Tier-2 Monsters.

The last day of the cave's conquest ended with much better results than expected. Now that the tunnels in the deeper parts collapsed, Michael could claim the entire lizard cave as his own.

He could start constructing a proper mine and create a more efficient way to harvest ores, store them, and transport them to his territory. It required more work to build everything he required, but the thought of the gains he could make was enough to give him the energy he needed.

By the time they returned back to the clearing, it was already late afternoon. Michael was given hundreds of corpses to extract, and he did so with a vibrant smile on his face.

At last, almost as if the Will of the Origin Expanse wanted to reward him for conquering the lizard cave, a Mythic Summoning Scroll dropped from a Mid Tier-2 Monster.

Michael extracted it, and he couldn't really believe his eyes at first.

After not having received one for so long, he nearly forgot that some Monsters could drop Mythic Summoning Scrolls.

Michael had only a few hours left before the spaceship would arrive on Kelta, and he couldn't help but feel that the Mythic Summoning Scroll was a good Omen.

If the Mythic Summoning Scroll would give him a great summon, he would have a great time in the Sapphirelake Military Academy. However, if he was unlucky – just like he had been in the last few weeks whenever he started another summoning session – his time in the Sapphirelake Military Academy would turn out horrible.

Usually, Michael didn't believe in omens, but something told him that he was going to be lucky with this one.

The Summoning Gate vibrated when Michael approached it with the black-leather Mythic Summoning Scroll in his hands.

It felt like a sign.

"Show me that I'm not unlucky, Origin Expanse. Let's go!" Michael shouted aloud as he broke the golden seal of the Mythic Summoning Scroll.

The Summoning Gate began to tremor the moment the seal was broken.

Even before the Mythic Summoning Scroll could unfold itself, it was sucked inside the energy pool.

Glimmering sparks of golden light filled the air around the Summoning Gate in the next minutes as one star after another began to light up.

The Summoning Gate's metal frame continued to tremble.

One Star shone up.

Another followed quickly.

Five minutes had already passed but the Summon still didn't step out of the energy pool.

A third star lit up.

Half an hour later, Michael's expression was a mixture of confusion and a trace of excitement.

Finally, a fourth star condensed on the Summoning Gate's metal frame.

Another 4-Star Summon!

It felt as if quite a bit of luck had been accumulated for this moment, for this Summon!

The Summon's outlines formed in the energy pool, and it stepped out soon after.

A Sword-Sabre-wielding Man wearing the combat clothes of the Desert that covered his entire body emerged.

He wore a crimson mask to hide his entire face and brandished his sword-like saber in front of Michael before he held it out for his new master to take.

"I'm the Masked Saber. I'm happy to be of your service Mi—...my Lord!"

"Welcome, Masked Saber. I'm glad to have you here," Michael said with a fond smile on his face.

Michael felt that Masked Saber had a familiar presence and that the 4-Star Summon was very amiable.

"How about I sho—..." He was just about to give Masked Saber a guide around the territory when he sensed that their Link of Loyalty was being formed.

At first, Michael thought that their Link of Loyalty would be frail and easily breakable. Combat Summons with a high-star rating usually achieved something great, which meant that they were either great leaders, prideful warriors, or exceptional in other ways. Usually, these Summons didn't like being ordered around. They were prideful and harder to control than others.

However, that wasn't the case with Masked Saber.

On the contrary, Masked Saber's Link of Loyalty was quite firm. It was not yet completed, but Michael could already tell that Masked Saber's link of loyalty was the thickest of all of his Links of Loyalty...and that included Tiara's Link of Loyalty.

Tiara was already willing to take a bullet in his stead. Was it even possible for any of his summons to have a firmer Link of Loyalty than the Battle Maid?

Michael hadn't been sure about that before, but it had been proven with the appearance of Masked Saber.

It was confusing that Masked Saber had a firm Link of Loyalty, but it was also great.

Michael felt good.

For a while, he felt extremely lucky. It was just too amazing.

His territory's population surpassed 5000 subjects, and his territory developed rapidly in the last 30 days he spent outside the spaceship.

How could he not feel great?

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A few hours later, Michael left the Origin Expanse.

He appeared in the cabin and sat down on his seat. Only a few minutes later, the Dekalos-Class spaceship entered Kelta's range.

They were about to land. Their trip was over.

His life in the Sapphirelake Military Academy was just about to begin.

Chapter 174 Malfunction

Michael almost missed the landing of the Dekalos-Class spaceship. Fortunately, he returned just in time.

It had already slowed down and the inertia generator was deactivated a few minutes later.

Michael had to sit on the safety chair when he stepped out of the Runic Gate. Afterward, he looked out of the small window in his cabin to witness the spaceship entering Kelta's exosphere. The Dekalos-Class spaceship entered the atmosphere and shot down to the planet's blue sapphire-like surface like a meteor.

Bright sparks ignited all over the spaceship's metal surface as the engines worked against Kelta's inertia to slow down their descent to the ground.

The Dekalos-Class spaceship trembled wildly as multiple forces impacted heavily on it, but it kept descending, slowly finding its way to the spaceship harbor that seemed to grow larger as their distance decreased.

Michael observed the planet's surface with the same interest as he watched their descent. Both were fascinating to watch.

Unfortunately, it didn't take long before they reached the harbor.

The spaceship harbor was humongous, even larger than the spaceship harbor in Elyra. It easily towered above all spaceships docked in the docking bay and reached deep underground as well.

Soon, the spaceship trembled one last time before it stopped moving altogether. They reached the ground, where the staff went through a safety checklist before the crew was allowed to open the gates to the docking bay.

[Dear passengers, it was an honor to bring the newest generation of mankind's pillars to Kelta. My crew and I are grateful, and we hope that everyone enjoyed the trip to Kelta as much as we did. My name is Captain Morane, and I hope to be of service in the future as well. Don't hesitate to travel through space with Morane Enterprises. Thank you very much!]

The captain's voice echoed through the speakers across the spaceship.

Once the Captain finished his short speech, a series of notifications rang through Michael's crystal watch.

[Suitable network system has been found. Connection to Starnet has been established!]

[Welcome to Kelta, the first human-occupied planet in the Lumina Stellar System. Have a nice stay!]

[Crystal watch of freshman student Michael Fang has been detected. In the following attached files, you will find the schedule of the next three days, the facilities you can use with your current rank, the place and room number of your accommodation, and much more!]

[Remark: The Real Combat assessment will determine the first rankings. The ranking cannot be challenged in the first week of your arrival.]

[Remark 2: The Rankings' daily rewards are doubled in the first month of your arrival. Please give your best to continue obtaining the rewards you deserve!]

Following the notifications, one of the files opened. It was his schedule.

Only three days were filled with appointments. The rest was still empty.

Today, all students would have to gather in the open auditorium where the Dean would hold a short speech.

It was scheduled to start in less than two hours. Michael's first reaction was that time was tight, but that didn't seem to be a problem.

Apparently, the spaceship from Elyra was the last to arrive.

Tomorrow and the day after the second aptitude assessment would be held and concluded.

It would be much fiercer than before, considering that the Ranking would be established, and the daily rewards doubled now that the freshmen from all planets finally gathered at the Academy.

The rewards were also announced in the files. They were quite high and included better cabins, Sapphire Points, Named Summoning Scrolls, and much more.

However, Michael was not really interested in any of that right now.

'Whatever'

He opened the crystal watch and immediately accessed Starnet messengers.

There was no need to rush outside, so Michael rather messaged his brother.

However, a deep frown appeared on his face when he saw that his brother hadn't sent a single message over the last 30 days.

'He knows that I couldn't connect to Starnet messengers during the trip. His focus was probably on his territory and the conquest of the Primedival Pyramid!' Michael told himself to calm his nerves.

He wrote a short message to his brother, informing him about his arrival at the Academy, and sent it over. Once Danny returned from the Origin Expanse, he would know that Michael arrived on Kelta without any issues.

Afterward, Michael retrieved the small Lord Card that was connected to Danny's Lord ID.

Michael wanted to ease his worries by looking at the intact Lord Card. However, he quickly realized that something was wrong.

Michael's heart skipped a beat as he looked at the card that kept changing colors.

Did it break on his flight to Kelta, or did something happen to Danny?!

Michael felt a lump in his throat as he left his cabin.

He walked outside without diverting his eyes from the Lord Card for a single moment.

That was also why he never realized that someone appeared behind him.

"I'm sorry to tell you this, but you cannot look at the Lord ID copy of other people in Kelta. The distance between the Solar System and the Lumina Stellar System is too far to transfer details such as the remnants and status of War Runes. The Origin technology requires too much energy for such a negligible piece of information. Sorry, Michael," A young, and sonorous, yet somewhat distant voice reached his ear from behind,

Michael turned around startled, just to be faced with Annabelle Claire.

They had never talked with each other before and only fought once during the Real Combat assessment in Elyra.

Michael kept looking at Annabelle in confusion, who seemed to notice something.

"Your name was Michael, or am I remembering wrong? If —..." She said, just to stop as Michael interjected.

"No, you remember correctly. My name is Michael Fang," Michael said hurriedly.

He was still confused by her statement, but his heart was more at ease after hearing her explanation.

She glanced shortly at him without a change in expression. Her eyes moved to the malfunctioning Lord ID and her voice softened.

"If you have any worries, you can just message the authorities and ask for more information. Or go to your teachers and ask them to make a request to the supercomputer in Elyra. They'll forward the information you want after confirming your identity and your relationship to the Lord ID of the person

you're looking for. It is a little bit annoying, but it reduces the costs drastically in exchange for little additional work."

Michael felt much better and he put the Lord Card away. If it was useless to look at the card, he might as well not pay any attention to it.

"Seems like you advanced," Michael said after he thanked Annabelle for easing his mind.

They weren't even friends, so Michael considered it a big deal that Annabelle noticed his worry, and that she shared important information with him.

In fact, weren't they competitors right now?

"That's only natural," Annabelle said, showing Michael her War Rune. It advanced to the 1st Tier and reached the same refinement degree as Michael's War Rune had attained.

"I will defeat you next time we fight!" She announced in a determined voice before she stepped ahead.

Annabelle left the spaceship and disappeared from Michael's sight.

Michael left the spaceship as well. He stepped onto the docking bay where a small robot welcomed him.

[My name is Robbie, the robot. Please allow me to scan your ID and irises before I guide you to the shuttle buses!]

Michael smiled weakly at the sight of the child-sized robot.

Nonetheless, he retrieved his Lord ID and allowed the robot to scan both his ID and irises.

[Scan has been completed. Welcome student Michael Fang. Follow me, please!]

Michael followed Robbie for the next 5 minutes until they arrived in a large hall where only one more shuttle bus was waiting.

The others had already departed.

'Am I the last to arrive?' He wondered, glad to be proven wrong as a few more students arrived shortly after him.

They entered the shuttle bus, in which more than 100 freshmen were already waiting for them.

None of them paid much attention to the latecomers. They continued to mind their own business, which was mostly to analyze the strongest opponents – using the videos that had been provided by the Saphirelake Military Academy.

Michael found an empty seat in the back and sat down.

"Seems like you cannot run away from me," He murmured when he realized who sat on the seat next to him.

It was Annabelle Claire, who looked at him indifferently.

"Running away? Me? Stop being delusional."

Chapter 175 Dean

Michael and Annabelle sat next to each other on the way to the Saphirelake Military Academy.

Michael wasn't awkward with Annabelle and asked a few questions.

He was very interested in her archery skills. Since their first spar, he felt that there was something profound in her archery skills, and he wanted to learn more about it.

Being an Archer, whose skills and accuracy had been tempered by Fenrir's memories and the Eagle Eyes Soultrait, Michael did not have a bad start. He was a good archer, had a great foundation, and his experience was not little either. Fenrir's memories tempered him a lot.

Nonetheless, he could still learn a lot from the Forest Elves, who already showed him lots of tips and tricks to improve his mastery. His interest in Annabelle's skills increased drastically after Michael encountered the Forest Elves.

He realized that Annabelle had been much stronger and more talented than he was. In fact, Annabelle was on Lilica's level of expertise, while only being Tierless and several years younger than him.

Intrigued by how Annabelle became this strong, Michael asked her way more questions than he initially wanted to.

Annabelle didn't take offense at the bombardment of questions and patiently answered him.

She looked cold and distant on the outside, but she wasn't rude. On the contrary, she was quite open and spoke a lot – though the way she spoke made it seem as if she wanted to keep her distance from Michael and the rest of the freshmen.

Michael chose to ignore the tone in her voice. Instead, he listened to her detailed explanations and the small hints she dropped. That way, the two spend the two hour trip to the Sapphirelake Military Academy without a second of boredom.

Because the shuttle bus took longer than expected to reach their destination, the students had to rush to the open auditorium.

The Dean was already standing on the stage. She was an old figure, casting a stark contrast to the young and vigorous faces in the audience. However, her presence radiated vigor and endless power.

Her gaze moved through the audience until it landed on the students, who arrived last. A faint smile blossomed on her face as she gestured to the latecomers to find a seat and sit down.

She cleared her throat, the scratching in her voice evident.

"Good morning, freshmen," the Dean began, her voice surprisingly loud and strong, "and welcome to the Sapphirelake Military Academy."

She paused, taking a long moment to scan the open auditorium and lock eyes with a few individuals in the first few rows. The audience grew eerily silent. Something in the air made it impossible for the students to even think about uttering a noise.

"You may be feeling nervous, or excited today, but I assure every single one of you that you belong here," The Dean continued, "Some of you might have lost your territories on the way to Kelta, but that can happen. In fact, not many freshmen will be able to stay Lords until the end of the first semester. Most of you will probably lose your territory due to various complications, and inevitable reasons. Some of you will even die!"

The Dean's voice grew heavy, and every student in the auditorium tensed. Even some of the professors seated far behind the Dean couldn't keep their faces straight. They knew too well that the Origin Expanse was a merciless place.

"But don't let that discourage you," The Dean added, her face brightening up a bit. Simultaneously, the tension in the open auditorium eased noticeably as well. "You have all worked hard to get to this point, and now is the time to make the most of it. The Sapphirelake Military Academy will become your whetting stone to transform you – the unpolished gemstones – into brightly shining, polished gemstones of immense value."

"As fellow freshmen, everyone in the auditorium must have realized that there are more than 10,000 students. Every single one of you is powerful and an unpolished gemstone. However, not all of you will be able to overcome the ordeals and finish the process. Some of you will fail, others will give up, and many will die in the Origin Expanse.

Our task is to provide you with the best facilities, and opportunities to grow stronger. We will guide you and give everyone our professional advice. Nonetheless, everyone present has to understand that your

future lies in your own hands. If you give up, you will inevitably fail. But if you keep swimming against the stream, you'll be tempered and become stronger than you can fathom.

As the Dean spoke, her voice seemed to grow in strength and power. It was as if she was channeling all the emotions and experiences of her long career into this moment.

In the next half an hour, the Dean continued on, encouraging the freshman to embrace new ideas, seek new experiences, and challenge themselves to grow. She spoke with passion and conviction, her words carrying the weight of decades, and great authority.

The audience sat captivated in the open auditorium, listening to her intently. Michael too, stared at the dean with gleaming eyes. He could feel that her charismatic speech reached the depths of his being. It was quite terrifying if he was to be honest.

As the speech came to an end, the Dean left the stage with a final nod to the crowd. She might be slow and be affected by the influence of old age, but she had the spirit and power required as the dean of the Sapphirelake Military Academy.

The message she wanted to convey with her speech was also clear; be bold, be curious, strive for improvements, and most importantly – survive by all means!

'I hope she teaches a course as well!' Michael mused in his heart.

He wanted to have a talk with the dean, get to know more about her vision of the future, and receive some wisdom from her teachings.

However, that had to wait until later.

Michael's stomach grumbled loudly. The freshmen around him looked at him with a grin, but Michael just shrugged.

"I guess, it's time for lunch," He mumbled before turning to Annabelle.

They had been seated next to each other while the Dean held her speech, and he wanted to continue talking to her during dinner.

Her archery training method was quite interesting. Michael hoped that he could find a way to implement her training in his workout routine. That way, he could maintain a great balance between flexibility, speed, and power.

"Do you want to have dinner with me? I heard that the cafeteria gives a welcome feast. We won't have to pay a cent and will get highly nutritious dishes!" Michael asked, unable to keep his excitement under control.

The thought of having delicious food created uncontrollable excitement within Michael. He felt energetic and jumped up from his seat, smiling brightly at Annabelle.

She looked at him, one eyebrow raised. Annabelle thought about it for a moment and gave him a slight nod.

"Let's go then!" He said, leading the way.

Michael wanted to eat to his fullest. He was not sure when he would be able to fill his stomach with the delicacies cooked by the Sapphirelake Military Academy's Chefs. Thus, he had to make the most use of it. I think you should take a look at

Since it was already late and everyone was tired, not many freshmen chose to visit the cafeteria. Instead, they visited other facilities, entered their rooms to return to the Origin Expanse, or they socialized with the freshmen coming from other planets.

However, Michael was glad about that. He would rather have more food for himself than share it. Wasn't that obvious?

He picked up four plates and filled all of them to the fullest before he brought them back to the nearby table without spilling any of it. Afterward, he returned to fill two more plates.

The first round of dishes had been prepared, and Michael was ready to feast.

Annabelle, on the other hand, was much more demure. She filled a single plate and ate slowly – and with manners.

She finished her plate in the same time Michael spent inhaling the aroma of six plates that had been filled to the brim.

It shocked Annabelle a little bit, but she didn't think too much about it. Some Soultraits required a tremendous amount of nutrition to work properly.

When Michael returned to the cafeteria staff for a second helping, they stared at him in shock. At first, they thought Michael wanted to hoard some food for the next few days. A few of them wanted to say something, but their chef restrained the overly ambiguous staff.

It looked like they noticed something in Michael's gaze. They weren't surprised when they saw Michael gorging on his food in the blink of an eye. Meanwhile, the staff was shocked to the core.

The Chefs looked at Michael with fatherly love as they refilled his plates.

A fellow glutton never failed to recognize one of their kind.

The Chefs had all Soultraits that consumed a tremendous amount of nutrition, and they naturally thought that Michael was similar.

But was that really the case? Michael had always been a glutton, even before he awakened Extraction!

Michael saw a few familiar faces when he returned to the table with his dishes again.

Kaleb and the Barbaric Couple were at the table to eat their daily dose of nutrition. Their body and mind had already been accustomed to eating to their fullest after finishing a huge jumbo plate every single day for a whole month.

They filled several plates to the brim and sat down around Michael – Frederik to his left with Jacqueline next to him, and Kaleb to his right.

None of them said a word as they feasted on their meals.

This astonished Annabelle quite a bit. She looked at the odd group of four people for a while before she blurted out the thoughts that flashed through her mind.

"I thought you guys hated each other. Seems like you're just friends pulling a joke on the first day of the trip!"

Frederik grumbled a few incomprehensible words at Annabelle's accusation. Meanwhile, Jacqueline recalled the day Frederik had been taken and forced to join the Limit Breaker course. She felt like throwing a drumstick at Michael at the mere thought of the troublemaker.

Meanwhile, Kaleb shrugged while continuing to eat.

After dinner was over, everyone was satiated and happy.

It was pretty hard to feel sad with a stomach that had been filled to the brim with extraordinary mouthwatering delicacies.

The entire human race would have to be on the brink of destruction to disturb Michael's happiness after tonight's dinner.

He ignored a few banters a few students started in the cafeteria and watched the staff intervene after a while.

The students ought to beat the shit out of each other tomorrow during the Real Combat assessment. They had enough time to beat each other until one of them gave up.

While listening to the quarreling students, Frederik, and the others were reminded about the Real Combat assessment.

Kaleb wouldn't join since he had yet to become an Awakened, but Frederik was ready to fight Michael once again.

He wanted a rematch and was certain that he had worked hard enough to defeat Michael at last. After all, he had finally advanced to Tier-1, and his degree of refinement exceeded Michael's by now.

Frederik Kolbenheim used his resources to surpass Michael, and he wanted to show once and for all that he was more talented than Michael.

He acknowledged that Michael was a prodigy, that the young man without special background was powerful, and that he progressed rapidly. However, Frederik had to fight and defeat Michael. Otherwise, how could he even think of becoming the Sun of the Freshman, and defeat other prodigies if he couldn't even fight Michael head-on?

What Frederik didn't realize was that his hatred toward Michael had dispersed a long time ago.

Rather than considering him a bastard, or a nobody, who didn't deserve to join the Sapphirelake Military Academy, Frederik began to see Michael in a new light.

The trip to Kelta changed his mindset a lot.

Now, Michael was not a nobody anymore.

He was a rival on equal footing!

Chapter 176 Silver Energy

The dorms were an interesting place.

Everyone had their own decent-sized room that was not spacious, but more than enough to feel comfortable. At least, Michael felt comfortable with a big bed, a small table and a chair to study on, and a big empty space that was slightly larger than the bed.

Of course, the rooms could be upgraded, but Michael was satisfied for the time being.

After he reached the dorm, he opened Starnet messengers and clicked on his chat with Alice Zenovia.

[Michael: Good afternoon, Professor Zenovia. I cannot access my brother's Lord ID and want to make a request about it. Can the supercomputer on Elyra, or the government forward the status of Daniel Fang's Lord ID now, and whenever a change occurs to me? If the latter is not possible, or not allowed, I can manually request an update on Danny's Lord ID every week or two. That's not a problem.]

Michael's message was nothing special. However, he was more formal than usual with Alice Zenovia.

Until now, she never paid too much attention to his behavior, but Michael felt the need to be more formal with his request after learning that she was his teacher.

'Just tell me that Danny is fine, and everything will be perfect,' Michael told himself before he opened the Runic Gate to the Origin Expanse.

He entered the Origin Expanse just to crash down on the bed and sleep soundly. Sleeping in the Origin Expanse saved lots of time.

It even gave him enough time to start a light workout after he woke up. The light workout was a test to see how well he could replicate Annabelle's training course.

After they'd exchanged contact details, Annabelle sent him a few video files. Some of the workouts she did were explained in great detail, and Michael imprinted them into his mind.

He did Annabelle's workout and figured that it was pretty nice to combine them with his body refinement workout. It loosened the tension in his muscles and allowed him to build a greatly balanced physique.

After a light workout, Michael read through the daily report, extracted monster carcasses, and summoned new subjects.

Once that was done, he gave a few orders to initiate the start of the high-scale mining project.

Everyone went to work, except Masked Saber, who stayed by Michael's side.

In just one day, Masked Saber reached the Mid refinement stage of Tier-0. Since he had been summoned, Masked Saber spent most of his time researching the Untamed Jungle's topography, and learning more about the territory's military might and development progress before he went out to hunt on his own.

Masked Saber was a Lone Wolf, who hunted more than 30 Low Tier-1 Monsters in a day – all by himself.

That was a terrific achievement, and it showed that Masked Saber was far from an ordinary summon.

Michael got to know that Masked Saber had the ability to shroud his weapon in silver energy, enhancing his damage output drastically. A single attack, precisely aimed at a vital point, was enough to finish off a Low Tier-1 Monster.

"Great potential, powerful ability, and terrifying combat prowess...Did he die too young to attain a higher star rating?" Michael murmured quietly as Masked Saber approached him.

If Masked Saber had never attained any special achievements, his star rating might have been suppressed to 4-Stars. At least, that was the way Michael looked at it. Masked Saber seemed too unique for an ordinary 4-Star Summon!

But that was also why Michael was so intrigued in Masked Saber. The Summon was simply too unique. He deserved Michael's attention.

Growing increasingly interested in Masked Saber's combat prowess, Michael challenged his Summon to a spar.

"Let's spar, Masked Saber!"

Masked Saber nodded his head, unsheathed his saber, and changed into his combat stance.

He pulled the saber back and moved his empty hand forward while bending his knees to lower his body ever so slightly.

Michael smiled at Masked Saber's fast response. He manifested Seron Voulge and got into position as well.

The next moment, Michael looked into the black eyes hidden behind Masked Saber's crimson mask.

Both parties reacted simultaneously. They kicked their feet off the ground to burst forward and swung their weapons the next second as they reached close enough to attack.

Michael swung Seron Voulge diagonally to cover as much space in front of him as possible. However, Masked Saber reacted in time. He forcefully halted his approach, twisted his blade, and struck down the silver glowing saber as Seron Voulge's blade passed by.

Seron Voulge was pushed down, taking Michael by surprise. He didn't expect Masked Saber to evade and counter-attack so easily.

What was interesting to note was that Michael's physical strength was two or three times higher than Masked Saber's. He had several Tier-1 Artifacts, completed the first stage of the Berserker Physique, and was at Tier-1.

Each of those reasons was enough to tell that he should be faster and stronger than Masked Saber, yet the 4-Star Summon easily predicted his attack, evaded it, and counterattacked by utilizing the tremendous force Michael had put into his slash. I think you should take a look at

Seron Voulge shot into the ground, and Masked Saber pushed forward. His left-hand grasped Seron Voulge's pole, while the silver glowing saber lunged forward like a python.

Michael wanted to pull Seron Voulge out of the ground and block Masked Saber's attack, but Masked Saber's flat hand pushed the pole down, preventing Michael from launching a counterattack and deflecting the saber strike.

Michael grit his teeth, retrieved Seron Voulge in his War Rune, and dived to the side.

He rolled on the ground and jumped up smoothly. Afterward, Seron Voulge manifested in his hand once again.

Michael took a deep breath while looking at Masked Saber, whose saber rested calmly in his hand. Masked Saber turned slowly in his direction, the silver glow around his saber intensifying.

'Looks like I cannot win without my Soultraits...what a shame,' Michael murmured in his mind.

He felt confused. On one hand, it was exceptional to have Masked Saber as his summon. Their first exchange showed clearly that Masked Saber was much stronger than his rank suggested. At the same time, Michael felt a little bit weird.

Masked Saber was adept at picking up his opponent's flaws and using them, but that was not all. Masked Saber had high mastery of energy utility, and he used his opponents' superior strength against them.

Somehow, Michael felt like he was watching a powerhouse like Fenrir.

It was a little weird.

Despite the weird feeling in his heart, Michael could tell that he could use his spars against Masked Saber to fix his flaws and get rid of his bad habits during combat.

The good thing was that Michael could trust Masked Saber. His Link of Loyalty reached perfection, a state that could only be topped by a True Link of Loyalty. However, for that, they had to share countless life-and-death situations and save each other from death multiple times.

A True Link of Loyalty allowed telepathic communication, sharing of pain, and much more. It was a great feature, but also something that only few could establish. Even his brother wasn't able to establish more than three True Links of Loyalty with the Summons he fought side-by-side for years.

All in all, he felt really great about having found a great summon and decided to focus on eliminating his flaws with Masked Saber's help. Michael took a deep breath while calming his nerves. He didn't manifest the Onyx Dragon Armor Set yet, but he began to utilize his Soultraits now. It was something Michael didn't want to do before because he thought that he would win too easily against Masked Saber if he was to rely on his Soultraits.

However, their first exchange showed quite clearly that he had been too arrogant – too full of himself. If Masked Saber had been an enemy who was after his life, Michael would be dead by now.

Taking this into consideration, Michael exhaled deeply before utilizing Lesser Enhancement on Seron Voulge and his eyes. Simultaneously, he exerted Eagle Eyes, further amplifying his eyesight.

Seron Voulge was shrouded in a white hue while his eyes shimmered white and golden.

Masked Saber sensed a change in his Lord's presence, and he readied himself for the second clash. A second silver light manifested in the air around the silver-glowing saber, but it dispersed soon after. Masked Saber didn't have enough energy to unleash his abilities in the way he did before he died.

But that was something Masked Saber could acknowledge easily. He lowered his body further and waited patiently for Michael to attack.

Michael shot forward the next second. He thrust Seron Voulge forward, while vigilantly eying Masked Saber's response. Masked Saber moved to the side, ready to counterattack, when he realized that Seron Voulge's trajectory changed all of a sudden.

The long blade inched closer to Masked Saber's head. Masked Saber, who already had a hard time evading the first attack, struggled to lift his saber to block Seron Voulge.

However, just as the blades were about to collide, Masked Saber's mind trembled. His sight blurred and his entire body felt eerily heavy all of a sudden.

Michael whipped Masked Saber with a Spirit Whip a quarter of a second before their weapons collided. Using his superior strength and speed, Michael's Seron Voulge impacted hard upon his opponent.

Masked Saber's grip around the saber loosened and he let go of the saber.

Yet, just as Michael sensed victory, his expression turned ugly. Masked Saber shot forward, and a small dagger appeared in his empty left hand.

Seron Voulge shot past the Desert combat clothes of Masked Saber, not even grazing them, forget about cutting inside his body.

Meanwhile, a cold blade soon found its way toward Michael's neck.

"I...lost?" Michael blurted in confusion.

At first, he was disappointed and scolded himself that he could have fought much better. However, after a second or two, his expression lit up.

He realized that he had a lot to improve and that he could become much stronger.

"I want a rematch!"

Chapter 177 Lover Of Research

After a few more spars with Masked Saber, Michael finally won his first round.

He was not satisfied with the result, because he only won due to his Soultraits, Artifacts, and higher Tier. He still needed to work a lot on his skills so the victory was not sweet for him.

Nonetheless, Michael was quite excited. Masked Saber thoroughly explained what mistakes Michael made, and how he could get rid of his bad habits rather easily.

Michael listened patiently while feasting on well-prepared Tier-2 meat dishes with the first crop the farmers in his territory had harvested a few days ago.

There weren't many vegetables yet, and the farms beneath the treehouses were rather small, but they grew extremely fast. Thanks to the influence of the Tier-1 4-Star Nature Spirit, the Botanic Magician, the environment of the Untamed Jungle, and the addition of high-quality fertilizer, all plants flourished rapidly while maintaining extraordinary quality.

The vegetables his people harvested a few days ago were highly nutritious and they stored some origin energy as well. Just by eating the vegetables was it possible to refine his War Rune. Though the refinement was insignificant for Michael as a Tier-1 Lord, it was very useful for his subjects.

Just by eating the meat and vegetables they procured on their own, it was possible to practice the body refinement technique, Sacred Rectification, and accelerate the absorption rate while practicing Pandemonium's Requiem.

Michael was full of energy, and slightly excited when he finished his meal.

pandasnovel.com He was totally ready for the second aptitude assessment!

Now that he was done with the tasks in the Origin Expanse, Michael left. He returned to his small room in the Sapphirelake Military Academy and left the dorms.

"Was this place so huge yesterday as well?" Michael blurted out after spending more than ten minutes navigating through the place that felt like a maze to him.

Turning around when he stepped outside, he noticed that the dorm was a huge skyscraper with more than 50 floors. It was more than 200 meters tall and towered high above Michael.

"To think that I didn't notice that when I arrived. Maybe I was too hungry?" Michael mumbled to himself before he turned around.

He opened the map of the Saphirelake Military Academy on his crystal watch and began to look for the hall he had to be in first.

'According to my schedule, I have to be in Block B, Physical Testing Zentrum Nr.4...in 30 minutes...'
Michael read in his mind while searching for Block B.

Only now did he realize that the Academy's campus was a humongous area that housed way too many buildings and facilities for both students and staff.

The campus was spread out over multiple blocks with wide streets and walkways connecting the buildings. Michael could also see quite a bit of greenery. The walkways were lined with trees, bushes, and benches, providing ample opportunities for students to sit and relax in between courses during breaks.

There was even a huge park that seemed to be frequently visited to practice nature-related Soultraits, go for a run in the nature, or to do parkour using natural obstacles to prepare for the worst-case in the Origin Expanse.

Michael wanted to train his reflexes and nimbleness using natural parkours as well. However, he was too busy finding the Physical Testing Zentrum on the map.

Once he found it five minutes later, he had to run. Block B was quite far away from his current position.

Michael had to run a few kilometers in the next few minutes. That was still feasible, and it gave him enough time to study Saphirelake Military Academy's map thoroughly.

He figured out where he had to go once he finished his work in the Physical Testing Zentrum, and where all other facilities were located.

The libraries, laboratories, classrooms, shops, and administrative buildings for faculty and staff were neatly organized. It was not difficult to remember where everything was located since it made sense.

Overall, Michael felt that the Military Academy's campus was more like a university campus, a bustling and vibrant environment where students could learn, socialize, relax, and build their futures without worries.

It wasn't the cruel and merciless training camp Michael expected to encounter.

'At least the competition for the Real Combat assessment will be fierce!' Michael thought as he entered the Physical Testing Zentrum where his physical assessment was held.

Many students were already being tested. They demonstrated their speed, spontaneity, physical strength, stamina, and so on.

When it was time for his appointment someone called out his name. Michael walked over and started his physical assessment.

Michael's War Rune's refinement degree didn't improve a lot, but his breathing had changed fundamentally, decreasing his stamina consumption, and the time he required to replenish stamina. However, that was not all. He finished the first stage of the Berserker Physique, which increased his physical standard by a notch.

As long as he continued practicing the second stage of the Berserker Physique, he would be able to compete against Lower Tier-2 beings in terms of physical strength while not even being a Tier-2 Lord. That was possible, and something many wanted to attain; a powerful physique that had long surpassed the threshold of the ordinary.

After his physical test concluded with a test of his reflexes, Michael rushed over to his next appointment. His memorization ability was tested next.

Third, he had to sit for a knowledge test. By the time Michael's fourth appointment was held, he had already visited four different blocks.

It felt like his schedule had been prepared to force him to run through all the corners of the Saphirelake Military Academy. At first, he was a little annoyed about that. However, Michael quickly realized that the authorities wanted the freshman to acquaint themselves with the large, sprawling campus of the Saphirelake Military Academy.

The freshmen ought to understand that the Saphirelake Military Academy had every possible facility to unravel the hidden potential within everyone.

Archery ranges, boxing rings, parks, gravity rooms, ranches, breeding facilities, taming grounds, forging rooms, alchemy houses, entire faculties focusing on enchanting, Artifacts, and much more. The Military Academy had everything.

Not everything could be used free of charge because certain facilities required a tremendous amount of resources to be used and maintained, but that was only obvious.

When Michael reached his final appointment before the Real Combat assessment would start, he met up with Harry Baren. I think you should take a look at

The Soul Power testing device was fastened to his body through belts, and Michael activated both Eagle Eyes and Lesser Enhancement.

"Lesser Enhancement's Soul Power increased by 6 units and reached 75. Meanwhile, your 3-Star Soultrait Eagle Eyes improved from 169 to 205 Soul Power Units. I'm not going to lie to you, Michael...both increases are quite crazy for a young Lord. Either most of your subjects love you, or you were pretty fast at expanding your territory's population!" Harry Baren explained with a tinge of excitement in his voice.

Some of the staff members and students looked weirdly at Harry Baren, but neither Harry nor Michael paid them any attention. The two of them had spent a month talking about Soultraits, Soul Power, and various theories that squirmed through their heads. They had gotten a lot closer, and their relationship wasn't that of a normal researcher and student anymore. Harry Baren thought of Michael as a fellow lover of research and seeker of the truth.

He respected Michael and the few well-thought theories he had shared about Soul Power.

Michael never really did anything special, in his opinion. Until now, Michael merely blurted out what he thought when he spoke with Harry.

"I think it's a little bit of both. But is the increase of my Soul Power really that surprising? I mean 6 units for a 2-Star Soultrait and 36 for a 3-Star Soultrait doesn't seem out of the world," Michael responded calmly to Harry.

He learned that Soultraits with a lower star rating received a lower enhancement from a subject's Link of Loyalty, no matter how firm the Link of Loyalty was.

Basically, the Tier advancement of the War Rune provided a standard amount of Soul Power to all Soultraits, meanwhile, the Links of Loyalty increased the Soul Power by 0.0001%, or even less according to Harry Baren's studies. He reached this conclusion after conducting research on 10,000 participants who had Soultraits ranging from 1-Star to 3-Star. It showed that 3-Star Soultraits received the highest amplification of Soul Power from a single neutral Link of Loyalty.

Thus, Michael thought that it was only obvious that Eagle Eyes had a higher increase in Soul Power than Lesser Enhancement.

"It's not that simple, Michael," Harry shook his head.

"You have to consider that the number of Links of Loyalty increases as you expand your territory. But there is also another important factor that has to be taken into consideration; 'compatibility'. This is something I'm currently researching, so please take my answers with a grain of salt. My theories might be proven correct in the future, but please listen to me, and consider my theory!" Harry said before he looked at Michael with expectations.

Michael gestured to Harry, who smiled brightly before he continued to speak.

"The theory is pretty simple. 'Compatibility' can be divided into two sections. First, a Soultrait's compatibility with the wielder can influence the increase of Soul Power. This kind of 'compatibility' is inherited, but it can be improved by comprehending the Soultrait and mastering it," Harry explained the first point. He waited a moment to watch Michael's reaction before he continued with the second point,

"The second theory is that you have many Archers, or subjects who've trained their eyes for a long period. Your subjects are more compatible with the Eagle Eyes Soultrait!"

The staff members eyed Harry with doubt, but they noticed that Michael's reaction was different to the other students, who were still waiting for their Soul Power test.

Michael thought seriously about Harry's theory and frowned deeply.

"So you think that I'm more compatible with Eagle Eyes than Lesser Enhancement, or that my subjects are more trained in using their eyes, which increases their compatibility to the Eagle Eyes Soultrait – resulting in the increase of 36 Soul Power Units within a month?" He asked with a raised eyebrow.

Now that he thought of it, he realized that it was not impossible. Harry's theory could be right.

However, to figure out more, Harry would have to create a complex formula and undertake constant testing of every Lord, who was willing to spend lots of time and effort to prove Harry's theories right.

"That's exactly what I thought!" Harry exclaimed excitedly, only for his smile to crumple a moment later, "Unfortunately, it's way too hard to prove these theories correct. The government won't give me enough funds to enter the next stage and deepen my understanding of the two theories.

Forget about starting the experiment with thousands of Lords, the funds I've been given won't even be enough to pay a satisfying fee to 10 Lords..."

Usually the reports of thousands of participants were needed to prove a theory right. Of course, it was possible to prove a point with far less, but the government became a lot stricter over the years.

Michael didn't know the exact reason, but it didn't really matter. It was a fact that Harry wouldn't be able to prove his point until he found a few more pieces of evidence that hinted toward the necessity to fund his theories.

However, Michael doubted that this would happen for quite a while. Nobody was keen enough to spend tens of billions on such an experiment. It was more important to fund other things, such as the growth of the newest generation of Lords.

Of course, Harry's research could help a lot. If proven right, his theories could turn into a practice on how to increase a Soultrait's Soul Power using specific training methods for all subjects – to increase their compatibility with their Lord's Soultrait.

However, it was too expensive to prove the point.

And, as a matter of fact, Lords with a high-star Soultrait usually had more benefits, in the first place. Their Soul Power increased rapidly to begin with. Hence, they did not require Harry's theory because it would mostly help those with weaker Soultraits.

Thus, even Michael didn't really feel that it was worth it to fund Harry's experiment. He could use his SoulStar Fragments to increase his Soultraits' Soul Power and their star rating.

"Well...I'm sorry to hear that..." Michael said a little awkwardly. He cleared his throat and took a look at the time.

"Unfortunately, I have to go now. The Real Combat assessment is waiting for me!"

Afterward, Michael disappeared quickly, leaving behind a few stupefied staff members, and Harry Baren, whose expression turned complicated.

"...but the Real Combat assessment won't start before afternoon..."

Chapter 178 Jump

Michael waited patiently in Combat Arena Nr.6 until the Real Combat assessment began.

His initial plan had been to enter the Top 500 in the freshman ranking because it would give him great daily rewards, but he realized quickly enough that it wouldn't be easy.

The freshmen were split into 10 Combat arenas where they would fight on the first day. Tomorrow, the strongest students would meet up in the first Combat Arena and then the initial ranking would be out based on their performances.

However, Michael immediately perceived that every single freshman in Combat Arena Nr.6 was powerful. The pressure they exuded naturally was anything but ordinary.

Each and every one of the students was confident and well-trained. Comparing them to his former classmates in high school was an insult to his fellow freshmen. None of them seemed weak. It caused his heart to skip a beat.

The corner of his lip tilted upward

'So that's what people mean when they talk about ordinary Lords being frogs in a well. These Lords haven't even seen a glimpse of the ocean and feel like they're at the top of the world.' Michael thought.

This time, the Real Combat assessment would be far more dangerous than before.

All freshmen from the Saphirelake Military Academy would compete against each other, not only the best 1500 who made it through the assessment in Elyra.

The lessons and courses during the month they traveled to Kelta demonstrated the Military Academy's attitude and resources. The lessons they could obtain from the Professors and Instructors here was exceptional. It was even greater than the teachings most freshmen had obtained after their families spent a fortune.

The competitive spirit was extremely high and the rewards of being in the rankings were too great which was why everyone wanted to enter the Top 500.

The Summoner Core was especially valuable.

However, Michael felt that the competition between the families was even more terrifying.

Michael noticed that many students glared at each other and that some began to throw shade at the others' families. Some of their insults were over the top, purposely taking a jibe at their family name and dragging it through the mud.

But then again, the other sides reciprocated the insults with equal fervor and took it to the next level.

Michael thought that some of these people would pounce at each other, but they held back. They knew that the referees would interfere and that they would fight each other sooner or later either way.

Michael heard a few 'I have to win to keep our family's image!', 'I will win and honor my family!', and 'Let me show you all how great I am! My power will show everyone that my family provided me with the best resources!'

Michael didn't really feel like listening to dumbass idiots, but he had to acknowledge that their arrogance and self-confidence was quite funny.

Michael was glad that he wasn't that arrogant yet.

He was quite excited for his first fight. Seeing the numerous medics and Adventurers with high-ranked healing Soultraits, who were ready to jump into action at any moment, Michael figured that there was no reason to hold back.

But that was when a small problem came to his mind.

'I used Spirit Whip quite often in the past. If my opponent is too strong, I'll probably use it subconsciously.'

Michael thought about the possibility for a while. At first, he wanted to keep Spirit Whip a secret by all means. However, he realized that it was not that important. Even if he exposed his third Soultrait, others wouldn't be able to do anything.

They might envy him for possessing three Combat-related Soultraits, but that was it.

Nonetheless, Spirit Whip was his trump card, and he was going to use it well.

It was early afternoon when the last students arrived.

Not much later, the referees called up the first combatants. Each Combat Arena had ten combat rings that were occupied by more than a thousand freshmen.

It didn't take long before Michael was called up as well.

His first fight in the Saphirelake Military Academy was about to start!

Michael entered the combat ring in which a lean young man was already waiting for him. He had ocean-blue eyes and long golden hair. Even his skin shimmered in a golden hue.

Michael retrieved the Onyx Dragon Armor Set and the Siltang Bow. Simultaneously, he observed his opponent.

The young man retrieved an armor set, a golden helmet, and a set of silver daggers. He entered a combat stance that allowed him to burst forth with great speed once the battle began.

'Mid-stage Tier-1, and stronger pressure as a Lord than Frederik...alright.'

Michael didn't know who his opponent was but he could quickly analyze him.

He changed into a defensive stance and grasped the frame of his bow artifact tightly.

The battle started a moment later when the referee gave the signal.

The young man, called Jeffrey Libern, kicked his feet off the ground and shot forward.

His body glowed golden and he disappeared the next moment.

Michael was already using Eagle Eyes. Lesser Enhancement was utilized, enhancing his Eagle Eyes, his Artifacts' strength, and amplification.

The moment Lesser Enhancement came into effect, Michael saw a distortion in space where Jeffrey Libern disappeared.

The small golden streaks were inconspicuous, but Michael noticed them at last.

He instinctively condensed an energy arrow while drawing the bowstring back.

A moment later, Jeffrey appeared several meters ahead of his previous position.

'Teleportation?' Michael wondered in slight surprise.

He regained his composure and released the energy arrow after adjusting his aim a tad. The arrow whizzed through the air but Jeffrey disappeared once again.

The arrow didn't hit anything and plunged into the ground.

Meanwhile, Michael retreated to the border of the combat circle.

He didn't know how large Jeffrey's range was, so he had to make sure that his back was safe so as to not fall prey to unexpected attacks.

But Michael quickly realized that it was not necessary.

Jeffrey reappeared a few meters in front of him again.

'The distance he can cross with every jump is short, a few meters at most, and there is a slight delay!' I think you should take a look at

Michael continued analyzing Jeffrey. Simultaneously, he released a third energy arrow.

This time, however, Jeffrey didn't use his Soultrait. Instead, he accelerated further and crossed the last few meters separating him from Michael.

The third arrow wasn't lethal. Jeffrey evaded the arrow easily. However, the fourth arrow was far more terrifying.

Michael reduced the distance to Jeffrey and released the fourth arrow from a close distance.

Even if Jeffrey was physically stronger and faster, his expression changed at once upon seeing the energy arrow approaching him like a bullet.

The enchantments on the silver daggers lit up and they began to vibrate rapidly as Jeffrey slashed out.

The energy arrow collided with the vibrating blade. Jeffrey's expression changed drastically at the moment of impact. It was easy to tell that Jeffrey didn't expect the force of the energy arrows to be that high.

He saw that Michael drew his bowstring back for the fifth time and cursed in his mind.

The next moment he looked towards his left and disappeared.

Michael observed the combat ring intently. He predicted where Jeffrey would appear and released the fifth arrow. It shot through the air when Jeffrey reappeared. However, the arrow didn't hit the young man.

Michael clicked his tongue in disappointment before he continued with the fight.

Jeffrey looked at Michael, gritting his teeth before he exhaled.

His golden shimmering skin turned brighter and the origin energy inside him began to churn.

The next moment Jeffrey disappeared again.

Yet, instead of taking his time to reappear a few meters ahead, his teleportation was instantaneous this time.

He jumped three times in a row and appeared next to Michael.

Michael's Eagle Eyes moved rapidly through the arena. They landed on Jeffrey whenever he reappeared, and a sense of understanding dawned upon him.

However, before he could make use of his understanding, Michael had to escape this tricky situation.

He twisted the Siltang Bow, manifesting an energy arrow, and released it with a half-drawn bow. The energy-condensed arrow was not as strong as usual, but it was strong enough to put Jeffrey in a predicament.

The arrow was about to hit Jeffrey in the head when he blocked it with his silver blades.

Jeffrey was about to slash down after blocking the silver blades, but Michael was already in front of him.

The Siltang Bow was nowhere to be seen.

Michael clenched his fists and delivered a heavy sucker punch with his left hand before he jabbed with his right.

His attacks were quick and precisely aimed at Jeffrey's vitals. The young man struggled a moment before he sliced at Michael with his silver daggers. Michael dived to the side, manifested Seron Voulge, and slashed behind him in a horizontal motion.

"Fuck!" Jeffrey cursed while lifting his daggers instinctively.

A moment later, he felt that Michael's strength had increased once again. A white hue engulfed Seron Voulge.

Unsure about the true extent of Michael's Soultraits, Jeffrey disappeared. Space distorted and he appeared a few meters behind Michael.

Michael turned around as quickly as he could but Jeffrey vanished once again.

'What a slippery dude. I cannot get hold of him!'

Michael was forced to watch Jeffrey with great vigilance, and it was beginning to annoy him a little. A single wrong move and his first fight would result in a humiliating loss.

He evaded Jeffrey's attacks a few times and escaped defeat several times by a hair's breadth.

His opponent was nimble and able to utilize his Soultrait more often than Michael had first assumed.

Nonetheless, Michael was able to say a few things.

"With his current mastery, he shouldn't be able to..." Michael thought, condensing an energy arrow before shooting it in an empty area exactly five meters ahead of the position Jeffrey disappeared from.

Jeffrey thought that he had been targeted, but he didn't expect Michael to have fully analyzed his Soultrait in such a short period. It hadn't been that long since the battle started!

The energy arrow pierced into his shoulder the moment Jeffrey reappeared.

He screamed out in shock and instinctively used his Soultrait two more times to escape Michael's control.

Unfortunately, that was exactly what Michael predicted beforehand. An arrow impacted where Jeffrey reappeared.

After the second arrow impacted his thigh, Jeffrey suffered a great shock. He tried to stay on his feet, but the shock prevented him from continuing to use his Soultrait.

Without his Soultrait Jeffrey's strongest advantage had now disappeared.

Another arrow pierced his other thigh, forcing the young man to the ground where he screamed loudly.

He didn't have much energy left, but he wasn't willing to go down like this either.

However, Michael didn't show any mercy. He released two more arrows that pierced his legs.

"Teleportation of exactly five meters, and only in the direction you look. Without the activation of your body refinement technique's unique effect, you wouldn't have been able to negate the delay of your teleportation either," Michael said quietly to himself and Jeffrey, who had stopped screaming by now.

He stared at Michael in hatred, but there was nothing Michael could do about that. He didn't really mind, either way.

In fact, Michael would have continued to shoot at Jeffrey but the referee had already lifted his hand to signal the end of the battle.

"Your Soultrait seems to be very strong, but it's probably extremely hard to control. You're very strong!" Michael acknowledged while making a mental note about Jeffrey. He wouldn't underestimate Jeffrey the next time they met. That was for sure.

Jeffrey's teleportation Soultrait would turn more terrifying once his range of teleportation expanded, and once his mastery increased, allowing him to use his teleportation more flexibly.

However, by then, Michael would become much stronger as well.

Chapter 179 Miracle

He left the combat ring, leaving the medics enough space to tend to Jeffrey's wounds. On the other hand, Michael was unscathed.

His energy consumption had been quite high, and he had been under tremendous stress, but he was physically uninjured.

Michael consumed an energy pill to replenish his used-up origin energy before he sat down on a bench to rest.

'It was not perfect, but I did a decent job, that's for sure.'

He was glad that he didn't rush to improve his War Rune in the last few weeks.

His opponent's War Rune had a higher degree of refinement but he didn't win.

Why was that the case?

There were multiple reasons, but the most important was that Michael had focused on other things in the past few weeks.

He diligently accumulated combat experience, fixed some flaws, finished his Berserker Physique's first stage, and focused on his Soultraits' control and utility.

That being said, his improvements had already been pretty fast. It was just that his War Rune didn't undergo any significant change.

The last 30 days had been used to focus on his foundation and strengthen the foundations of several things in his territory.

Even if Michael wanted to, he couldn't rush the process.

With a Soultrait such as Extraction, he had to focus on the foundation, otherwise, he would end up becoming a useless fool with countless Soultraits but who was unable to use multiple Soultraits at a time. Simultaneously, he would have a huge paper army rather than a mighty, invincible army if he ended up rushing the progress.

Either way, Michael was excited. Observing the fights in the combat rings while resting showed quite clearly that his first impression hadn't been wrong- there were many powerful students among the freshmen.

Even those with seemingly weaker Soultraits were powerful simply by knowing how to use their powers properly.

The techniques they used were impeccable and a sight to behold.

He watched the fights with great interest and learned a lot about the extent to which certain Soultraits could be used.

First, he watched a young woman summoning a Demon. The Demon was at the same stage as the young woman. They fought together against their opponent who summoned a Bone Armor to cover his entire body.

The Bone Armor had tiny gaps at the joints to ensure high flexibility, but the young woman and the demon weren't able to inflict injuries through them. Whenever the Demon and the young woman were about to injure the young man, he covered his joints in a second layer of another Bone Armor.

The Bone Armor of the young man moved around his body like a tightly knit cloak, seemingly alive, protecting him from most wounds.

That worked fine until the Demon had enough. It let out a shrill cry and ripped out one of its arms.

Black blood oozed out of the arm stump, but it began to heal rapidly. The Demon's extraordinary regeneration was fully unleashed.

The ripped-out arm in the Demon's hand turned into black fumes, which both Demon and the female Summoner could control.

The black fumes shrouded the young man's head, where it tightened and compressed, cutting off the young man's access to oxygen.

He was forced to inhale the black fumes whenever he wanted to breathe.

Slowly, the young man's movements grew heavier. He began to twitch and writhed in pain after five minutes and collapsed on the ground not long after.

The female Summoner won, but neither she nor her Demon Summon were unscathed. The young man had manifest bone spikes all over his armor and shot them out like a porcupine.

The young man didn't go down without giving his all. He fought with all his might and caused both the Demon and the female Summoner to bleed a lot.

After their battle was over, Michael's attention moved over to Annabelle. She was fighting against a freshman, whose entire body was covered in thick metal armor. The freshman wielded a broadsword like it was a thin stick, blocking most of Annabelle's arrows while inching closer to finish her off in close combat.

Annabelle didn't allow the approaching metal colossus to distract her. She remained level-headed and released one arrow after another. Annabelle analyzed the movement patterns of the metal colossus until he was at a distance of eight meters from her. By then, she changed her tactic suddenly.

She activated her Soultrait, and her presence changed at once. In the next five seconds, Annabelle released seven arrows in succession. At first, Michael thought that she sacrificed her accuracy to release seven arrows in such a short time span, but he couldn't be more wrong.

Annabelle's arrows were terrifically precise. The arrows pierced through the metal armor's joints where the defense was the weakest, taking the audience and her opponent by surprise.

Weakened, and slowed down, the freshman in heavy metal armor was fated to lose. Yet, Annabelle didn't show him any mercy. She continued to bombard her opponent with precisely aimed arrows until the referee announced her as the winner of the battle.

Some found Annabelle to be over the top and that she should have shown mercy, but Annabelle couldn't care less about those no-names. If they weren't willing to fight until the very end, they should have chosen to attend a different academy.

In the next battle held in the same combat ring, an even more terrifying scene unfolded.

A young man transformed the moment the referee started the battle with a signal. Crimson scales covered his body, a long lizard tail extended out of his tailbone, and large dragon wings grew out of his shoulder blades.

A single flap was enough to create strong gusts.

The ground beneath the young man began to melt as the temperature in his vicinity increased rapidly. I think you should take a look at

The young man's presence changed. It was altered by the tinge of Dragon Might that swept through his entire being.

Once his transformation was completed, the young man was overwhelmed by the emotions sweeping through him. He issued a terrifying roar that affected the audience and some combatants in the other combat rings.

While the young man's transformation to a Dragonoid was striking and majestic, the young woman opposing him wasn't impressed.

She retrieved a pitch-black dagger and a few dark vials of blood from her War Rune.

The woman cut herself deeply with the dagger before she threw the vials into the air. A single slice was all it took to cut the vials open.

The glass vial shattered and the glass fell to the ground. Meanwhile, the black viscous liquid inside the vials was now levitating in the air.

The young woman's eyes glowed bloody red. The blood gushing out of her body shot toward the black liquid, defying gravity. It fused with the black liquid and was pulled back inside her body.

Not a single droplet of blood was left behind as the young woman retrieved it inside her body. She could control blood using her Soultrait and used it to merge with the black liquid.

In response to taking in a strange liquid, the woman's veins turned crimson. The glow in her eyes intensified, adding an eerie and deadly aura to her appearance.

But her body's transformation and acceptance of the foreign substance was not yet over. Claws grew from her hands and her tanned skin turned into a mix of black and bloody red.

pandasnovel.com She clawed herself a few times, inflicting tiny claw marks that were deep enough to pull blood out of it.

The black dagger disappeared in the woman's War Rune, but looking at the huge black claws she had, nobody thought that she required a dagger to fight.

She condensed tens of blood needles by pulling blood out of her body. The blood needles were darkish-red in color and rotated rapidly.

Then, once fully condensed, the blood needles burst forward.

The young man, who had transformed into a Dragonoid couldn't evade all of the attacks. However, he didn't deem that necessary, in the first place.

He coated his wings in origin energy before folding them in front of him, creating a shield.

Most blood needles were blocked successfully. Yet, the moment the first blood needle pierced through the layer of origin energy and the young man's dragon wings, everything changed.

Michael was not sure what happened, but less than half a minute after the first blood needles entered the young man's body, he burst apart.

The young man wasn't even able to do something before his body burst into countless pieces.

He died, just like that.

Or so it looked at first.

Two Medic teams rushed to the combat ring the moment the young man burst into countless pieces. Two Adventurers unleashed white and silver lights from their bodies. The pieces of flesh and organs of the young man stopped in their tracks, hovering in the air.

The next moment more than ten high-ranked healing traits were utilized on the young man.

Michael was not sure what kind of miracle he was watching, but in less than two minutes, the young man opened his eyes once again – his body fully intact.

The young man had been healed and pulled back from hell after the Grim Reaper reaped the young man's Soul.

'Is that the power of high-ranked Soultraits? Being able to pull someone back from death?!'

Michael figured that this kind of Soultrait could only be used when the deceased died not long ago. Maybe, a few seconds was the limit.

Nonetheless, the ability to resurrect someone from death was already terrifying enough to throw Michael and most of the audience into a state of shock and awe.

They couldn't believe what they were witnessing just now. Despite originating from big families, none of the descendants had seen something on the same level as resurrecting the dead.

Michael stared blankly at the young man, who had just been resurrected. The young man's body trembled in shock, but his eyes were clear. It was obvious that he hadn't realized what had just happened.

"Damn. Isn't that woman too fierce?!" Someone near Michael asked.

Michael turned around to see who had already regained his composure to burst out loud.

However, what he saw surprised him quite a bit. Three young men, looking exactly the same, stood next to two young men, who stared at the battlefield without a tinge of surprise.

Neither the young woman's fierceness nor the miraculous resurrection of the young man seemed to have fazed them.

They were looking ahead impassively as if they had seen worse things in life.

'Who are these guys?' He wondered.

"I could defeat this woman in a single strike. This is nothing special," One of the two nonchalant guys said without a change in expression, "You guys have a lot to learn to realize that this is nothing in the world we're stepping into by entering the extraterrestrial!"

Chapter 180 High Nobles

The guy lecturing the triplets was almost two meters tall. He was muscular and had short brown hair. His eyes were also brown and of a color similar to his tanned skin.

His appearance was above average, but he wasn't exceptionally handsome. Nonetheless, the reason many people paid more attention to him was his confident demeanor and clothing.

He wore expensive clothes, which had a unique insignia engraved on them. The insignia depicted a large stone fist that smashed on the ground, breaking it apart.

Michael's attention was drawn to the insignia as it was weaved with a trace of origin energy.

'These two seem to hail from bigger families,' Michael thought as his attention moved to the other guy, who nodded when the tall brown-haired student said that he could finish the blood-controlling student with a single strike.

pandasnovel.com The second guy was not as tall as the brown-haired student, but he was no less intimidating. His build was athletic, but he was more on the leaner side. However, he had heterochromatic eyes that caused Michael to feel the chills. One of his eyes was green while the other was black like the abyss. Even the white of his eyes was much darker than it should have been. It looked quite terrifying.

The student with heterochromatic eyes wore expensive clothes, and he had an insignia engraved on them as well. The insignia was different though, showing a black eye shrouded in golden sparks.

"Even if we can defeat her, she is giving her best to be picked for the Battle Exchange just like everyone else. If you think that the Battle Exchange with the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs is not worth going

all-out to soak your hands in the blood of your opponents, you guys have to learn a lot more about this world," The student with heterochromatic eyes said to the triplets.

Everyone had been taught in school that killing your opponents in the Origin Expanse was essential. It was a necessity to ensure that your enemy couldn't recuperate and prepare thoroughly to attack you when you least expected it.

Being merciful would lead to your doom. That's what everyone had been taught in the past.

Nonetheless, it was never easy to make your first kill. Michael struggled a lot at first as well. His first blood was the worst because he had killed a human, but the next few times weren't necessarily better. He felt bad about killing for a long time until he noticed that he would end up dead the moment he hesitated to deliver the killing blow.

'They've been taught differently from the fundamentals,' Michael thought while observing the two young men. He had already seen their fights before and clearly recalled that they didn't have to do much to defeat their opponents.

Their fights had been quite simple; overwhelming victories that didn't require much effort. That was how their fights looked on the outside.

Michael figured that they had powerful Soultraits, and both their War Runes and their presences were extremely powerful.

Compared to most of the other freshmen, they felt like polished gemstones, whose hidden potential had already been unraveled, while everyone else was still a rough gemstone covered in dirt and impurities.

The triplets' eyes glowed brightly as they continued to talk to the two freshmen. Michael was also interested in their discussion, so he got up from his bench and took a step closer to them.

He cleared his throat and did something he wouldn't usually do; he tried to be an extrovert and socialize.

"Sorry for butting into your conversation, but I unintentionally eavesdropped on some of it," Michael started slowly, trying to find the right words only to realize that he failed miserably, "You sounded very confident when you said that you can defeat the female student, who can control blood, that too, with just one strike."

Michael tried to keep smiling even after he saw that the two students did not like his interjection.

"Are you guys confident to make it into the Top 100 of the freshmen?"

There was no malice in his voice and no hidden intentions. The two students thought Michael wanted to provoke and ridicule them for their statement, but that was not the case.

On the contrary, Michael was merely curious if those two students would make it into the Top 100. According to their response, Michael would get to know whether he would make it into the Top 100, or if he would struggle to make it into the Top 500.

"We should be able to. Why are you asking?" The student with heterochromatic eyes asked, still doubtful of the stranger joining their conversation.

"I just wanted to know how strong the Top 100 will be to see if I have a chance or not," Michael responded with a light shrug.

"That's all?"

Michael nodded.

The brown-haired student saw the determination in Michael's eyes, and he couldn't help but smile lightly.

"To be truthful, I think our parents will travel to Kelta and beat the shit out of us if we're not even going to make it in the Top 100 of the first year. They would probably take away all their investments," He said half-jokingly.

Michael figured that the tall, brown-haired student was a little bit more relaxed. He didn't seem to doubt Michael anymore or mind answering him.

Understanding that Michael wanted to compare his strength with theirs to see if he had a chance to enter the Top 100, the tall student didn't feel like shooing Michael away.

"Are the two of you from big families then?" Michael blurted out without thinking. He was not too sure where he had seen the insignia engraved on the two students' clothes, but they seemed familiar.

The triplets and the two powerful students looked at Michael feeling dumbfounded. It was rare to find an ignorant fool, especially in a place like the Sapphirelake Military Academy. However, it looked like they had struck the jackpot.

They were a little curious about the newcomer. Not many were daring enough to jump into the conversation of other people, especially not if two people in the conversation had a presence like the two powerful students. Both of them were already Tier-2 Lords, and Michael could feel heavy pressure radiating from them that reminded him of Fenrir.

At first, Michael thought that it was killing intent, but he was quickly proven wrong when he recalled what Harry taught him before.

'Is that what Harry considered Soul Power overflow?' I think you should take a look at

When young Lords awakened strong Soultraits, often they could not properly control their Soultraits and the Soul Power they naturally exuded.

What did that mean? The two students had extremely powerful Soultraits which they cannot even control after advancing to Tier-2!

"I'm Lincoln Piedra, from the Piedra family. I'm the descendant of one of the High Nobles," The tall, brown-haired student introduced himself.

He gestured to his friend, who exhaled deeply.

"Zeke Lavita. Also, a descendant of one of the High Nobles," the student with heterochromatic eyes, introduced himself shortly. He saw that Michael's lips parted to ask another question, so he quickly intervened, "Lincoln and I are childhood friends, we're hopeful of making it to the top ten...and yes, our Soultraits are 6-Stars. Our families have been close to each other for the last 500 years. No more questions about our families!"

Michael didn't expect to encounter the descendants of two High Nobles so soon, but it was quite interesting. Zeke Lavita merely revealed information about them that could be procured with some research, but Michael was still thankful that he shared it – though it seemed a little bit forced.

But what surprised Michael the most was that both Lincoln and Zeke had 6-Star Soultraits. Danny was already extremely powerful with his 5-Star Soultrait, so he could not even imagine how powerful the two students in front of him would be.

The publicly known statistics said that 50% of all Awakened will be Starless at first. They would awaken their Soultrait later after accumulating more Soul Power. Most of them would awaken after advancing to Tier-1, but their Soultraits would mostly be 1-Star or 2-Star, at most. The rest of all Awakened had a 30% chance to awaken a 1-Star Soultrait, a 15% chance to awaken a 2-Star Soultrait, and a 4% chance to awaken a 3-Star Soultrait.

The remaining 1% made up the probability of awakening a 4-Star and above Soultrait.

Michael nodded his head at that answer. He could tell how rare and powerful high-star Soultraits were. Nonetheless, he was not shocked to the core. His Soultrait was much stronger than a 6-Star Soultrait. Extraction might only be a 4-Star Soultrait for the time being, but he could use it to procure more Soultraits and improve his existing Soultraits as long as he was given enough time.

Curious about the triplets, he turned to them. Michael expected them to possess high-ranked Soultraits as well.

"We don't have 6-Star Soultraits, but we're the descendants of a Minor Noble," One of the triplets hastily blurted to avoid any misunderstandings, while the second added, "And as you can see we're triplets."

The third snapped his fingers and revealed a mischievous smile before he continued what his brothers left out, "We belong to the Barscht family, and are called Janus, James, and Jarg."

While watching the triplets, Michael felt a little weird. Somehow, he thought that he was watching three monkeys that were trying to act like humans – only to fail miserably.

The triplets had brown eyes and hair. They were rather short with an average height close to 1.6 meters, and their arms were out of proportion. Their hands were a little too big and their arms were too long compared to the rest of the body.

'If they let their hair grow and attach a tail to their tailbone, they can be considered monkeys... Wait! What am I even thinking about?!?' Michael shook his head and returned his attention to Lincoln, Zeke, and the triplets.

But he noticed that their attention had already moved to a young woman who had just arrived at the entrance of the arena. It was Alice Zenovia.

"What is Alice doing here?" Michael mumbled quietly to himself, but the others heard him as well.

Zeke lifted an eyebrow and asked "'Alice'? I know that you're ignorant, but you shouldn't call Professor Zenovia by her first name – if you want to stay alive that is."

'Hmm? Aren't you exaggerating much?' Michael asked in his mind, but he didn't speak his doubts aloud. Yet Lincoln noticed exactly what Michael was thinking based on his expressions. He could only shake his head at that. What kind of reckless fool did they attract today?

"The Zenovia family is one of the Supreme Families. Furthermore, Professor Zenovia is a prodigy with a rare elemental-combat 6-Star Soultrait. Her territory suits her Soultrait perfectly as well, she summoned a Quasi-Legendary Summon from her Fortune Summoning Scroll, and she is likely to become one of the youngest Queens in the Origin Expanse...She is already a Tier-5 powerhouse at the tender age of 25, and has a Tier-5 Glacier Flood Dragon, a mythical creature, guarding her palace. Don't. Fucking. Provoke. Her!!"

Michael could instantly tell that neither Zeke nor Lincoln wanted to get on Alice Zenovia's wrong side, and he could clearly understand why.

"Is she that powerful? I never knew," He mumbled, which caused even the triplets to shake their heads.

"You should really study the nobility, clans, and influential families of mankind," Janus remarked.

"If you don't do that..." James added,

"You will die miserably!" Jarg finished.

"Oh...well...I guess..." Michael said, agreeing that they had a point.

He saw Kaleb walking behind Alice, but Michael could tell that Lincoln, Zeke and the triplets would beat the shit out of him if he were to wave at Kaleb and shout his name loudly.

Just as Michael thought about doing it, Kaleb turned his head in their direction. He recognized Michael with a single glance and tilted his head.

He raised an eyebrow and stared at the odd group before he raised his hand lightly, greeting Michael without saying a word.

Michael smiled and raised his hand to respond with a peace-sign.

Zeke noticed the exchange between the two and frowned.

'What did I just see?'