

Supreme Lord 261

Chapter 261 Wisps Of Knowledge

Extraction's enhanced golden streams engulfed the small batch of books lying on the floor, initiating the process of extraction.

It was the first time that Michael used extraction on a book, hoping to extract the knowledge inside, and he was not sure how well it would work.

He had great hopes, especially after Enhancement had been upgraded to 5-Star, strengthening the enhancement effect of every applied layer. Using Enhancement on Extraction several times strengthened Extraction's power greatly. The 6-Star Soultrait's limits increased, revealing new functions that could be utilized by Michael.

He was not sure if he was not yet able to extract the book's knowledge, or if that was not possible, in the first place. However, Michael expected great things from Extraction because it had yet to let him down, after all!

At first, Michael didn't sense anything. He was about to lose hope when he sensed that something changed after he used Extraction on the books for a whole minute. He could see a silver wisp passing through extraction's golden streams. The silver wisp passed through the golden stream and entered his body through his palm.

After that, strands of information entered his mind where they were immediately digested and comprehended.

"I don't even have to comprehend the information entering my mind? Doesn't that mean I can extract comprehended knowledge immediately?" Michael mumbled to himself, and a bright smile blossomed on his face.

The discovery he made was much better than expected. Michael thought that the Wisps of Knowledge entering his mind would be similar to those from the Memory Orbs and that he had to digest and comprehend everything on his own.

However, that was not the case. It felt more like the knowledge entering his mind belonged to him.

While that seemed great, Michael could also see the downside.

'If the content written down in the books is incorrect or misleading, I'll have wrong information imprinted in my mind. Finding the falsified information and replacing it with authentic data will be quite difficult.' Michael concluded.

He knew that the effect of falsified information might not be that drastic when it revolved around studying certain simple topics, but it would be quite problematic when he was to apply it to more important topics.

'Don't believe everything. Use your head to question the information the Wisps of Knowledge imprint in your mind!' Michael told himself as he continued to extract the Wisps of Knowledge from the books in front of him.

Now that Michael could sense what exactly he had to extract to obtain the Wisps of Knowledge he could divert Extraction's focus on these spots. He aimed precisely at them and quickly extracted the Wisps of Knowledge that entered his mind.

In the next 30 minutes, Michael learned the spoken and written language of the Draconia Era. It hadn't been easy to fill his mind with that much knowledge, but Michael overcame the toll of learning a complete new language in half an hour, quite easily.

"Good thing that I practiced Ceasurium Menta up to the second stage. If not, I would be bleeding to death," Michael scoffed before he stopped using Extraction on the books that were spread out in front of him.

He picked one of the books up, just to see that the pages were blank now.

"That counts as destruction, right? I didn't steal the books...just the content," Michael said to the Librarian with a sly smile on his face.

He wiped his bleeding nose with the back of his hand and his eyes sparkled brightly while staring at the Librarian.

"You...what did you just do?" The Librarian asked a deep frown on his face.

The power Michael had used just now was extremely old. It was something the Librarian had never seen before even when he was still alive. Putting aside the presence of the golden streams, it was quite obvious that Michael did something to wipe out not only the content of the books but also the insights of the author who wrote the books a long time ago.

"I learned the language of the Draconia Era," Michael revealed while speaking in the language that had been used before the Second Epoch.

His proficiency in the language was not exceptional, just like his pronunciation, but the Librarian could clearly understand what he said.

The Librarian stared at Michael in bewilderment and could not think of a response as his mind blanked out. He was trying hard to hide his surprise.

Little did the Librarian know that Michael was also surprised. If he had known that it was so easy to learn something, he wouldn't have bothered spending so long mastering the Memory Lane technique at the Saphirelake Military Academy. The technique was quite useless now, but even then Michael had to reach the 3rd Stage until the end of the semester if he didn't want a bad remark.

That thought was quite annoying, but it was not too bad. After all, he could study everything for his other courses as long as he could find the textbooks for his courses. In the age of technology and space-traveling physical books were a rarity. But even if they were rare, they still existed. It was just that their price was quite high.

Fortunately, Michael had enough money to purchase a bulk of physical books to skip studying.

"Can you really understand what's written in all those books now?" Tiara asked, even more baffled than the Librarian.

She felt a sudden burst of excitement course through her entire being like an electric current.

Michael looked over to Tiara and nodded his head. Then he tilted his head lightly as he thought of something.

He took a step closer to Tiara and pressed his flat hand against her forehead.

Tiara was startled. She held her breath and was about to step back when she heard Michael's thoughts in her mind.

[Focus on my thoughts and try to learn the Draconia Era's language yourself!] Michael ordered, using his Mind Reader Soultrait for the first time in forever.

Mind Reader was not supposed to be used this way. It was actually supposed to read the mind of the target. However, Michael was using Mind Reader in reverse while revealing his unguarded mind to Tiara. He began to think about the knowledge of the Draconia Era's language that had entered his mind not too long ago, allowing Tiara to get a glimpse of the translated version of the books he had just extracted.

Tiara's mind was flooded with information. She stumbled backward and fell to the ground without uttering a single sound. All she could do was stare at Michael in surprise and utter shock.

"How is that possible? What did you do, Master?" Tiara asked, feeling quite clearly that a strand of information had entered her mind.

She had yet to digest the information and comprehend everything, but Tiara was certain that she could learn the language of the Draconia Era using the strategy Michael had just utilized.

"I used the Mind Reader Soultrait in reverse to allow you to read my mind. I cannot do that with all of my Summons since I don't trust everyone to enter my unguarded mind, but we can copy the content of the books and write it down ourselves," Michael said, overjoyed that his foolish idea was working.

He actually didn't expect Mind Reader to be that useful. Fusing Mind Reader to his War Rune had been one of his regrets. However, that was not the case anymore. Mind Reader's utility increased by leaps and bounds because it allowed him to forward the knowledge he learned from books of another language to anyone he wished.

By studying the books spread all around the Library, Michael's mind would translate them naturally and he could use Mind Reader to forward the translated information that could then be written down on paper for everyone to read. That was amazing!

With this discovery, Michael turned to the Librarian, the glint in his eyes even more intense than before.

"Can you show me books related to the Origin Expanse, All Languages of the First Epoch, Books about the Dragon Tongue, the Origin Tongue, books about Forging, Ores, Alchemists, Enchanters, Martial Arts techniques, Breathing techniques, Ancient Ruins and...maybe just everything that may be useful for a 'young and naive fool, who thinks that he is powerful and that the Origin Expanse ought to be conquered by him'," Michael requested, unable to refrain himself from teasing the Librarian using the same words he had used a few minutes ago.

The Librarian was about to say something, and lecture Michael but he shut his mouth before uttering a single word.

It was not difficult to tell that Michael's motivation was overflowing and that he had entered a state of extreme excitement. His entire being was overflowing with ecstasy, desiring to devour the knowledge of the Library of Laxartia.

Under normal circumstances, the Librarian would tell the youngster to calm down and take one step at a time. However, after witnessing what the young Lord had just done, he didn't want to say anything.

Rather than warning Michael, the Librarian wanted to see how high his limit was.

Could he really devour the knowledge of the entire Library in the remaining time before the Lord Rift closed, or would his brain be overwhelmed with information, unable to digest more. Would Michael collapse from the input of knowledge, or were his mind and willpower strong enough to overcome all ordeals?

For the first time in what felt like an eternity, the Librarian felt surprised and a tinge of interest by looking at one of the youngsters entering the Will's Lord Rifts. Everyone capable enough to enter a Lord Rift had great ambition, but the Librarian had only seen a handful with the actual strength, willpower, and uncontrollable desire to overcome all issues and become the greatest.

However, Michael was different from the handful of prodigies the Librarian had seen before.

He didn't seem exceptional at first glance.

The Librarian could also tell that Michael had been affected by the Will. It was most definitely not a blessing granted by the Will.

On the contrary, a curse had spread through his bloodline, festering through all of his ancestors that were granted by the Will centuries ago.

Yet, despite the curse weighing down on the youngster, Michael didn't seem to be giving up.

'I wonder how much you have gone through, and what obstacles await you in the future.' The Librarian thought, staring at Michael.

'Good luck, fellow Descendant of the Cursed. May your future be brighter than mine!'

Chapter 262 Change

Michael quickly realized that the books stored in the Library of Laxartia were extremely valuable to him, his subjects, and his territory.

They were not just ordinary novels of ancient times but had detailed information about the Origin Expanse, guides related to raiding ruins, manuals on how to train Grandmaster Artisans, martial art techniques, training techniques, how to combine different techniques to create a superior technique, and much more.

All in all, Michael was unable to leave behind any of the books. According to him, the extraordinary knowledge stored in the books shouldn't stay in the Lord Rift. It should be taken outside and utilized

properly. That was also why Michael never stopped using Extraction to extract the Wisps of Knowledge even after his head began to ache.

At one point, Michael's sight began to blur, his legs grew weak and blood began to trickle out of his nose, eyes, ears, and mouth. The headache grew intense to such an extent that Michael began to wonder if he would faint in the next second.

Despite that, he never stopped using Extraction – not until the countdown of the Lord Rift went down to less than one hour.

His head was overflowing with knowledge that had been deeply imprinted in his mind, and he felt nauseous. Michael swayed left to right when he got up from the ground, his legs shaking like leaves in the wind. The next moment Michael began to vomit.

Tiara and Masked Saber appeared next to Michael and tried patting his back soothingly. They stared at him with worry, unsure what they could do to help him.

"How about a potion? No...you will just vomit the content before the potion takes effect..." Tiara mumbled staring at Michael while her lips were pressed together, "Why did you have to be so greedy? It's just a bit of knowledge. The Lord Rift has yet to close, but you've just turned yourself into an easy target for everyone!"

For a moment, Tiara lost herself in anger. She even forgot to call Michael 'Master', and was glaring daggers at him. Michael's greed had put him into an extremely difficult position. He was vulnerable, and an easy target for any Lord and Monster in the Lord Rift.

"Don't worry too much. There shouldn't be too many Lords left behind, and Monsters seem to avoid the abandoned town as well," Masked Saber reassured Tiara though his tone was slightly cold.

Tiara imagined seeing a glint of anger behind Masked Saber's mask, but she thought that this couldn't be the case. She was definitely not wrong for lecturing Michael for doing something dangerous like putting himself in a vulnerable position.

"We just need to protect him since he endangered his life for the sake of his people and territory," Masked Saber continued to speak, "Or do you think Michael did all of that for himself? Do you really think he was that greedy because he solely focused on his own gains? Seems like you forgot about the Zentika Empire after we entered the Lord Rift."

The longer Tiara listened to Masked Saber the more she believed that Masked Saber's impression of her had worsened gradually. It was almost like Masked Saber was angry at Tiara for lecturing Michael after he deliberately jeopardized his health to collect more knowledge for his people and the territory.

However, Tiara didn't say anything. She recalled the warfare against the Jungle Expedition, and how the fight against the 13 Paladins had ended. Tiara was also fully aware of the pain Michael went through at that time.

After the warfare, it was also quite obvious that Michael had been agitated with himself. He had been forced to use the Chaos Pills to kill the 13 Paladins, destroying the majority of the Untamed Jungle's outer area – nearly destroying his territory as well.

The Lord Rift was likely to be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – something Michael couldn't ignore. He had to make full use of it, gaining as much as possible even if that meant he would have to suffer.

"Alright, alright. We will protect our Master..." Tiara mumbled quietly, throwing Michael's right arm around her shoulders to support him.

Masked Saber did the same to Michael's left side, helping him up.

The Library of Laxartia seemed the most secure with the Librarian around. However, it didn't seem like Michael wanted to stay in the Library.

"Magical Smithy..." He mumbled weakly while blood continued to trickle down his seven orifices.

Even though Michael gained lots of knowledge, he didn't want to miss out on the Magical Smithy either. If he could take it with him, the researchers in his territory could thoroughly analyze the magical construction. As long as they researched it long enough, they may even be able to figure out the exact technique used by the Magical Smithy to forge weapons. The chances were slim but if they could mass-

produce the unique technique used by the Magical Smithy, Michael's Underground Forging Hall would be able to create Artifact-like Armaments for his Summons as well.

If that was truly possible, Michael's army would turn into ferocious wolves in sheep's skin. The thought alone was more than enough to nudge Michael to take a step closer to the exit.

"Just rest for the next 15 minutes. The library will close down afterward, either way. You'll be on your own from then on," The Librarian said calmly.

He had been silent since Michael began to greedily devour the Wisps of Knowledge of the Laxartia Library and only spoke up now.

"And believe me when I tell you that you need these 15 minutes of rest. If you really want to take the Relic of Draka with you, you'll have to empower your ancient power a lot more than you did to obtain the Wisps of Knowledge," The Librarian revealed, fully aware of what Michael intended to do.

He looked up in the air as if he could see through the library's ceiling and shook his head.

"I will also give you a final tip since you've exceeded my expectations. You proved me wrong, so make sure that I won't regret telling you this- Either hide until the end after you collect the Relic of Draka, or run for your lives, hoping that 'it' won't be able to catch you," The Librarian said, causing three heads to flick to him at once.

The Librarian gave a cryptic warning and turned silent. He didn't say anything else. However, the snippets of information he had forwarded and the serious tone in the Librarian's voice were already enough to show that something big had happened.

"It? What do you mean by It?" Tiara asked but she didn't receive an answer.

On the contrary, the Librarian turned away and disappeared for the next 15 minutes.

In these 15 minutes, Michael forced himself to take a wide variety of potions. He also used Extraction to drain the origin energy in the surroundings. Utilizing Extraction right now was akin to subjecting himself

to mental torture but given the Librarian's tips, Michael figured that he would require every single ounce of the origin energy in his storage to extract the Relic of Draka.

Michael tried his best to improve his condition in 15 minutes, but the time was simply too short compared to the strain he had subjected himself to by extracting and digesting Wisps of Knowledge for tens of hours.

Nonetheless, his condition improved quite a bit thanks to the high-quality potions he had extracted from a bunch of Lords before. Each of the Zentika Empire's Lords had been given two unique potions that were likely to provide them with a means to improve their condition in an emergency.

Luckily, they hadn't been able to use their unique potions, leaving more than enough for Michael to stop the bleeding all over his head, and tend to the extreme headache.

Even his sight was a little bit clearer when the Librarian returned.

"It's time for you to leave," The Librarian merely said, pointing at the door.

Michael nodded his head subtly as he turned to the door. He was just about to take the first step to leave when he turned back to the Librarian.

"Thank you very much for helping us out. Your guidance was very helpful. I will never forget what you did," Michael said sincerely, feeling grateful to have met the Librarian.

The Librarian didn't say anything in response, but that was not necessary. Michael just wanted the Librarian to know that his help was appreciated and that he felt thankful.

Afterward, Michael and his subordinates stepped outside the library, where they were greeted by searing heat and luminous shades of red that painted everything in the surroundings wherever they looked.

Even the sky was drenched in a luminous shade of red, which cast an eerie atmosphere all over the Lord Rift.

Yet, instead of feeling a chill creeping up their spines, all Michael, Tiara, and Masked Saber could feel was the searing heat that permeated every inch of the Lord Rift.

The temperature outside the Laxartia Library easily exceeded 100 degrees Celsius, forcing Michael and the others to cover their body with a thin layer of origin energy to keep themselves cool.

"What the hell happened—..." Michael was about to ask, only to be interrupted by a terrific explosion that originated from the mountain range.

Following the explosion the temperature increased once again.

However, none of them could pay attention to this.

Their entire focus was pulled to the ginormous being that soared through the air, issuing a terrifying roar that caused every single hair on their bodies to stand up on its end. They were paralyzed in fear and could only watch the being that spit out blazing hot flames from its maw.

From inside the library, the Librarian kept watching Michael and the others as they stood frozen in place.

'I hope they make it out alive.'

Chapter 263 Protect

The atmosphere all over the Lord Rift had changed. Nothing looked the same as before.

The Mountain range was towering tall against the horizon, but it didn't feel like a symbol of peace anymore. On the contrary, its once clouded peak was not veiled in a dark cloak of ash and smoke.

Rivers of molten lava streamed down its sides with an ominous, fierce intensity. The air all over the Lord Rift held the scent of sulfur, and the ground trembled with the echoes of the mountain range's

unleashed fury. Or that was what it felt like to Michael as he stared at the mountain range that turned out to be a volcano, which had erupted not too long ago.

But even if the erupted volcano and the streams of molten lava were already fearsome, and a bad omen of what awaited the Lords in the last hour until the Lord Rift would close, the being soaring through the vast expanse of the crimson sky was far more terrifying.

The being had fearsome blood-like scales that shone brightly in the sunlight, and expansive wings that seemed to spread across the entire sky.

Its eyes were like ponds of molten gold, gleaming with intelligence, wisdom, and fury, causing Michael to feel a chill running down his spine as its heads surveyed the Lord Rift.

The being was a mythical creature, a monstrous existence with an appearance of a red-scaled lizard having enormous wings, large horns jutting from its head, a serpentine-like neck that moved gracefully, and a majestic presence that commanded reverence, evoking a sense of fear and admiration.

It was a dragon soaring through the sky with effortless grace!

"Fuck...was that the 'it' the Librarian mentioned earlier?" Tiara cursed in a low voice when she regained her composure.

She had activated her Transformation Soultrait instinctively, growing silver fur all over her body. Tiara's wild instincts had reacted subconsciously. However, even after the Silvarean Transformation, Tiara didn't feel secure. On the contrary, the fear sweeping through every inch of her body intensified.

Her wild instincts told her to run away as far as possible if she wanted to survive. But instead of moving, her eyes locked onto Michael. She tried to suppress her growing fear of the monster by digging her claws deep into her palms.

Contrary to Tiara, Masked Saber didn't even think about running. He stayed by Michael's side and waited patiently to see what Michael was going to do. However, Michael was staring at the sky cluelessly, wondering what orders to give to his team.

Seeing the Red Dragon was enough to turn his already hurting head into a complete mess. It was difficult to arrive at a definite conclusion, especially after they witnessed the Red Dragon diving down to the densely grown forest where it released searing hot flames.

The Red Dragon's flames turned everything in its way into ashes. The dragon breath didn't even leave behind remnants of the beings it burned alive. Bones, flesh, and organs, everything was reduced to a crisp.

Witnessing the Red Dragon's power, Michael's first thought was to flee. However, where were they supposed to flee to? Was there a place to run? Could they escape the Red Dragon if it discovered them running across the small plain?

Michael was certain that the Red Dragon would discover them if they were to run wildly through the wilderness. Thus, instead of running away, it was much better to hide.

The Red Dragon had yet to pave its way to the abandoned town, creating a perfect opportunity for the trio to rush to the smithy before finding a place to hide.

Michael forced himself to run even though he was still not feeling well. They reached the smithy in no time, and both Michael and Masked Saber entered it quickly. Meanwhile, Tiara was left outside to observe the Red Dragon's movements. They had to be prepared once the Red Dragon decided to change its target to the abandoned town, after all.

Reaching the Relic of Draka, Michael picked up the sword that had just been forged. He immediately sensed that the sword was powerful and that it had effects similar to a Tier-2 Artifact. That was exceptional, and it caused Michael to momentarily forget about his worries.

Unfortunately, the Red Dragon was not quiet. It roared out loudly, pulling Michael back to his senses.

'Should I leave the Relic of Draka behind to ensure that it doesn't become an unnecessary load weighing me down? But will that change anything, in the first place? If the Red Dragon finds us, we'll be dead, either way...'

No matter how Michael looked at the situation, the presence of the Red Dragon was comparable to the mythical serpent in the Untamed Jungle. The Red Dragon was definitely not a Mythical Creature at the 2nd Tier. Even if it was, Michael wouldn't be confident to kill the Red Dragon. It was probably impossible for him to even inflict a shallow scratch in the Red Dragon's scales, if he was able to reach its scales, in the first place.

Feeling weak and powerless in the face of the Red Dragon meant that it would kill him one way or another.

"Just take the Relic. We'll definitely be fine," Masked Saber said encouragingly before adding,

Michael looked over to Masked Saber and he lifted an eyebrow at Masked Saber's next words. I think you should take a look at

"Even if something happens. I'll make sure that you will survive!"

Michael could tell that Masked Saber was dead serious. He would do everything to ensure that Michael would survive.

It encouraged Michael to unleash three layers of Enhancement on Extraction before he targeted the Relic of Draka – the Magical Smithy.

But at the same time, Michael had a premonition. He could tell that something was wrong with the way Masked Saber spoke. It was a very familiar feeling, which was a little different from the way Masked Saber spoke usually.

Yet, before Michael could ask something, he got distracted by a surprising fact. He realized in slight astonishment that Extraction was not powerful enough to extract the Relic of Draka.

This forced Michael to add more layers of Enhancement to Extraction. He had already been using the strongest form of Extraction to extract the Relic of Draka but it still didn't seem enough. As a result, layer after layer of Enhancement was added until a total of seven layers of Enhancement had been applied to the Symbol of Extraction.

It was the highest number of Enhancements Michael had applied to a single object, or Soultrait until now, and both the energy consumption and the effect were terrific.

Michael's origin energy was rapidly drained, but Extraction was only able to extract the Relic of Draka by the time seven layers of Enhancement strengthened the 6-Star Extraction Soultrait.

He extracted the Relic of Draka in one go and stored it inside his War Rune's storage. By the time the Relic was stored, Michael stopped using Enhancement and Extraction. Yet, what he didn't expect to happen was sudden exhaustion and the agonizing headache to resurface.

Blood gushed out of his pores again, and the world around him turned dark for a moment.

Michael's legs gave in, and he slumped to the ground.

"You've overworked yourself, but you got it. You're definitely the Lord, who benefited most from the Lord Rift. Good job!" Masked Saber commented, giving him a thumbs up.

In response, Michael smiled weakly. He tried to get up again and move with Masked Saber and Tiara to a more secure location to hide until the Lord Rift closed when Masked Saber patted his shoulder soothingly.

"Don't worry, we're just as safe here as everywhere else in the abandoned town. There is no need to keep moving for the time being. I'll protect you, just rest a bit longer!" He said reassuringly.

Michael merely heard Masked Saber's last words before the tension accumulated in his body was released. His vision tunneled and he fell unconscious the next second.

Masked Saber looked at Michael, and a heavy sigh escaped his lips.

"To think that you would risk your life just to ensure that your territory can prosper. You really don't want to lose your territory to the Zentika Empire, do you?" He asked, staring at the sleeping Michael for a long time.

"Just what makes you strive for strength that much? It's not like you could survive and live a nice life without that much stress if you worked a little bit less," He mumbled, scratching the back of his head with a thin smile on his lips.

"But I guess striving toward strength and finding out more about our ancestry is one of the things everyone in our family desires. It's just sad that this desire lets us forget about what's truly important sometimes," Masked Saber sighed, shaking his head lightly before he looked down at his clothes that were slowly being worn out by the ever-increasing temperature of the Lord Rift.

"...To enjoy life as much as we can while we're still alive..."

Masked Saber pressed his lips together in a thin line and touched his mask which showed signs of cobweb-like cracks forming all over it.

"No matter what happens, I will make sure that you get out of here alive. You are the most precious in my life, after all!"

Chapter 264 Blazing Flames

"The Dragon is coming!"

Those were the first words Michael heard when he regained consciousness. His head still hurt, feeling like it was about to split apart at any moment, however, Michael didn't dare to stay on the ground.

He focused on the golden wisp of the Lord Entrance ticket just to find out that the Lord Rift would close in a few minutes.

They had come so far!! Now they only had to survive a few more minutes!

"Tiara, come here," Michael said weakly before he consumed several energy potions and healing potions. His body might still be fine but his head was a mess, and Michael could only hope that the healing potion would ensure that his brain wouldn't suffer from any permanent injuries after what he was about to do.

Now that he had rested a bit, Michael's energy storage was filled to the brim. Adding the energy entering his body through the potions, Michael was overflowing with origin energy. It was just enough to use Extraction on the ground beneath him.

Tiara appeared in the smithy, with a trace of worry in her heart. During their time in the Lord Rift she had never felt that uncomfortable. A premonition permeated the air, and worry was gnawing at her. Even if the Red Dragon wouldn't find them, the dragon breath may still reach the smithy and burn down everything in their sight – possibly even them.

However, seeing Michael's calm expression worked wonders on Tiara who relaxed almost instantly. She followed his hand gesture and stepped closer. Michael then pulled her even closer before he did the same to Masked Saber.

The next instant, the ground beneath them with a radius of half a meter around Michael disappeared suddenly.

Michael's eyes were closed, his entire focus pointed toward extracting the ground beneath them.

Even if the Red Dragon burned down the smithy with its dragon breath, Michael and the others were unlikely to die that easily. The dragon breath may still reach them but the flames would not directly scorch them alive. They would just have to withstand the searing heat – which was comparatively a little easier to counter.

Michael never thought that it would be easy, but he was pretty sure that digging a hole downward was much better than leaving the smithy and running around wildly. At least, the Red Dragon wouldn't notice them until the very end.

Less than a minute after Michael regained his consciousness, Michael and the others noticed that a heatwave flooded their small pit. The smithy didn't seem to have been burned down yet, but the Dragon's roar sounded a little closer than before. It was obvious that the Red Dragon had begun to wreak havoc inside the abandoned town.

The heatwave crashing down on them caused great distress to Michael. He bit his lower lip hard and it began to bleed but he endured the pain just to ensure that he would stay conscious while increasing the

intensity of Extraction. He unleashed Extraction's full power before adding a layer of Enhancement to accelerate everything.

They moved downward much faster than before, creating a huge gap between them and the surface. However, the downside was that Michael's origin energy was quickly drained.

He tried to extract the origin energy from the surroundings but the headache prevented him from using Extraction multiple times. Michael could barely focus on carefully extracting the ground beneath them without collapsing on the spot.

Meanwhile, Tiara kept retrieving potions every few seconds. She hastily removed the lids and fed the potions to Michael, who seemed to have entered a trance-like state to make sure that he would continue extracting the ground beneath them even if he would collapse.

But even after Michael gave his all, a Red Dragon's power shouldn't be underestimated. Tiara and Masked Saber were the first to notice it when it all began.

The Dragon issued a blood-curdling roar that was followed by a desperate outcry of fear and despair. In the next second, a sea of blazing flames burned down the smithy and everything in its surroundings, removing the source of the desperate outcry once and forever.

At first, Masked Saber and Tiara thought that they wouldn't be affected by the blazing flames. The heat of flames expanded the air, which resulted in a reduction of its density. Thus, the gravitational force would pull down the relatively colder and denser air, displacing the hot air, which would then result in the flames shooting upward.

However, the flames they were talking about weren't normal by any means. These flames were the source of power of a true dragon, a mythical creature that was feared the most for its terrifying fiery breath!

Nobody could really tell what, or who enraged the Red Dragon to this extent, but it was obvious that the dragon was truly enraged. Something big must have happened for the Red Dragon to destroy everything in its sight. It wouldn't burn down its own source of food and everything else around for no reason.

But even if there was a reason neither Michael nor Masked Saber, or Tiara could care about that. They just wanted to survive, and would do everything to achieve that goal.

Unfortunately, the Red Dragon's breath didn't make it easy for them. Instead of shooting upward, the dragon's flame spread everywhere it could. As long as a trace of origin energy was in its path, it devoured the same.

They were extremely fast and deadly, increasing the heat inside the pit by several degrees the moment they began to spread out from the surface.

Masked Saber reacted instantaneously. He spread his silver energy out above their heads like a shield, creating a perfectly sealed ceiling of silver energy. Given that the Red Dragon's flames weren't aimed at them, Masked Saber was certain that the silver energy ceiling was strong enough to protect all of them.

That was indeed a correct assumption of Masked Saber. But there was one thing he didn't take into consideration; Dragon flames burned through creations made with origin energy.

The moment the blazing dragon flames reached the silver energy ceiling Masked Saber realized that his origin energy wouldn't be enough to protect them until the Lord Rift closed – throwing all of them outside. Masked Saber's only advantage was that Michael continued to pull them deeper underground. Their distance to the surface increased, which weakened the intensity of the dragon flames that reached them.

That way, Masked Saber could regulate his energy consumption a little bit.

He let out a big sigh of relief, telling himself that his silver energy ceiling was likely to be enough to protect them for one more minute. By the time the next 60 seconds elapsed, all of this would be over. They would return to the Untamed Jungle with all their loot, happily expand their territory, and become stronger than ever before.

But it was just as Masked Saber took another breath that his heart skipped a beat. His hair stood up on its end and he didn't dare to move a single muscle in his body.

The Red Dragon had noticed the pit in the ground, and it was staring straight at Masked Saber with its golden eyes that shone with a wicked glint.

"Fuck..."

Masked Saber's voice barely reached the bottom of the pit when the Red Dragon lifted its head to direct its flames straight down the pit.

45 seconds remained.

Chapter 265 Realization

The moment Masked Saber cursed out loudly, Michael was pulled out of his trance-like state.

He felt weak and his head felt like it was about to burst at any moment, but he could still crane his head to look up. Even if he couldn't move, Michael would have forced himself to move either way. Now was not the time to slack.

Michael's view was filled with the Red Dragon's blazing flames as they shot down the pit. He glanced at Masked Saber and Tiara for a moment before he stopped using Extraction on the ground beneath them.

Instead, he released a beam of golden light upward.

The moment Michael changed his target, blood began to trickle out of his eyes, nose, ears, and mouth. But that was the smallest problem Michael faced right now. His golden beam of extraction collided with the dragon flames a quarter of a second after Michael released it.

He tried to extract the origin energy from the dragon's flames, knowing that these mythical flames wouldn't extinguish immediately if he deprived the oxygen in the vicinity. It was a desperate attempt but he prayed that it would work. However, instead of being able to extract the dragon flames' origin energy, Michael witnessed in shock the way his extraction's golden streams were devoured by the dragon flames.

For the first time since Michael had gotten hold of Extraction, he was faced with the destruction of Extraction's power. It was not impossible to imagine given that the dragon's breath released mythical flames, but Michael had a hard time coping with Extraction's uselessness while facing this type of issue.

The dragon flames continued to move downward rapidly. It wasn't long before they collided with the perfectly sealed silver energy ceiling. Masked Saber had never stopped channeling more energy into the silver energy ceiling, strengthening it just enough to block the first impact of the dragon flames.

Despite being able to block the flames, the silver energy ceiling burned down quickly. At the same time, Masked Saber spit out blood. The impact of the dragon flames must have been much harder than expected.

Masked Saber's perfectly sealed silver energy ceiling crumbled. The searing hot heat of the dragon flames passed through the silver energy ceiling, filling the bottom of the pit.

But that was not everything. If that was all, Michael might not feel desperation coiling around his heart in a vice-like grip.

However, Michael saw from the corner of his eyes that Masked Saber's cloth began to catch fire. Masked Saber's mask seemed to have been deprived of all its moisture, causing cracks to form all over the surface.

A burst of fear spread through his entire body seeing what was about to happen to Masked Saber. For the first time since he entered the Origin Expanse, death seemed closer than ever. It was hovering in the air above them and felt almost like the Grim Reader's soul-reaping scythe was pressed tightly against their necks.

Feeling a tinge of desperation for the first time, Michael reacted instinctively. He applied seven layers of Enhancement on Extraction before he released another golden beam upward.

The golden beam was much more intense than before. It cut through the dragon flames, initiating a fierce battle between an ancient power and the mythical flames that should have burned down everything.

Michael's golden beam of extraction began to devour the origin energy within the dragon flames all while the dragon flames destroyed the golden beam, draining it of the origin energy that had been used to create it as well.

However, Michael continued to use the energy he had just drained from the dragon flames to continue releasing the seven-layer enhanced golden beam of extraction. The golden beam immediately caught fire, slowly burning down until it would be destroyed at last.

But that was perfectly fine with Michael. He wasn't trying to have a fierce battle with a mythical creature at this point. All he wanted to do was stall enough time until the Lord Rift would close. Once they were thrown out of the Lord Rift, Michael could cover Masked Saber with several blankets to ensure that nobody would be able to see him.

After all, the condition attached to his life allowed nobody to see his skin, forget about his face!

Yet, even though Michael was doing his best, he couldn't block the dragon flames all by himself. He was merely a Low-stage Tier-2 Lord. His Soultrait may be powerful, especially after it had been enhanced with several layers of 50% Enhancements, but the mythical creature was not only ranked multiple Tiers higher than him, but its mythical flames were far from weak as well.

Michael could merely decrease their strength and drain some origin energy to continue utilizing enhanced Extraction all while the searing heat continued to drain Michael, Tiara, and Masked Saber's vicinity from all moisture.

The temperature in the pit easily crossed 400 degrees Celsius at this point. Not even the layers of origin energy were enough to shield them from the searing heat and scorching flames.

They were sweating profusely, their breathing grew ragged, and their bodies' condition was deteriorating rapidly. It was only a matter of time before they would collapse due to the terrifying heat.

If they weren't at the 2nd Tier, they would already be dead.

However, the situation continued to worsen. The temperature was already unbearable, and they were stuck in a pit with nowhere to go, but the worst was that Masked Saber's clothes had caught fire. I think you should take a look at

They ought to be resistant to all elements, but a small spark of the dragon flames must have passed through the silver energy ceiling, slowly paving the way toward Masked Saber to burn all of his clothes slowly.

Michael grit his teeth and threw a short glance at the Lord Rift's countdown. It showed that the Lord Rift would close in less than ten seconds, which was much more time than they had left.

Michael's origin energy storage was drained, and even Tiara's support from the sideline was of little to no help.

She was trying to energize Masked Saber and Michael with potions to ensure that they could continue giving their best. After all, Tiara didn't have a Soultrait or power that allowed her to extinguish, or weaken the flames of a pureblood dragon. That was not her expertise and it left her filled with regret and anger. She had never felt that useless in her life... not even when their home was taken, and they were forced to flee.

At that time, Tiara had been filled with regret, embarrassment, and humiliation. However, she knew that there was still something she could do to help her people, and to protect them. There had been a way out of misery, and a task only she could accomplish.

But what about now? Right now, Tiara couldn't do anything.

She couldn't even help Masked Saber, who continued to focus solely on the silver energy ceiling to protect them rather than worrying about his burning clothes and cracking mask.

The temperature at the bottom of the hole began to increase rapidly, Michael's golden beam of extraction was devoured by the dragon's sizzling flames, and the full impact of the deadly mythical flames crushed down on Masked Saber's silver energy ceiling at last.

It was already a wonder that Masked Saber had been able to maintain the silver energy ceiling that long. Yet, even after the mythical flames crashed down on it, the ceiling didn't crumble down completely.

Some more sparks of flames reached the bottom of the pit, but they were incomparable to the tremendous force of flames that had yet to reach them.

Weirdly enough, Michael's mind went astray when he stared at the silver energy ceiling, and something his brother said a long time ago resurfaced in his mind.

—" You may not understand me right now, but there will be a time when all your strength won't be enough to protect yourselves and those around you. That's why some people practice forbidden techniques that use your life force as a replacement of origin energy to draw out more strength than you ought to possess. That way, you can use your life to defeat a stronger opponent, or protect someone from a terrific attack you could never block otherwise. These Life Reversal techniques are dangerous, and I hope you will never learn them." –

At that time, Michael didn't understand what his brother meant. Using a Life Reversal technique seemed stupid in his eyes, and that was what he told his brother.

—"Who the hell would be stupid enough to use such a technique?"--

His brother had been smiling knowingly, patting Michael's head with a vibrant smile on his lips.

—"I hope you will never have to use it, but you should know...some people would rather sacrifice themselves than seeing their beloved dying."--

παπιδαςNovel.com Recalling the scene as if it happened the day before, Michael's eyes widened. He momentarily forgot about the desperation filling his entire being and looked over to Masked Saber.

Everything seemed to make sense now. The silver energy, the familiarity he felt when talking to Masked Saber. His familiar fighting style. The True Link of Loyalty.

All of it started to make sense...but it couldn't be. How could Masked Saber be...

"Danny..." Michael cried out weakly.

Masked Saber's clothes were burning at this point, and his mask cracked down, burning into ashes as the mythical flames devoured everything.

"It took you long enough, little fool," A familiar voice reached his ears, causing a teardrop to trickle down Michael's cheek.

Masked Saber's clothes were now reduced to shreds and his mask cracked down, burning into ashes as the mythical flames were devoured, revealing his brother's face in front of him.

The next moment everything in front of Michael was devoured by the dragon's flames.

Chapter 266 Caring Family

Daniel Fang knew that everything was over when his mask crumbled. He stared deep into Michael's eyes and smiled vibrantly at his little brother before the blazing mythical flames engulfed his entire body, burning him rapidly.

Daniel merely had a second before he would burn to ashes. However, knowing that he was bound to die, there was only one thing he could do. He had to ensure that Michael would be fine – that his beloved brother would survive the next few seconds.

Daniel Fang threw his body in front of Michael and Tiara before he channeled his entire Lifeforce into the forbidden Life Reversal technique. Every bit of strength within his body was used to create a huge silver sword that filled the entire space above them.

Danny coughed up blood, and his legs wobbled horribly, but his eyes never left the dragon flames above them. He released the humongous silver qi sword to cut through the dragon's mythical flames and stall some time for Michael.

After unleashing the strongest attack he could condense, Danny's entire being felt weak. It was as if life was seeping out of him at an alarming pace.

Nonetheless, he turned to his brother, still smiling brightly. His lips parted and he said something, but Michael couldn't hear a single word. Michael was in a trance, staring blankly at his elder brother, flabbergasted and unable to comprehend the situation.

The next moment, Daniel Fang's body shot up in flames and burned in front of him, turning into ashes.

Meanwhile, the scene around Michael and Tiara began to change. The flames engulfing them extinguished and everything turned dazzling white. They were teleported out of the Lord Rift. The Lord Rift had closed.

But it was too late. It had been just a second too late.

Michael and Tiara survived, but Masked Saber...no...Daniel Fang sacrificed his life by using everything he could in a desperate attempt to protect his beloved brother.

"Danny..." Michael let out a shrill cry, tears pouring down his cheeks like a waterfall before the tension accumulated in his body dispersed. The adrenaline coursing through him receded, and the accumulated exhaustion of his body and mind crashed down on Michael at once.

He was about to faint when something unexpected happened.

Strands of memories of the past resurfaced in Michael's mind.

He had never expected to think of them again...those bittersweet memories of the time when everything was still fine. Michael didn't want to recall those memories, but he was too weak to reject them. He was drawn into the memories and recalled everything.

It was a memory from more than ten years ago. A middle-aged woman with a youthful appearance was busy in the kitchen, preparing dinner while humming the melody of the most trendy song that had been released a few days ago. She smiled lightly while listening to the chaos behind her.

Two young boys at the age of 7 and 11 were playing in the living room, brawling with each other to find out who was stronger between the two. The older boy was physically stronger, and he was much taller and heavier, yet he didn't use his entire strength in the friendly brawl. He smiled at his younger brother, who was trying to outwit him, happy to fool his little naive and gullible brother by evading his weak and slow attacks at the last moment.

The boys were Michael and Daniel from a time when none of them had manifested their War Rune. The brothers were oblivious to the dangers of the future and didn't even think about their awakening. All that was on their mind was to continue living this peaceful life with their sweet family.

Their family consisted of five members, who loved each other dearly. They would do everything in their power to help each other whether it was by motivating one another through praises, or by lecturing them when they did something wrong. The brothers would even go as far as to risk getting injured as long as it could alleviate the stress and exhaustion of the adults by distracting them.

The youthful middle-aged woman finished cooking dinner and called the boys to set up the table. Her smile widened as she saw them rushing over to the kitchen to help their mother.

They set up the kitchen table, only to halt in their tracks when they heard the door to their apartment open quietly. The two brothers turned around while listening to the pained groans of a middle-aged man, and the teasing voice of a young woman.

The middle-aged man and the young woman looked almost the same. While the middle-aged man's facial features were a little feminine, his actions and behavior were certainly not. On the other hand, the young woman was a true beauty. Her beauty could compare to the Frozen Duchess – Alice Zenovia –, and she had many pursuers who fancied her.

However, none of them met her standards. She was a little tomboyish, and cold to those who were not ambitious, and those who were weaker than her despite spending several years longer in the Origin Expanse than she had.

Her name was Hesta Fang, a young woman at the age of 20, and the youngest human, who became a higher life form by advancing to the 4th Tier. She was ambitious, powerful, and had survived all kinds of ordeals, and she would never accept someone weaker than her as her lover. I think you should take a look at

Some would even say that she was cold and unapproachable. Yet, seeing the two brothers staring at her with big, sparkling eyes Hesta Fang couldn't help but squeal excitedly and bend her knees to lower herself on the ground. She opened her arms widely and smiled vibrantly at her two younger brothers, leaving behind the exhaustion she had felt from sparring with her father the whole day.

Danny and Michael rushed into their sister's embrace, hugging her tightly.

It had been a while since they saw Hesta and they worried a lot about her.

"Will you stay longer with us this time?" Young Danny asked, his eyes already filled with tears.

He didn't want to part with his sister anytime soon.

"Tell us more stories about the Origin Expanse!!" Young Michael exclaimed in excitement, happy that his sister had returned from the Origin Expanse without any injuries.

As long as she was fine, everything would be alright.

"Ayyy, my little boys. Aren't you a little bit too clingy? Your poor sister can barely breathe," The youthful middle-aged woman stepped forward. She ruffled through the hair of her little boys and smiled gently at her oldest child. After a brief eye-contact between the mother and daughter, Hesta straightened her legs to stand up.

She held her brother's hands – one of the boys on each side –, and walked over to the dining table. She lifted Michael into the chair, even though he was already big enough to do so himself, and looked over to Danny in hopes that she could spoil him a little bit as well.

However, Danny had already moved into his seat, his eyes flicking restlessly from the dishes to Hesta.

The flashing smile on his face clearly revealed his excitement, causing Hesta's heart to melt.

On that day she swore to herself to spend more time with her family, and to make sure that they wouldn't have a hard time in the future.

Unfortunately, her pledge didn't go according to the plan.

That seemingly ordinary day turned out to be a life-changing event for the two brothers. It was the last night they saw their sister, and it was the last good memory of their parents.

Everything changed after this seemingly ordinary day of a loving family.

The oldest child disappeared, and the two brothers were abandoned, left with nothing more than money.

...

At one point, Michael noticed that the memory of the past he had long forgotten started to get blurry. The memories and the pleasant sensation accompanying them dispersed, replaced by dazzling light, the chirping of birds, and the familiar smell of the densely grown jungle.

Michael and Tiara had returned to the Untamed Jungle.

Chapter 267 Sacred Desert

[Several months ago in the Sacred Desert]

It had only been a few days since Michael left home to travel through space. Danny was very busy in his territory but he still thought about his brother, wondering how he was doing.

He wasn't too worried about Michael's well-being. On the contrary, Danny was certain that his brother would be fine. It was his gut feeling telling him that everything would be fine with his brother. And usually, Danny's gut feeling was right – especially when it revolved around his brother.

Instead of worrying needlessly about Michael, Danny felt that it was more important to finish the last preparations for the Sarkophag of the Primedival expedition.

It hadn't been long since they found the Sarkophag of Primedival, but everyone was excited to raid the Primedival Pyramid and enter the deeper area to make huge gains.

Only Danny was extremely cautious of the Primedival Pyramid's dangers. He repeatedly warned the remaining Lords in the Alliance that had been created specifically for the raid of the Primedival Pyramid, but they seemed anxious to pass by the Pyramid's outskirts and enter the deeper parts.

"My Lord, do you really want to join those foolish Lords inside the Primedival Pyramid? I don't think we should trust them. They're treacherous and they mistreat their subordinates!" A young man wearing high-quality desert armor voiced his concern, before kneeling down to the ground.

The young warrior knew that he shouldn't judge his Lord's decisions, but his worry forced him to go against his ideals and wishes.

"I know that they cannot be trusted. I will use this opportunity to ensure that their military force will dwindle before I attack them. They're probably planning something similar, but there is nothing we can do about that. If I attack one of them, the others will join the battle once both sides sustain heavy casualties," Danny responded, feeling an incoming headache at the given situation.

The problem was that the Primedival Pyramid was located at the intersection between four large territories. The border of Danny's territory and the territory of the three Lords formed a huge quadrat with each of them being in charge of one quarter. The four Lords had been fighting for two years now, and all of them had been on the verge of annihilation at least once.

Waging war with several Lords was not even the biggest problem. The biggest problem was that Danny discovered the Primedival Pyramid on a windy day a year ago. At that time, he was barely able to see the tip of the Pyramid's ruins jutting out of the Sacred Desert's ground, looking seemingly inconspicuous. But Danny's curiosity was piqued and he undertook a rather laborious task of digging a huge hole along with his subjects to reveal the humongous Pyramid.

While working hard to dig out the Primedival Pyramid, Danny found an invaluable treasure- a natural 5-Star Tierless Weapon Artifacts called Tigerfang. He put it inside his War Rune immediately, thinking of gifting Tigerfang to his brother.

Unfortunately, one of the three enemy Lords' scouts reported the appearance of the Primedival Pyramid and the treasure Danny found in its outskirts to their leader. It was only a matter of days before the other Lords heard of the Primedival Pyramid causing a huge stir in the Sacred Desert.

Danny and the three other Lords were in charge of a rather isolated territory. It was surrounded by large mountains, leaving only small trails for outsiders to infiltrate. Thus, the battle of sovereignty between the four Lords began, and all focus was put on the Primedival Pyramid. The benefits one could obtain from the Primedival Pyramid could be a deciding factor between victory and annihilation, after all.

The warfare of the four Lords became even bloodier than it had been, and chaos and destruction ensued for the next few months. None of the four Lords was able to avoid losses, which drastically stagnated the development of their territories.

In fact, none of the four Lords was able to avoid suffering a major setback in their territories' development progress. The battlefield had moved to the Lords' territories, forcing all of them to use desperate means and actions to survive.

Thus, less than two months ago, the Lords finally decided to hold a meeting to determine what to do next. They decided to plunder the Primedival Pyramid together and use their gains to fight one last battle. I think you should take a look at

"They're our enemies. Warning them won't help us...or is there something else that you are planning, my Lord?" A middle-aged woman with serpentine eyes appeared to their right side with a confused expression. She heard what their Lord said, but couldn't comprehend his reasoning.

"Warning them is for my own good. I need them to survive for a while so that I can enter the inner area to reach the Sarkophag of Primedival. If the Lords and their subordinates die before they can distract the enemy, we will have to struggle a lot more," Danny replied grimly, understanding that it was dangerous to keep his enemies alive.

It would be much better to let the Lords die, conquer their territories and prepare for a large-scale expedition using the gains made from annexing three large territories.

But time was what they lacked the most right now. When Danny entered the Primedival Pyramid for the first time he found out that it would collapse and destroy everything inside it exactly 500 days after it had been dug out. The majority of the 500 days had already passed, leaving Danny and the other Lords no way but to work together if they wanted to benefit from the Primedival Pyramid.

And right now, they were completely focused on that goal. Danny sighed heavily while wiping the sweat off his forehead. If not for the Primedival Pyramid's countdown, he would have never bothered creating an alliance with the three Lords. It was idiotic to work together with your nemesis. Any mistake could lead to their betrayal. There was no trust, which was disastrous in a raid.

Danny knew that damn well, but he was also fully aware that if he didn't join the expedition his enemies would make huge gains.

"How about we attack their territories while they are busy raiding the Primedival Pyramid? As long as their Summoning Gates have been destroyed we'll be able to win the war of sovereignty!" The serpent-eyed woman said, but Danny shook his head.

"If I don't reach the meeting spot unanimously agreed upon in the earlier meeting, the remaining Lords will join hands to attack me. The same will also happen to others if they don't arrive at the meeting spot," Danny revealed with a shrug.

He didn't feel great being pulled into the alliance with the other Lords, but he couldn't fight against the combined force of the three Lords simultaneously. They were not weak by any means, otherwise, Danny would have long since killed them.

Danny was waiting for an opening to strike, but so were the other Lords. None of them backed down, and all of them were greedy to claim everything for themselves – including sovereignty and the loot of the Primedival Pyramid. It was a hassle, and Danny couldn't avoid the battle if he didn't want to abandon his subjects and territory.

He would have to let go of his territory and rights as a Lord to avoid the bloody warfare, but that was not something he wanted to do.

Contrary to others neither he nor Michael would ever abandon anyone. After all, they knew how it felt to be abandoned, left to fend for themselves even though they didn't have the means or power to safeguard themselves.

Danny didn't want to abandon others. He didn't want to make others feel the desperation and helplessness he and his brother felt when their parents abandoned them with a disgusting excuse.

They wanted to search for their sister, knowing damn well that Hesta hadn't disappeared normally.

...

"I will never be like my parents. I'd rather die than abandon those who trust me!"

Chapter 268 Raid

The raid of the Primedival Pyramid could be considered anything but a great success.

After the four Lords and their armies met less than two kilometers from the entrance of the Primedival Pyramid everyone could already feel the tension between the four forces.

The Gigantus Desert Scorpions in Danny's rows screeched loudly, while the Goldscale Earthworms in the army of the other Lords swirled restlessly through the sand around them.

No matter how Danny looked at the situation he couldn't help but feel discomfort. It didn't make sense for four archenemies to join their forces and raid the Primedival Pyramid together. Something was off, but Danny had yet to figure out what it was.

He observed the actions and responses of the other Lords as they shared their thoughts about the Primedival Pyramid.

"Since the Primedival Pyramid requires to be conquered from all entrances simultaneously, we won't even have to pay attention to each other upon entering the Pyramid. Everyone can do their own thing before the final battle that determines who will be the sovereign of the four territories," One of the Lords said emotionlessly.

Even until now, Danny didn't know what race this Lord belonged to. He had the head of a Pteranodon, an extremely long neck, and his arms were long and flexible, which made them seem like they were serpents. On the other hand, his legs were thick, allowing him to have a strong foothold on the ground.

Despite that, the Lord didn't seem powerful. He looked more like a small child had haphazardly put together some random monster body parts. However, his strength – and the strength of his subordinates – was not something that should be underestimated. He was the reason Danny nearly lost his territory twice.

Meanwhile, the two other Lords were no less dangerous. One of them belonged to the Glorack race, a race of small Stone Giants. They were one of the weaker Giant races, their bodies created from mother earth and father stone. The Glorack race was slow, but both their attack power and means of defense were extraordinary.

Danny's Gigantus Desert Scorpions couldn't injure them even with their large pincers or their stingers. Not even the venom with high acidity was strong enough to inflict lethal wounds. After all, the Glorack couldn't feel pain, and the only way they could be killed was by crushing their Lifecore.

Defeating them was difficult for ordinary Summons. Even high-ranked Summons had problems if they were not in possession of powers that allowed them to cut through tempered stone, or crush it with brute force.

Fortunately, Danny had the perfect Soultrait to deal with the Glorack. Faced with Danny as an opponent, the Glorack could only keep some distance to him.

And last but not least there was the Drakna race. The Drakna race was said to have been the Demi-Human offspring of a Dragonaut with extremely low purity of a Red Dragon's bloodline, and a member of a lesser race. They looked like Demi-humans with red scales covering their bodies, small horns growing from their heads, and a large lizard scale growing from their tailbone.

They had a weak innate fire affinity and were adept at using their eyes to easily locate origin energy, the trajectory of projectiles, and see in any environment. Even in utter darkness, the Drakna would be able to see properly, turning them into an extraordinary force during the day and at night.

There was a time when Danny and the Drakna Lord thought about combining their forces. However, before they could do so to deal with the Glorack and the Pteranodon Lord, they took note of the danger and attacked the Drakna Lord from both sides. The Drakna Lord would have died if not for Danny reaching the perimeter at the last moment. Danny focused his attacks on the Glorack Lord and his army, which he nearly decimated while the Drakna Lord fought desperately against the Pteranodon Lord, using the arrival of night to his advantage.

Quite a while had passed since that day, but it was the first time that the four armies had gathered at one place once again. This time it was not for an all-out war either. It was to conquer the Primedival Pyramid.

"Just so everyone knows if anyone here decides to attack my territory while I'm inside the Pyramid with my army...you will not only lose your lives but I will also make sure that I torture everyone in your territory before taking your Summoning Gate to reactivate mine," Danny warned, his eyes as sharp as the razor-sharp sword that hung down his waist.

The other Lords were oblivious to the fact that he had purchased a Lord Seal not too long ago. The Lord Rift drained his entire savings worth billions of dollars. In fact, even that wasn't enough to purchase the Lord Seal. He had to use up a few favors to get hold of this treasure.

To ensure that his people would be safe, Danny had constructed a large underground bunker deep underneath the mountain range. It was far away from his territory, and also the current location of his subordinates.

Danny didn't trust the other Lords. Thus, he made sure to prepare everything to reclaim his territory if necessary. His subordinates wouldn't die, and he could use the Summoning Cores of his enemies with the Lord Seal to regain his power as a Lord – if he was to lose it.

"You can try killing me, human bastard. You are but a hideous stepping stone for me and my people!" The Pteranodon Lord hissed, turning away from the other Lords.

The Drakna Lord's serpentine eyes glimmered upon seeing the Pteranodon Lord's wide-open back but Danny merely shook his head. The Pteranodon Lord wouldn't show his unguarded back to his archenemies – not if he wasn't prepared to get attacked. Maybe he was even hoping that the Drakna Lord wouldn't be able to control his emotions and make some stupid mistake. I think you should take a look at

However, Danny didn't think too much about it either. He put his flat hand against his sword handle and turned away as well.

"Since we know where we have to enter, let's not disturb ourselves with each others' presence. It's disgusting," The Glorack Lord said, also turning away.

Danny looked back at the departing backs of the other Lords, a deep frown appearing on his face.

'Isn't the tension between them almost negligible today? The Drakna Lord's temper didn't flare up even once. He should be throwing fists at both the Glorack and the Pteranodon Lord. However, he merely glared at them. Is he holding back?'

A glare could have several meanings, but it was never for a good reason. Danny couldn't remember to have seen someone glare at him for a good reason, at least. Nonetheless, there hadn't been any killing intent in the Drakna's eyes when he glared at the Pteranodon Lord. It was more of an empty stare void of any intention.

That was weird, and it was also why Danny chose to order his desert scouts to pursue the three Lords and to report to his right hand whenever something happened. Their reports would reach him immediately given that every member of the desert scout unit had been given a short-distance messenger crystal.

They were expensive, but Danny didn't fret over the price. On the contrary, he would have paid a lot more for the messenger crystals as long as they allowed him to be up-to-date about the movements of everyone in the isolated area of the Sacred Desert.

Danny valued information enough to consider the cost of millions as a mere bargain.

He didn't enter the Primedival Pyramid immediately. Instead, he waited for the first reports to reach him before he began to move toward the southern entrance gate of the Primedival Pyramid.

At the entrance gate, Danny ordered the Saharit Elephants who had a thick bone plate growing out of their heads instead of ordinary tusks to charge toward the firm gates and crush them.

The entrance gates in all directions were black, and they had golden enchantments engraved all over them. The enchantments were complex and overlapped with each other, creating a huge illustration with a 3d effect. The images represented the type of challenge they would have to face after succeeding in the initial trial; destroying the four gates without getting killed.

When the Pteranodon Lord had attempted to raid the Primedival Pyramid by himself, he had experienced how devastating the Primedival Pyramid's initial trial truly was.

First of all, the four black gates in all directions had to be attacked simultaneously, otherwise, they couldn't be broken. If the gates weren't attacked simultaneously, the energy that had naturally gathered and condensed inside the Primedival Pyramid over the course of thousands of years would be released to empower the enchantment arrays of the black gates, repairing them faster than they could be destroyed.

Only an existence at the 5th Tier would be able to destroy the black gates faster than the Primedival Pyramid could repair them.

That was one of the reasons four forces were required to charge inside the Primedival Pyramid at once.

Another reason was that the Primedival Pyramid released its forces once someone attempted to destroy the gates. The forces would split up to defend the four gates once the initial trial was set in motion. Instead of moving to four different locations, and splitting into four forces, the Primedival Pyramid's force would divert their focus to protect the other gates if the raiders were unwilling to attack all four gates simultaneously.

The Pteranodon Lord nearly died facing the full force of the Primedival Pyramid's defense power but managed to survive by sacrificing most of his subordinates at that time.

Fortunately, that was not necessary anymore. Four Lords with their full military power attacked the black gates with the aim to destroy the black gates and protect their lives against the Undead forces of the Primedival Pyramid.

It didn't take long until the first Undead emerged from the searing hot sand. Skeletons of all kinds of beings and monsters appeared all around the Primedival Pyramid.

Soon the raid began, sealing the inevitable fate of another Cursed Child.

Chapter 269 Undead Of The Desert

The Undead of the Desert were not to be underestimated. There were countless of them, and none of them seemed weak or timid.

There were Skeleton Spearman wielding spears and carrying shields. Nehkarabia Warrior Skeletons with two sabers, great combat prowess and spatial awareness, Tomb Guard Skeletons wielding halberds, Crypt Ghouls that were as large as Elephants, Skeleton Archers and many more.

However, the ordinary defensive units of the Primedival Pyramid were only slightly annoying for most. They wouldn't be enough to wreak havoc in the rows of the four Lords' armies.

That was different for the Undead Cavalry, the Desert Warbeasts, the Monstrous Infantry, and the Monsters of the Primedival Pyramid.

The Undead Cavalry was put together with Nehkarabia Horsemen riding on Skeleton Horses, and the Nehkarabia Knights riding on Giant Ghouls that were as long as a crane. Their combat prowess was terrifying, especially when the unpredictable movements of the Giant Ghouls were taken into account.

But the Warbeasts made everything even worse. Undead Dire Wolves and Soul-devouring Death Vultures shot out of the sand. The Death Vultures covered the cloudless sky while the Undead Dire Wolves charged through the vicinity with terrifying speed and power.

All those units of the Sacred Desert's Undead were already enough to cause chaos even though the strongest of them were at the Peak of Tier-1. The Giant Ghoul Serpents, the Crypt Ghouls, and the Soul-devouring Death Vultures were on the verge of Tier-2, and their combat prowess could be compared to weaker Tier-2 Warrior Units.

However, the Monstrous Infantry and Undead Desert Monsters of the Primedival Pyramid's army were even more fearsome.

Danny discovered Anubirats and Kleshbits in the rows of the Monstrous Infantry – Superior Existences that had reached the Peak of the 2nd Tier. Anubirats were large guardian statues carved into the likeness of the Gods and Goddess that were loved and prayed to during the Second Epoch.

The guardian statues appeared around the black gate, standing guard and protecting the perimeters of the Primedival Pyramid. The Anubirats were imposing monuments reminiscent of the former glory of the Desert Gods in the Second Epoch, who were awakened in times of need using powerful incantations.

In ancient times the living warriors of the Sacred Desert took great strength from the fact that the Anubirats fought alongside them, believing that their Gods guided and protected them whether it was in life, or in death and as for the Anubirats' appearance, it resembled their image of Anubis.

Kleshbits were like the Anubirats, guardian statues the size of an elephant. However, they didn't fight alongside their warriors. They stood at the back with a huge six-meter-long great bow in their hands – their arrows representations of the fragility of life. Each arrow would find its target, impaling a poor soul, and pulling it into the Sacred Desert where all traces of its existence would be washed away.

Just seeing a handful of those Anubirats and Kleshbits emerging near the southern gate was enough for Danny to curse aloud. He immediately issued orders, manifested his armor and one-handed longsword before he dashed forward with great speed.

The Reinforced Sword Qi of his Soultrait shrouded his sword in silver light all while several compressed Sword Qi blades manifested around his body. He released the Sword Qi blades in hopes of killing the Anubirats and Kleshbits with a single blow. However, the Kleshbits released a deadly arrow to burst the Sword Qi coming their way, while the Anubirats slashed their sickle-like swords at the Sword Qi, shattering it with much more ease than Danny expected.

Danny clicked his tongue, issued a few mental commands to his subjects through a True Link of Loyalty, and moved closer to the Guardian Statues. He didn't want them to kill the Saharit Elephants as they continued to smash the southern gate.

He used more Reinforced Sword Qi around his sword and activated the enchantment of his boots. [Sand Dash] was the enchantment he activated. It allowed him to run across the desert as if he was running over an ordinary plain. His feet didn't sink deep into the sand. Instead, it felt like the sand beneath his feet was firm, pushing him from the ground to accelerate his steps further.

Circulating energy through his body, Danny emerged in front of the closest Anubirats. The Undead Guardian slashed at him with both sickle-like weapons. Its movements were rapid, equivalent to the movement speed of a Low-stage Tier-3 Adventurer. Fortunately, Danny had advanced to the 3rd Tier not too long ago.

He was even able to use some of his connections to get a Saint-rank Blacksmith to create an artificial 5-Star Tier-3 Weapon Artifact for himself. The Artifact and the Lord Seal combined together drained everything Danny had accumulated over the course of four years. He didn't have a single cent in his savings account, and he was even forced to be indebted to the blacksmith. His territory's income for the next three years would be used to pay the Saint-rank Blacksmith.

That was also why Danny wanted to give his all to raid the Primedival Pyramid. He hoped to find a few treasures to pay his debt before using the remaining gains to expand his territory. Once the other Lords were dead, he could focus on turning the isolated area of the Sacred Desert into his headquarters before slowly expanding his territory across the mountain range.

The Takla sword was his Epic Tier-3 Artifact that had been engraved with enchantments that worked perfectly in sync with his Reinforced Sword Qi. It was a customized Artifact that could be considered better than certain natural Epic Tier-3 Artifacts.

Thus, as he kept using his Reinforced Sword Qi on the Takla Sword, Danny was not too worried. He continued to move rapidly, blocking the Anubirat's attacks. I think you should take a look at

He unleashed a Sword Qi blade to the right when the Kleshabits released one of its huge deadly arrows at him, but they destroyed each other upon colliding.

Danny jumped high into the air, coating his sword in silver light before slashing down on the sickle weapons of the Anubirats. The sickles shattered, revealing a big gap for Danny to slash down and behead the Anubirats.

Once the Guardian of the Primedival Pyramid lost its head, the rest of the body crumbled as well. However, Danny didn't receive an energy influx upon killing the Anubirats. That distracted him for a moment and he kept watching the fallen enemy intently, thinking that the Anubirats would move again.

However, instead of moving, the Anubirats stayed on the ground. Instead, the Kleshabits' arrows shot toward Danny in mid-air. This forced Danny to release a few Sword Qi blades which generated enough force to twist and move his body in the air, barely evading the deadly arrows.

When Danny landed on the ground, he threw a glance in the direction of his army. His army consisted of more than 20,000 members of which more than half were at the 1st Tier. Only a thousand were at the 2nd Tier, but they were extremely powerful. Danny had nurtured them thoroughly to ensure their combat prowess would not suffer in adverse conditions and their survival instinct would keep them alert in fierce battles.

Danny had witnessed the death of too many precious subjects to not care about their training progress. He would rather have a smaller army than others if all of them were well-trained with high combat experience and thoroughly mastered combat techniques.

Unfortunately, that was easier said than done. He had only a few veteran combat instructors in his territory with the capability to unleash his subjects' full potential.

Only a minority of them were able to find enlightenment during training, and even less were able to get promoted, gaining a higher star rating. It was truly not easy, but Danny always gave his best to provide his subjects with the best treatment and resources. That way, he could ensure a firm link of loyalty, and that his subjects wouldn't die so easily.

Danny was just about to change his target to the other Anubirats that had begun to wreak havoc with his Gigantus Desert Scorpions when the ground around him began to tremble.

It was not only around him. The sand all around the Primedival Pyramid began to tremble, revealing dozens of skeleton-sized heads. Swords and axes the size of bus shuttles were pushed out of the sand, held by humongous skeleton hands clutching the heavy weapons tightly.

Danny's expression turned sour, but he began to move without hesitation.

His entire body was shrouded in Reinforced Sword Qi at once, turning his entire being into a sword itself. His every movement turned sharp and deadly. In an instant, he appeared behind one of the humongous skeleton heads.

His sword artifact had expanded in size due to the Reinforced Sword Qi's influence. It reached a length of six meters, which Danny used to release a tremendous amount of energy to slash the humongous skeleton head and crush it at once.

The humongous Skeletons emerging from the sand were not ordinary beings. They were Bone Giants, Lesser Mythical Existences at the 3rd Tier. Danny had read about the Desert Giants in the Second Epoch a long time ago, but he had never expected to see them appear in front of him just like that. They were now Undead, but their size and strength didn't change much in comparison to the ancient letters he found about the Sacred Desert. In fact, the Primedival Pyramid might have increased the power of the Desert Giants upon resurrecting them from the dead.

'If the initial trial forces us to fight dozens of Lesser Mythical Existences at the 3rd Tier...what the hell awaits us inside the Pyramid?' Danny couldn't help but ask himself after realizing that his burst of Reinforced Sword Qi was barely enough to kill one of the Bone Giants. The Bone Giant had been in a disadvantageous position, pushing its body out of the sand, and thereby creating an opening for Danny.

Despite that, Danny had used nearly a quarter of his energy to strengthen his Reinforced Sword Qi before he could crush the Bone Giant's head. After all, the bones of a Desert Giant were the firmest. They grew even firmer under the constant tempering of the Primedival Pyramid's energy and the tightly compressed sand all around it.

But even then, Danny was certain that he could deal with a few Bone Giants as long as he had the support of his army. He had a few Tier-3 Adventurers by his side and Summons that were also at the 3rd Tier, ready to go all out if necessary.

However, the Bone Giants weren't the only monstrosities that emerged from the ground later than the others.

Four nightmarish existences emerged near the black gates, one near each of them, spreading terror and fear in the hearts of all beings around them.

The Necrosphinxes had surfaced!

Chapter 270 Terror Of The Battlefield

The hidden region of the Sacred Desert was a vast expanse of land filled with precious resources that couldn't be found anywhere else.

It was surrounded by a huge mountain range where terrifying creatures hibernated, restricting the infiltration of foreign Lords and their armies.

The battle for sovereignty in the hidden region of the Sacred Desert had been raging for decades, yet Danny had only arrived four years ago. He had been young at that time and a mere rookie Lord without much power. Despite his powerlessness, Danny made use of his Soultrait, and his fortune to summon a 6-Star Summon through the Fortune Summoning Scroll to transform his great misfortune into an opportunity.

He killed the Monsters and Lords in his surroundings – almost dying on multiple occasions – and grew much stronger. His War Rune's refinement degree improved quickly in the first two years until only four Lords were left fighting for the reign of the Sacred Desert's hidden region.

By that time, the Lords' territories had grown fast as well, creating long borders that had to be meticulously guarded all the time to ensure that no uninvited guests trespassed their territory behind their backs.

The war increased in intensity over the years, until Danny dug out the Primedival Pyramid. The Primedival Pyramid was an ancient ruin of the Second Epoch, and it was located in a depression in the centermost position of the Sacred Desert's hidden region.

Facing each direction stood a black gate that had to be broken before one could enter the Primedival Pyramid. However, breaking one of the black gates was easier said than done. The initial trial of the Primedival Pyramid was initiated the moment the black gates had been struck with heavy attacks, awakening the Undead of the Sacred Desert once again.

There were tens of thousands of Undeads, ranging from Skeleton Archers to Nehkarabia Knights riding on Giant Ghoul Serpents, or even Kleshabits and Anubirats, which were considered as Guardian Statues of the Sacred Desert during the Second Epoch.

However, amid all those Undead, the Bone Giants didn't attract most of the attention as expected.

On the contrary, all the eyes were glued to the pitch-black statue of the Necrosphinx. A Necrosphinx emerged from the sand in front of every black gate, acting as a guardian and the final boss of the Primedival Pyramid's initial trial.

It inflicted terror in a wide radius and attacked ruthlessly, passing through the rows of enemies without any effort.

The Necrosphinx was a bizarre and horrifying statue – a strange amalgamation of mythical beings that were said to have been sealed in the underworld. It had the torso and face of a man and was armed with gigantic, scything blades that could sever the neck of a Desert Giant with a single slice. The Necrophinx also had a scorpion-like tail, allowing it to stand strong against all kinds of predators.

However, the worst was that the Necrosphinx had long black wings sprouting from its back, mimicking the wings of an Onyx Roc. Those allowed the Necropshinxs to glide through the air in bounding leaps before falling among their terrified prey, reaping their lives with its scything blades.

The moment Danny saw the appearance of the beings that were considered legends even in the ancient texts of the Second Epoch, he swore profusely.

He accessed his War Rune's storage and retrieved a few potions. The content of the translucent glass vials shone brightly, but Danny didn't have any time to pay this any attention. He removed the lid of the potions and consumed the content without any hesitation.

Each of those potions could be considered one of Danny's trump cards. They stimulated his physical strength, reduced his stamina consumption, enhanced his energy circulation, and opened his pores to accelerate his natural energy absorption. Combining the effect of all potions, Danny's body would also start to naturally pull the surrounding origin energy toward him.

The moment he consumed the potions, Danny noticed that their effect had been activated. It hurt a little seeing that all of his potions had been used up at once – knowing how hard it had been to procure each of them –, but he knew that death was the only outcome if he wouldn't drink them right now.

He sent a mental note to his subordinates, telling them to consume their Minotaur Strength Potions, and the Arcane Energy Potions at once. They were lesser versions of the potions he drank and provided a much weaker effect. Nonetheless, they would enhance the combat prowess of his subjects greatly, and that was definitely necessary.

Even though Daniel had killed one of the Bone Giants, another batch of three Bone Giants were on their way to the southern black gate and his people.

That meant, Danny and his army had to deal with three Bone Giants that were lesser mythical creatures at the 3rd Tier, one Necrosphinx – a mythical mutation at the 3rd Tier, known and feared for being a reaper of lives on the battlefield, dozens of Anubirats, Kleshabits, and thousands of other Undead beings of the Sacred Desert.

Danny trusted his people, but there was a huge difference between blindly trusting others while acting oblivious to the dangers ahead and trusting his people while being fully aware of their combat prowess and the danger of the situation that lay ahead. I think you should take a look at

But he was not someone who would back off at the sight of danger. From one moment to the next, Danny began overflowing with energy. He shrouded his sword artifact tightly in Reinforced Sword Qi and dashed toward the Kleshabits. They were gathered in one place and aimed at the Saharit Elephants with their great bows. Danny unleashed a few smaller Sword Qi blades to cut their great bows' bowstrings before he appeared beneath them. He shot upward, his sword held high in the air.

The first Kleshabit couldn't react in time and suffered a heavy blow to its head, causing the head to burst into countless pieces. Danny kicked his feet from the beheaded Kleshabit to appear mid-air next to the other Kleshabit. He beheaded the second Kleshabit, just to unleash a strong crescent-shaped Sword Qi toward the third Kleshabit.

Danny turned a blind eye to his energy consumption as he fought. He knew that he had to go all-out to ensure that his subjects wouldn't suffer too much. Thus, he drained more than half of his origin energy storage within seconds to eliminate all Kleshabits that were guarding the southern gate.

He wanted to finish off the Anubirats before attacking the Bone Giants as well, but he quickly noticed that his subordinates had already formed large groups to bombard the Anubirats. The Anubirats might be strong enough to fight with a dozen enemies at the same rank and Tier, but they couldn't block all attacks either. Explosive energy-infused arrows impacted when the Anubirats tried to block them, forcefully halting the Anubirats' movements.

The other Summons used this opportunity to strike, inflicting scratches and deep cuts all over the Anubirats' bodies. Once enough cuts had been inflicted it would only be a matter of time before their limbs would crumble and fall off. By the time that happened, the Anubirats would lose most of their combat prowess. They would die miserably.

'The Guardian Statues are not as powerful as I expected. Is it because they're already thousands of years old? Or is it because I prepared thoroughly to fight statues?'

Danny hadn't prepared specifically to fight the Necrosphinx, the Anubirats, or the Kleshabits, but he had always equipped his subordinates – and himself, with the means to fight any kind of opponent. This included opponents with extremely strong defenses such as the Glorack race, and the Bone Giants.

Dealing with the Guardian Statues of the Anubirats and Kleshabits was a little different from fighting the Glorack, but all it took was ample preparations and a small fortune of explosive energy infused arrows, and other weapons with highly destructive traits to deal with them.

A few subordinates still died facing the Anubirats, but their deaths were not for naught. They had sacrificed their lives to deal with the Anubirats all while protecting their comrades in arms behind them.

Seeing that his subordinates were strong enough to deal with the Anubirats, the Undead Dire Wolves, the Death Vultures, and all those other Undead, Danny diverted his attention to the Bone Giants and the Necrosphinx. He first wanted to deal with the Necrosphinx, but he noticed that his strongest subordinates were already restricting its movements.

Danny didn't have many powerful Summons under his wing, but the few he had possessed exceptional strength. Furthermore, he had a few Adventurers working for him. Their Link of Loyalty had numerous conditions and restrictions, but they worked for him, nonetheless. Their combat prowess was not low either. It was enough to stall the Necrosphinx for a short while with the help of Danny's most powerful summons.

This included the Lamia Queen, Danny's strongest Summon – a 6-Star Summon at the 3rd Tier!

Danny turned to the three Bone Giants, who were slowly advancing to the most crowded area of the battlefield. The Undead of the Sacred Desert were busy surrounding Michael's Tier-1 Warriors, and the Bone Giants with their humongous longswords, prepared to mow through them, taking dozens, if not hundreds of lives with a single attack.

Daniel couldn't accept that. He manifested more than a dozen Silver Qi Swords around his body and gave a mental command to make them rotate around their own axis at a terrific speed before throwing them at the back of the head of the Bone Giants.

Using his full strength for each of the Silver Qi Swords, Daniel Fang was able to crack a portion of the Bone Giants' skull. Four rotating Silver Qi Swords impacting simultaneously had been enough to inflict subtle cracks along the backside of their skulls. That was great, but it was not enough to deal with them for good.

But that was not Danny's intention in the first place. He merely wanted to show the Bone Giants that they would die if they continued to pay attention to the masses.

If they didn't want to collapse and fall into an everlasting sleep, they would have to turn around and face Daniel.

And that was exactly what they did.

They turned around and charged at Danny.