

Supreme Lord 311

Chapter 311 Relic Research

'There is something wrong with this old man...' Michael cursed in his mind as he left the Bartholomew Shop.

He didn't say much after Kraft Viton arrived in the room, but it was quite obvious that Helen Ascaln sent the old man after him to ensure that he wouldn't do anything stupid. Rather than being a babysitter to Kraft as he had assumed earlier, Michael felt like he was the baby, and Kraft Viton was his nanny.

That was already quite annoying, but it was even worse that both Helen Ascaln and Kraft Viton told him repeatedly that he shouldn't do something stupid.

It was obvious that they were mostly worried about the continuation of their trade with blueprints, however, Michael wasn't really sure why they thought it was important to keep reminding him that doing something stupid would be....stupid. Wasn't that obvious?

However, even more annoying than their constant reminders was the fact that Kraft Viton followed him wherever he went, tailing him like a shadow. He didn't say anything and his steps were eerily silent. Michael had to focus on the sounds around him to sense the old man behind him.

Now that his business with the Bartholomew Corporation had been completed – somewhat –, Michael could divert his attention to other things. He calmed his nerves by participating in the Limit Breaker Course and met up with the Professors of the Old Languages, and Ancient Ruins courses. He talked with them and received their contact details so that he could ask questions and continue studying for his courses even when he was busy in Meku.

The Battle Exchange and the Interdimensional Flag War might be related to the Saphirelake Military Academy, but that didn't mean Michael would receive an exemption from being required to achieve the passing grades for his courses. He had to continue working on his Memory Lane technique, train his physique to pass the Limit Breaker Course's test in the future, and study more to pass the Ancient Ruins and Old Languages test.

Michael was not too worried about the knowledge exams. Given the information he had obtained in the Laxarta Library, Michel was confident to pass the tests right now. The Ancient Ruins and Old Language exams for freshmen were not too difficult, after all.

Nonetheless, Michael wanted to stay in contact with his professors. He knew that he could pass their exams, but he didn't apply to their courses merely to obtain some merit points for his graduation. Michael opted for their courses to broaden his horizon and learn more about Ancient Ruins and the Old Languages to raid the Temple of the Forgotten in the future.

Last but not least, Michael entered the Origin Expanse and his territory. He received the daily report where he saw that a few Starless Summons had been praised several times. It was only a matter of days before they would obtain the first batch of Warrior Enlightenment Potions. At that time, the efficiency of the Warrior Enlightenment Potion would be revealed, hopefully awakening the adventurous spirits of some Starless Summons.

Afterward, he entered the basement of the Wooden Manor where the Relic of Draka was located. He visited the Underground Forging Hall, the Enchanter's Lair, and the Alchemy House to witness their rapid progress first-hand. Everyone worked extremely hard, much harder than Michael expected from his Summons.

However, he understood their excitement to work even harder than before. One of the 1-Star Blacksmith Apprentices seemed to have recently attained enlightenment, promoting him from a 1-Star Blacksmith Apprentice to a 2-Star Blacksmith. Roughly at the same time, a 1-Star Enchanter Apprentice attained enlightenment as well, promoting him to a 2-Star Enchanter.

Both apprentices attained enlightenment thanks to the memory crystals that Michael had filled with the memories of the Laxarta Library's knowledge. He separated the memories accordingly to ensure that each memory crystal had specific knowledge. This made it much easier for the Summons to see the memories of the knowledge they were interested in. After gaining some understanding of certain things that had been hard to comprehend before, the Alchemist Apprentice ended up concocting a few Energy Nourishing Pills, and Body Strengthening Pills, which had been impossible before.

He attained enlightenment from the concocting process and the additional knowledge and became a 2-Star Summon.

Meanwhile, the 1-Star Blacksmith Apprentice had been visiting the Relic of Draka whenever he had some time to spare. He studied the memory crystals' knowledge related to blacksmithing and attained

enlightenment by watching the Magical Smithy working tirelessly on the Artifact-like Armaments. Using the enlightenment, the Apprentice forged a weapon beyond the limit of a 1-Star Apprentice, promoting him to a 2-Star Blacksmith.

Given the high efficiency of the memory crystals, Michael had to put some restrictions on them. Too many Summons wanted to use the memory crystals, and Michael didn't have the means to provide them to everyone. Thus, only the Summons who worked the hardest were given permission to use the memory crystals for a few days.

Lilica was the one who came up with the idea of putting restrictions, and conditions on the memory crystals usage. The restrictions fueled ambitious Summons with motivation, just like the Warrior Enlightenment Potion fueled Starless Summons with longing and desire.

Michael wished to procure more enlightenment potions, or more memory crystals to share his Archery knowledge and every other mastery he had obtained from the hundreds of Memory Orbs he had absorbed in the last half a year. Unfortunately, memory crystals were extremely hard to procure. Even the Bartholomew Shop in the academy was out of stock after his purchase. It would take quite a while until they would be restocked even though Michael was number one on their priority list.

Michael didn't rush the Bartholomew Shop to procure the items he needed. He would receive a notification on the crystal watch once the goods he had pre-ordered would arrive. By then, he would have to send the old man to the Origin Expanse to exchange the blueprints with the goods he had ordered. That was the easiest way to ensure that the Bartholomew Corporation obtained their blueprints and Michael could mindlessly order goods and get them delivered wherever he was located.

Looking at it from this point of view, Michael could exploit the fact that Kraft Viton's anchor in the Origin Expanse was located in the Bartholomew Corporation's headquarters. That was also one of the few reasons he decided to accept the old man's company.

He swore to himself to make use of the old man's presence as much as possible.

Putting aside his thoughts about Helen Ascaln and the old man, Michael focused on the Relic of Draka. The Weaponsmiths and Tiara had been researching the Relic for a while now, and they had no idea how it worked.

Michael could access it and sense how to control it, but that was something only he was capable of. The Relic didn't even use the ores provided by the Weaponsmiths. It just stopped moving once the ores Michael put in its storage had been used up. I think you should take a look at pandasnovel.com

It was almost like the Relic was sentient, and that it considered Michael as its master. When Michael read that in the report he was intrigued – of course.

He decided to spend a few hours researching the Relic of Draka and trying to configure it. After all, he was in need of the Relic's magical powers.

"An Artifact-like Armor would be great," Michael mumbled to himself, scratching the back of his head as he tried to figure out how to give the Relic precise commands.

After losing the Typhern Leather Armor Set, Michael had been a little bit at a loss. He could bind a new Artifact to his War Rune, but given Dragon Might's influence, Michael was not certain whether he should try to purchase a 4-Star Tier-2 Armor Artifact, or if it might be better to focus on other Artifacts instead.

The Dark Orb of William Black had been quite intriguing, and so were Lincoln's Gauntlets. Everyone had customized Epic Tier-2 Weapons that enhanced their Soultrait's power. That way, they could exhibit more strength.

Earlier, Michael didn't think that it was necessary to possess another Epic Artifact as long as he purchased high-ranked Tier-2 Artifacts. But since he realized how powerful the Legendary Tier-2 Ring Artifact was, Michael's opinion changed completely.

If he could replicate his Artifacts with products of the Relic of Draka, Michael would be free to focus on 2-3 high-ranked Epic, and Legendary Artifacts to further increase his strength, while still obtaining the external enhancement from the Artifact-like products of the Relic of Draka. That way, Michael would make tremendous gains and hold an advantage over everyone else.

Hours of research revealed that Michael knew a lot less about the Relic than he expected. First, he found out that he was the only one with full authority of the Relic of Draka, and that he could give others specific permissions as well. Other than that, Michael also learned that he could easily configure the Relic of Draka. The easiest way to change the Armament it created was by providing forging blueprints.

Michael provided a forging blueprint for War-axes, which he had purchased not too long ago. Initially, the blueprint was for the Weaponsmiths to forge better weapons for his Berserkers, but given that the Relic of Draka's products had additional enhancements, Michael decided to make some changes.

The Relic of Draka began producing war axes instead of thin-bladed longswords.

'Now I only need a proper forging blueprint for armor, and suitable material,' Michael thought, 'I wonder if the Relic can create an armor with similar enhancements to a Natural Epic Tier-2 Armor Artifact. Maybe with the right materials that's possible.'

Michael felt a little excited at the thought of creating Natural Epic Artifacts that could be worn and used by Summons as well. His excitement didn't die down even after he left the Origin Expanse.

Kraft Viton was patiently waiting at the same spot Michael had left him at. However, Michael didn't care about that. He was just excited at this point.

"Let's go. It's about time we travel through space!" He said in excitement, feeling that researching the Relic and the opportunity to travel through space once again were an exceptional combination to boost his happiness and vigor.

It was almost time for their departure. Thus, Michael left the academy grounds to hail a space shuttle that brought him and Kraft Viton to Kelta's spaceship harbor.

Once again, Michael was caught off-guard by the sheer grandeur of his surroundings. He could only stare when he saw the majestic, behemoth-sized spaceship harbor. His heart began to beat wildly as they made their way inside.

By utilizing Eagle Eyes with several layers of Enhancement, Michael did a thorough inspection of every single detail in the spaceship harbor.

He didn't want to miss anything.

Once inside the spaceship harbor, the shuttle reached the destination not long after. Michael and Kraft Viton stepped out and walked toward the group of students and teachers that had arrived ahead of time.

However, Michael didn't even notice them. His eyes were drawn to the spaceship behind the students, his eyes gleaming in excitement.

"That's pretty neat!"

Chapter 312 Zeus

Michael's eyes were locked onto the spaceship and the docking bay behind the other students and teachers. His eyes shone brightly, revealing his excitement.

The spaceship loomed before him majestically. Its sleek, elongated form exuded grace and power. It resembled a robust, silvery dart with wings that curved gracefully on its side. His imagination was running wild, making him visualize it as a combination of a bullet and an airplane, designed for both speed and maneuverability. He chuckled at that and kept admiring the stunning piece of craftsmanship.

The surface of the silver spaceship was smooth and reflective, almost like polished metal. The back of the spaceship had powerful engines that emitted a soft, glowing light that originated from origin energy.

Just staring at the spaceship was enough to make Michael's heart beat faster. It was a Tuar-Type spaceship that was smaller than the Dekaloss-class spaceship, but several times faster.

The Tuar-type spaceship required only three days to fly them through most parts of the Lumina Stellar System to get to Meku where they would meet the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs for the first time.

Flying through space and encountering other races outside the Origin Expanse were both exciting thoughts. Unfortunately, Michael didn't have enough time to keep daydreaming. He saw Kaleb approaching him from the corner of his eye and turned to his friend.

"Hey Michael, you're just on time. Let's en—..." Kaleb began but stopped talking abruptly. His eyes widened ever so slightly and he looked at something – or rather someone – behind Michael, "Who...is that behind you?"

Kaleb's voice was quiet but both Michael and Kraft heard him clearly. They also heard the uncertainty and confusion in Kaleb's voice. The young Zenovia hadn't even seen Kraft until he was directly in front of Michael.

"His name is Kraft Viton. You can consider him a shadow sent to accompany me by the Bartholomew Corporation," Michael explained before he shrugged lightly.

Just before they arrived at the spaceship harbor, Kraft Viton told him that he should ignore his presence. That was not really difficult, because Michael could barely sense the old man's presence, in the first place. He had to look back every now and then to reassure himself that he wasn't hallucinating and that the old man was still there.

"Why would the Bartholomew Corporation send someone with you to the Battle Exchange?" Kaleb asked, his gaze lingering on Kraft Viton for a few seconds before he added, "And why does the name 'Viton' ring a bell?"

Michael was not really surprised that Kaleb knew the family name 'Viton'. He could already tell that the old man was not an ordinary Awakened. No human capable of advancing to the 4th Tier and beyond was ordinary. But there was more to that. Michael had paid some attention to the few words Helen Ascaln, and Kraft Viton exchanged during his video call with the executive director of the Bartholomew Corporation.

Their exchange was not obvious, but given his high perception and the permanent enhancement Eagle Eyes provided to strengthen his eyes, Michael detected a few odd points.

Helen Ascaln was the Bartholomew Corporation's executive director, but she eyed Kraft Viton with vigilance. She was not afraid of him, but Michael could tell that she was uncomfortable talking to Kraft Viton as if he was her subordinate – which he was supposed to be the case. That was just one of the few points he figured out, but it was the most apparent reason Michael was certain that Kraft Viton was far from ordinary.

"You really didn't listen to what I told you this morning," Michael sighed. He shook his head but didn't repeat himself. Kaleb would find out about his investment in the Bartholomew Corporation's Agriculture Project soon enough.

"Who are you talking to, Kaleb?" A voice resounded from behind Kaleb.

"Is he your friend?" Someone else added, a trace of curiosity intertwining his words.

Kaleb turned around with a faint smile on his lips.

"That's Michael Fang. And yes, he is my friend," Kaleb introduced Michael, who stepped next to him.

Michael smiled at the small group before he greeted them with a polite nod.

"Let me introduce everyone to you," Kaleb said as Michael used Eagle Eyes to take a proper look at the small group of seven people.

He pointed at the young man who spoke to him first, "This is Killian Zeus. He is in the 4th year and is at the Peak of the 3rd Tier. He would probably be at the 4th Tier if he didn't restrain his War Rune's advancement to participate in the Flag War."

Killian Zeus nodded imperceptibly in Michael's direction. His attention was more focused on Kraft Viton, whose presence he noticed only after he looked at Michael for the first time.

Killian's expression changed slightly, a trace of confusion spreading across his face for a second or two before he regained his composure. He cleared his throat and turned to Michael once again.

"Nice meeting you. I saw your fight against Mr. Klein. Your powers are very interesting. I hope I'll be seeing your full strength soon," He said, his voice a notch colder than before.

Michael was a little bit confused about the subtle change in Killian Zeus' attitude toward him. He sensed a trace of energy circulating around him, and the old man's voice reached his ears in the next moment, almost like it came out of the trace of energy.

"The Zeus family is a Supreme Family, and they created the Olympus, our rival," Kraft Viton explained to Michael, whose head flicked to the old man. I think you should take a look at

"Our? You mean the Bartholomew Corporation. Why are you including me in your rivalry?" He asked, but the old man only scoffed.

"The moment you decided to become an investor in the Agriculture Project, you turned into their enemy, and our ally," Kraft Viton said, causing Michael to curse inwardly.

Kaleb didn't pay any attention to the conversation between Michael and the old man. He continued to introduce the small group.

"Cecile Marian, 6th Star of the fourth grade's ranking, Orion Darr, 9th Star of the fourth grade's ranking, Peter Gramm 3rd Star of the fourth grade's ranking" Kaleb's introduction took quite a while, yet Michael only noticed one particular thing.

The entire group was made of Tier-3 Lords, who were part of the top 13 in the fourth grade's ranking. Simply put, most students were the Suns and Stars of their respective years.

Other than the Suns and Stars of the ranking boards, Michael could tell that most other students were powerhouses belonging to the 3rd and 4th year, but that was only given. Their War Runes had manifested much earlier than the rest, and they had had more time to strengthen their bodies, minds, and Souls to prepare for the Battle Exchange and Interdimensional Flag War as well.

Almost all 3rd and 4th-grade students were Tier-3 Lords with the necessary power to compete against the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs head-on. They were eager to participate in the Interdimensional Flag War, not only because it would bring their family honor and glory, but also because of the rewards they would obtain for participating in the Interdimensional Flag War, and for eliminating their enemies.

Not only the Sapphirelake Military Academy and the government would shower them with rewards such as rare Artifacts, Sapphire Points, Mythic Summoning Scrolls, and more, but all races affiliated with the Tritan Alliance created a pool of rewards for those participating in the Interdimensional Flag War.

Those rewards included Legendary Artifacts, Mythic-rank Plants, Exotic Recipes and knowledge unique to the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs.

Obtaining any of those would elevate the power of any Lord – even the descendants of High Nobles, and Supreme Families.

But that wasn't the biggest gain in the eyes of the Supreme Families and High Nobles. By participating in the Interdimensional Flag War, and achieving great feats next to the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs, the descendants of High Nobles and Supreme Families could garner the attention and respect of the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs. Once they received their respect it would be much easier to obtain the leader's permission to trade goods and knowledge, opening up the path to more wealth and prosperity.

All of those reasons combined were why everyone was a little bit tense and nervous. Most participants of the Battle Exchange were from nobility, or from influential houses. There were also Minor Nobles and merchant families that were trying to become more influential, and they hoped that the Battle Exchange and the Interdimensional Flag War would allow their breakthrough.

On the other hand, Michael didn't really need any of that. Even if he could get closer to the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs, he didn't have the means to trade with them. His exchanges with the Forest Elven Tribe and the Bartholomew Corporation required most of his attention, and it was not as if he possessed goods of interest for the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs – at least, Michael couldn't really think of anything except the products of the Relic of Draka that might interest them.

But the Relic of Draka was required to strengthen him and his army. He didn't plan to hand over the artifact-like armaments to anyone else anytime soon.

Thus, Michael was rather amused seeing how nervous some students were.

He kept Eagle Eyes activated while talking a little to Killian Zeus and his friends. Michael could tell that their little chat was more of a formality than an attempt to become friends, but that was fine with him.

In fact, it was better that way, given the weird glances he received from some descendants. They weren't even trying to hide their scornful and condescending gazes.

'Even if my background is lackluster, I still made it to the Battle Exchange on my own. So keep your judgment to yourself!' Michael cursed in his heart, a little annoyed that he wasn't strong enough to challenge them and beat the shit out of them.

The presence the 4th-grade students radiated was incomparable to Mr. Klein's measly presence. It was obvious that the Sun and the Stars of the 4th year had gone through years of arduous training, and that they collected enough combat experience to solidify their presence, turning it into a weapon against weaker prey.

It didn't take long before Killian Zeus and the others departed. They entered the Tuar-type spaceship after the professors and disappeared from Michael's sight.

"Don't think too much about it. Once they see how hard-working and strong you actually are, they'll see you in a different light," Kaleb said in an attempt to lift his friend's spirits, feeling a little sad for Michael.

He clearly recalled the first time he met Michael. At that time, Kaleb had been certain that Michael was a nobody, who tried to show off his Artifact, and that he was an Awakened.

Thinking back, Kaleb realized how narrow-minded and foolish he had been.

He had grown closer to Michael, close enough for Kaleb to consider him one of his best friends – if not his only best friend.

After all, Michael was a genuine friend, something that was hard to find for a descendant of a Supreme Family.

"Even if they don't realize how good you are, it will be their loss, not yours!"

Chapter 313 Sapphire Points

Less than half an hour after everyone entered the spaceship, they departed. Their departure was smooth and you could barely feel the spaceship ascend high into the air until the Tuar-type spaceship accelerated to leave the harbor with a burst of energy.

Micheal expected their departure to be a little uncomfortable considering that the Tuar-type spaceship was extremely fast, but he had been so focused on a few messages on the crystal watch, and Kraft Viton's words ringing through his ears that he didn't even realize when they entered space.

Kraft Viton was trying to teach him how to send messages through origin energy. The principle was simple. A wisp of energy would be filled with words that were sent to the recipient's ears where the wisp of energy would disperse, releasing the words it contained.

However, turning the 'simple' principle into reality was extremely hard. It required high mastery of origin energy, and the ability to control energy precisely over a long distance.

Michael's mastery of origin energy was already quite decent. Given the information engraved on his mind every single time his War Rune fused with a Soultrait, Michael learned numerous ways to use and alter origin energy. Adding the experiences and memories he obtained from extracting Memory Orbs from his enemies, it was only natural that Michael's mastery of origin energy reached a high level.

Others would require years to be as proficient at controlling energy as Michael. But Michael still struggled to envelop his words in a wisp of energy, so sending it to Kraft Viton across the spaceship was a far cry right now.

Michael failed to do so several times, which was also why he ended up using the crystal watch to send Kraft Viton a few messages. He didn't ask the old man why he was trying to teach him Whispering Energy. Instead, Michael asked the old man about doubts he had related to Whispering Energy.

At first, Michael didn't really want to have Kraft Viton around him. He didn't want a babysitter of the Bartholomew Corporation observing his every action. However, his view of the situation changed quickly.

Whispering Energy was quite useful. Not only was learning Whispering Energy a way to further refine his mastery of origin energy, but Michael could think of countless ways to use Whispering Energy in

combat. As long as he learned how to use Whispering Energy subconsciously, Michael would be able to communicate with his allies without alerting his enemies.

Not only would that benefit him greatly in the Origin Expanse, but it would also be quite useful during the Battle Exchange, and the Interdimensional Flag War. As long as he used it properly, it might actually benefit him in a one on one battle as well. Using Whispering Energy to whisper into his enemy's ears to distract him might seem like a petty trick, but Michael was a petty human being, so it was fine to use tricks like that.

In a life-and-death battle victory is all that matters. Survival was the way, no matter how dirty you fought!

Growing increasingly interested in Whispering Energy, Michael spent a while chatting with Kraft Viton, and attempted to replicate the old man's technique. It didn't work well, but Michael could tell that he was slowly getting somewhere – even if it was at snail's pace.

He didn't know how much time passed but Michael grew a little tired after continuously trying to replicate the old man's technique. It was a lot more complicated than he first presumed.

Thus, he ended up taking a look at something else; the infrastructure of the spaceship!

Since they had to spend three days in the spaceship to reach Kelta, Michael thought he might as well spend some time analyzing the Tuar-type spaceship's structure. His interest in spaceships was quite high, yet he had never been able to get his hands on detailed information about the Tuar-Type spaceship.

This one was one of the newer models as well!

The first thing Michael noticed was that the inside of the Tuar-type spaceship was extremely spacious.

Everyone had a tiny room to sleep and manifest their Runic Gate on the highest floor, then there was a spacious cafeteria, a large living room where everyone could meet up to play games, or simply talk about the Battle Exchange, or some other mundane things on the third floor.

Meanwhile, the second floor was fully occupied by the training ground that could also be used as an arena to spar with each other.

Last but not least, the ground floor of the Tuar-type spaceship was occupied by the personnel, and most of the spaceship's machinery.

It didn't take Michael a long time to finish reading through the guide provided in the information channel of the Tuar-type spaceship. The infrastructure was interesting, and so was the technique used. It was only a little bit unfortunate that the minute details about the materials used to construct the spaceship, the technology and pilot training couldn't be found.

All those pieces of information were what Michael was looking forward to reading. He wanted to visualize how the spaceship had been constructed, and how the captain controlled it.

Michael even requested to take a look at the machine room to learn more about the structure and technology used to move the spaceship through space, but the staff declined his request immediately. Michael was a little bit sad about that, but there was nothing he could do about the crew's decision.

If they thought that it was too dangerous to allow an ignorant young Lord to enter their machine room while they were mid-space, there must be a reason. Michael didn't even want to think about the reason but he presumed that some idiot must have pressed buttons that shouldn't have been touched in the middle of space. I think you should take a look at

With a gloomy face, he dropped the guidebook and wondered what to do next. And a moment later, he received a notification on the crystal watch

[Dear students of the Sapphirelake Military Academy, please proceed to meet up on the first floor in 30 minutes.]

The message was not really detailed, but it came from the academy's official account. Thus, Michael got up from the bed and went to the first floor without delay.

He found Lincoln and Zeke talking to a few students after he entered the training ground, probably 3rd or 4th graders. But instead of walking over to them, Michael kept his distance. Even though he was quite

open-minded, he knew that most descendants participating in the Battle Exchange didn't like people such as Michael – people who didn't have a noteworthy background.

Instead of putting Lincoln and Zeke in an awkward position by forcing them to introduce him to others, who were likely to frown upon him, Michael felt much better observing his surroundings.

He used his Eagle Eyes to take in as much information as possible. Instead of standing around idly, Michael observed the other students. He looked at their War Runes, imprinted their faces and facial expressions into his mind all while trying to determine what type of body refinement they underwent.

By observing the overall physique of the Awakened around him, Michael could roughly determine what type of Soultrait they possessed. It was not perfect, but a rough indicator of their Soultrait.

For example, Zeke had an athletic build focusing on his dexterity and agility while Lincoln's physique was rugged with well-trained, bulging muscles. Lincoln required physical strength to exhibit his Soultrait's strongest form. Zeke, on the other hand, was better off moving around nimbly. He could use his Eye of Illusion to trick his enemies and evade attacks before attacking his enemies with fast strides.

Michael could also make out some specific details about the other students such as sparks passing through Killian Zeus' arms, and a tinge of coldness radiating from Kaleb naturally. The coldness permeated the air around Kaleb, turning the air around him slightly chilly. Even if it was barely visible, Michael could clearly see it thanks to his Eagle Eyes.

Other than that, there were also some students whose presence altered the origin energy around them. Michael could see that quite clearly.

All-in-all, Michael spent most of his time on the first floor of the spaceship to analyze his potential allies in the Interdimensional Flag War, or his future enemies. It was intriguing and definitely worth the time and energy he spent imprinting all the bits of information he could store deep into his mind.

A loud snap rang through the training ground exactly 30 minutes after the students received the notification. Alice Zenovia and a few more Professors of the academy stepped into the center of the training ground, with half-serious, half-smiling expressions on their faces. Only Alice was ice-cold as usual, which highlighted the small smiles on the faces of the other Professors.

"Hello everyone. I presume that everyone knows me already, so I won't introduce myself again," Alice Zenovia started off, her voice as sharp as a blade of ice, "Everyone here knows why we're on our way to Meku, and how we're supposed to interact with the Berserkers and the Warlock Centaurs. Thus, I won't go into detail about that."

As Alice spoke, the young man next to her stepped forward, "Of course, we'll be forwarding guides to everyone about the basics you should know. Read through them to ensure that you won't accidentally be rude to the Berserkers. Otherwise, you might end up in a Blood Ritual, facing the Berserkers' wrath. That's not what anyone here wants to happen, believe me!" The young man said, his gaze moving across the crowd of students.

His gaze lingered on Killian a little longer than the others before he stepped back once again. He motioned to Alice, who continued speaking.

"Since everyone present will be representing the Saphirelake Military Academy, a part of mankind with the students of other academies and universities who'll be present at the Battle Exchange, the Dean decided to give everyone some Saphire Points, and the opportunity to purchase some of the rare goods that have been stored in the academy's treasury," Alice revealed, her gaze shifting to Michael for a second.

However, Michael was a little bit confused about some things Alice had just noticed.

'Wasn't it just the Saphirelake Military Academy that was participating in the Battle Exchange? When did that change?' He wondered, unsure how many humans would participate in the Battle Exchange this time around.

'Is winning three rounds in the Battle Exchange really enough to participate in the Interdimensional Flag War?'

Despite the confusion, Michael continued to listen to Alice. Her short speech ended within a few minutes and as stated earlier, a few Saphire Points were credited to every student account.

Saphire Points were hard to procure. Most of them could be earned by completing missions, completing unique assignments, or passing final exams with high scores. They were valuable, and one could do a

wide variety of things with them. This included purchasing unique techniques, recipes, Mythic Summoning Scrolls, and so on.

However, Michael didn't even think about using his Sapphire Points for something like that.

A much better plan was already forming in his mind!

Chapter 314 Big Five & Great Three

The Sapphire Points in his possession could be very well used to purchase recipes similar to the Energy Nourishing Pill. The recipes would be of a lower level than his Energy Nourishing Pill, but it would be very valuable for most Lords nonetheless.

However, Michael had a different plan in mind. He first thought of saving up Sapphire Points to purchase recipes for potions similar to the Warrior Enlightenment Potion, but he changed his decision when he found something very interesting in the academy shop's purchase catalog.

"Zention Ore...an ore that attains exceptional flexibility upon being purified in the reduction process. The higher the purity of the Zention Ingot, the higher the origin energy conductivity, and the stronger the force distribution of physical attacks...Zention Ore is often used for customized Epic Tier-2 Armor Artifact..." Michael read aloud, while nodding his head slowly.

High energy conductivity in ores indicated that the energy veins within the ore weren't clogged and that multiple enchantments could be engraved on the Armament once it was shaped into the desired form. Adding the force distribution of highly purified Zention Ingots, they could be considered one of the best materials to forge Armor Artifact.

Unfortunately, Zention Ore was as rare as it was exceptional. It was extremely expensive and would be sold in auctions most of the time. Even Michael couldn't easily purchase enough Zention Ore from the Bartholomew Corporation to forge a proper Armor.

In fact, even if he purchased enough Zention Ore, Michael didn't really have the means to hire a Saint Blacksmith, and a Grandmaster Enchanter to create a customized Epic Tier-2 Armor for him earlier. That

changed when he found the Relic of Draka. Now the only issue was the amount of Zention Ore he could purchase, and getting hold of a compatible armor forging blueprint.

Michael decided to use all of his Sapphire Points to purchase enough Zention Ore to forge one Armor Set and a wide variety of forging blueprints. But before that, Michael had to continue listening to the speeches of the Professors.

After Alice's short speech ended, the other Professors said a few more things. They forwarded a few more information guides and informed everyone that they should always come to them if they had any questions. The Battle Exchange was a very important event. Therefore, the Professors were even willing to spar with the students and provide specific pointers to help them hone their skills.

The Professors would then spend some time with them to give them individual lessons and specific advice for the issues they encountered.

Michael was not too interested in that offer for the time being. He would rather enter the Origin Expanse where he could use most of his time to develop his territory and grow stronger by practicing Sacred Rectification, Whispering Energy, and attain deeper understanding of his Soultraits.

Researching his Soultraits was far from easy. It might look easy given that Michael learned new things about his Soultraits every now and then, but given that he had so many Soultraits he would have to spend far more time and effort to gain a deeper understanding of each of them.

Time was definitely not on Michael's side, but it was not as if that had ever been the case.

Other than some standard information and general guides, Michael also got to know more about the other Professors, and more pieces of information about the other Universities and Academies.

The two Professors standing next to Alice were called Ophelia Blaze and Oliver Zeus. Apparently, Oliver Zeus was Killian Zeus' uncle. Oliver was only three years older than Killian, but he was already a Professor. Meanwhile, Ophelia Blaze didn't look much older either.

Most Professors, who traveled with the participants of the Battle Exchange were rather young, and all of them belonged to Supreme Families, High Nobles, or Great Clans. All of them had the same mission- to

approach the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs to get closer to them. If possible, they should sign trading agreements encompassing the entire Tritan Alliance the moment they arrived in Meku.

'It was only obvious that the Zenovia family is not the only family trying to become the pioneers in the trading business with the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs. Everyone wants a piece of the cake,' Michael thought with a grin.

The Zeus, Blaze, and Zenovia family seemed somewhat close. Alice, Ophelia, and Oliver definitely knew each other for quite a while, otherwise, Ophelia and Oliver wouldn't be able to be chatterboxes in front of Alice for tens of minutes despite Alice's chilling cold expression that didn't change even once. Most people would feel uncomfortable chatting around the Frozen Duchess.

Michael also noticed that they never really stopped talking and that they even pulled Alice into their conversation, but she kept her replies short. Even though she looked cold and distant, she talked to Ophelia and Oliver for quite a while – and that was not something she would do with many people.

'So they're competing against each other with the teams they trained, but it's more of a friendly competition since they're friends? Or will they fight each other to death even though they're friends?'

Michael was not sure how deep friendship between the influential families ran, but he could guess that friendships were either highly valued and that not even business could destroy them, or that the exact opposite was the case. He guessed that they had a very distinct separation between friendship and business. I think you should take a look at

"Are you curious about the Big Five Universities and the Great Three Academies?" Kaleb asked from behind, startling Michael a little.

He was fully focused on observing Alice and her company, and the new pieces of information he had obtained so he didn't even notice when Kaleb arrived behind him.

"I'm not sure why, but I always thought the Saphirelake Military Academy would be the only academy sending students to participate in the Battle Exchange. I didn't even think about the Big Five Universities and the Great Three Academies until now," Michael revealed in all honesty.

"Usually, all sides send 1500 participants to the Battle Exchange. Out of 4500 future powerhouses, 1000 will be picked to participate in the Flag War. As for why you thought differently...I don't really know. Maybe it's because the Saphirelake Military Academy is the only prominent human-built academy in the Lumina Stellar System. The Big Five and the Great Three are located in our native solar system, after all," Kaleb explained a little to which Michael responded with a faint nod.

After skimming through some of the guides, he also learned about those pieces of information. The Big Five and Great Three would send 150 participants to Meku just like the Saphirelake Military Academy. This left 150 spots for the Battle Exchange, which were filled with heavenly prodigies from other academies, talented youths from the Great Clans, or other promising Awakened, who were in possession of Soultraits that could influence the outcome of a battle to a great extent.

Some Awakened with Soultraits like that were also present in the spaceship. These students never made it into the top 13 of their grade's ranking, but their Soultraits were too good to ignore them.

There was a skinny young man from the 3rd year, who would definitely go to the Interdimensional Flag War because of the Soultrait he manifested. He was at the Peak of the 2nd Tier and didn't exude intense pressure either. However, Michael found out that the skinny student's Soultrait was called War Flag. Once the War Flag was manifested, its presence would elevate the morale of the allies within the Soultrait's range.

The War Flag would also enhance the power of all allies, further enhancing the combat prowess of everyone around it.

Other than the skinny student, there was a female student with a Soultrait called Dome of Vitality. The dome healed everyone in its range, and it lowered the time they required to replenish their energy drastically.

There were a handful of students like them in the Saphirelake Military Academy, and Michael was sure that the other Academies and Universities had students with similar Soultraits as well. In fact, the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs should have such Soultraits as well, even if there weren't many of those since Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs were known for manifesting physically attributed combat-type Soultraits.

"The competition this year will be...interesting," Kaleb said with a bright smile on his face.

The Professors might have said that there was no competition between the Universities and Academies because everyone was fighting for mankind's survival and growth, but Michael clearly recalled the competitive spirit in the Professors' eyes, indicating the opposite of what they'd said before.

The competitive spirit of the Professors was contagious. Kaleb and the other students were exhilarated, eagerly awaiting to reach Meku and start the Battle Exchange. They could not wait to participate in the fierce battles and demonstrate that they were prodigies among prodigies. Some of them didn't even care about the honor they could earn for their families. They just wanted to be the strongest of the youngest generation and showcase what they were capable of.

They wanted to be praised from all sides and stared at with awe, respect, and a tinge of fear.

Michael was no different. However, his reasons were not exactly similar. He didn't need the respect, awe, or fear. All he desired was the strength he could attain by getting ground and polished while battling future powerhouses. They were powerful, and Michael wanted to use their power to become stronger on his own.

He was in possession of enough Soultraits to grow much stronger than any of them, but he required the pressure from outside to squeeze out more of the potential that was hidden deep within himself and his Soultraits.

But before he would risk his life to become stronger, Michael returned to his room.

After talking with Kaleb for a while, he had grown even more excited about the Battle Exchange. He was looking forward to it.

The Battle Exchange and the future events were bound to be epic. Michael was certain about that.

Chapter 315 Spark

Michael's clothes were drenched in sweat and he was breathing heavily, standing next to the Relic of Draka.

The forge of the Magical Smithy was fully empowered, releasing a blazing heat that spread through every nook and cranny in the basement. Standing next to the forge, Michael felt tendrils of smoke rise up from the tips of his hair, and he even began to wonder how much longer it would take before his blood would start boiling.

Sweat poured down his cheeks, and the discomfort of the blazing heat began to wear him down, yet Michael never took his eyes away from the forge.

He stayed focused and kept watching intently as the Zention Ore was slowly reduced to metal.

After talking to Kaleb for a while, Michael finished his purchase in the academy shop. He used all of his Sapphire points to buy Zention Ore and a wide variety of forging blueprints before returning to the Origin Expanse.

Now that he was back in the Origin Expanse, Michael focused on the creation of his Artifact-like Armor Set.

Michael began to utilize Extraction once the Zention Ore had been reduced to its metal. He engulfed the dark glowing metal inside the forge with the power of Extraction and started extracting the impurities within it.

The Relic of Draka used a specific forging technique that released some impurities within the metal it processed, however, Michael's 6-Star Extraction Soultrait was a lot more potent.

Applying layers of Enhancement on top of Extraction further increased the Soultrait's potency, allowing Michael to extract more impurities from within the dark glowing metal.

At first glance, extracting the impurities within Zention metal seemed quite easy. However, Michael had to pay attention not to extract the energy veins alongside the impurities. Most of the impurities were attached to energy veins, or even clogged them, restricting proper energy circulating. Extracting the impurities would solve those issues, and allow the Relic of Draka to unleash more of the Zention metal's hidden potential. But extraction required lots of focus and time, especially when it had to be detailed.

Michael's control of Extraction was quite high, but he rarely used Extraction for detailed extractions. Most of the time he would either throw the golden streams of extraction toward his enemies, extract entire behemoth trees, or dissect bodies – which didn't really require him to control Extraction with extreme focus.

Slowly but steadily, Michael applied more layers of Enhancement onto the Power of Extraction. His golden streams invaded the Zention metal from all sides, carefully working through every inch of the metal to extract the impurities within.

More than half an hour passed before Michael retrieved the third Energy Nourishing Pill. He consumed it to replenish his used-up energy to keep extracting more impurities within the Zention metal.

By now, Michael had already extracted most of the impurities within the Zention metal. However, Michael was not yet satisfied. He wanted to ensure that the Relic of Draka could use the best materials to forge his Armor Set. Therefore, he began to use the Power of Enhancement he had stored in the Legendary Ring Artifact to add more layers of Enhancement on top of his Power of Extraction.

Extraction ended up with 10 layers of Enhancement for a short period. It was just enough time to remove some more impurities within the Zention metal. Michael slumped to the ground afterward, mentally drained, covered in sweat, and dead-tired.

He lay down on the ground, not caring about the searing heat that filled the entire room. Too tired to move, Michael waited until bits of his origin energy had been refilled before he conjured a few Glacicles. He put them down next to him so as to cool his surroundings for a few minutes and regulate his body temperature.

Once the Glacicles had molten, Michael forced himself to get up. He was still sweating but he was satisfied with the result.

The Relic of Draka had already begun to move, using the purified Zention metal to start processing it.

After Zention metal had been purified, its black surface shimmered royal blue. It looked magnificent, and a vibrant smile blossomed on Michael's lips.

He had to use up the Power of Enhancement he had painstakingly hoarded and stored in the Legendary Ring Artifact after his battle with the Blood Witch, but he was certain that it would be worth it. The Relic of Draka was most likely proficient enough to turn the purified Zention metal into a natural Epic Tier-2 Artifact without the restriction of having to bind it to his body.

If he had a Grandmaster Enchanter at his disposal, he could even add enchantments on top of the Armor Set. But even without one, the Zention Armor Set was bound to be exceptional – all thanks to him extracting more than 80% of its impurities!

Staring at the crimson ring on his right index finger, Michael fell deep in thoughts.

"I wonder if the Relic can recreate Artifact-like accessories like Dragon Might as well...If that's possible, even my Summons could use the Power of Soultraits stored within these accessories..."

Theoretically, it should be possible to mass-produce accessories with the same effects of artifacts. However, practically it was extremely difficult. In the first place, Michael would have to procure a blueprint for an Artifact that could store the Power of Soultraits like the Legendary Dragon Might Ring Artifact. Without a blueprint, the Relic of Draka wouldn't be able to produce the Artifact. Other than that, Michael would have to procure the materials required to forge such a unique artifact like Dragon Might. I think you should take a look at

While the materials might be easier to procure, Michael had never heard of a blueprint for accessory Artifacts such as Dragon Might. But Michael didn't really have high hopes, in the first place. Dragon Might was considered a Legendary Artifact for a reason.

Despite all of that, Michael felt that it would be great if he could make use of the Relic of Draka a little bit more. Using it to forge Artifact-like Armaments for his Summons was great, but it was rather slow, which meant that he could only equip some of his Summons with those Spirit Armaments, which Michael decided to call the Relic of Draka's products.

Unsure how much time the Relic of Draka required to complete the Spirit Armor Set, Michael decided to leave the basement. The Magical Smithy would complete forging the Spirit Armor Set without him as well.

Hence, he returned to his room and took a quick bath. While sitting in the wooden bathtub, he thought about the development of his territory once again.

After he spent some time in a room with 150 powerful Lords, Michael's thoughts about the future changed a little bit. He got to know dozens of people with various unique Soultraits, and the number of unique Awakened from influential families would increase further. Michael was about to meet 1500 of the strongest Awakened and Lords of the youngest generation. If he took the strongest Lords of the Berserker and Warlock Centaur's youngest generation into account, Michael was about to meet nearly 5,000 Awakened who were bound to become powerhouses in the future – as long as none of them died, that is.

Each of them had been nurtured meticulously. They were trained from a young age and had been facing the dangers of the Origin Expanse for years. Fighting them would certainly grant him far more benefits than staying in the academy where he would have to waste his time attending courses that were more or less useless to him at this point.

A spark of determination ignited within Michael's heart at that thought. Facing thousands of geniuses in the near future excited him. Even the thought of watching their fights and analyzing their combat prowess, ways to deal with their unique Soultraits, and their special Inheritance techniques, was more than enough to bring a smile to his face.

This spark of desire influenced Michael's train of thought. He stepped out of the bathtub and put on one of his combat suits.

Not even a minute later, Michael found himself standing in the center of the training ground, surrounded by the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team and Tiara.

"Are you sure that you want to fight all of us at the same time, Master?" Tiara asked, not sure if she should be happy that Michael wanted to spar with her, or if she should feel insulted that Michael thought he could defeat six Tier-2 Adventurers simultaneously, including herself.

The Forest Elven Adventurers were in possession of two 4-Star Soultraits each, and Tiara had even better Soultraits. Wasn't Michael taking them too lightly?

"I won't hold back, so make sure that you guys won't sustain any heavy injuries," Michael retorted, his attention focused on Tiara.

In the worst case, Lilica and the other Forest Elven Adventurers could leave the Origin Expanse to rush to their tribe's healers. Their healers should be as powerful – if not more powerful – than the Medic team in the Saphirelake Military Academy. However, Tiara couldn't leave the Origin Expanse. She had to rely on their Priests to be healed.

"I am the toughest here. My natural regeneration is several times faster than the Forest Elves' natural regeneration combined!" Tiara grumbled for the first time, showing a sign of frustration toward her master.

She was already feeling bad for being of little to no use to her master. All she could do to help his territory prosper was train the Summons and go out hunting. But Michael started to treat her as if she wasn't even a combatant right now.

Her pride as a Silverfang Tigerfolk, and a Warrior took a hit just from hearing that.

Lilica and the Forest Elven Adventurers were also dissatisfied with Michael's comment. They stared at him and manifested their Artifacts one after another and prepared to give him a tough time.

Meanwhile, Michael had to suppress a vibrant smile seeing how seriously his subordinates reacted. He was fully aware that his comment was a little bit unfair, especially toward Tiara, but he wanted to ensure that Tiara and the Forest Elven Adventurers would give their best while sparring with him.

Michael was also fully aware that Tiara's natural regeneration was in a different league than his. She didn't even need constant supervision from several Medics with healing-type Soultraits to tend to her after the Dragon breath burned her. Tiara healed naturally while Michael was bedridden in the infirmary under constant supervision and influence of healing Soultraits.

Nonetheless, Michael had to provoke Tiara and the others. He ought to tell them to pay attention to their surroundings. After all, he wanted to go all out in order to see how strong he actually was.

Unleashing his full power in front of the entire Tritan Alliance for the first time was not something Michael wished to do. He would rather practice and perfect his skills until he passed out before showcasing his talent in front of such a huge audience.

He wanted to control his powers to refine them during the Battle Exchange to be prepared for all kinds of situations that awaited him during the Interdimensional Flag War.

After all, the Flag War was where both the dangers and the treasures were waiting for him!

Chapter 316 Pressure

The training ground was emptied and turned into a large arena with hundreds of Summons eying their Lords with respect and curiosity.

Michael stood at one end of the arena while Tiara and the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer Team stood on the other side, their Artifact manifested and ready for battle.

After listening to Michael's comment, Tiara didn't think about holding back anymore. She activated her first Soultrait, Silvarean Tiger, to grow silver fur all over her body, which increased her defense drastically. Following that her pupils were altered, enhancing her eyesight, while her physical strength increased substantially as well.

Tiara's body leaned forward dangerously close to the ground while moving her spear around herself with great precision.

Meanwhile, Lilica Balrean gripped her bow tightly. A white ring manifested in her emerald-green eyes after she activated her 4-Star Soultrait, Weakness Detection. A grayish ring formed around the white ring in Lilica's eyes as she utilized her second 4-Star Soultrait, Precise Aim, as well.

Both Soultraits had simple utilities. Weakness Detection allowed Lilica to detect the weaknesses of her targets, while Precise Aim improved her accuracy with all types of weapons drastically. By combining her Soultraits, Lilica's combat prowess increased significantly.

After Lilica and Tiara unleashed their Soultraits, the remaining four Forest Elven Adventurers followed suit. Liopham Zelc manifested his 4-Star Rage of the Primal in front of their team, targeting Michael before releasing his other 4-Star Soultrait, Swiftmess.

Just like the enchantment swiftmess, Liopham's second Soultrait enhanced his Agility drastically by conjuring winds around his feet.

None of the remaining three Forest Elven Adventurers unleashed their Soultraits immediately. Mika Zels, Opars Zelk, and Pheli Zan were all either unable to unleash their Soultraits before the battle with Michael started, or they wanted to wait for a better opportunity to take Michael by surprise.

Michael didn't say anything, but he smirked. He had seen the Soultrait the EmeraldLeaf Adventurers had awakened upon entering the Origin Expanse several times. He was also the one who granted them a second Soultrait. Obviously, Michael knew what Soultrait he had given them.

He released his Legendary Ring Artifact's dragon might, and swirled the Wyverntooth Spear around his body. The battle started not long after as Icarus' screech resounded through the territory's center.

The moment the battle began, Pheli Zan unleashed her Battle Cry Soultrait. A thunderous roar resounded through the arena, filling the other Forest Elves and Tiara with energy. Their muscles bulged and their power increased by roughly 10% in response. Opars Zelk moved behind the others, a white symbol the size of a piece of paper manifesting above him.

He pressed his hand against Mika's back while using his Soultrait, Energy Imprint, to channel energy into Mika as the youngest Forest Elf used both Arrow Duplication and Pierce while pulling the bowstring of his bow backward.

Mika didn't hesitate to use the strongest forms of his Soultraits since Opars had his back. He released the arrow with tremendous force and began to move around to spread out and allow their team to attack Michael from all sides.

Mika's arrow shot through the air. It split into dozens of duplicates that were aimed either at him or the area around him, forcing Michael to do something big if he wanted to evade, or block the attack.

With Pierce applied on the main arrow, Mika ensured that the duplicated arrows were also under the influence of Pierce's effect, making it difficult for Michael to block the downpour of arrows easily.

While Mika's arrows garnered the spectator's attention, Lilica didn't remain idle. She moved to the side while spying on Michael with Weakness Detection. She pulled her bowstring back and used Precise Aim to target the area her Weakness Detection determined his weakest point.

She released the arrow and continued to move.

Liopham and Tiara didn't focus on keeping their distance from Michael. Liopham exerted a considerable amount of energy to force Michael's attention onto the Spirit Totem manifested with his Rage of the Primal Soultrait. It couldn't affect Michael a lot, but Michael's attention was still constantly drawn over to the Spirit Totem every now and then, distracting him.

After the Spirit Totem drew Michael's attention over, Liopham followed Tiara, who had charged ahead to enter close combat.

As the Soultraits were utilized one after another, Michael used Eagle Eyes with two layers of Enhancement. He absorbed the view in front of him down to the finest detail and began to move.

He first released a human-sized Glacicle which he conjured vertically in front of him. It was enhanced with a single layer of Enhancement.

Simultaneously, Michael created a small Qi Sword which he released with a burst of energy toward the Spirit Totem.

The Qi Sword was faster than the arrows released by the Forest Elves. It was also too fast for Liopham to move the Spirit Totem somewhere else. Unable to block the Qi Sword while also maintaining the Spirit Totem was impossible for Liopham. As a result, the Spirit Totem was hit and pierced through. I think you should take a look at

Rage of the Primal was a good tool against monsters and less intelligent races. It was very useful against races with strong wild instincts. However, Rage of the Primal was not that useful in a head-on battle, especially not if the opponent possessed a highly destructive long-range attack.

Mika's arrows impacted on the Glacicle roughly the same time the Spirit Totem was destroyed. Pierce enhanced both the destructive and penetration force of arrows and blades. Despite that, there was a limit to how much they could destroy.

Glacicle was more than a meter thick and Michael continued channeling bits of energy into it to ensure that Mika's arrows were blocked properly. The arrows impacted and pierced through the first layers of Glacicle, but they weren't strong enough to shatter Glacicle.

Despite that, Mika was satisfied. He made a great trade by forcing Michael to unleash a human-sized Glacicle. It required at least as much origin energy as Mika had to use for his attack – the only difference being that Opars had replenished Mika's used-up energy immediately.

Lilica's attack wasn't blocked by the Glacicle. But Michael saw the attack thanks to his Eagle Eyes, either way. His Wyverntooth Spear moved through the air to pick up the arrow and block it. Lilica frowned a little seeing how easily Michael blocked the attack, but the corners of her lip curled upward the next moment when she saw Liopham and Tiara appear next to Michael.

Tiara thrust her spear at Michael's chest while Liopham used his rapid speed to kick toward Michael's legs. Once Michael lost his balance and fell to the ground, it would be a matter of time before they would emerge victorious.

But, Michael was not done yet. He responded instinctively by adding another layer of Enhancement to Eagle Eyes. He also applied a layer of Enhancement to his legs to accelerate his movement speed a little. Being able to clearly see the incoming attacks, Michael changed his stance by moving his right leg backward. Simultaneously, he moved the Wyverntooth Spear to block Tiara's attack.

But just as Tiara's spear was about to collide with the Wyverntooth Spear, Tiara utilized her other Soultrait, Internal Force, to change the force of her attack internally, distribute it differently and alter her movement drastically without losing the slightest bit of her movement speed.

Even though Michael already knew what Tiara's Soultrait was capable of, countering it was far from easy. It was the first time he was fighting against Tiara seriously, and he had several other opponents to pay attention to as well. Thus, he released an oval-shaped Glacicle to block her altered thrust while simultaneously unleashing three enhanced Spirit Whips to strike her mentally in quick succession.

But that was not enough. Michael conjured a Qi Sword as the Glacicle Shield manifested, and he released it with a burst of energy toward Tiara as the three Spirit Whips impacted.

Another Qi Sword manifested next to Michael. It shot toward Liopham, forcing the Forest Elf to unleash the strongest form of Swiftiness to avoid getting impaled.

Meanwhile, Tiara twisted her body while also using Internal Force to further adjust her stance in order to evade the small Qi Sword flying toward her.

Her attack had been blocked, providing Michael the opportunity he needed to step back.

Using Eagle Eyes constantly, all while applying Enhancement on top of Eagle Eyes, and Glacicle, Michael struggled quite a bit. He didn't add any additional layers on top of his Spirit Whips, or the Qi Swords, simply because he was already going over the top by simultaneously controlling five Soultraits with great precision.

His control did not waver even though his head began to ache. Using so many Soultraits simultaneously affected not only his mental power but also drained his stored origin energy rapidly.

But even then, Michael was starting to feel exhilarated. He felt that the pressure applied by Tiara and the Forest Elves would allow him to master multitasking more Soultraits simultaneously, hopefully with even greater proficiency than before!

Fully focused on the battlefield, Michael blocked Lilica's next attack with the Wyverntooth Spear. He manifested a dozen small Glacicles to block Mika's second attack. The Glacicles shot toward the duplicated arrows that would have hit him, destroying any potential danger in its essence.

Afterward, he had to face Liopham and Tiara head-on once again. But this time, Pheli Zan joined the close combat battle as well.

She used her first Soultrait [Repelling Shield] to create a semi-translucent shield in front of Liopham and Tiara as Michael's next counterattack was about to hit.

The Repelling Shields ought to block and repel the impacting force. However, the Qi Swords were too destructive to be fully blocked and repelled. The shields could only slow the Qi Swords before they burst apart.

But that was more than enough time for Liopham and Tiara to change their mind. They advanced past the Qi Swords and shot toward Michael, whose energy storage was facing a crisis.

In response, Michael unleashed Extraction.

Chapter 317 Everything

Once Michael unleashed Extraction on top of his other Soultraits, he felt like his head would split apart as a searing pain shot through him. However, by using Extraction to extract the origin energy in the surroundings, he could solve the problem of his dried-out energy storage to a certain degree.

Using too many Soultraits simultaneously was not easy, but it worked – more or less – thanks to the external pressure Tiara and the Forest Elves put on him. Michael was also growing more excited when he felt that Extraction's potency was strong enough to annex the energy in the surroundings without being fully unleashed.

At this point, Michael didn't even have to focus on Extraction to unleash it. A simple thought was all it took.

The annexed energy was enough to empower Eagle Eyes reinforced with four layers of Enhancement, and his other Soultraits such as Reinforced Sword Qi, Glacicle, and three Spirit Whips without an Enhancement.

Michael would have loved to utilize Enhancement to put several layers of Enhancement on each of his Soultraits, but given that he was already using six Soultraits, he didn't deem that necessary, in the first place.

Michael had a lot of things to test out. It was the first time he used all of his combat Soultraits simultaneously, after all. He was exhilarated despite the numbing headache!

Pheli, Liopham, and Tiara were still pushing toward him, only retreating to rush toward Opars, who would use Energy Imprint to refill their energy storage while Lilica and Mika distracted Michael with a downpour of arrows.

Michael decided to change his tactic the moment Tiara and Liopham retreated. Liopham was extremely fast and Tiara's attack pattern was unpredictable. Thus, the combination of those two was the most annoying, followed by Mika's Arrow Duplication and Pierce combination.

Once the melee fighters retreated, Michael received a few seconds to change his tactic. He manifested dozens of Glacicles which he released toward Lilica and the group around Tiara before kicking his feet from the ground to charge toward Mika.

After he failed to hit Michael several times, Mika grew impatient. Being the youngest Forest Elf in the group, Mika had always been known as the least patient. He wanted to see the results of his attack immediately and was mildly annoyed that none of his attacks affected Michael.

In the first place, Michael didn't seem to pay too much attention to him. Michael merely released a few Glacicles to block most of his attacks, infuriating the youngest Forest Elf on the battlefield.

He knew that Michael grew stronger at a much faster rate than anyone else, but he thought that his contribution in a battle against Michael would be somewhat notable. But that was not the case. His contribution was close to nil. At least, that was how Mika felt.

Michael thought the opposite because Mika's well-timed attacks had restricted him more than once. He was often unable to charge toward Lilica, or Opars to deal with them because of the downpour of Mika's arrows.

They might not be strong enough to pierce through his human-sized Glacicle, but the duplicated arrows with Pierce were too dangerous to ignore.

Thus, Michael blasted in Mika's direction the moment the opportunity appeared. His Glacicles ought to restrain the others long enough, especially after they had retreated to refill their energy yet again.

Michael released two Qi Swords toward Mika before moving to the side. Mika was just about to release another arrow with Arrow Duplication and Pierce when he noticed that the Qi Swords shot toward him from ahead while Michael moved to the side.

The moment he released his bowstring to destroy the Qi Swords, Michael would appear next to him, ending him with the Wyverntooth Spear. But he couldn't ignore the Qi Swords either. They were too fast and deadly to ignore. Mika's instincts screamed at him as his survival instincts kicked in. They overwhelmed his rational thinking and forced him to let go of the bowstring, releasing the arrow that duplicated before colliding with the Qi Swords.

The Qi Swords burst after several duplicated arrows with Pierce impacted. However, just as Mika visualized earlier, Michael appeared next to him, the Wyverntooth Spear heading straight toward his neck.

Michael's attack stopped merely an inch away from Mika's neck, and a faint smile formed on his lips as he said, "You're dead."

Mika broke into a sweat at that. His legs caved in and he slumped to the ground, his eyes lingering on Michael, whose expression changed.

"You were really annoying to fight. I would hate facing someone like you in a life-and-death battle," Michael murmured, all while thick droplets of sweat poured down his cheeks.

At this point, Michael was extremely exhausted and unable to hide how worn out he was. His clothes were drenched in sweat and his short hair was plastered to his temples. I think you should take a look at

Even if he had yet to be hit with an attack, Michael felt like he wouldn't be able to fight much longer. The only advantage he held over the others was that Mika had been defeated, causing cracks in their defense.

Seeing that Tiara, Liopham, and Pheli stood in front of Opars who continued to use Energy Imprint to refill their energy storages, Michael's eyes moved over to Lilica. She had evaded the Glacicles Michael shot in her direction earlier and was now about to release another arrow. Lilica had pinpointed Michael's weakness and unleashed one arrow after another in quick succession.

However, Michael's Glacicles were conjured at a breakneck speed, and released at once with great precision to smash into Lilica's arrows at once.

Even though Glacicle was only a 4-Star Soultrait, it was extremely useful against other projectiles – especially projectiles made out of wood and energy. The Glacicles clashed with the arrows and burst apart, releasing a chilly mist that froze the arrows. Energy-condensed arrows were likely to condense further until they would destabilize and burst apart while wooden arrows would freeze and fall to the ground due to the sudden change in their momentum.

Of course, multiple different factors played a role as well, but Michael could conjure and release dozens of Glacicles while Lilica released two to three arrows. She might be able to pinpoint his weakness and aim at him with great precision, but her arrows were still made out of wood. She didn't want to use the Pieckers or her other expensive arrows in a spar, after all!

Michael knew that Lilica wouldn't use her expensive arrows in a spar. He and Tiara scolded the Forest Elves way too often for wasting money by using consumable items, and breaking expensive arrows in spars and situations that didn't actually require the usage of costly items that would be better put to use in a real battle.

Thus, Lilica refrained from using Pieckers and more expensive arrows in a spar. However, they were losing despite having a numerical advantage. Lilica realized her mistake too late. Michael released several Qi Swords amid his next batch of Glacicles, which forced her to retreat and change her position. By the time she blocked the Qi Swords, several Glacicles had impacted all around her joints and vital points. The freezing mist of the Glacicles was unleashed upon impact, affecting Lilica's combat prowess and movements.

She couldn't even do anything against Michael as he appeared in front of her without potentially breaking off her limbs.

Michael lightly tapped Lilica with the Wyverntooth Spear before he muttered in a low but confident voice, "Dead."

He then retracted the Wyverntooth Spear and turned around to face the remaining four enemies head-on. Even Opars changed his tactic to join the others in close combat.

Michael ended up with four blades moving in his direction with ridiculous speed. Opars circulated a tremendous amount of energy through his body to enhance his strength and speed while Tiara moved unpredictably, thrusting out with the spear just to change the targeted area several times.

Liopham moved rapidly with Swiftiness fully unleashed, and Pheli released her Repelling Shield to protect everyone's vital spots. Pheli's energy reserves were used up instantaneously as more than ten Repelling Shields manifested all around her allies. They restricted Michael's attack enough to allow Pheli and the rest to strike Michael first.

Unfortunately, Michael didn't accept that. He intertwined three Spirit Whips with each other to elevate their strength as high as possible before he applied a few layers of Enhancement. Then Michael struck Pheli with the enhanced 3-fold Spirit Whip. The moment the Spirit Whip impacted, Pheli screamed out. Only the white in her eyes was visible, and the repelling shields destabilized. They disintegrated as Pheli collapsed on the ground, allowing Michael to manifest Glacicles all around his body.

He turned into a hedgehog covered in icicle needles and released them in all directions at once.

Following that, Michael observed the response of his opponents before he reacted as well, using his Eagle Eyes' exceptional eyesight to move in the direction Liopham moved.

Michael moved rapidly, slashing toward Liopham all while manifesting a few Qi Swords to restrict his paths. Liopham could move rapidly, but he required a path to make full use of his speed.

Michael's Wyverntooth Spear was just about to drive deep into Liopham's chest when Michael stopped in his tracks.

"Dead," He said in-between two heavy breaths, throwing his body around just to detect that Tiara's spear was about to impact his abdomen.

Michael lashed out with the enhanced 3-fold Spirit Whip, hitting Tiara hard enough to make her falter. He also had six Qi Swords, and dozens of Glacicles at the ready. That was enough to put Tiara in her place and kill her – if Michael desired to do so.

Maybe Tiara would have been able to escape the danger of the Qi Blades and Glacicles, lowering the lethal damage by allowing the attacks to impact in specific areas. However, she would end up severely injured, one way or another, and they were merely sparring right now.

Thus, Michael let the Qi Swords and Glacicles hover mid-air instead of striking Tiara. He had never planned on killing her. He merely smiled at her and dealt with Opars attack, blocking it just in time before overwhelming him with the power of six Soultraits.

Chapter 318 Promotion

'I am so dead...' Michael cursed in his mind as he lay down on the ground.

More than ten minutes had passed since he won against Tiara and the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team, but he had yet to stop sweating buckets. His head was still thumping wildly as well.

Michael was exhausted, but he was quite satisfied with the results of the spar. He felt a lot better. Meanwhile the spark in his heart developed into a small burning flame that flickered brightly, bringing light to the darkness inside his heart.

At one point Tiara appeared next to him. She stood there, biting her lower lip while waiting for him to get up and notice her.

Michael finally looked at her while slowly pushing his upper body from the ground.

"What are you thinking about, Tiara?" He asked when he noticed that Tiara hesitated a bit.

"Master... I think I should take back what I said the last time you asked me if I wanted another Soultrait..." She revealed, clutching her clothes tightly while subconsciously avoiding locking eyes with Michael.

"Hm? Was that ever off the table? Didn't you just say that you didn't like the Soultraits I had at that time because they were not compatible with the Soultraits you manifested? I agree with that, mostly," Michael said lightly before he added, "Once I harvest more Soultrait Symbols, I'll show them to you, and you can tell me which ones you want, and I will give them to you. It's easy."

Michael smiled at Tiara, who looked both happy, yet uncomfortable. As Michael's subordinate and Battle Maid, Tiara was supposed to be one of Michael's strongest fighters. She ought to be a great asset to his territory and army, yet Michael defeated her easily – and she requested to be granted some of his most valuable resources- Soultraits.

Looking at Tiara, Michael couldn't help but feel that she was a much worse overthinker than he was.

"I would shower you with Soultrait Symbols and SoulStar Fragments in the future, either way. If I can ensure that you grow stronger, and that you and my people will have a higher survivability during the future wars against our enemies, I would do it without a second thought," Michael explained calmly.

Tiara looked up and locked eyes with Michael, a shimmer of gratefulness and happiness gleaming in her ocean-blue eyes.

"By the way, you have two 5-Star Soultraits, don't you?" Michael asked suddenly.

He noticed that Tiara's Soultraits were on a different level compared to the Forest Elves' Soultraits. She possessed two Soultraits just like them, but each of her Soultrait was on a higher level than theirs.

Tiara was surprised for a moment, but she nodded her head in the next second. There was no need to hide her Soultraits in front of Michael.

"I have a transformation Soultrait that replicates the natural transformation a member of the Silverfang Tigerfolk attains upon evolving their life force, which happens when we become Higher Lifeforms at the 4th Tier. Once I ascend to the 4th Tier, my first Soultrait, Silvarean Tiger, will receive a qualitative upgrade that allows me to grow even stronger in my Silver Tiger form. You already know my other Soultrait, Internal Force. It allows me to re-distribute the energy and force inside my body instantaneously. By precisely adjusting the force in my body I can change my attack pattern and movement trajectory at once without losing momentum," She revealed without hesitation.

Michael fell deep in thought while listening to her explanation. He pressed his palms against the firm soil and got up from the ground.

'Upgrading a 5-Star Soultrait cost more than 50,000 SoulStar Fragments. Giving her more Soultraits and upgrading them should be my main goal to enhance Tiara's combat prowess. That's much easier than collecting tens of thousands of SoulStar Fragments.'

Michael had yet to upgrade all of his Soultraits to 5-Star, but he was not exactly in a rush. He had other means to increase his strength and had a huge to-do list to complete before he could return his focus on upgrading his Soultraits.

One of the most important tasks was to improve his control of Soultraits, especially when he utilized multiple simultaneously. He had realized that he fought mostly instinctively against Tiara and the Forest Elves, which was good to a certain degree, but it also revealed his lack of comprehension and mastery of most Soultraits.

Michael had only comprehended bits of Extraction, but that was already more than what he knew about his other Soultraits. He could only control his other Soultraits because of the knowledge imprinted in his mind when he fused with them.

That had to be addressed soon since he wanted to grow stronger. But then again, Michael could also tell that he could unravel more of his body's hidden potential if he learned more combat techniques, and if he started to use his brain a little bit more mid-battle. He had yet to refine his mind to a deeper level, and his Soul hadn't been refined at all.

Other than that, Michael felt that his equipment required an upgrade as well. After sparring with several students in possession of customized Epic Tier-2 Artifacts his interest in powerful Artifact increased. However, the spark of interest evolved into an inferno only after obtaining Dragon Might.

It enhanced his mental power, and ability to multitask drastically, allowing him to wield six Soultraits simultaneously. Without the Legendary Ring Artifact, Michael would have collapsed the moment he attempted to use six Soultraits at once. He might even have sustained permanent brain damage if not for Dragon Might.

Thus, Michael was extremely curious about the Spirit Armor Set that was currently being produced by the Relic of Draka.

He smiled at the thought of the Spirit Armor Set and only got back to his senses when he saw Blaire Tracer rushing over to him.

"My Lord, three Starless Summons attained enlightenment after watching your battle! They drank the Warrior Enlightenment Potion earlier and comprehended the essence of a 1-Star Warrior all thanks to your spar!!" Blaire exclaimed in pure excitement. She smiled vibrantly like a little child who received an expensive toy.

"Where are they?" Michael asked immediately.

Blaire turned around and pointed toward a crowd of Summons that had gathered around two young men and a young woman, "Over there."

Michael nodded and walked over to the crowd. He squeezed his way through the crowd and appeared in front of the three Starless Summons. Then he closed his eyes and lifted his right hand, focusing on his Link of Loyalty with the three Summons that stood right in front of him.

Their Links of Loyalty were firm, and they shone brightly in his Mind's eye allowed him to see the deepest parts of his consciousness.

His Mind's eye saw the War Rune's pillar of light, the Sphere of Light hoarding his Soultraits, and tens of thousands of Links of Loyalty that branched out from the bottom of the pillar of light like countless roots.

Some roots were thicker while others were firmer, but out of all three small roots attracted his attention. They were shorter than most, and not as firm and stable as the roots around them. These three roots were the pulsating Links of Loyalty of the Starless Summons, who had attained enlightenment.

Michael closed his eyes and continued to focus on the pulsating Links of Loyalty. By focusing on the Links of Loyalty, Michael could feel their emotions clearly. They were excited and curious, but there was also a tinge of fear.

What would happen if they failed to be promoted to 1-Star Warriors? What if they wasted the Warrior Enlightenment Potion? Even though they had never been punished unjustly in Michael's territory, they were afraid. Afraid of failing. Afraid of being of no use. Afraid of staying worthless.

The fear in their hearts blossomed, and the pulsating of their Links of Loyalty grew unstable. The calm and rhythmical pulse devolved into a frantic mess.

Michael might have never observed one of his Summons being promoted, but he could instinctively tell that their fears and worries would cause more harm than good. He kept his eyes shut and circulated some of his energy through the roots of the pillar of light.

He infused his energy into the pulsating Links of Loyalty, slowly altering the unstable pulse. Michael's interference was a little risky because he might startle the Summons, which would forcefully interrupt their promotion to 1-Star Warriors. Fortunately, the trust he had earned from his Summons over the course of the last months was enough to keep the Summons at ease even after Michael infused energy into the Link of Loyalty that connected Michael to his subjects.

His energy infusion was calming, and it made the Summons realize that their Lord was no other than Michael. They recalled his actions and how well he treated them, which instantly dispelled most of the doubts that had popped up in their hearts.

They calmed down and regained their focus within seconds.

Afterward, the three Summons paid attention to nothing other than their promotion. They recalled every bit of Michael's spar against Tiara and the Forest Elves, which they used in combination with the effect of the Warrior Enlightenment Potion to stimulate the potential that was sealed in the deepest parts of their being.

Their focus entered the deepest parts of their being, where the first layers of their potential were uncovered – slowly but steadily.

Comprehending the essence of a Warrior after drinking a Warrior Enlightenment Potion was much easier. However, that didn't mean it was actually easy. Most Starless Summons required several potions and weeks of hard work to trace the essence of a 1-Star Warrior.

Yet, the three Summons did so by watching Michael's spar, just like that.

The layers of their sealed potential crumbled, and the roots – their Links of Loyalty – grew longer, firmer and they stabilized in the following hours.

All this while, Michael never left their side. He remained next to them, trying to guide them through the promotion to become 1-Star Summons.

Chapter 319 Desire

The three Starless Summons were promoted to 1-Star Warriors by unraveling bits of their hidden potential.

Upon unleashing their hidden potential, the presence of the Starless Summons changed gradually. Their muscles bulged a little bit, and the origin energy coursing through their veins grew more potent.

They were all born as blank sheets without any special talent granted by the Will of the Origin Expanse, but now they were slowly developing into sharp blade. Basic knowledge about the essence of combat, weapon mastery, and tactics entered their minds, evolving the weaponless sheep into fierce wolves.

The Starless Summons' minds grew more mature and affine to the essence of combat and warfare. They kept changing constantly under the influence of the promotion to 1-Star Warriors. Several hours passed, but not a single spectator left. Everyone observed their transformation and the events of their promotion to 1-Star Warriors with interest.

It was a magnificent event, and the spark of hope most Starless Summons desperately needed. Almost all Starless Summons were unsatisfied with their potential and progress so far. They didn't understand why they were resurrected as Starless Summons when thousands of their brethren had been resurrected and summoned as 1-Star Summons.

Most Starless Summons felt that it was unfair. They were Starless and were thus mostly used as a workforce, whether it was on the farmlands to support the Farmers and Gardeners, assist in the kitchen, join the construction sites as laborers, or assist the Alchemists, Blacksmiths, or Enchanters in their work.

They were merely a workforce to support the Starred Summons. At first, that might have been fine. Some might even think that it was fine to keep working like this forever. They were given a place to sleep, and enough free time to entertain themselves, and the amount of food they were given was far more than most of them could eat.

As long as they were given the means to survive and live a pleasant life in Michael's territory these Starless Summons would be fine.

However, the majority desired more. They wanted to be more than just helpers. They wanted to be of immense value. But they thought that it was impossible. Their potential was horrendous, and not even 1 out of 10,000 Starless Summons had the chance to naturally attain enlightenment and be promoted to a 1-Star Summon.

And witnessing the promotion of three Starless Summons to 1-Star Warriors gave them just that- hope to change everything.

Every Starless Summon, who witnessed the potency of the Warrior Enlightenment Potion was starstruck. Only two batches of these potions had been distributed up to this point, yet three Starless Summons had already attained enlightenment. Their fates changed between one moment and the next. One moment they were laborers, but the next moment they entered Michael's army, and were given the opportunity to use the energy absorption technique Pandemonium's Requiem, Energy Nourishing Pills, Body Strengthening Pills, and Sacred Rectification as the warrior-specific body refinement technique.

Their strength would increase by leaps and bounds within the next few days, their lifespan would increase by advancing to Tier-1, and they were given more opportunities to study more about Berserkers, Knights, and other 2-Star combat occupations.

All it took to change their lives forever was to work hard and be noticed by their Lord's attendants. Once noticed, they would be given Warrior Enlightenment Potions, and their future would take a new direction.

Various thoughts ran through the minds of the Starless Summons, whether they were questions, doubts, or foolish thoughts. But all of them circled back to one particular thought, and desire- All of them wanted to grasp the opportunity and become 1-Star Warriors through the Warrior Enlightenment Potions.

Observing the reaction of his Summons, Michael felt blessed, but also a bit pressured. It was a blessing that his spar with Tiara and the Forest Elven Adventurers resulted in the promotion of three Starless Summons. Hundreds of Starless Summons witnessed the birth of three 1-Star Warriors. It was extraordinary.

Michael couldn't have wished for a better advertisement for his Warrior Enlightenment Potion.

However, there were two downsides – of which one could be considered a peculiar problem.

The real problem was that Michael witnessed humans' greed more often than he wanted to acknowledge. He nearly fell victim to it as well. Thus, he knew that the scarcity of Warrior Enlightenment Potions, and the competition for every bottle would end up with quarrels.

As long as the Starless Summons fought only a little, Michael's military force could keep the situation under control. However, once the first murder occurred, things would change. I think you should take a look at

The crime rate in Michael's territory was eerily low because everyone was mostly satisfied with the benefits they obtained from being Michael's subordinates. Michael had always been focusing on creating tight-knit Links of Loyalty with his subordinates, resulting in him treating his subjects like family. He gave them everything they needed and more.

However, that was not possible with rare resources such as Energy Nourishing Pills, Body Strengthening Pills, and the Warrior Enlightenment Potions. There were many other resources Michael couldn't share with everyone. Thus, it had been quite a while since he created different levels of treatment.

Those who didn't want to do anything were given a small bed and enough food to survive. They shared their High Treehouse with dozens of people but were still given enough space to allow survival.

The people who worked hard were given their home, enough free time for entertainment, and the opportunity to build a family, go to school, get educated, and make themselves useful for the Librarians and scholars afterward, or to train and potentially become Warriors or practice other Combat Occupations.

They often became apprentices and made an effort to become a valuable asset to the territory. Thus, they were given much better treatment than those, who were merely given food and a place to sleep because they were connected to Michael via the Link of Loyalty.

Afterward, summons that had jobs with responsibilities and a certain danger level were given better treatment. Their value was determined through their occupations, achievements, and how hard they worked and they were given special incentives such as Energy Pills, Energy Potions, highly nutritious meals, and much more.

The Military was given the best treatment as they put their lives on the line whenever they left the territory. They had to grow rapidly into powerful Warriors to protect the weak with their sharp blades, or fast Scouts to scout the surrounding area. It was only given that Michael provided them with Energy Nourishing Pills, Body Strengthening Pills, and special techniques to ensure their growth and safety. After all, they were the first line of defense so if the military crumbled nothing else would survive for long.

But the treatment and benefits received by those in the military and other occupations were not uniform either. Everyone had different responsibilities and they were given the perks and benefits accordingly.

Tiara and The Forest Elven Adventurers were not only the strongest but they were also the Captains of their respective teams. They were responsible for the lives of hundreds of team members. Thus, they were given a slightly preferential treatment to ensure that they would be strong enough to control their subordinates, and lead their Unit to victory!

Michael was about to create Spirit Weapons and other Armaments using the Relic of Draka. They wouldn't be given to just anyone because the Relic of Draka could only create one Spirit Armament in six hours. To be precise, six hours was the least amount of time required for it to produce an ordinary longsword with low external enhancements.

Michael was certain that products such as a Spirit Armor Set created from highly purified Zention ore would require days. Since Michael wanted to focus on enhancing the combat prowess of his strongest fighters it made no sense to create Spirit Armaments weaker than 1-Star Tier-2 Artifacts. They required 2-3 days to be completed, meaning that the Relic of Draka produced merely 10 Tier-2 Spirit Armaments a month.

One month was a long time. It was more than enough to turn a Starless Summon into a 1-Star Warrior, and nourish him into a Mid Tier-1 Warrior – if they worked day-in and day-out. 2-Star Knights and Berserkers had enough potential and comprehension of energy absorption techniques to use Energy Nourishing Pills to advance to the 2nd Tier within two months – once Michael's territory could produce enough Energy Nourishing Pills for everyone.

Thus, given that Michael summoned dozens of 2-Star Summons alone from daily Summons, he would never have enough Spirit Armaments for everyone. That meant he had to give the Spirit Armaments to those Summons, who contributed the most on the battlefield if he wanted to fuel the motivation of the rest.

Michael never really liked to manipulate others, but there was nothing else he could do about it. Playing favoritism in his territory wouldn't be a good thing, so he had to use his Summons' contribution to determine their treatment level.

This only left him with the peculiar problem Michael faced since he came back from the Lord Rift.

The potency of the Body Strengthening Pill and the Energy Nourishing Pill was exceptional. They were more than tenfold more potent than ordinary pills. Adding the high demand and low supply for them, followed by the desired Warrior Enlightenment Potions his Starless Summons wanted, Michael began to note that he lacked ingredients the most.

He had many Alchemists, but he lacked the tools, and ingredients to mass produce anything. His Alchemists could learn to mass produce everything, but that would require time, effort, and resources.

Unfortunately, he didn't have time or resources given the impatience of his Summons. And Michael understood their desire very well. He wanted to grow stronger as well, after all!

Chapter 320 Elders' help

Other than the Warrior Enlightenment Potion's effect, Michael started to notice the effects a combination of specialized body refinement techniques, Energy Nourishing Pills, and Body Strengthening Pills had on his Summons.

The Archer's Agility and Dexterity increased as they completed the first stage of their body refinement technique. They grew more nimble and were able to release arrows much faster than before without affecting their accuracy.

The Knights, on the other hand, used body refinement techniques that enhanced their endurance and stamina to act as the guardian protecting everyone at the frontlines. Contrary to them, the Berserkers' focus was raw physical strength. As long as they could hit hard enough to eliminate their enemy with a single strike, nobody would be able to harm them!

After everyone had witnessed the potency of the Warrior Enlightenment Potions, and the effects of the Energy Nourishing Pill and the Body Strengthening Pill the demand for them increased drastically. Unfortunately, Michael couldn't find enough resources to supply every combatant with those precious medicines. In fact, most of his ingredients were still growing in the gardens. It would take a few more weeks before the ingredients were ripe and ready to be harvested.

"What's the easiest way to procure more seedlings, seeds, and ripe ingredients? They're overpriced back home...but if I want to nurture everyone before the Zentika Empire strikes, I'll have to accept the horrendous prices..." Michael mumbled to himself.

Michael didn't hear much about the Zentika Empire after the Lord Rift. However, that worried him more than occasional groups of Adventurers barging into the Untamed Jungle. He would have loved to encounter a bunch of Adventurers instead of the silence coming from the Zentika Empire.

One way or another, Michael was certain that Senator Keltos was unwilling to give up the Untamed Jungle. After the warfare with the Jungle Expedition, other Senators of the Zentika Empire's Council were likely to have found a new target in the Untamed Jungle. Some must consider Michael a lethal threat – or so Michael thought.

One way or another, it was a fact that Michael would encounter the forces of the Zentika Empire eventually. Therefore, he had to prepare himself and his people for the inevitable.

"How about I ask our Elders?" Lilica enquired.

She looked intently at him and locked eyes when he turned to her.

Lilica had heard what Michael mumbled to himself. Thus, she decided to offer her suggestion.

"You want me to ask the Forest Elves? That might actually work better than asking others. No. It will definitely work better," Michael responded, pondering over her words after Lilica pointed out the obvious.

Contrary to the human territories that were void of flourishing nature, every single inch of territory under the Forest Elven's control was related to nature, and its wonders.

"But would they be willing to trade rare ingredients with me? The Elders must be quite happy with the current trade, and it's not like I can give them the Spirit Armaments produced by the Relic of Draka in exchange to the rare ingredients," Michael pointed out, mostly to himself rather than Lilica.

However, Lilica didn't seem to be too worried about that.

"The Elders don't like owing favors, just like any Forest Elf. That means the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team still owes you something for the Soultraits you've given us. Unfortunately, it's hard to put a price-tag on Soultraits since it's the first time we heard that it's possible to harvest Soultraits the way you're doing. We cannot do that on our own, which means that they might be rather easy to procure for you, but they're invaluable for the entire Forest Elven Tribe," Lilica answered, indicating to Michael that they had not forgotten about the benefits they'd obtained from him.

She further added reassuringly, "Furthermore, the Elders feel that they're gaining much more than you from the exchange of Agriculture blueprint against Armaments. The blueprints they hand over have been stored for decades, if not centuries, and they're essentially useless to the Forest Elves. The Elders have been worrying about overcharging you, especially after we, the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team, gained new Soultraits for free. You didn't ask us to pay you for the Soultraits, after all."

Michael listened intently. He tilted his head a little and wondered if Lilica was twisting the truth in his favor to make him feel better.

'I gave you the Soultraits to strengthen you against the Jungle Expedition, and to ensure that you guys won't run away once the 50,000 members of the Jungle Expedition enter the Untamed Jungle.' Michael sighed inwardly.

It was good that Lilica considered him a good guy, but the reality was a little bit different. He had been in dire need of the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team's help at that time. Thus, he exposed his power and

revealed additional Soultraits. Even if Lilica and her team had wanted to leave, the Forest Elven Elders would have held them back, forcing them to support Michael.

He knew the value of Extraction, and that the Forest Elven Tribe would want to make use of it after getting a glimpse of its power. That was only obvious.

If they could procure Extraction by killing him, they would have probably tried it already. To their misfortune, only Michael was able to extract Soultraits. Even the mythical treasures created by the Will of the Origin Expanse couldn't extract Soultraits. At least, Michael hadn't heard about anyone obtaining such a treasure yet.

"Either way, the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team still owes you something, and the Elders want to be of more help as well. I think you understand their intentions," Lilica said, throwing him a knowing gaze, "Either way, you should make use of it if you want to grow your forces rapidly. The Pills and Potion recipes we found in the Lord Rift are extraordinary, and we should make use of them as much as possible before it's too late."

Lilica's words warmed Michael's heart and he felt glad seeing that Lilica was not solely focused on the benefits she could provide her tribe, but also thought about Michael's territory. Lilica wanted his territory to prosper and develop. Michael had been noticing that for a while now. It was really nice to see.

"In that case, do you know what the Forest Elves need more than our Armaments? It might be nice to receive rare ingredients for a low price, but I doubt that anyone will be happy if I demand low rates for a long period. If I take rare ingredients in addition to agriculture blueprints in exchange for the same Armaments I will feel guilty, and the Elders will feel like slapping me in the near future," Michael said, looking at her with a small smile.

"The Elders will be happy to help you develop your territory faster. Developing your territory means that the Underground Forging Hall expands, after all. More blacksmiths with a higher star rating means that you'll trade high-level armaments of good quality with our tribe. We're in need of those armaments, much more than you can fathom," Lilica revealed, a trace of concern shining in her eyes.

Michael nodded. He was curious why the Forest Elven Tribe had so much trouble procuring Armaments, but Lilica and the other Forest Elves had never been willing to tell him more. All they said was that there were multiple reasons and that it required the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team to emerge far away from everyone else before the Forest Elven Tribe could start procuring Armaments made out of metal.

That had been bothering Michael for a long time now. He thought that their problems were related to potential enemies located all around the Forest Elven Tribe's territories. Michael was not certain about that but he imagined that the Forest Elven Tribe had many enemies around them, who were probably blocking their transactions with other races.

But then again, that was just a thought that had flashed through his mind one night. He couldn't be certain.

After Lilica offered to use the ingredients harvested in other Forest Elves' territories, they began to work out a proper plan. He first wrote down the ingredients they required to mass-produce Warrior Enlightenment Potions, Energy Nourishing Pills, and Body Strengthening Pills.

Lilica left the Origin Expanse to speak to her Elders. She had to find out how many ingredients they could produce every month, how much Michael had to pay for them – including the discount – and how many batches Michael's Alchemists could produce with the ingredients.

Several days passed quickly as they worked on it and soon there was only one day left before they would also be in Meku.

Michael spent most of his time in the Origin Expanse dealing with the Forest Elves, trying to solve quarrels between the Starless Summons and sparring with Tiara and the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team.

Most spars ended up with Michael winning – even if it was by hair's breadth. Tiara and the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team quickly adjusted to his tactics, forcing Michael to change his strategy in every battle. Their teamwork improved with every spar, and they forced Michael into the corner more often as time progressed.

The pressure weighing down on Michael was terrific, but it was exceptionally useful. He grew more accustomed to his Soultraits, and he learned a lot about the hidden potential of some of his Soultraits. Comprehending more about his Soultraits increased his combat prowess naturally. New ways to use his Soultraits opened to Michael, and he used them without hesitation to learn more and more.

His days in the Origin Expanse were exceptional, just like his progress with Sacred Rectification and Pandemonium's Requiem.

All while using the Body Strengthening Pills and Energy Nourishing Pills to accelerate his progress with the body refinement technique, Michael learned how to control origin energy more precisely, and how to absorb the energy in his surroundings at a faster rate.

His territory developed rapidly, his people grew stronger, and Michael, as a Lord and an Individual, grew stronger as well.

At the same time, his mastery of most techniques increased rapidly, resulting in a drastic boost in Michael's confidence.

He had never felt so ready and pumped up to face his human competitors, the Berserkers, and the Warlock Centaurs.