

## **Supreme Lord 331**

### Chapter 331 Who?

At the end of the day, Michael decided to show the librarian the piece of paper he had shown his brother.

There were two reasons for that.

First, Michael was too curious to find out more about the language used by the Temple of the Forgotten. He wanted to obtain an answer to the question that had been tormenting his mind ever since he found the Temple of the Forgotten; How dangerous is the Temple of the Forgotten?

Michael wanted to know how much stronger he had to grow to raid the Temple of the Forgotten, and what kind of treasures he could find inside the Temple of the Forgotten. He was too curious not to ask others for help.

Second, Michael hated himself for overthinking too much. The Berserker Librarian couldn't really do much against Michael even if the Berserker grew interested in the Temple of the Forgotten.

Only Michael knew about the location of the Temple of the Forgotten, and he was the only Lord in the Untamed Jungle. Forget about other human Lords, Michael hadn't seen any other Lords in the Untamed Jungle either – except the Gogi Lord, who had been exterminated a long time ago.

Even if the Berserker Librarian would be interested in his Ancient Ruin, he was unlikely to act right now – not when the Interdimensional Flag War was about to begin, and the threat of the Tekur race still existed.

The piece of paper was small in the large hands of the Berserker Librarian as he looked at it. His brows furrowed deeply as he imprinted the letters into his mind.

"I...don't know this language. I can translate parts of it, but it doesn't really make sense. It feels incomplete," The Librarian said, tilting his head to look at the letters from a different angle. "Some sort of Origin Tongue, but it's a lot older than the oldest books I've retrieved from the Blood Asura Dungeon..."

The librarian stared at Michael, his frown even deeper than before, "I don't think the language books on the third floor will help you. I can hand them over, but you won't gain anything. The records of Ancient Ruin raids might be helpful..."

The librarian halted in his tracks. He seemed irritated and sighed deeply. "...let me give you one piece of advice."

"Don't enter this Ancient Ruin until you become a Divine Lifeform."

Michael's eyes widened in surprise. Even Kraft Viton couldn't contain himself after he heard what the Berserker said and blurted out, "Huh?!"

The old man took a stride forward and took a look at the piece of paper shared by Michael as well.

He was asking Michael to become a Divine Lifeform, a being whose life force evolved a second time as a result of advancing to the 7th Tier. The Berserker Librarian told him to become such an existence before entering the Temple of the Forgotten. That was crazy, or so Michael would have said if he hadn't suspected something similar as well.

Since Lilica told him that the language used in an Ancient Ruin determined its danger level, Michael had had a bad feeling about the Temple of the Forgotten. However, being told that he should become a Divine Lifeform before entering the Temple of the Forgotten was a lot different than merely thinking about it. Receiving affirmation was like a fierce slap of reality on his face.

Michael realized too late that Kraft Viton was staring blankly at the piece of paper that landed in his hands. The old man had been too baffled about the Berserker Librarian's words to pay attention to his behavior. He didn't care that it was rude of him to look at Michael's possession.

His eyes widened while staring at the letters, followed by utter confusion replacing his surprise.

Michael retrieved the piece of paper with his expression eerily calm. "It seems like I have to trust you now. You said that we're allies, after all."

His voice was eerily calm as he added, "I decided to trust you once." But his eyes were far from calm. A blazing flame of fury could be seen within them.

Kraft Viton noticed that he made a mistake. He might be older, and stronger than Michael, but his mission in Meku was to ensure that nothing bad would happen to Michael and not to meddle in his affairs in any way.

Locking eyes with Michael, Kraft Viton felt a little bit weird. Michael's last words were a warning, but the gaze was a promise.

'Break my trust, and I will make sure to crush the Bartholomew Corporation, even if that means I have to sell my soul to the Olympus,' Michael's eyes seemed to scream. That was at least what Kraft imagined to hear in his mind as he kept staring into Michael's eyes. It was ominous.

Michael turned away from the old man and focused on the librarian once again.

He might not be able to procure useful information about the language used in the Temple of the Forgotten, but he could take another path to take one step closer to his final goal.

"Does the library sell duplicates of language-related books from other Epochs? Many Awakened should be studying other languages in case they encounter an Ancient Civilization or Ancient Ruins...so you should have some books to sell, or at least to read, right? Can a Warrior buy these books, or do I have to be a Champion to purchase them as well?" Michael asked the Librarian, while storing the piece of paper back into his storage space.

"Records of Ancient Ruin raids are very interesting as well. If you allow me, I would like to study them," He added carefully.

The librarian smiled at Michael. He gave him a thumbs up.

"You're quite interesting, little Lord. I wonder how far you will make it in the Battle Exchange. This year will probably be a lot more interesting than usual," He said before manifesting a holographic screen in front of Michael.

"Usually, you can only purchase books when you're a native Champion, but I'll make an exception for you. Tell me which books you want to read," The librarian said, resulting in a smile appearing on Michael's face.

"The duplicates are in physical form, right?" Michael asked after he threw a glance at the catalog the librarian had manifested in front of him.

"Of course. Otherwise, you wouldn't be able to take them inside the Origin Expanse."

"In that case...I would like to take all of them," Michael said after he saw the list of books that interested him, which was a lot given that he wanted all of them.

Despite the unpleasant news he learned a few minutes ago, Michael was still excited. He was slowly getting somewhere. His pace may be extremely slow, but he made progress. That was already worth quite a bit.

"Yes, of cou—...wait, you said all of them?" The librarian asked, his amiable expression replaced with another deep frown.

No matter how he looked at it, the little human in front of him was always throwing new surprises. It was quite surprising, but also refreshing.

"You do realize that there are more than 1000 language-related books in this catalog, right? You...do realize that I'm not running a charity, and that you will have to pay for them...right?"

"Of course, I will pay," Michael said immediately. However, he realized that he missed out on an important point in his excitement.

Rubbing the back of his head he added, "But can I pay in installment? I might have gone overboard without asking how much I have to pay, in the first place. Well...I don't even have any Tritan Credits either, but I should be able to use items from the Origin Expanse as a replacement for Tritan Credits, or does that not work?"

"You don't even have Tritan Credits? How in the world—..." The Berserker Librarian was slowly losing his nerves. He had a good impression of the little human, but his sudden foolish attitude didn't make any sense. It was irritating, and no Berserker liked to be irritated.

Yet, the librarian wasn't even able to finish his sentence as Michael retrieved a black scroll with a golden seal, and a crimson pill that increased the temperature in the surroundings.

"What's better...Body Strengthening Pills, or Mythic Summoning Scrolls? Or do you want some Energy Nourishing Pills, or maybe a Warrior Enlightenment Potion in exchange?" Michael asked, his eyes gleaming.

At first, he didn't want to reveal so many trump cards. However, the more he talked to the Berserker Librarian, the more obvious it was that the librarian was far from ordinary. Not only was the librarian probably a Tier-6 Lord, but he mentioned the Blood Asura Dungeon as well.

Michael didn't know a lot about dungeons, but he had heard a lot about the Blood Asura Dungeon. The strongest powerhouses of the Tritan Alliance had joined their forces to conquer the Blood Asura Dungeon. Many died within the dungeon. Only the strongest survived, and they continued to grow much stronger in the following years.

No matter how Michael looked at this situation, the Berserker Librarian was far from ordinary. Kraft Viton must have noticed that as well. Thus, Michael chose to reveal some of his trump cards.

Maybe, he could strike a deal with the Berserker race using his new connection with the talkative librarian.

"Who is that kid?" The Berserker Librarian asked Kraft Viton.

It was already rare for participants of the Battle Exchange to have company, and Michael had a powerhouse following him like a shadow.

Despite that, it didn't look like Michael and Kraft were close. In fact, they didn't seem to know much about each other. That was something the Berserker Librarian learned in the conversation of the last few minutes.

But even if that was the case, the librarian couldn't help but repeat his question a second time.

"Who is that kid?"

Chapter 332 Michael, the businessman

After Michael left the library, the librarian was both irritated and curious. Somehow, the little human's questions and requests about Ancient Ruins and old languages had turned into a business deal and a proposal for future exchanges, and he didn't even know how that happened.

It was interesting but he also felt like he had been led around – by someone who wasn't even one-tenth his age at that. That was what irritated the librarian the most.

"Maybe, I've grown too old for this..." He murmured, glancing at the three Body Strengthening Pills, one Warrior Enlightenment Potion, and two Mythic Summoning Scrolls that were lying in his hands.

"...I should send the pills and potion to the laboratory."

\*\*

Michael felt quite good with more than 1000 language-related books resting in his War Rune's storage space. He wasn't in a rush to read, and didn't plan to do so in the first place – not in the conventional way, at least.

Michael would extract Wisps of Knowledge from the 1000 language-related books to consume the knowledge and imprint it in his mind at once. That may burden his mind a little, but it would be a lot more efficient than reading through the books several times to study and understand the content properly.

Even as a Tier-2 Lord with Ceasurium Menta at the 2nd stage, Michael couldn't memorize and comprehend everything he read once. He wasn't even sure if Alice was capable of something like that. She would probably be able to memorize it. But comprehending complex languages after a single read through unfamiliar books wasn't something anyone could do easily – if not for the existence of Extraction.

Michael was satisfied with his encounter with the librarian in Piloq's library. Nonetheless, he was exhausted. The cogs in his brain had been moving on full power way too long. It was about time that he rested a little.

However, Kraft Viton didn't allow that. He stared at Michael for quite a while, numerous questions waiting to escape his lips.

"Why would you exchange Mythic Summoning Scrolls with the Berserker instead of using more Pills and Potions in exchange? The Mythic Summoning Scroll should be a lot more valuable than the Body Strengthening Pill, and the Warrior Enlightenment Potion," Kraft remarked as they walked through Piloq's streets.

Michael glanced to his right, but he didn't say anything. For him, Mythic Summoning Scrolls were actually not that rare. All they required was a lot of corpses that had to be extracted. 10,000 Summoning Scroll Fragments were enough to create a Mythic Summoning Scroll.

Meanwhile, the pills and potions in his possession were more valuable. Michael didn't have a surplus of ingredients yet. In fact, his territory lacked ingredients the most. That was also why he handed over only a handful of pills and only one potion.

But that was not something he wanted to tell Kraft Viton.

"Don't you think it's better to be on the librarian's good side? He is stronger than you, and he helped me even though I am – no, I was – a stranger to him," Michael said instead.

"Is that why you started prioritizing the Berserkers?" Kraft Viton asked, his voice exposing his inner feelings.

"Hmm?" Michael raised an eyebrow and stared straight at the old man, who returned his stare.

"You could have made a deal with the Bartholomew Corporation. Why didn't you do so?" He asked calmly, "Body Strengthening Pills, Mythic Summoning Scrolls, Energy Nourishing Pills, and Warrior Enlightenment Potions. Each of those goods is worth a fortune, and they're in high demand. Every Lord

would run behind you and try their utmost to please you if you could provide them with as many resources as they demand."

Kraft Viton didn't seem to be jealous, or angered by Michael's action. It was the opposite. Michael felt that the old man's curiosity about him grew and that he began to consider Michael a full-fledged adult roughly after they arrived in Piloq.

"Well, it's actually pretty simple," Michael said with a shrug, "I think the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs can give me a lot more in exchange for revealing some of the most valuable goods my territory can procure and produce. The books are far more valuable than the vast majority of books that can be found in the Sapphirelike Military Academy, and I was able to procure more than a thousand of those in exchange for a few pills, a potion, and two scrolls. But that is not everything I obtained, obviously."

The corner of Michael's lip curled up, and the gleam in his eyes grew brighter.

"I made a powerhouse of the Berserker race curious about me. I showed them some goods, which they probably need to ensure that their people grow strong enough to survive in the Origin Expanse, and potentially even retain their Lord Powers. Furthermore, I showed the librarian that I'm not taking advantage of his generosity. I know that he didn't have to sell me the books that I've purchased just now. In fact, it was against the law considering that he said only natives with the status of a Champion or higher are allowed to purchase these books."

Michael's thin smile grew wider the more he spoke, resulting in a vibrant smile as he reached the final conclusion.

"All in all, I landed a great deal, a deal that could become a long-term business venture with the Berserkers – maybe even the Warlock Centaurs once they find out about my goods. By then, I can reap all profits by leveraging my advantage to the max."

Michael had a lot more to say, but he kept a few obvious facts hidden. The Bartholomew Corporation couldn't provide him with the ingredients Michael's Alchemists required to mass produce the pills and potions. Almost no human was capable of doing so given that mankind's major territories were either barren lands, infertile, frozen, or deserts. Growing the rare plants and herbs Michael required to concoct the pills and potions was basically impossible.



He knew the market well enough to say for certain that the Berserkers would be a better partner in that regard. That was something Kraft Viton had to agree to as well.

But that didn't mean he liked it.

Kraft concluded that Michael researched enough about business and socializing. Otherwise, he couldn't explain how Michael made so many valuable connections less than 12 hours after they'd arrived in Piloq. Michael learned a lot in a short amount of time. It was a valuable experience for the young Lord, who seemed to have a much more mature mind than Kraft Viton first presumed.

Interestingly enough, Kraft Viton's analysis of Michael was not entirely correct. He predicted that Michael wanted to obtain cheaper resources such as rare plants and herbs from the Berserkers. However, Michael's plan was the complete opposite.

He didn't really have to pay too much attention to purchasing ingredients since Lilica promised to help him out. She would deal with the Forest Elven Elders to procure a large batch of ingredients from the Forest Elves who had the best environment and knowledge when it came to growing rare plants, and using nature to their advantage.

Lilica could procure a lot more alchemy materials than anyone else.

However, the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs could do something else for him. Their primary spawn locations were near the plains, mountains and savannah regions. They could provide Michael with all kinds of ores, forging recipes, and Named Summoning Scrolls – preferably Blacksmith related.

Michael researched a lot about the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs, and he had heard rumors that some Berserkers were able to procure 2-Star Weaponsmith Summoning Scrolls, and Named Summoning Scrolls of similar nature.

Michael wanted to obtain all of those to expand his Underground Forging Hall, which would increase his production of Armaments. That would result in more profits from exchanges with the Forest Elven Tribe. Once the Forest Elves' goods landed in his possession, Michael could mass produce various pills and potions, equip his people with all kinds of Armaments and resources to grow stronger, AND he could earn a fortune by selling Agriculture-type Blueprints to the Bartholomew Corporation.

Michael's plan was to create an endless cycle of growth with his territory towering in the center, and the thought of having taken a step closer to dealing with the Berserkers excited him a little.

He smiled foolishly at the possibility of striking a special deal with the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs. Potentially, he could even gain their trust in the next few months to have the Berserker race send some of their Awakened to his territory – working as his subordinates to continue dealing with him.

Once the Interdimensional Flag War was over, Michael would have to leave Meku once again. He would return to the Sapphirelake Military Academy, which meant that someone had to follow him in the real world, or the Origin Expanse to keep trading goods with the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs.

Of course, that was something Michael didn't have to worry about...yet. Nonetheless, he was excited and in a good mood.

He may be a little bit tired, but he obtained new contacts and a vast amount of books in exchange for his effort. It had been an eventful day.

And only now did he allow himself to rest a little.

After they returned to the hotel, Michael entered his room for the first time, but he entered the Origin Expanse to sleep in the Wooden Manor rather than wasting his time sleeping in the hotel.

He yawned loudly after he fell on the soft mattress inside his room.

A smile crept up his face, and he fell into a deep slumber with a thought flashing through his mind.

'I wonder what'll happen in the next few days...no, weeks...'

Afterward, darkness embraced him like a long-lost friend, and he fell asleep.

Chapter 333 Honorless

Michael slept much longer than usual so when he woke up he felt energized and ready to rumble.

However, rather than rushing outside, Michael ended up retrieving the books he purchased the day before. He released Extraction and started to extract the Wisps of Knowledge within the books.

The content and knowledge of the books were extracted one by one, slowly but steadily. He was being careful not to tear off the pages which meant that he spent the next four days in the Origin Expanse to extract countless Wisps of Knowledge, which he devoured immediately.

The amount of information and knowledge flooding his mind was mind-numbing, but it was also quite exciting. Michael learned three new languages – written and spoken –, and he could slowly comprehend the connections between the languages. Understanding the origin of the languages he had learned was quite intriguing, and it allowed him to take a small step closer to his final goal. At least, that was what Michael felt. He was certain!

Now that four days passed in the Origin Expanse, Michael could either spend the remaining five days outside the Origin Expanse, or he could make use of the time difference to spend the next ten days in the Origin Expanse. He learned a lot about the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs and felt that he could learn a lot by analyzing their strategies, strengths, and weak points.

Michael was busy refining his body and many other tasks as well.

But then again, he was too excited to stay idle. The last four days had already been rather boring if compared to his exciting fights against Thaor, and the other Berserkers.

"I should visit them," Michael mumbled to himself.

He finished his business in the territory after a long talk with Lilica, who was still negotiating with the Forest Elven Elders. Afterward, he approved the development plans suggested by Opars, Liopham, and Tiara before he left his territory through the Runic Gate.

Michael returned to his cozy hotel room, where he jumped onto his bed to feel more comfortable while reading through the messages he received in the last two days.

For one, Alice had sent him a short message. She asked how he was doing, and what he was up to. Her message was informal, and it made Michael wonder if the Frozen Duchess considered him a friend rather than her disciple, or as one of her students.

Michael didn't feel bad at the thought of being treated as a friend rather than an ordinary student. It was a lot better actually.

He sent her a short reply to answer all of her questions. Then Michael asked her how she was doing, and what exactly she had to do now that they had arrived in Piloq.

His questions were not really important. It was just some nonsense Alice didn't have to answer. Nonetheless, Michael tried to be nice before he moved to the next chat.

[Kraft Viton(Bartholomew): Thanks to you I've been really busy. Message me once you're back from the Origin Expanse, and I'll meet up with you. Even if you want to walk through Piloq alone, give me a heads up. I won't follow you, but it would be better if you tell me where you go. That way, I can rush over if something happens. Prioritize your safety!]

Somehow, the old man sounded like a caring grandfather to him. He never had a grandfather, but Kraft Viton was probably the closest to one. It didn't feel bad either. On the contrary. Michael enjoyed the warmth in his heart.

Other than that, Kaleb, Lincoln, and Zeke messaged him as well. They'd been wondering where he was and if he wanted to challenge some Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs in the arenas.

And then there was Annabelle Claire and the Barbaric Couple asking him how meeting the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs had been, and if they acted just like they'd been described by everyone.

Michael answered their doubts before responding to Kaleb and the rest. He told them that he would go to the arena near the library.

Only then did he see that he received another message from an unknown account.

[Unknown: It's me Thaor. Get your ass up, and come over to the arena. We've been waiting for you for days. Your brethren are mostly arrogant pieces of shit. How about you come over instead? Otherwise, I might actually cripple them before the Battle Exchange starts.]

Michael raised an eyebrow when he saw the message. He didn't know how Thaor got his contact details, but he did. He got up from the bed and sent Thaor a message while leaving his room.

[Michael Fang: Why would I care whether you break their bones, or if you cripple them? If they annoy you, do it. That means less competition for me and more trouble for you.]

Michael closed the starnet messenger once he finished reading through all the messages. Then he moved over to the Ulran Arena, which was where he met Thaor and the others before.

Even if there wasn't any trouble, Michael would have visited Thaor and the others. He had a few doubts about the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs' fighting styles, and he wanted to analyze them a little bit more before the Battle Exchange started. I think you should take a look at

Mekhaz was a Champion, and Thaor was a former Champion. Both were certainly strong enough to compete against students in their 3rd year. Only prodigies such as Killian Zeus, his subordinates, and others with similarly high combat prowess were stronger. However, that was also owed to their highly refined War Rune at the Peak of the 3rd Tier.

"Thaor and Mekhaz are probably not much older than me. I wonder if I'll have to clash with them during the Battle Exchange," Michael mused to himself. He arrived in front of the Ulran Arena and entered.

Michael tensed up the moment he stepped inside the arena. The smell of burned flesh permeated the air, and the murmurs of the people in front of him reached his ears.

"Are all humans that merciless? Where is their honor? Do they even know what honor means?" A Warlock Centaur asked, the anger in his voice apparent.

"Even if these humans are powerful, they don't deserve an ounce of respect. How dare they..." The Berserker standing next to the Warlock Centaur growled, manifesting a huge broadsword as he strode forward.

Michael frowned deeply.

He looked to the combat rings and saw Killian Zeus standing in front of a half-charred body – Thaor's body.

Lightning kept zapping through Thaor's body, continuously burning him. Thaor was struggling to move, attempting his utmost to escape Killian's power, but he was unable to move an inch. Not even his Crimson Aura fused with the Red Giant Soultrait was powerful enough to block the lightning that shot out of Killian's fingers. The lightning bolts were dark purple and they looked deadly.

Michael didn't even have to activate his Eagle Eyes to see the streams of energy that had been channeled into the lightning bolts to further reinforce them.

The healers of the Ulran Arena rushed over to Thaor, but they couldn't start healing the Berserker before Killian stopped releasing his bolts of lightning, otherwise, they may also sustain mortal injuries.

All while the healers tried to talk Killian into making him stop, the young descendant of the Zeus family didn't seem to bother. He was eerily calm as he continued to use his Soultrait to burn Thaor from inside out.

The Berserkers manifested their Weapon Artifacts one after another, which was followed by the Warlock Centaurs, who were doing the same. They were ready to attack Killian with their combined forces if it was necessary.

Mekhaz stepped forward, his expression filled with anger and disgust, "You have no honor, human."

Killian glanced over with a nonchalant expression plastered on his face. He shrugged lightly before responding, "In a life and death battle all that matters is your survival. No matter how miserable your victory may be, your enemy's death and your own survival are the only factors that truly matter."

"This Berserker insulted me with his mere presence, so we sparred a little. How was I supposed to know that 'spars' are amateurish battles in this place? I thought Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs were races

raised in War, ready to shed their blood and sacrifice their lives on the battlefield. Do you think it makes sense to spare him if he is too prideful to surrender on his own? As long as he surrenders, I will stop."

Michael couldn't find fault with Killian's words or actions, not completely. However, Killian acted like a hypocrite by saying that he would stop once Thaor surrendered. It was not possible for Thaor to surrender in his current position, after all.

Killian smiled vibrantly at Mekhaz. He then pointed at one of his subordinates that Michael recognized as Peter Gramm, the 3rd Star of the Sapphirelake Military Academy's 4th year.

"Defeat my friend over there, and I will forgive this idiotic Berserker. Lose, and you will end just like him," He said to Mekhaz, whose expression contorted.

His anger and disgust were increasingly hard to control. Thus, Mekhaz didn't even try to fight against his natural wild instincts. He accepted the fight and entered the combat ring, summoning his Artifact to fight.

Michael watched as everything unfolded right in front of him. He was a little overwhelmed but felt like he had to do something.

But he was too weak to restrain Killian, and he couldn't fight in Mekhaz's stead either – also because he was too weak.

All Michael could do was watch...for now.

He crept around the arena, a plan forming in his head.

'A little suicidal, but feasible...probably.'

Chapter 334 Nutcase

The battle between Peter Gramm and Mekhaz began soon after they entered the combat ring.

Mekhaz summoned a highly flexible metal armor that encased his entire body. It looked like a single piece of metal was constantly moving, adjusting itself to fit the Warlock Centaur perfectly like a second skin.

Peter Gramm frowned when he saw the armor. It was clearly Mekhaz's Soultrait.

He exerted his own Soultrait following Mekhaz, and manifested a huge mace that weighed heavily in his hands. The mace was black, and intertwined with crimson lines that resembled veins. The crimson veins connected to the crimson thorns that protruded all over the mace.

Peter Gramm channeled some energy into the heavy mace, thus decreasing the weight in his hands considerably. He issued rapid strikes and moved slowly toward the Warlock Centaur, who had yet to initiate an attack.

Once Peter Gramm was in Mekhaz's proximity, the Warlock Centaur made a sudden move. He shot forward, manifesting a three-meter-long spear in his hands.

The spear whirled around Mekhaz before he thrust out with deadly precision. Peter twisted his body and lifted the mace to block the attack. He altered the spear thrust's direction ever so slightly. It was just enough to evade the spear blade by a few centimeters. His body inched closer to Mekhaz after the attack, and using the tiny gap in his opponent's defense, Peter Gramm attacked.

His mace smashed heavily onto Mekhaz's chest, causing ripples all over the Warlock Centaur's Living Armor. Peter expected Mekhaz to try to avoid the attack, yet the Warlock Centaur didn't even budge. He wasn't forced to retreat nor did he show any response to the mace's heavy impact.

No Tier-3 Lord had been able to block Peter's attacks that easily. His Mace of Destruction was one of the most destructive weapons he had ever seen. No armor ought to be able to block his attacks. Not even the armors manifested through manifestation-type Soultraits!

However, Mekhaz's Living Armor was different. Living Armor was a Soultrait that absorbed a considerable amount of force of impact, both physical and elemental. The remaining force would be spread through the Living Armor – distributed evenly across the body once it was released, thereby decreasing the injuries one would sustain.



Blunt attacks could numb Mekhaz, but killing him with brute force was near-impossible, not as long as his Living Armor was intact!

That was something Peter Gramm noticed after his first attack impacted on his opponent. Mekhaz continued to move without showing any signs of disturbance. Not even his rhythm was disrupted. It was almost as if he allowed Peter's mace to impact rather than Peter tricking Mekhaz into landing the first blow.

Michael noticed the same from outside the combat ring. He was currently moving around the combat ring to slowly advance toward Killian Zeus, who had never stopped using his Soultrait to charge Thaor's half-charred body. Michael was not too sure how much longer Thaor would be able to endure Killian's attacks, but it didn't look good. That was certain.

Michael moved slowly to prevent attracting any attention. He had long since activated Eagle Eyes to keep a watch on the other human prodigies standing near Killian, and the battlefield. Once the battle between Peter and Mekhaz ended, the situation in the Ulran Arena would change once again.

Michael had to help Thaor before that. He didn't want the tension to escalate. After all, it was already bad enough that the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs of the Ulran Arena never retracted their Artifacts. Their weapons were still sitting tightly in their hands, ready to be used at any moment.

The Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs' opinions of the humans they'd encountered didn't seem to be great. Michael was probably the only reason why they would hold back. Differentiating their opponents once their anger and wrath were unleashed wasn't that easy, especially not since most humans looked quite similar in the eyes of the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs.

The humans were small and looked frail. It was not as if some of them had three arms or two sets of legs to be able to tell one from the other. Only their skin and hair color seemed a little different.

Michael hoped that the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs could be a little bit more patient, just a little while longer.

As Michael continued to move around the combat ring, the battle in the combat ring intensified.

Mekhaz moved nimbly within the combat ring all while slashing and thrusting his spear toward Peter Gramm. Peter was forced to retreat as he was unable to keep up with the Warlock Centaur's nimble movements and fierce blows.

Peter's eyes narrowed as he realized that Mekhaz was a heavily armed cavalry unit with great movement speed and tremendous physical strength, not just a mighty beast. He knew that the Warlock Centaurs were powerful, but he didn't expect to be overpowered in a challenge of brute force. His Soultrait was the essence of destruction, and his physical strength had been increased to the peak. All of his Artifacts enhanced his physical strength and endurance. Even his Soultrait reinforced his constitution on top of his body's refinement.

Until now, Peter Gramm had been confident to fight the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs in a head-on battle even without his Mace of Destruction. Unfortunately, that didn't seem to be the case.

Or his opponent was just too strong – an anomaly amid his ordinary kind that he had the misfortune of sparring. Taking a deep breath, Peter Gramm's lower arm began to glow. The glow encased the Mace of Destruction's handle, influencing the manifested weapon considerably.

The glow dimmed a few seconds later, revealing the Mace of Destruction fused with Peter Gramm's lower arm. His lower arm and Soultrait had fused, resulting in a massive increase in Peter's strength. Crimson red veins shot up toward Peter's upper arm, tightening around it with a vice like grip. Peter released a muffled groan in response. I think you should take a look at

Mekhaz witnessed all of this, but he didn't stop the fight. On the contrary, his attacks accelerated. He inflicted several cuts all over Peter's arms and legs, pushing the human Lord backward – until Peter gained full control of the power he gained after fusing with the Mace of Destruction.

The moment the intensity of the battle increased, Michael figured that he didn't have much time left. His steps accelerated and he appeared amid the group of Killian's subordinates.

They were fully focused and didn't even notice Michael as he had concealed his energy fluctuations as much as possible. Killian and his subordinates paid attention to the combat ring and noticed Michael only after it was already too late.

Michael appeared next to Killian Zeus seemingly out of nowhere. He took a deep breath and used the Power of Enhancement that had been stored inside the Legendary Ring Artifact to empower Extraction as he unleashed his full power.

A Dome of Extraction burst forth from Michael's body. It expanded rapidly, shrouding Killian Zeus and Thaor entirely. Michael stopped expanding the Dome of Extraction once everyone he wished to target had been engulfed. He extracted all the origin energy permeating the air to further empower the Dome of Extraction.

Following that, Michael focused on the origin energy channeled into the bolts of lightning and lightning currents all around and within Thaor. The energy he extracted ended up inside Michael's body, where he annexed the altered origin energy. The lightning energy tingled quite a bit, but Michael ignored the sensation. He continued annexing and extracting the origin energy within the lightning bolts, ignoring everything that happened around and within him.

Thus, Michael didn't even realize that the tingling sensation of the lightning energy was stimulating him. It allowed him to annex the energy faster, which was quite helpful as it allowed him to obliterate the lightning currents spreading through Thaor before he was punched in the face.

Michael slumped to the ground, his jaw hurting like hell. He looked up, just to see Killian's furious face. His face was red in anger as he towered in front of him, bolts of lightning manifesting in his palm.

"Don't touch my lightning, you fucking peasant!!!" He roared, but Michael was neither shocked nor scared. There was a vibrant smile blossoming on Michael's face.

"Since the day I met you, I realized that you were a nutcase. You see...I am pretty good at figuring out people. And you...you are a piece of shit, but that is not something I have to tell you, right?" Michael responded, still smiling brightly.

His focus never left the Dome of Extraction that had finished extracting the lightning currents all around Thaor. This allowed the healers to rush over and move Thaor aside while simultaneously casting numerous healing Soultraits to tend to the Berserker's wounds.

Killian Zeus frowned deeply when he saw what the healers did, but he turned back to Michael, his face overflowing with wrath.

The bolts of lightning had shrouded Killian's entire arm by now. Michael knew that he couldn't avoid fighting Killian, but that was suicidal. He was ready to use the entire energy he had annexed in the last few seconds to create a humongous Glacicle before he would run away.

However, that didn't seem to be necessary as Michael perceived something from behind him.

But before he could make sense of it the next moment heavy pressure descended all over the Ulran Arena. The lightning crackling alongside Killian's arms dispersed, and both the Mace of Destruction and the Living Armor dissipated.

Killian paled and slumped to the ground. He was having a hard time breathing, all while Michael didn't sense much.

The heavy pressure didn't affect him. It was not directed at him, after all.

Michael turned around, just to see that someone had appeared at the entrance of the Ulran Arena.

The moment Michael saw the figure, he frowned deeply. Simultaneously, the Berserkers kneeled onto the ground while the Warlock Centaurs bowed deeply.

"Chieftain!!" They shouted in unison.

Meanwhile, Michael's frown deepened.

This someone at the entrance of the arena – the Chieftain they were bowing to – was someone Michael was quite familiar with.

It was the Librarian.

Chapter 335 Chieftain

The tense situation in the Ulran Arena was solved rather easily at the end of the day.

The Chieftain of the Berserker race appeared in the arena, and intervened before anything bad could happen. He merely released his pressure to restrict the humans and end the battle between Mekhaz and Peter Gramm.

"You must be the descendant of Zeus," The Chieftain, also known as Librarian by Michael, addressed Killian without a change in his expression.

The Chieftain was eerily calm, and it was impossible to read his train of thoughts from his face.

"That's me," Killian responded while taking deep breaths.

The Chieftain's presence still weighed heavily on Killian, restraining his movements drastically.

"Leave the arena and stay in the hotel until the Battle Exchange starts," The Chieftain ordered in a calm yet commanding voice.

Killian wanted to say something but speaking took a whole lot of effort right now. His mind had trouble gathering his thoughts and blood trickled onto the ground from his nose. But he was still faring well when compared to his subordinates who had collapsed onto the ground, bleeding from their ears, nose and eyes.

"We will leave... Just retract your presence..." Killian agreed reluctantly. The anger surging through his mind was like a blazing inferno but he forcefully swallowed all of it. Facing the Chieftain was not something Killian was capable of...not yet at least.

The pressure encasing the Ulran Arena dispersed, releasing Killian and his group at last. Killian got up from the ground. He glared at Michael since he was unable to unleash his anger toward the Chieftain. But he didn't do anything. Instead, a smile crept up on his lips.

"Beg for mercy! Plead that you won't face me or my people during the Battle Exchange, otherwise, you'll be shipped back crippled, and in a cage, like the rat you are," He cursed.

Michael raised an eyebrow, but he didn't feel like lowering his strength and holding himself back to be on par with Killian Zeus. Michael merely smiled without saying a word.

Killian and his group got up from the ground and left the Ulran Arena, not daring to look at the Chieftain as they passed by next to him.

'Is that how strong I have to become before others stop looking down at me?' Michael wondered seeing how easily the Berserker Chieftain suppressed some of the descendants of mankind's strongest families.

Killian and the others were still young, and they would grow rapidly in the next few years, but they were still descendants of powerful and highly influential families. Suppressing them as easily as the Berserker Chieftain was something Michael could only dream about with his current strength.

The Chieftain retrieved a small book. He turned a few pages and wrote down something before he glanced over to Thaor. As his gaze moved past Michael he halted in his tracks. A trace of surprise gleamed in his eyes.

"I think you should return as well," He said.

Michael didn't react immediately. Was he just imagining it, or was the Chieftain disappointed? Well, Michael was disappointed as well. He couldn't really deny that. But weren't fights between the strongest Awakened of the younger generation quite normal? Everyone thought that they were the strongest, only to end up facing someone, who had a natural advantage against you.

Fights were normal. Unfortunately, the way Killian Zeus handled the situation did not mean it was a normal fight anymore. It was a clear provocation and a warning for all Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs.

That was what disappointed the Chieftain.

After understanding the situation, Michael nodded his head. He looked back to take a look at Thaor, whose body had been fully regenerated. Thaor was still a little dizzy and affected by the aftermath of high voltage lightning currents coursing through his body for several minutes, but he would survive and heal without any permanent damage.

Michael took the stairs that led to the entrance and was just about to leave when Mekhaz's voice rang through the arena.

"If I may say something, Chieftain..." Mekhaz began, barely waiting until the Chieftain looked over to him before he continued, "I hope you can let Michael train with us."

Some Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs standing near Michael nodded their heads in unison. Thaor spoke up as well, "I agree with Mekhaz."

The Chieftain was a little surprised. He didn't expect someone to speak up for Michael.

In the first place, he was unsure what Michael was doing in the Ulan Arena with the descendants of the Zeus family. He met Michael in the library two days ago, and their interaction gave him some understanding of Michael's personality. It was hard to imagine Michael working together with someone like Killian Zeus and his subordinates. Their personalities would clash way too often.

Nonetheless, the Chieftain put aside his personal opinion of Michael and turned to Mekhaz. He had yet to gain a full understanding of the situation.

"Why do you want Michael to stay? I expected you wouldn't want to have another human near you after this...encounter," The Chieftain said, intentionally stressing the words 'human' and 'encounter'.

"Michael is a good guy. We met him earlier, and he earned my respect," Mekhaz started, only for Thaor to interrupt, "I fought Michael, and I respect him as well. He is not like this lightning freak."

Mekhaz frowned at Thaor for interrupting him, but he nodded toward the Chieftain before he continued.

"Most of us have Soultraits, which are closely tied to physical boosts, power enhancement, aura creation, and armament manifestation. We don't have anyone with mental attacks, nor many Awakened with Elemental-type Soultraits. Michael, on the other hand, has everything. We need him, otherwise, we will have a hard time finding our problems, adjusting to our weaknesses, and fixing our problems before the Battle Exchange starts."

"Fighting Peter Gramm wasn't too much of a problem. Defeating him would be a little bit annoying, but it's not impossible. As long as I use my secret technique, I could defeat him. However, this Killian Zeus and his bolts of lightning are different. My Living Armor can weaken them, but the bolts of lightning can easily pierce through my armor, rendering most of our defenses useless. His Soultraits and combat style is...different than ours."

"And this young human can help you fix your problems?" The Chieftain asked, only for Michael to add another question aimed at Mekhaz.

"How do you know that I have a Soultrait that affects your mind?"

He didn't really try to hide Spirit Whip, but Michael couldn't recall having used Spirit Whip on Thaor or anyone else in the Ulran Arena.

Mekhaz looked at him, just to smile without saying a single word to explain himself. Michael pressed his lips together, trying to suppress a sigh.

'Did I just expose myself, or did he already know?'

Meanwhile, Thaor nodded grimly at the Chieftain's questions. Even the other Berserkers, and Warlock Centaurs who had witnessed Michael's battle against Thaor nodded in agreement.

If anyone could help them learn more about long-range Soultraits and Elemental Soultraits, it was Michael. He might not be a Tier-3 Lord, but he had enough Soultraits to switch between various combat styles. It was hard to find someone like Michael, let alone convince him to help out. After all, many races considered each other rivals even if they were in the same Alliance. Some sort of competition existed everywhere.

Fortunately enough, Michael didn't really care about mundane things such as competition between allies. Having a rival and friendly competition was nice, but he wouldn't go as far as hating the others for competing with one another.

Seeing how everyone agreed to train with Michael, the Chieftain couldn't hide his surprise. He had researched Michael a little before but hadn't been interested enough to start a thorough investigation.



Michael was just a young Awakened of the human race, and not worth more of his attention. Even the goods in Michael's possession hadn't been enough to pique the Chieftain's interest. He was busy enough with his work in the library, and the preparations for the Battle Exchange.

However, now that he saw dozens of Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs show their respect toward Michael his opinion changed considerably. It was not difficult for human Fletchlings to attain the status of a Warrior. But the same couldn't be said about earning the respect of a Champion, a former Champion, and dozens of Warriors. That was a lot different.

The Chieftain grew more curious and he made a mental note to request Michael's data from the Sapphirelake Military Academy.

Michael noticed the subtle change in the Chieftain's expression and quickly interfered.

"I would like to learn more about the physical traits and instinctive-based fighting styles of the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs. It should help me a lot for the Battle Exchange, and in future encounters against races with similar traits – whether it is during the Flag War, or in the Origin Expanse. By helping Mekhaz and Thaor I will gain a lot as well. It's a fair exchange."

"You will encounter all kinds of enemies in the Flag War. Tekur is a neutral race that can awaken all kinds of Soultraits. Once their War Rune manifests and their Soultrait is awakened, they focus their whole attention on building a foundation around their Soultraits. But that is obvious since that makes them even stronger and more dangerous. After all, their techniques are on a different level than ours. The Interdimensional Flag War is merely a playground for the youngest generation to gain some combat experience. They won't even send their prodigies since the Flag War is of no interest to them," The Chieftain explained, providing Michael with some pieces of information he didn't know beforehand.

Looking at the Berseker, whom he had first gotten to know in the library, Michael felt that the librarian's attitude had changed once again. From being overly talkative in the library to trying to contain his anger, only to revert back to his talkative self, he kept seeing varying types of behavior. Nonetheless, something was different.

Was it curiosity that Michael sensed? He was not too sure.

"In that case, do whatever you want. Just don't stir any trouble. I don't want more issues before the Battle Exchange starts," The Chieftain remarked before he left without saying another word.

He disappeared just as suddenly as he had appeared. Michael couldn't even thank the Chieftain for separating Killian and his group from the rest and not letting the dispute escalate.

After the Chieftain left, Michael and the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs started to train.

The following five days passed in the blink of an eye. Michael barely got any sleep. He was either in the Ulran Arena to train, or he rested and tried to comprehend the language he had learned by resting a few minutes in the Origin Expanse. Then he practiced his body refinement technique, improved his mastery of the energy absorption technique, and kept progressing in his mind refinement degree.

Sparring with the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs helped him a lot to improve rapidly. Not only did he gain a better understanding of the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs but he also understood their racial traits, their strong points, and weaknesses.

Last but not least, Michael gained the most by being under heavy pressure fighting the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs. The pressure allowed him to breakthrough and increase his proficiency with his Soultraits.

Within five days, Michael grew a lot stronger.

He felt that he was slowly improving himself and getting ready for the Battle Exchange.

No, he was definitely ready for the Battle Exchange!

Chapter 336 Start

At last, the day of the Battle Exchange's start arrived.

The strongest Awakened of the Tritan Alliance's youngest generation would face each other in various disciplines for the next 30 days. The annual event was held to allow the Tritan Alliance to grow closer and learn more about each other. At the end of the Battle Exchange, the strongest members of the

Tritan Alliance would be picked to spend two months of time training together to participate in the Interdimensional Flag War together.

The Tekur race's influence in the Lumina Stellar System wasn't that high yet. However, their influence expanded slowly. It was about time to close the Lesser Dimension Gate.

Everyone participating in the Battle Exchange knew about the importance of the event, but not everyone joined the Battle Exchange with the same goal in mind. Some were more interested in establishing a strong network with the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs while others were more interested in crushing their allies' confidence.

They wanted to establish dominance and instill a bit of dread in the hearts of the youngest generation of Awakened to assert their race's superiority over others.

Michael thought that something like this was stupid, but he saw it happen quite often in the last few days. In the five days he spent training in the Ulran Arena, Michael saw eight groups of humans barge into the Arena with the intention to humiliate the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs.

Of course, there were also pleasant encounters with other human Awakened, but they could be counted on his fingers. It was quite disappointing. Michael could clearly see how the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs grew more distrustful of the human Awakened after every unpleasant encounter. If not for Michael training with them, pointing out their weaknesses, and giving his utmost to guide them, the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs might have ended up considering every human Awakened as distrustful, and honorless.

Even though most encounters with human groups were rather unpleasant, the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs learned a lot fighting them. The war-loving races were quick learners, allowing them to defeat some of the most annoying brats from the human race. Other than that, Michael asked Lincoln, Zeke, and Kaleb to come over to train as well.

They were busy with their own stuff, but they came over one day to spar with Michael, the Berserkers, and Warlock Centaurs.

On the day of the Battle Exchange, Michael met up with the three descendants to then walk towards the underground arena. The underground arena had been closed until today for the authorities to prepare everything needed for the Battle Exchange.

It was a humongous underground Colosseum that could easily fit tens of thousands of spectators. A total of 25 combat rings were installed in the center of the arena, ready for the 4500 participants of the Battle Exchange to be used.

Despite the small number of combat rings, Michael was quite pleasantly surprised. The underground Colosseum was humongous. It looked majestic, and almost like it had been carved out of a single piece of stone. There was not a single gap that indicated how many bricks had been used to construct the humongous structure. This piqued Michael's curiosity. However, even more so did the dense origin energy permeating every inch of the underground Colosseum.

No other arena in Piloq released as much origin energy as the underground Colosseum. It was the perfect place to train tirelessly for tens of hours, and to fight without the need to hold back.

Once Michael and the others arrived in the Colosseum, they searched for a place to sit down. They arrived a bit early, but there were already hundreds of participants occupying the first two rows. Some were chatting lightly with each other, while other groups were visibly worried about the Battle Exchange and their performance.

Thaor, Mekhaz and a few other Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs, who Michael got to know in the hardcore training of the last few days, were already seated as well. They motioned to Michael to come over. There was enough space behind Mekhaz and Thaor for others to sit, so they did just that.

"Urgh..." Kaleb cursed the moment he sat down. He looked ahead, only to realize that his sight of the combat rings was blocked by a massive red wall of muscles.

"How am I supposed to see anything?" Kaleb asked quietly, looking over to Michael who began to grin.

"Thaor, how about switching seats with us? We can hardly see anything but your back," Michael asked loud enough for Thaor to hear. He turned around and saw the small group of four little humans fully engulfed in the shadow of his back.

He didn't stand up. Instead, he scoffed and motioned to the Berserker seated in the first row. Thaor said something to the Berserker, who turned around. An expression of displeasure appeared on the Berserker's face but he got up nonetheless. Thaor turned back and pointed at the empty seat in the first row.

"You guys won't see much if you don't sit in the first row. Jugh is more than willing to switch places with you and your friends," Thaor said, ignoring the growling Berserker in front of him.

Michael nodded and got up. He walked over to the first row and sat down. Kaleb and the others followed him and sat down as well.

"This will be interesting," Zeke mumbled in a low voice, making his friends raise an eyebrow.

"I don't think anyone except Michael spent enough time with the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs to get on friendly terms with them. I don't think any Berserker or Warlock Centaur would be willing to switch places with the Awakened who annoyed and humiliated them before," Zeke explained when he noticed that his friends' attention didn't move back to the center of the arena.

"You think fights will break out even before the Battle Exchange starts? Because of seats?" Michael asked, which Zeke reaffirmed with a simple nod.

He pointed to their right side where three Berserkers and two Warlock Centaurs were in a heated discussion with a group of humans, who were forced to sit behind the huge Awakened – where they couldn't see anything but broad backs covered in well-trained muscles.

The Berserkers' eyes were already bloodshot, and the Warlock Centaurs looked like they were about to grasp the leader of the human group to squash it at once. Meanwhile, the group of humans was totally unbothered by that. They continued to shout at the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs in front of them, voicing out complaints, insults, and worse.

"They're clearly trying to provoke the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs," Kaleb cursed silently, and the others agreed.

Even Thaor and Mekhaz took note of the issue, a frown forming on their faces.

"They hope that the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs would attack. Once one party attacks another, Party A will be held accountable for anything that happens. First of all, it is forbidden to fight in the spectator area of the Underground Colosseum. Second, the Battle Exchange explicitly forbids fights in public areas. No innocent citizens shall be wounded. Third, Party B is allowed to fight back with full power – which means that they won't be punished even if they kill Party A," Mekhaz explained with a deep sigh.

"Usually this rule applies to Berserkers because they're considered short-tempered and prone to violence. But...it never happened that human Awakened provoked Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs that openly. This is not like it was last year," Thaor added, openly acknowledging his race's flaws.

Fortunately, a group of humans, Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs appeared in the center of the arena before unpleasanties in the spectator area turned into serious issues.

"Welcome to the Underground Colosseum. My name is Palika Mervenham, and I'm the Berserkers' Chieftain, " A familiar voice resounded in the Colosseum, silencing everyone with two simple sentences.

"Next to me is Silvana Zentur, the War Priestess of the Warlock Centaur race, and Franklin Wolfheart, the Dean of the Octagon Council of the Big Five Universities, and the Great Three Academies," Palika Mervenham introduced the War Priestess standing next to him, and the Octagon Council's dean, who stood in front of the small group of humans.

Eight humans, probably each representing one of the Great Academies and Big Universities, stood behind the dean. On the other hand, there was also Alice Zenovia and Oliver Zeus standing a bit farther from the group. They weren't introduced nor was any attention paid to them.

'Is that what happens when you're new to the Battle Exchange?' Michael wondered, not sure whether he should like what he saw or not. The whole situation was a lot more complicated than he initially thought.

He found out recently that the Sapphirelake Military Academy was rather new to the Battle Exchange. They had yet to earn some reputation during the Battle Exchange, and the Interdimensional Flag War, which was probably why the Berserker Chieftain didn't even introduce them to everyone.

The Sapphirelake Military Academy was not yet acknowledged by the Tritan Alliance. Fortunately, that would change soon enough.

"I am not the type of person who likes talking a lot. Rather than talking too much, I love to let my actions speak up for me. That's why I won't say much before we get started. Several messages should have been forwarded to everyone at this point. The Battle Exchange's rules have been noted down neatly. Read through them to understand what you're allowed to do, and what's forbidden. Breaking the rules will result in a severe punishment," Palika said, contradicting himself immediately.

Michael rolled his eyes when he heard that the Chieftain was not talkative. He clearly recalled how much the Chieftain spoke when they first met in the library.

"The Battle Exchange can be summarized rather simply. There are a total of five disciplines that will be tested in the next 30 days. Each discipline has a total of 200 open slots with special rewards such as Summoning Scrolls, Unique Artifacts, and the participation token for the Interdimensional Flag War. That means the top 200 of the respective disciplines will participate in the Interdimensional Flag War to represent the Tritan Alliance," The Chieftain explained with a smile on his face.

As Palika took a deep breath, the War Priestess continued to talk about the Battle Exchange.

"It is possible to participate in all disciplines. Of course, that also means you can procure a total of five Flag War Tokens. Each Flag War Token represents one participant in the Flag War. Therefore, if you procure five Tokens, you can keep one for yourself and distribute the rest however you'd like to distribute them. You can also trade the Tokens or simply sell them," The War Priestess explained, only for her expression to turn ice-cold as she added,

"But you can also lose your Tokens. Everyone with more than one Flag War Token can be challenged indiscriminately as long as the other party offers something of similar value in exchange."

As the War Priestess' words resounded through the arena, the Dean of the Octagon Council murmured quietly.

"Or you just steal the Tokens of other people."

As the dean's voice rang through the Colosseum, everyone and everything turned eerily silent for a few seconds.

Then some human Awakened began to smile brightly, while the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs looked at the dean in disgust. As honorable Warriors, thievery was one of the worst sins they could imagine.

Yet, the Chieftain and the War Priestess didn't say anything about the Dean's words. On the contrary, they seemed to agree.

This was enough reason for Michael to open the holographic screen of the crystal watch where a few notifications popped up.

He opened the Battle Exchange Rules Guide the moment he found the message and started to read through it.

A few minutes later, his expression was distorted and he began to curse.

"The Battle Exchange will be a fucking mess..."

Chapter 337 Ominous Rules

The speech of the representative took much longer than anyone expected. Everyone wanted to say something, resulting in a drastic loss of interest from the spectator area.

Instead of focusing on the representatives speaking about the Battle Exchange, how important it is for the Tritan Alliance to remove the threat of the Tekur race, and that teamwork was essential, most humans ended up opening their crystal watch's screen to read through the Battle Exchange Rules Guide.

After they heard what the dean said about stealing the Flag War Tokens, everyone was interested to know if it was truly allowed to steal the Tokens, or if the dean blurted out thoughts aloud without thinking.



Only the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs kept paying attention to their leaders' speeches.

Michael was quite surprised about the guide's structure. It was comprehensive and quite easy to understand. The Chieftain did a great job summarizing everything without leaving out any important piece of information.

Unfortunately, that didn't really make it better. The rules of the Battle Exchange were clear – or was it better to say that the lack of rules was clear? Michael was baffled when he saw the short list of rules for the Battle Exchange.

They could be summarized quite easily as well.

1– No fighting in public, and no murder.

2–Accidents can happen, but you have to call a healer the moment you injure someone.

3–Fighting in the other arenas is allowed, and will be counted into your ranking as long as a neutral witness was present. Nonetheless, it is preferred that you either fight in the Underground Colosseum or record the battle if no trusted neutral witness is present.

4–If you lose your Flag War Token you can only blame yourself for being too weak to keep it. How did you even make it into the top 200 if you cannot even protect a Token?

5– All Flag War Tokens in your possession have to be affixed to your clothes.

6– Hiding in the Origin Expanse, or hotel room is not allowed.

7– There are a total of 200 permanent Flag War Tokens for Support and Healing-type Soultraits. You don't want to die during the Flag War, and be strong enough to face the Tekur head-on? If that's the case, leave the Awakened with Support and Healing-type Soultraits alone!

The rules didn't encourage stealing, but they stated indirectly that thievery was allowed. It was...interesting. Until now, Michael had been curious as to why the Battle Exchange would last an entire month. But now everything made sense.

In the next five days, the five disciplines of the Battle Exchange would be held. The 1000 Flag War Tokens would be distributed, leaving 25 days to challenge Token holders, or to steal them.

The Token holders would have to focus on protecting their tokens until the end of the month while the other participants would have to give their utmost to get hold of a token.

Once the Battle Exchange ended after 30 days, only the Token holders – the participants of the Flag War – would remain in Piloq. The remaining participants would be sent back to their academies and universities. In the following two months, a hellish training would be initiated – supported by a vast amount of resources provided by the combined efforts of the Tritan Alliance.

The ranking of your Flag War Token would determine the amount of resources allocated to the respective Awakened, meaning that it was essential to have a Token with a lower number.

Therefore, the competition between Token Holders would be fierce as well. Especially since the difference in allocated resources between a single rank was likely to be ginormous. After all, the Tritan Alliance wished to close the Lesser Dimension Gate as soon as possible – preferably during this year's Flag War.

The amount of resources invested in this year's Battle Exchange was several times higher than before. This was also mentioned in the guide – probably a means to fuel every participant with more motivation and make them strive for a better ranking.

The guide also mentioned that the rewards handed out to the top 200 of every discipline would be worth fighting for. Michael noticed the particular way some sentences were left ambiguous while others were written with great detail, giving precise information about the gains one could make by attaining a high ranking at the end of the Battle Exchange.

It was written in a way that made everyone – including Michael – immensely interested in reaching the top 200 in all disciplines.

However, even then, Michael wouldn't participate in all disciplines. That would not only be extremely stressful, but it was also nonsensical because Michael was not strong enough to enter the top 200 in certain disciplines. I think you should take a look at

He might have many Soultraits, but he was still a Tier-2 Lord. Trying to reach the Top 200 in the Solo Combat discipline meant that he would have to be among the top 200 among 4500 participants – with more than 1000 being Tier-3 Lords with Inheritance techniques.

Michael didn't want to use up his strength early in the Battle Exchange, not if the Battle Exchange allowed him to fight strategically and take someone else's Flag War Token in the next four weeks. He had to fight strategically to make most use of the Battle Exchange, and its 'unique' rules.

"Solo Combat, Duo Combat, Team Combat, Survival of the Fittest, and Support Assessment. All of that seems quite important for the Flag War," Kaleb mumbled when he reached the section related to the five disciplines of the Battle Exchange.

"They want the cream of the crop in terms of Individual combat prowess, teamwork, strategic warfare, survivalists, and supporters. That makes sense," Michael replied with a shrug.

He figured that his individual combat prowess was still not up to the mark. His strength increased considerably, but there were many young prodigies at the Peak of the 3rd Tier with Inheritance techniques and powerful Soultraits. Killian and his group of annoying brats were just one of more than a dozen groups.

The Sun and 12 Stars of the 4th year in all Academies and Universities were Mid Tier-3 Awakened at the very least. Their combat prowess was likely to be above their rank as well. And this excluded the powerful Warriors of the Berserker race and Warlock Centaur race. Thus, Michael wouldn't be able to deal with them. He made a mental note to avoid the Solo Combat discipline.

The Duo Combat discipline was similar in that regard. Michael fought alongside Kaleb a little, but they were both only 1st year students, who had little to no teamwork experience. The opposite was the case for many 3rd and 4th year students. Overpowering 4th year students with their powerful Soultraits may be possible, but it was unlikely to produce a pleasant result.

Last but not least, Michael scratched out the Support Assessment as well. He had Eagle Eyes, which could be used to support himself, but it was not exactly a Soultrait that supported others.

Thus, Michael was only left with three options. Either, he created a team with others for the Team Combat discipline, or he tried his best in the Survival of the Fittest discipline.

"The Duo and Team discipline reward only a single Token. That means only one in the Duo ranking will receive a Token while the other Awakened has to obtain their Token through other means," Zeke noticed.

"Why would you even participate in the Team discipline then? A team of five is supposed to give the Flag War token to a single person? What nonsense is that?" Kaleb grumbled, but both Zeke and Michael shook their heads simultaneously.

"It's much easier to enter the top 200 in the Team Discipline. The Battle Exchange has 4500 members, which can create at most 900 teams of 5 members. There will probably be less teams because not everyone will have enough time to spare for the Team Discipline. Four victories are probably enough to enter the top 200, which rewards one Token, and a considerable amount of resources to train for the next few weeks," Zeke said, to which Michael added,

"The resources obtained in the Team Discipline can be used to grow stronger rapidly, which will then allow you to challenge Token Holders to obtain your own Token. That's also why I'll probably focus on the Team Discipline. If my team can reach a high rank in the Team Discipline, we'll obtain more resources which I can then use to train in the Origin Expanse."

Lincoln and Zeke looked over to Michael when they heard 'my team'. However, Kaleb was the first to say something.

"Do you already have a team? Did you just include me and the others in your team on a whim, or did you already plan something?" He asked but Zeke interrupted him.

"I will probably focus on the Duo Discipline with Lincoln, and the Support Assessment. Lincoln will obtain the Token obtained from Duo Combat, and I will definitely enter the top 100 in the Support Assessment. We won't participate in the Team Combat Discipline."

Michael fully agreed with Zeke's reasoning. Zeke's Eye of Illusion was an exceptionally powerful Soultrait. If used properly mid-battle, it would most definitely change the tide of the battle. Just like Zeke said, he would definitely enter the top 200 ranking in the Support Assessment.

Lincoln and Zeke were childhood friends. They knew each other better than anyone else. Their combat experience as a pair was extraordinary because of their years of experience fighting and training side-by-side. Thus, Michael was also confident in the duo's chances to enter the top 200 in the Duo Combat discipline.

But that was something Michael had already taken into consideration.

"Do you have someone else to team up with?" Michael asked Kaleb with a small grin on his face.

Kaleb just shook his head, which was enough for Michael to turn around to Thaor and Mekhaz.

"How about you guys? Ready to team up with us?"

#### Chapter 338 Siblings

Five days training had been more than enough for Michael to determine Mekhaz and Thaor's combat prowess, their weaknesses and their most exceptional advantages.

Combining the two frontline fighters, who had exceptional endurance and useful physical Soultraits, with Kaleb's Frozen Nova, and Michael's great versatility, they would have good chances of overpowering other teams. All they missed was one more member – preferably an Awakened with a Support-type Soultrait, or maybe even a healer.

Kaleb was great at controlling the surroundings with his Soultrait, and he could inflict a considerable amount of damage as well. Michael, on the other hand, was more of an assassin, a long range fighter and everything else except a Supporter and a Tank. But the latter could be solved by Thaor and Mekhaz rather easily.

"Sounds good to me. I doubt anyone else would be willing to join their forces with other humans at this point. That makes it easier for us to take advantage of the other teams' weaknesses," Mekhaz agreed without feeling the need to think about the proposal for a long time.

Thaor also nodded his head. He didn't know Kaleb, but Michael had earned his respect. He didn't think that Michael would be around bad people so he decided to give Kaleb a chance.

"It should be interesting. I'm in," He said.

Michael turned to Kaleb, who had yet to officially agree to join. Seeing the glimmer in Kaleb's eyes, Michael was certain that his friend would join the Team Combat discipline.

"Of course, I'll join. I don't want to reveal my full strength during the Solo Combat, or Duo Combat discipline. My trump cards should stay hidden as long as possible," Kaleb said, flashing a sly smile at his team members.

At this point, Michael wasn't sure how strong Kaleb had grown. Kaleb's War Rune had a higher refinement degree, but it wasn't that much higher. However, his 7-Star Soultrait had grown much stronger, and Kaleb focused on practicing his Inheritance technique, refining his body, mind and Soul to adjust his entire being to the Frozen Nova.

Michael was certain that Kaleb could deal with an ordinary Tier-3 Awakened if he didn't hold back. That was enough to determine that he was strong enough to team up for the Team discipline.

"You'll probably want an Awakened with a Support Soultrait, right? We won't be strong enough to deal with enemies like the lightning freak, so a Support Soultrait should be perfect to fill in the gap," Thaor remarked suddenly. He had already started planning who to pick next in order to set-up their team perfectly.

"I know some Lords with Support Soultraits, but other teams should have picked them already. Or they might not bother about the combat disciplines and apply only for the Support Assessment discipline," Kaleb pointed out after agreeing with Thaor's assessment.

"If everyone agrees that we're missing an Awakened with a Support Soultrait, I can get someone. She won't be willing to participate in the Support Assessment because she considers herself a pure-blooded warrior and not a backliner, but...she is a little bit difficult to deal with. Her personality is messed up," Thaor revealed, his expression a little bit sour.

It was almost as if he didn't want to invite the person he had just mentioned, yet he proposed to invite her. Michael was quite amused at this sight.

"If her Soultrait is as powerful as her personality is messed up, we will be fine," Kaleb responded, which resulted in a light chuckle from Mekhaz.

"I second that," Mekhaz added with a thumbs up, while Michael nodded his head as well.

Thaor sighed heavily when everyone agreed to his proposal. He actually didn't want to invite that nutcase, but he blurted out his thoughts when he recalled her. That crazy freak's Soultrait was just too useful for them, and the exact thing their team was missing after all.

"Alright...I will talk to her..." He grumbled before disappearing for the next 30 minutes.

After half an hour, Thaor returned with another Berserker beside him. The Berserker looked just like Thaor, with the sole difference being their gender. The newcomer was a woman with a fierce expression that prevented anyone – even most other Berserkers – to approach her.

"That's my sister Lokai. She has a mutated Soultrait that e—...." Thaor began to introduce his sister to the team, only to be interrupted by a heavy smack to the head.

Lokai hit Thaor on the back of the head – hard enough to make him lose balance. Thaor's head nearly hit the bench in front of him.

"Don't reveal my Soultrait to strangers, little Thaor. I will decide whether I join this team or not after seeing how strong these tiny human Lords are! After that, I might tell them about my Soultrait," Lokai chided, ignoring her little brother after she stared smugly at the others.

"That shouldn't be too difficult. How about we leave the Colosseum and spar in the Ulan Arena? Since we're participating in the Team discipline we should be focusing on our teamwork as long as we can," Michael agreed with what Lokai said.

He turned to Mekhaz, a question forming in his mind, "Will you guys participate in the Solo or Duo Combat discipline?"

"We're brave Warriors. Of course, we're participating in all combat-related disciplines!" Lokai bellowed, visibly offended at Michael's question even though he had not even directed his question solely at her.

Michael turned to the female Berserker and raised an eyebrow, "Are you stronger than Thaor? If yes, by how much?"

Mekhaz had yet to answer Michael's question, but he didn't know what to answer, in the first place. He wanted to participate in the other disciplines but they lacked time, and they would be extremely exhausted if they were to participate in all competitions.

After competing in the Solo Combat discipline and fighting more than a dozen of fights, they would have to participate in the Duo Combat discipline the day after the Solo discipline. The day after the Duo combat discipline would be the Team discipline. There wouldn't be any time to rest.

This year's Battle Exchange was obviously different than usual. It was not only a battle of raw power. The Awakened would have to think strategically to ensure that they wouldn't be exhausted when it was crucial to be in their prime, along with knowing when to attack and when to retreat to recuperate.

"Stronger than Thaor? I was not blessed by the War God with such an exceptional Soultrait, forget about his Unique Constitution. He may be younger than me, but I'm not stronger than this little brat. Though, I am not weaker either!" Lokai answered, straightening her back proudly as she looked down on Michael, whose expression didn't change in the slightest.

"In that case, you should focus on the Team discipline rather than wasting your time and energy in the Solo and Duo disciplines," Michael said before pointing at Thaor, "I don't want to sound like a dickhead, but he won't make it into the top 200 in the Solo discipline and neither will you."

Thaor was the first to react. His fingers curled into fists and he was just about to say something when he saw the seriousness in Michael's eyes. He saw Mekhaz from the corner of his eyes as well. The Warlock Centaur nodded his head subconsciously, fully agreeing with Michael's conclusion.



"There are at least a dozen Peak Tier-3 Lords with powerful Soultraits and exceptional Inheritance techniques in the 4th grade of the Saphirelake Military Academy. If it's like that in every academy and university, you'll have more than 100 Peak Tier-3 Lords with powerful Soultraits to face – and that doesn't even include the powerhouses of the Berserker race and Warlock Centaur race. I think Thaor is roughly my age, and you must be a year, or at most two years older than your brother. There are still older participant who're most definitely at the Peak of the 3rd Tier. They will snatch the top 200 spots of the Solo discipline easily," Michael explained calmly.

He ignored Lokai's fierce expression and looked toward Thaor, "The Duo competition might be interesting, but you will be dead-tired if you compete against everyone else. By the time the Duo discipline ends the Team discipline will start. Do you think you can handle competing in the Team discipline with your full strength, without holding your team back due to your exhaustion?"

Michael could say a lot more, but he didn't think that it was necessary. His arguments were convincing enough to silence Thaor. Meanwhile, Mekhaz agreed wholeheartedly.

"And how do you know that Thaor is not strong enough to deal with them?" Lokai asked, taking a step closer to Michael to intimidate him with her height and immense pressure.

Michael, however, looked up to the female Berserker with a seemingly unbothered expression, "I think that convincing you with words is useless. How about I show you with actions?"

Lokai raised an eyebrow but didn't say anything at first.

"Let's spar in the Ulran Arena. If you're not satisfied with our team, you won't have to join us. However, if you join us, you should reconsider participating in the other disciplines," Michael proposed, not letting the smile on his face waver.

Lokai was still silent. However, she turned to the door of the Underground Colosseum and motioned Michael and the others to follow.

Michael got up and followed without saying a word. Meanwhile, Kaleb looked at Thaor and Mekhaz with a wry smile. Mekhaz returned a faint smile, just to ask the question that flashed through his and Thaor's minds.

"Is Michael always like that?"

"Like what?" Kaleb asked.

This time it was Thaor, who asked, "Is he always trying to pick fights with the most troublesome people?"

Kaleb chuckled hearing the question. He recalled the times Michael had picked a fight with him, and the Barbaric Couple. It hadn't been once. In fact, Michael kept fighting with them until they grew tired of it.

"Yeah...that's normal."

Chapter 339 Like Sister Like Brother

Michael didn't want to waste too much time convincing Lokai to team up with them. Instead, he wanted to show her how strong he was, and what he was capable of. That should be enough to gain her respect as a fellow Warrior.

It didn't take long before they reached the empty Ulran Arena. Since everyone was still in the Underground Colosseum, Michael and the others had enough space to train without getting disturbed.

Lokai glanced over to Michael and scoffed at his charade. He was obviously trying to act calm in front of her to seem more confident than he was. It was as clear as day. There was only one thing that confused Lokai.

Why would her brother ask her to join the Team Combat discipline if the little humans were weak and useless?

'No...in the first place...why is Thaor so calm and composed even though this little human brat said that he won't make it into the top 200 in the Solo Combat discipline? Thaor wouldn't allow someone weaker than him to say that. He would try to beat someone stronger than him for calling him weak as well... That doesn't make any sense...'

While she pondered over that, Michael manifested the Wyverntooth Spear and the Spirit Armor Set as he jumped into the combat ring before he walked around calmly.

His crimson ring glimmered lightly, releasing bits of its dragon might. It was strong enough to be perceived subtly, but too shallow to affect Lokai. She entered the combat ring as well and summoned a pair of metal gauntlets and a necklace that had been made out of a skull and several bones. It looked fierce, but Michael spent only a few seconds observing the necklace.

His attention moved back to Lokai as Mekhaz's voice rang through the arena.

"Start the battle at my commands," He shouted, starting the countdown.

"Three, two, one...fight!"

The moment Mekhaz said 'fight', Lokai charged forward. She accelerated rapidly and looked like a train at full speed as she appeared in front of Michael. In the blink of an eye, her right arm pulled back to gain maximum velocity and she punched forward.

Her presence, speed and the force behind her punch increased all of a sudden as a crimson glimmer manifested in her eyes. She had activated her Soultrait, Burning Fury, to enhance her strength, agility and perception considerably. The next moment, her fist crashed down, punching in Michael's direction.

However, Michael had long since moved from his earlier position. He took a long stride forward the moment Lokai appeared in front of him. With his Eagle Eyes fully unleashed and further amplified with several layers of Enhancement, Michael pinpointed Lokai's blind spot immediately. He moved the moment he detected that Lokai was about to strike, and appeared to her right side by disappearing beneath her arm.

Under normal circumstances it was advantageous to be big and physically strong. However, Michael took advantage of the difference in their size by moving below her arm as Lokai punched out. A strong gust splashed against the back of his head as Lokai's punch cut through the air, but that was all he felt from her attack.

In the next moment, Michael revealed his Legendary Ring's dragon might. He released his dragon might at full power, while simultaneously manifesting dozens of Glacicles around them.

But Michael was not yet done. He applied six layers of Enhancement to Reinforced Sword Qi and conjured six Qi Swords that shot toward Lokai from all directions alongside the Glacicles. Following that, Michael used Spirit Whip to conjure three Spirit Whips that were intertwined with each other to maximize the damage he could deal. The three-fold Spirit Whip lashed out just as Lokai was about to unleash her bone necklace's enchantments.

She wanted to protect herself, snatch Michael, and throw him to the side to win the battle immediately in a single move. Sadly, she ended up losing control of her Soultrait and the origin energy surging through her body as something heavy smashed onto her head, no...inside her head.

The Spirit Whip bypassed Lokai's mental defense easily, smashing heavily onto her mind, stunning the female Berserker for a second. And that was all it took for the Glacicles and enhanced Qi Swords to impact.

The Glacicles shattered, releasing freezing mist all over the Berserker's skin while the Qi Swords cut deep into her flesh. Lokai's skin grew colder and it was only a matter of time before her tough skin would freeze and become brittle. But before that would happen, Lokai was bound to lose the battle with Michael.

She didn't even know where he had disappeared at this point, and could only feel something cold and extremely sharp pressed against her neck.

It took Lokai a moment to realize that Michael was standing on her shoulder. No, he was squatting on her shoulder, pressing the Wyverntooth Spear against her neck all while another batch of six Qi Swords revolved around her neck, ready to cut her from all directions.

"Why does everyone underestimate my strength when I fight them for the first time? Do I look that weak?" Michael asked quietly.

However, his voice was such a big contrast to the silence that reigned through the entire arena that everyone heard him.

Michael's silent complaint caused Mekhaz to look at Thaor, who kicked the ground. Meanwhile, Kaleb stared at his friend in shock.

"Since when did you obtain an ic--...Did you always have an Ice-type Soultrait?" Kaleb asked in a voice that was just loud enough for Michael to hear. I think you should take a look at

Michael retracted the freezing mist in the combat ring before removing the Qi Swords as well. He turned to Kaleb and smiled lightly.

"I got Glacicle in the Lord Rift. It's not a powerful Soultrait but the Glacicles have a pretty good freezing property, and they're quite cheap to create and easy to control," Michael said with a shrug.

He didn't intend to hide the truth. However, Kaleb continued to frown.

"But...you obtained the silver sword Soultrait in the Lord Rift as well..." Kaleb added.

"Nope. I obtained the Reinforced Sword Qi Soultrait as a reward for my contribution in the Lord Rift...even though I would have preferred not obtaining it at all..." Michael said, his expression suddenly filled with sorrow and a tinge of anger.

It was evident that Kaleb had many questions, but Michael didn't intend to answer all of them right now. Explaining everything would not only waste several hours, but he would have to expose Extraction's powers. That was not something Michael wanted to do in a public place, let alone with strangers around.

He jumped down from Lokai's shoulder and looked at the female Berserker, who had trouble regaining her senses for a while. She was too shocked to move or say anything.

"I...just lost, didn't I?" That was the first thing she said after several minutes of silence.

"Yup. Either you're weaker than your brother, or you underestimated me a lot more than any Warrior should underestimate their enemies no matter how weak they may be," Michael said bluntly, not even trying to sound nice.

Lokai grit her teeth when she heard what Michael said, but she knew that it was the truth. She had underestimated Michael even though there hadn't been a reason to do so. He was only a Tier-2 Lord, but both Thaor and Mekhaz respected him. That should have been more than enough reason to consider Michael a powerful opponent – not someone one should underestimate easily.

"You've grown a lot stronger in the last few days, Michael. Seems like you've analyzed our weak points more thoroughly than I expected," Mekhaz pointed out, trying to console Lokai a little bit with his words, while also showing Michael that he noticed what the young human Lord had done.

But Michael merely shrugged.

"Either way, I hope you can take my words more seriously now that you've seen some of my Soultraits," He said, trying to pull the subject back to the more important topic; the Team Combat discipline.

"I don't really know what your Soultrait does other than enhancing your strength, agility, and perception a little bit. If that's all you can do, we'll have a problem in the Team discipline," Michael said straightforwardly, "Can you only support yourself, or can you use it on someone else as well? How many allies can you strengthen and does your Soultrait have a side-effect? How long does the enhancement last?"

Michael's questions could be considered rude, but if Lokai wanted to join them in the team combat discipline, she would have to reveal the utility of her Soultrait to a certain extent. A Support-type Soultrait was a little bit different than other Soultraits, after all. If they wanted to make full use of it – which they had to in order to fight opponents of a higher rank and Tier – they had to know the special perks of Lokai's Soultrait.

Lokai nibbled her lower lip for a few seconds, her whole attention drawn to Michael.

She looked over to Thaor afterward and sighed heavily.

"I understand why you want me to join this team...but I hate you for not warning me, you piece of garbage!" She cursed Thaor, who flashed a smile toward his older sister.

"I am in. There is no reason not to join this team," Lokai said, before adding, "But let's beat up everyone thoroughly. There are a few Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs, who've been starting to look down on me and my brother. It's payback time!"

Michael didn't know what made Lokai say that but he didn't really care too much. Since Lokai was willing to join their team they could register as a full team.

"By the way, my Soultrait is called Burning Fury. It is a mutated Support-type Soultrait. It enhances everyone's Strength, Agility, and Perception as long as I've enough energy stored. Using Burning Fury on five people is rather simple. I can maintain it for an hour before I have to consume an energy pill," Lokai explained, revealing the secrets of her Soultrait rather nonchalantly.

"But the mutation of my Soultrait is the most important," She added.

"Burning Fury's potency increases alongside the danger we're facing. The stronger the opponent we're facing the higher the enhancement!"

Chapter 340 Unique Logic

After they registered their team, Michael and the others spent most of their time in the Ulran Arena.

On the official first day of the Battle Exchange the Solo Combat discipline was held. Michael decided to watch a few battles with Kaleb and the rest of his team to find out more about their potential opponents in the Team discipline.

Interestingly enough, Lokai, who had been complaining all day about not being able to participate in the Solo discipline, kept her mouth shut after watching the third battle with everyone else. She realized that nobody was given much time to rest in between their battles, and that the strongest Awakened at the Peak of the 3rd Tier wouldn't show any mercy to their opponents.

They unleashed their strongest attacks to end their battles as quickly as possible. By ending their battles quickly, the Awakened had more time to rest up than the others. Furthermore, they could establish dominance over others, potentially forcing them into surrendering and weakening their confidence.

Just like Michael predicted, the top 200 spots of the Solo discipline were all filled with Peak Tier-3 Awakened, and Late Tier-3 Awakened with extremely powerful Soultraits, and special powers. Neither Michael nor Thaor were confident of defeating them. However, that was only normal.

Both Thaor and Michael had manifested their War Rune less than a year ago. Meanwhile, almost everyone in the top 200 of the Solo discipline manifested their War Rune close to four years ago. The difference may only be three years, but that was equivalent to six years inside the Origin Expanse!

They could close the gap if they were more talented, in possession of stronger Soultraits, or given enough resources to accelerate their growth. However, even closing the gap of strength was not something that happened overnight. Everyone was already striving hard to grow stronger, making it already difficult to maintain the gap, forget about closing it.

By observing the fights of the Solo discipline with great interest, Michael learned a lot. He made mental notes about certain opponents and told himself to collect more information about them later. But even if Michael was very interested in the Solo discipline and the Awakened's Soultraits, they didn't spend too much time watching others fight. Instead, they returned to the Ulran Arena where Kaleb was told to spar with Lokai, Thaor, and Mekhaz.

Kaleb had yet to gain their respect as Warriors. Thus, the young descendant of the Zenovia family had to show them what he was capable of.

Fortunately, it was not really difficult for Kaleb to take the two Berserkers and the Warlock Centaur by surprise. He tapped into the Power of Frozen Nova and unleashed one of the strongest moves he could control – though just barely. One moment everything was perfectly normal, and the next moment everything in the Ulran Arena froze. The temperature in the arena dropped rapidly, and breathing the chilling air in the arena was both uncomfortable and painful.

Every breath was harder to endure, and his opponents felt like their lifeforce was being frozen into a block of solid ice.

Michael had to create a small dome of Extraction around him to extract the chilling air around him. He was unaffected as Kaleb used his 7-Star Soultrait. However, the opposite could be said for Mekhaz, Thaor, and Lokai. They didn't expect Kaleb to have such a powerful Soultrait, and were taken by surprise as the flood of ice and chilling air hit them.



Kaleb had to stop using Frozen Nova after a few seconds. His energy storage had been drained rapidly, and he felt a little dizzy. It was far from easy to control Frozen Nova, especially the Frozen Tsunami.

It would be easier to control Frozen Nova if his energy storage was bigger. He wouldn't have to restrain Frozen Nova's extraordinary powers to use weaker attacks with great precision. Unfortunately, as a rather powerful 7-Star Soultrait, Frozen Nova's weakest action would still drain one-fourth of his stored energy. The attack was extremely strong, but it drained too much energy. Thus, Kaleb had been focusing on controlling Frozen Nova, and further splitting up the power output of Frozen Nova to use his Soultrait with lower energy consumption.

Once Kaleb gained the Berserker's and Warlock Centaur's respect, it was about time to come up with battle strategies. Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs were known for their aggressive combat style, but Michael and Kaleb wanted to take their opponents by surprise. They hoped that their tactics could be different from the norm. That way, they could overwhelm their opponents even if their overall combat prowess might be weaker than that of the enemy team's.

It was not easy to discuss battle strategies with the stubborn Berserkers, but Mekhaz made it a lot easier. At least, the Warlock Centaur listened to their ideas and combined them with other important factors that hadn't been taken into consideration.

As such, several hours passed and it was not long after their heated debates came to an end when the second day of the Battle Exchange started. The Solo discipline finished at midnight, and the Duo discipline started one minute after midnight. The second discipline started the moment the first finished, giving those who participated in both disciplines no time to rest or recover.

The second day of the Battle Exchange was rather uneventful for Michael and the rest of his team. They spent the whole day in the Ulran Arena, testing a few combat strategies, and sparring with each other in two versus three teams. The team composition was changed after every spar after they talked thoroughly about their teamwork, how to fix the flaws in their teamwork without letting it negatively impact their combat prowess, and how to improve their tactics further. I think you should take a look at

Even though they didn't watch the Duo discipline's battles, their team received many reports about the battles. Apparently, the battles of the Duo discipline were even fiercer than they had been during the Solo discipline. Many Awakened had been injured, and two Awakened – one human and a Berserker – were brought to the nearest hospital because they had been crippled. They had to be tended to immediately to save their lives after they had been mortally wounded since not even the Healing Soultraits of the attending healers had been strong enough to tend to them.

After the incident in which the human Lord and Berserker Adventurer had been injured, the tension in the Underground Colosseum reached a new height. The Berserkers began to fight more fiercely than before, all while the human Lords used their Soultraits to inflict more injuries on the weaker opponents. Even the Warlock Centaurs had a hard time controlling the rage surging through their bodies.

"What a mess..." Kaleb mumbled, staring at the screen in front of him. It was already late at night, and their team was just about to split up and sleep a few hours when more reports flooded Kaleb's crystal watch.

Michael and the others received a few reports as well, but Kaleb's information network was the most developed due to his family's effort. But even the few reports Michael and the others received were more than enough to frown deeply.

"Was it really a good idea to throw the Tritan Alliance into the Battle Exchange? I already had a bad feeling about Killian and the others, but this doesn't feel like allies fighting for a better spot in the ranking... Isn't that more like arch-enemies trying to kill each other...for the sake of killing?!" Michael cursed loud enough for everyone to hear.

"It's not that bad. Injuries make Berserkers only stronger. The wounds inflicted to the weak will heal rapidly and make them stronger than before. We think of wounds as lessons and don't hold grudges...usually. The lightning freak never intended to kill me either. He wanted to establish dominance, but he never released the strongest form of his lightning – not after he saw how much damage his strongest lightning made after our first clash," Thaor tried to pacify Michael while looking up from the report he read.

"The lightning freak might be a piece of shit for acting the way he did, but that was his way of gaining our respect – through domination and an attempt to inflict fear. It was honorless, but our race always respects the strong," Thaor added, only for Lokai to intervene, "You might not understand this yet, but the strong can do whatever they want. The strongest beings determine the rules of society. A single command can kill tens of thousands."

Michael had already guessed that Thaor was not angry at Killian Zeus for attacking him because Thaor spoke rather lightly about the 'lightning freak'. Nonetheless, it was a little bit weird of him to act like that after nearly getting charred to death.

'Even if Killian didn't reveal any killing intent...isn't the fierceness a little bit too much between allies? Or is that actually normal? Can cultural differences be that huge?'

He already knew the answer to the last question that had flashed through his mind. Every race had a unique culture. In fact, even within the races cultural differences existed. It was perfectly normal.

'Looks like I have to adapt a lot more to the cultural differences than I thought.'

Michael smiled faintly and nodded his head.

"But if that's true, why are the Berserkers more aggressive in battles than before?" Michael asked out of curiosity.

"That's also pretty simple. They're getting more excited to fight human Awakened. Sustaining injuries in battle is perfectly normal for us. In fact, it brings great glory to leave a bloody battlefield with scars. By allowing our excitement and battle spirit to take over, we're showing our allies that we consider them valuable allies with great power. Furthermore, it is also a sign that we would never turn our backs on them, and leave the Underground Colosseum as one unit – just like it's supposed to be as allies!" Thaor announced, his voice growing louder with each spoken word as his chest swelled with pride.

However, Michael and Kaleb could only look at each other in confusion.

'That...seems fucked up...' Michael thought, blinking his eyes irritably, 'But why do I feel like it makes sense?'