

Supreme Lord 381

Chapter 381 Kitsun Lord

****[Back in the Untamed Jungle]****

"Why is everyone here so useless? I'm not feeding you to be worthless trash!!" A loud voice thundered through the surroundings as a short Kitsun emerged from a large tree. He had been observing the Kitsun reinforcement struggle against a group of Blood Oath Demon Monkeys.

The Kitsun's eyes were crimson, and his skin was as close to pitch-black as it could be. His appearance was already unique compared to every other Kitsun, but his presence was even more noticeable and prominent. It was a mixture of wrath, desire, possessiveness, and desperation.

The unique-looking Kitsun was the Kitsun Lord, Haro Ki.

He waved his hand through the air and activated his Soultrait to control the dark gas every Kitsun produced to create their cloud-like lower body. Tapping into the dark clouds of the Kitsun in his range, the Kitsun Lord created a strong suctioning force to shape a large cloud in his hands.

Haro Ki released the dark cloud toward the Blood Oath Demon Monkeys before he began to move as well. He turned into a black flash and appeared behind the monkey that was the furthest in the back. In one moment the Kitsun Lord had been walking near the reinforcement and in the next moment blood spurted through the surroundings. Two furry arms flung through the air and the Blood Oath Demon Monkey that was the furthest in the back began to scream out loudly.

Faint trails of blood trickled down from the Kitsun Lord's finger as he looked at the two fountains of blood that spurted out of the arm stumps of the monkey he faced. In the next moment he licked his fingers, tasting the monkey's blood.

"It's not as bad as I thought. Seems like you ugly bastards have some talent," Haro Ki said while the dark cloud under his control engulfed the heads of each Blood Oath Demon Monkey, cutting off their access to oxygen.

The monkeys screamed aloud, their voices filled with surprise and a tinge of fear. The screams rang through Haro Ki's ears, but he only smiled. He willed the dark cloud to invade the Blood Oath Demon Monkeys' bodies through their nostrils and wide-open mouths.

The monkeys began to writhe in pain, and they tried to resist the attack, but their efforts were rendered futile. The dark clouds entered their bodies, where they expanded by draining their energy and the remaining oxygen that resided within them.

Merely seconds passed before the first monkey collapsed on the ground, twitching helplessly. More Blood Oath Demon Monkeys followed soon. Some clawed at their own throats, hoping that they could breathe in some oxygen that way. However, every attempt to get rid of the black cloud and to take in oxygen ended up failing miserably.

Not even half a minute passed since the Kitsun Lord arrived, yet the Blood Oath Demon Monkey group had been decimated. A total of 31 corpses were now littered over the ground around him, dark gas oozing from their bodies.

Haro Ki pulled the dark gas out of the corpses and moved it inside his lower body. His black cloud expanded ever so slightly before it was compressed into its former size.

While staring at the monkey corpses, the smile on Haro Ki's face disappeared. A deep frown replaced the satisfactory smile of the sadist.

"Thank you for rescuing us, Mylord!" A young Kitsun Awakened at the 2nd Tier approached Haro Ki.

The Awakened bowed respectfully to his lord and began summarizing the happenings of the last few hours, "We've received several reports of the Blood Oath Demon Monkeys attacking us with smaller groups ranging from five to 25 members. They usually focus on smaller parties of the reinforcement, similar to our group. The vice-leader sent out Pustan and Zaram to deal with the monkey king, but it looks like they died as well. We're honored to meet our Lord again after such a long absen—..."

Even before the Awakened could finish his sentence, he felt that something was off. His heart skipped a beat as a streak of pain swept through it. A single glance down at his body told him what had just happened.

Haro Ki cut off one of his Awakened's arms in rage. Blood spilled through the vicinity and the Awakened began to scream aloud, the shock amplifying his pain massively.

"Shut up."

The Kitsun Lord's blunt words barely reached the now amputated Kitsun and a dark cloud formed around the Awakened's head, muffling his screams before finally cutting his access to oxygen as well.

"You bastard! How useless can you guys be?! Why did you not eliminate the grotesque monsters yet? Do you think I raise and feed y'all to stand around and let yourself be killed?" Haro Ki thundered, his crimson eyes turning cold like glaciers, "If that's the case, then die at my hands."

The moment his words reached the Awakened's ears, Haro Ki's flat hand shot forward. His speed and strength were extremely high, posing no problem as his flat hand pierced through the Awakened's chest. The Awakened flinched and tried to escape his Lord's wrath. Unfortunately, it was all for naught.

Haro Ki's flat hand coiled around the Awakened's heart. He twisted his hand and tore the Awakened's heart out of his body with brute force. The black cloud shrouding the Awakened's head disappeared as the Awakened slumped to the ground. A moment later, Haro Ki threw the Awakened's heart at his face, ignoring the tears trickling down the young Awakened's face.

A smug and superior look plastered on his face as he watched the miserable end of the Kitsun Awakened in front of him.

The satisfaction died down quickly, replaced by anger and frustration.

"Who else wants to report how useless they are?" Haro Ki asked, clearly not done relieving his stress.

The small group of Kitsun Summons and Awakened didn't dare to say anything. They avoided their Lord's eyes and lowered their heads as low as possible.

"Trash. Utter trash. Why do you guys even exist?!" The Kitsun Lord cursed, turning away from the small group, "Bring me to the rest of the reinforcement. The vice leader owes me an explanation!"

The wrath of the Kitsun Lord was easy to perceive by everyone. However, little did anyone realize just how enraged Haro Ki truly was.

The Kitsun Lord's family heirloom had been stolen and nobody could explain how that was even possible. Nobody dared to explain the situation to him face-to-face. Even the Captain of the Elementals Cave security didn't dare to meet him head-on. The captain decided to commit suicide instead of facing the Kitsun Lord's wrath.

That was probably for the best, but it enraged the Kitsun Lord even further.

He didn't even have anyone to torture for the next few months after his useless subordinates lost the Elemental Empress, his family's most important asset – also considered his family's heirloom. He had to get back the Elemental Empress, otherwise, he might not survive the wrath of his elders. It had been his mission to nurture another Emperor-ranked Core for the next generation of the Ki family, after all.

But now...now the Elemental Empress had escaped. She was in the clutches of another Lord, a Lord who had been foolish enough to invade his territory to reduce his forces one by one.

The Lord didn't even bring ten subordinates with him to attack Haro Ki's territory. It was only obvious that the foolish Lord sought death.

But there was also something that bothered the Kitsun Lord.

The invading Lord and his subordinates possessed too much knowledge. They were only Awakened at the 2nd Tier, yet their knowledge of the Kitsun race, the mechanics of Haro Ki's territory, and the traps and trickery used by Haro Ki was simply too profound.

It was almost like the invading Lord and his subordinates could see the future, or that they knew the infrastructure of Haro Ki's territory as well as the Awakened, who had been working for the Kitsun Lord since the days he entered the Origin Expanse.

It was eerie and confused Haro Ki because it didn't make any sense.

'Did he torture my subordinates to obtain these pieces of information? Are they using Soultraits to procure insider information?'

The Kitsun Lord was led to the main group of the reinforcement where the vice-leader was already waiting for him.

"Welcome back your majesty. I have been waiting for your return for a long time. I sincerely hope that your breakthrough to a Higher Lifeform succeeded. There had been a minor incident, but you don't need to worry about that. Your majesty didn't have to grace us with his majestic appearance!" The vice leader greeted, his voice overflowing with seriousness.

Haro Ki ignored the vice leader's slimy comments and stared at him like dead meat instead. Of course, his breakthrough to the 4th Tier didn't succeed. Haro had been pulled away from the enlightenment chamber to return to the Origin Expanse because his useless subordinates were neither strong nor intelligent enough to kill a handful of Tier-2 Awakened.

Instead, his trashy subordinates allowed close to 20,000 Summons, and 170 Awakened to die. But that wasn't even the worst because they had yet to catch the invaders, who had continued to wreak havoc and already destroyed three Beast Ranches.

The Kitsun Lord's losses were terrifying, especially the fortune he wasted for attempting to upgrade his War Rune. His advancement to the 4th Tier failed, and all his invested money had been burned to a cinder.

Haro Ki was not merely angry at this point. He was fuming in fury and longed for the death of the invading Lord and his subordinates.

"I hope you have good news and an even better reason why the reinforcement is still in the Untamed Jungle and not hunting down the invader in the Savannah. If not, hope that I'll get back what belongs to me, otherwise, you won't see the outside of the torture chamber for a very long time," The Kitsun Lord said coldly.

"And I'm not talking about a few weeks."

Chapter 382 Lordess & Lords

[In the Savannah region beyond the Kitsun Lord's territory]

A middle-aged woman with red skin and blazing flames for hair rested her back against a large crystalized chair. She stared at a crumpled note, a grim look etched on her face.

"So you're saying that this note arrived through a fist-sized wasp? From the direction of the Kitsun Lord's territory at that?" She asked in a hoarse voice that didn't fit her small feminine body.

She had a voluptuous humanoid body, two long black horns jutting from her forehead, and a large tail with a morningstar at the tip growing out of her tailbone. However, the most intriguing feature about the middle-aged woman were the bloody-red leathery wings that adorned her back.

"The golden wasp had arrived from the Kitsun Lord's territory's direction, yes. But it traveled east to the neighboring Lord with two more notes attached to its stinger. Our strategists are guessing that the golden wasp will send the two notes to the other Lords living adjacent to the Kitsun Lord. However, we're not sure if the note can be trusted," A bulky man with one black horn and a morningstar tail said.

He was the Awakened whom the Golden Stinger Wasp had shot with an energy stinger. The note had been attached to the energy stinger, which was why the bulky Awakened traveled to their headquarters as quickly as possible to report to the Valyr Lordess.

"It has been a while since the Kitsun Lord tried to scheme with us Valyr. He doesn't possess enough strength to attack the combined force of us three neighboring Lords either. Just what is that bastard scheming?" The Valyr Lordess grumbled in anger, her blazing hair flaring up.

Her hands clenched the armrest tightly, nearly breaking it off. She only stopped as the sound of crackling crystals reached her ears.

"How high are the chances that a Lord was daring enough to leave his territory and invade the Kitsun Lord's territory?" The Valyr Lordess asked after a second of silence, "No. The more important fact is to find out how likely is it that an unknown group of invaders is strong enough to destroy three border

settlements before the Kitsun Lord reacts? I heard rumors about the Kitsun Lord leaving the Origin Expanse to prepare for his ascension to a Higher Lifeform, but his subordinates are numerous enough to block most attacks...under normal circumstances."

It was already unlikely that some unknown Lord appeared in the Savannah region without the Valyr Lordess and the other Lords hearing about it. That either meant the information on the note were wrong, or the Lord came from another region. The Valyr Lordess was vaguely aware of the Zentika Empire and knew that they were more interested in the Untamed Jungle, and the Ice Mountains. They had to conquer a portion of the Untamed Jungle before freely entering the Savannah region.

That meant the unknown Lord was either from the Untamed Jungle or another region. Or he was lying?

Just as the bulky man was about to reveal some of the information the Valyr Scouts had collected over the last few hours, a young woman wearing a tight ruby armor set barged into the chamber. She was breathing heavily and gasped for air for several seconds. However, even the gasps for air couldn't hide her bright smile, and the excitement on her face.

"The Kix border settlement of the Kitsun Lord has been set on fire! I saw a pair of big Greater Eagles, a silver-furred Demi-human...and a group of Forest Elves leaving the Kix settlement with another humanoid and a Fire Elemental... If I'm not mistaken the Fire Elemental was the Elemental Empress!!" The young woman exclaimed in between several breaths.

Her vibrant smile met the stoic face of the Valyr Lordess.

"You 'saw' them? How did you even get close enough to them, Zira? You are not even supposed to be near the border region, let alone close enough to see anyone leaving the Kix settlement. Did you invade the Kitsun Lord's territory? How far did you go?!" The Lordess shouted, jumping up from her chair.

She stared intently at the young woman, whose smile turned even brighter than before. "Mother, I was just having fu-..."

"No, don't tell me. I don't want to know what trouble you're making...Little troublemaker..." The Valyr Lordess sighed deeply and sat down back on the chair. Even if it was already quite difficult to control a territory and manage it properly, raising a tomboyish and foolish daughter was even harder.

She thought it was a good idea to bring her to her territory once she manifested her War Rune instead of allowing her to become a foolish Lordess herself, but that plan didn't succeed. Instead of being raised as the future Lordess of her mother's territory, the young and foolish daughter turned into a carefree spirit.

She was not restricted by responsibilities and could thus go wherever she wanted to – basically.

"Mother, don't worry about me. I'm strong enough to eliminate most issues. Am I not already one of the strongest Valyries?" Zira asked proudly.

"Either way, mom...This is amazing. I sensed so much chaos, death, and fire energy in the Kix settlement. We should strike now and expand our territory! Let's kill these disgusting Kitsun!" I think you should take a look at

The Valyr Lordess could only rub her temples in an attempt to not shout at her daughter. She couldn't listen to her daughter anymore. Even if her words were true, what if everything was a trap? The Kitsun Lord was known for his disgustingly crafty tricks.

There was only one point that attracted her attention.

"Are you sure that the Fire Elemental was the Elemental Empress and not just some High Elemental?" The Lordess asked again, her eyes moving from Zira to the bulky man.

Both the bulky Awakened and the Valyr Lordess knew how important the Elemental Empress was to the society of Elementals. Their research about the Kitsun Lord, Haro Ki, also resulted in definite results. Haro Ki and the Ki family of the Kitsun race were obsessed with their Elementals – especially the Elemental Empress and Emperors.

The Kitsun Lord would never allow his Elemental Empress to leave her hiding spot. Not for some petty tricks and neither for any other reason.

"Eh...I have never seen an Elemental Empress but you told me that the Elemental Empress has one main element and that she has minor control of most other elements," Zira said, not feeling so sure anymore, "She had a blazing body but some strands of her hair were of different color. I know that some

Elementals with two elements exist, but the Elemental I saw must have control of at least 10 elements. That can only be the Empress, right?"

The bulky Awakened and the Valyr Lordess nodded their heads subconsciously. They had never heard of a High Elemental with more than three elements. It was even rare for the Elemental Empress to have control of more than 10 elements. One way or another, the Elemental Zira saw was a rare specimen, something the Kitsun Lord would never risk losing for some petty tricks.

"So it's true?" The Valyr Lordess mumbled, her gaze lingering on the crumpled note.

It had been more than two years since the Kitsun Lord and the three Lords bordering the neighboring territories in the Savannah region had entered a cold war. They stopped attacking each other, but focused on strengthening their military power. Instead of bashing each other mindlessly, it felt like all sides were trying to improve faster than the other to initiate an all-out attack.

Unfortunately, the population in the Kitsun Lord's territory expanded the fastest, creating an imbalance of power between the three bordering Lords and the Kitsun Lord. The only advantage of the Valyr and the two other Lords was that their Summons and Awakened were a lot stronger than the Kitsun.

Zira was the best example. She was strong enough to fight a dozen Tier-3 Awakened of the Kitsun race simultaneously. Her Soultrait might only be 1-Star, but she was considered a prodigy in terms of combat awareness and martial arts comprehension. Her innate potential was also strong, resulting in her War Rune advancing to Tier-3 before she turned 21 years old.

All while the Valyr Lordess doubted the course of actions and the truth of the crumpled note, similar scenarios happened in the headquarters of two more territories. The Lords held a meeting with everyone's gaze lingering on the crumpled notes on the table in front of them.

Everyone assumed that the note was most likely a trap created by the Kitsun Lord. But a trace of suspicion emerged in the hearts of the three Lords as the news of the Kix settlement reached them. The Lords sent out several scouts to reaffirm the news.

Receiving reaffirmation took a while. The scouts made sure not to clash with the scouts of the other Lords who sought affirmation about the Kix settlement as well. They collected as many pieces of information as possible and connected the dots to prepare a detailed report.

Once they were done, the scouts were just about to return to their own territory when they noticed something on their way back. Their curiosity triggered and their gut feelings telling them to make a detour, the scouts moved somewhere else before returning.

What they found shocked them greatly. They collected additional information while being dazed and returned home right after.

Still flabbergasted by the additional information they had collected, the scouts forwarded their detailed reports, which contained the additional information as well.

"The Xia settlement has been set ablaze," The report stated, stirring the hearts of the Lords and Awakened who'd been seeking to take revenge on the Kitsun Lord for years.

"The second border settlement has fallen."

"Our time to strike has come!"

Chapter 383 Real Start

"Arghhh!! These fucking bastards!!!! How useless can someone be!?!"

The Kitsun Lord's wrath reached an entirely new level as the news of the downfall of the second border settlement reached him.

His forces were still traveling across the Savannah region to reach the border area to fight the invading Lord when several pieces of news reached Haro Ki.

The oldest report stated that the invading Lord and the Elemental Empress were indeed working together to burn down the border settlements. But they did not just set everything on fire. No, they first eliminated a large number of Kitsun Summons before moving over to eliminate the Awakened stationed in the border settlement.

Once the Awakened had been killed, more fires would be ignited before the invading Lord ventured deeper in their territory. All-in-all they didn't spend more than an hour reducing a fully intact, thriving settlement into a burning pandemonium.

It had been years since the Kitsun Lord lost connection to so many Summons and Awakened within such a short period of time. However, that was not even the worst. Two particular factors didn't allow the Kitsun Lord to regain his calm and calculative persona.

The first factor was that the Kitsun Lord couldn't accept reading about the Elemental Empress running around his territory, unrestrained and freely using her powers, especially against him.

And second, another worrisome report arrived. The first half of the report stated that the scouts of the three neighboring Lords had been seen crossing the border. The Lords found out about the burning settlement. But the spark that set ablaze the last shred of patience left in the Kitsun Lord's mind was the second half of the report.

It stated that the second border settlement had been set ablaze as well.

The Awakened inside the second border settlement had been eliminated and everything was on fire. All of that happened not even one hour after the invading Lord left the first border settlement with his people.

That meant the invading Lord took less than an hour to travel close to 100 kilometers – using the Greater Eagles as a means of transportation – and to find and kill a total of 84 Awakened. Several hundred Links of Loyalty had been cut in close succession as well.

"This bastard is a menace! A pest that has to be removed as soon as possible!" The vice-leader of the reinforcement growled loud enough for the Kitsun Lord to hear.

The Kitsun Lord's head flicked to the vice-leader, his eyes bloodshot.

"If you guys weren't entirely useless, we would have already been at the settlement before this piece of thievery trash would have been able to reach the Xia settlement!!" He shouted, every word leaving his mouth filled with rage and fury.

Haro Ki continued to curse loudly, and his voice grew even louder as a young Kitsun rushed up to him.

"What do you want?! If it's nothing important, you'll be dead meat!" The Kitsun Lord snapped at the young Kitsun, who flinched violently.

"S-Sir...The enemy...the invading L-lord arrived at the Zum settlement..."

For a moment the Kitsun Lord was too stunned to speak. He stared at the young Kitsun hoping to find a lie in the Kitsun's words. But the Kitsun was not lying. If anything, his words couldn't be closer to the bitter truth.

"Already? How?" Haro Ki asked, unable to get his act together.

However, before the young Kitsun could say anything the Kitsun Lord retrieved a large golden crystal from his storage space.

"No. Don't tell me. It doesn't matter," The Kitsun Lord said, a sudden sense of understanding dawning upon him, "I don't have to know."

Even though Haro Ki had been fueled with nothing but wrath, anger and obsession for the last few hours, he calmed down all of a sudden. The losses of his territory along with the casualties had reached a dangerous level. He couldn't allow the third border settlement to collapse as well. If the third border settlement were to fall, the three neighboring Lords would most-definitely initiate an all-out war against him.

They would probably gang up against him and divide his territory among themselves once everyone had been killed.

The Kitsun Lord's patience had been reduced to a cinder, yet he remained eerily calm as he charged the golden crystal with his origin energy.

"My Lord! Do you really want to use the Spacika Crystal for this? We planned to use it to destroy the Valyr once you advanced to the 4th Ti-...." The Vice-leader of the reinforcement began hesitantly, staring into the bloodshot eyes of his master.

"If I don't use it now, my territory might not exist anymore by next week. Forget about the Valyr... I want this Lord. No matter what it costs, I want this bastard's life! He took my Empress, killed my people, and destroyed my plans..." The Kitsun Lord grit his teeth, anger resurfacing on his calm face, "I will show this puny existence that he made enemies with the wrong race!!!"

The Kitsun Lord spit the last words out, while continuing to channel energy into the Spacika Crystal.

The crystal stored a teleportation skill that could be used to transport people from one anchored place to another. Its cost was tremendous, draining more than two annual incomes of the Kitsun Lord's territory just to purchase the Spacika Crystal. After purchasing the Spacika Crystal several years back, only now did he feel the need to use it. Hence, the Kitsun Lord began to charge it with energy.

By now – years later – the Spacika Crystal had just enough energy to teleport 30,000 people to another location.

Haro Ki's effort and meticulous planning over the past few years would have been successful, allowing him to invade the Valyr Lordess' headquarters in a few weeks. His spies had already installed an anchor in the Lordess' headquarters, and he would have initiated an attack with the bloodthirsty beasts and his strongest forces once he evolved to a Higher Lifeform.

However, the arrival and actions of the invading Lord destroyed all of his carefully crafted plans. Not only that but the invading Lord's actions actually endangered the future of his territory. That was something Haro Ki never imagined to be possible. It was totally out of expectations. After all, the initial reports of his scouts in the Untamed Jungle had clearly stated that the invading Lord was not powerful and 100% not a threat.

'I will torture those scouts and bathe them in the blood of the invading Lord once all of this is over. They won't be able to escape my wrath. WEAK? NO THREAT? This bastard is strong enough to sweep through my settlements with less than 10 members!! How can that be weak?!?'

"I will move a few thousand Guards to the Xia and Kix settlement to extinguish the fires and up the defenses against an attack of the bordering Lords... The rest will come with me to annihilate this thieving bastard!" The Kitsun Lord announced.

There was no time to waste. It was now or never. He wouldn't underestimate the thieving Tier-2 Lord anymore. If anything, the Kitsun Lord would use all of his remaining means to obliterate the sneaky Lord.

The all-out war against Michael Fang, the Lord of the Untamed Jungle, thus began for the Kitsun Lord.

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After they attacked the first border settlement, Michael and the rest improved their tactics. They used the blitzkrieg tactic to attack the second border settlement. The Golden Stinger Wasp and the Elemental Empress brought them inside, Liopham lured everyone to the center of the settlement, and the remaining members of the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team began to hunt both Guards and Awakened while acting as the main distraction.

At the same time, the Golden Stinger Wasp and the Elemental Empress used their remaining energy to move through the entire settlement. They set a few fires before focusing on spreading the flames across the settlement to inflict as much damage as possible.

The rapidly spreading flames and the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team created enough chaos so that Tiara and Michael could slip past most Guards amidst the chaos unnoticed. They moved through alleys and jumped over buildings searching for Awakened. Due to the rising smoke and anguished cries, that was not further difficult.

All Awakened were under a Soul Pact. They were forced to aid the Kitsun in case the settlements were under attack. Michael and Tiara made use of this to observe their surroundings, find their target, and strike from the shadows.

Interestingly enough, the second border settlement had two Tier-3 Awakened to defend the settlement. To their misfortune, Michael went all out as he attacked from their blind spot. Six enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords and a fully empowered Spirit Disturbance were more than enough to kill a Tier-3 Kitsun Awakened from a blind spot. His surprise attacks bore much better results than Michael fathomed.

Thus, they didn't even spend 20 minutes before they disappeared with a killcount of a few hundred Summons and 84 Awakened.

Once their attack was completed, they rushed to Icarus and his mate. Their next target was the third settlement that they advanced towards while Michael extracted the corpses of the Awakened.

He focused on extracting SoulStar Fragments and Soultrait Symbols and ignored the rest for the time being. The other loot might be of great use in the future, but the SoulStar Fragments and Soultrait Symbols were more important right now.

Michael crushed the Soultrait Symbols with Extraction to amass more SoulStar Fragments, which he then used to form the outlines of Glacicle's 5th star. He didn't possess enough SoulStar Fragments to upgrade Glacicle in one go, but that was no problem.

Glacicle's power output increased considerably as the outlines of its 5th star formed.

Even though Glacicle was a simple power, Michael liked it quite a lot. It was not as powerful as Kaleb's Frozen Nova, or Alice's Frozen Kingdom, but the essence of their power was different in the first place.

Michael's focus would never be on Glacicle. If anything, Glacicle was a good weapon to deal with large numbers of enemies, and that was something he would have to do soon enough.

A big battle would break out soon. He could feel that clearly.

Chapter 384 All-out War

The Guards and Awakened were already prepared for Michael's arrival when they reached the third border settlement.

"Will they invite us inside or do we take that honor to ourselves?" Tiara snickered lightly.

While satiating her thirst for blood almost constantly during the last two days, Tiara's personality changed slightly. Usually, she was stiff and task-minded, acting like the future of her race depended on her alone. However, right now, Tiara felt more like a playful girl. That was a welcome change – though Michael was not sure if it was appropriate in this situation.

A total of 4,000 Guards and close to a hundred Awakened were eagerly waiting for them. That was a little bit different from the earlier attacks.

Obliterating the Beast Ranches had been quite easy. Meanwhile, the border settlements required more work and finesse to make the most use of their powers. If a single member of their small team had been missing, the invasion of the border settlements would have been useless.

The Greater Eagles easily transported them across the Kitsun Lord's territory, and both the Golden Stinger Wasp and the Elemental Empress made use of their elemental powers to aid the main fighting force of their team. Without their support, none of Michael's plans would have worked out.

That was also why Michael was grateful for everyone, who continued to fight by his side. They complained not even once to Michael and fought without large resting breaks for a long time.

Everyone other than Michael was a little tired – mentally and physically –, but none of them wanted to stop after coming this far. Now that they made it this far, they wanted to deliver one more big blow to the Kitsun Lord before watching how the domino effect would lead to the end of the Kitsun Lord's territory, toppling everything down.

"How about we show our presence a little bit more, and watch how they're going to react? Maybe they will actually invite us inside," Mika asked with a tinge of excitement. He chuckled lightly and watched the responses of his colleagues with a gleeful expression.

Meanwhile, his Bow Artifact was already resting in his hand, waiting to be used once again.

"Hmm... why not? Since they know that we're coming to kill them, we might as well greet them properly," Michael responded by manifesting Zark.

The bow rested nicely in his palm, and an energy arrow condensed on its bowstring. Michael pulled the bowstring backward smoothly. His back arched, the arrow tip tilted higher, and a golden glint manifested in his eyes.

Three seconds was all it took to condense an arrow, pull the bowstring back, aim, and shoot.

The arrow was released with great momentum. It cut through the air in a high arch over a distance of several hundred meters. The arrow descended after reaching its climax, and it rained down, piercing the designated target's throat accurately.

The target fell over the wall, crashed down, and remained lying on the ground, unmoving.

One shot. One kill.

Lilica glanced at Michael, one eyebrow raised, but she didn't say a word. That was not necessary.

Instead, Lilica retrieved her Bow Artifact and an arrow. The other members of the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team followed their leader's action and manifested their weapons and projectiles as well. The EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team moved in unison, nocking an arrow on their bowstring, pulling back, aiming, and shooting in a beautiful arc.

With enough energy channeled into their Bow Artifacts, the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team's arrows could cover a distance of several hundred meters with their bows. Their range was nearly as high as Michael's. The only issue was their eyesight. Forest Elves had good eyes, but they couldn't compare to the power of a 5-Star Soultrait that enhanced one's vision.

Nonetheless, years of experience played a major factor as well. The Forest Elves' arrows hit most of their targets, killing two Guards on the spot. They followed with a second barrage of arrows right after, which killed two more Guards.

Tiara, the Elemental Empress, and the three monsters didn't do anything other than crane their necks while observing the arrows fly through the air until they impacted.

They stood in the wide-open Savannah with their heads held high and simply watched as chaos ensued on the settlement's walls.

After six barrages of arrows the chaos in the settlement died down. Silence enveloped the entire settlement all of a sudden, and the Guards stationed on the walls disappeared.

Following that, Michael returned Zark inside the War Rune. He moved over to Icarus and got on the Greater Eagle's back.

"I need to see what is going on in the settlement. Fly up," He ordered Icarus, who shot high into the air.

Using both Eagle Eyes and Spirit Gaze, Michael's eyesight was amplified to its peak. He ignored the cold wind splashing in his face and stared intently at the settlement.

'Huh?' Michael nearly blurted aloud, his eyes wavering for a moment at the sight that unfolded in front of him.

A golden swirl that looked just like the Elemental Empress' spatial portal had formed in the center of the settlement. It was the size of a small house and allowed hundreds – no, thousands of Guards and Awakened – to emerge in the settlement.

'He is bringing everyone over... but why only now? Why didn't he do that earlier?' Michael wondered, his eyes fixated on the center of the settlement.

2,000

5,000

10,000

The number of Kitsun emerging from the portal continued to increase rapidly. It looked like the portal would never stop spitting out more Kitsun.

"It must be an expensive item that can only be used once. Is he getting serious now? After sacrificing thousands of subjects, and losing most of your fortune you decided to finally take me seriously?" Michael was both amused and confused by his enemy.

It was about time that the Kitsun Lord took him seriously. He was already bored to death with creating new speedrun records. If the third border settlement attack would have been even easier than the second, Michael would have eliminated the Kitsun Lord and his subjects in no time.

'How many are there now in total? 25,000? That is...quite a lot to deal with...with our small gr-....'
Michael couldn't finish his train of thought as he saw something from the corner of his eyes. Something that shot straight toward them with terrific velocity.

"Fuck!"

Just as Michael's curse rang out, something impacted heavily. Icarus screeched loudly and blood spurted through the air.

In the next moment, Icarus began hurtling down from the sky, one of his wings burning like a black sun.

It was odd that Michael couldn't see what exactly had hit them, but there was no time to think about that. He and Icarus were falling down at a terrific speed, and they would die upon impact.

Michael's mind was rattling, but he couldn't think of a perfect solution in an instant. All he could think of was to conjure Glacicles around Icarus' burning wing in an attempt to extinguish the fire. The Glacicles burst apart, releasing its freezing mist. Facing the black flames that coated Icarus' right wing, the freezing mist melted quickly. However, it was their fortune that Glacicles' freezing mist was the Soultrait's strongest property. It was extremely cold and had a freezing effect that affected even the black flames.

The black flames flickered vigorously as they fought against Glacicle's freezing effect. The flames grew weaker, but it was not enough for Icarus to stabilize his mind. It was not as if the pain disappeared all of a sudden. On the contrary, Icarus felt like the pain grew much more intense with every passing moment.

Michael closed his eyes and released the Dome of Extraction upon sensing Icarus' pain. His target was the black flames, which he tried to extract with a burst of 5-layer enhanced Extraction.

The flames dimmed slightly, but they weren't extinguished immediately.

Michael continued to curse in his mind as he thought of various solutions to rescue Icarus and himself. He could use Icarus' body to protect himself and decrease the intensity of the impact, and he could abandon Icarus by jumping from Icarus' back before creating a Qi Sword below himself.

He could also try to rescue both Icarus and himself with an enhanced Qi Sword, but Michael knew that he couldn't keep them in the air since they were too heavy. The Greater Eagle was not a lightweight, after all.

Gritting his teeth, Michael was just about to do something suicidal when he felt a heavy impact from below.

A green flash entered Michael's sight, and it was at this moment that he realized Icarus' mate had propelled herself high into the air.

She ignored her own safety and clawed Icarus tightly while using every bit of strength inside her body to ascend higher into the air. She fought against the gravity that tried to pull her, and Icarus downward, but it was a helpless fight.

The green-feathered Greater Eagle was not strong enough to stop Icarus' fall. She slowed the fall a little bit, but that was already everything she could achieve with her burst strength. Afterward, she was being dragged down to the ground as well.

She struggled to flap her mighty wings in a desperate attempt to rescue everyone and never let go of Icarus. But that was her downfall.

Dragged to the ground and unable to change the inevitable, the female Greater Eagle screeched loudly and desperately.

Michael looked over to the green-feathered Greater Eagle, a smile full of warmth forming on his face.

'I should think about a name for you once all of this is over.'

As the thought flashed through his mind, their distance to the ground decreased drastically. However, not even a trace of worry could be found on Michael's face. Instead, he glanced over to the Elemental Empress with a knowing smile.

["Now!"]

In the next moment, a portal appeared beneath Icarus and the rest.

Chapter 385 Command

A portal coalesced below Icarus and the rest a few meters before they were about to crash into the ground.

The portal was not large and it could only be maintained for a few seconds before the unstable energies dispersed in all directions. But those few seconds were all they required to rescue Icarus, the female Greater Eagle and Michael.

Icarus and the rest disappeared inside the portal, only to be spit out from the portal's exit in the next moment. The exit was also a small portal that hovered above the ground vertically. Michael, Icarus and the female Greater Eagle's position changed all of a sudden. Their momentum decelerated and their fall slowed down further. One moment they had been falling to the ground like a meteorite shower and in the next second their position was swapped, their momentum changed, and they slumped to the ground without sustaining any major injuries.

Icarus was still screeching in pain as the black flames continued to burn his plumage, but that was taken care of as the Elemental Empress interfered. She was dead-tired and could barely move. However, the Elemental Empress forced herself to keep going. She waved her hand to create a suctioning force that pulled the black flames toward her.

The Elemental Empress gathered the black flames in her hand before shrouding the flames with her blazing fires. She started to devour the black flames and annexed them.

Devouring the black flames didn't take a lot of time, but it felt like an eternity to the Elemental Empress. After creating a portal to rescue Michael, Icarus and the female Greater Eagle, she still had to move and

devour the strange black flames. That was a little bit too much for her to handle, especially since her spatial affinity was not that great.

Her proficiency and comprehension of spatial affinity was still not up to the mark. The Elemental Empress never had the time, or permission to study the elements. All she was allowed to do was create all kinds of Elementals. Therefore, it was a big thing for her to regain freedom.

She might be bound to Michael, but the Elemental Empress was glad that she could learn so many new things. Her revenge was also on the way. It was only a matter of time before she could set the Kitsun Lord's body on fire and witness his miserable death. At least, that was what the Elemental Empress hoped to happen.

But, for now, all she wanted was to take a break. After spending the last two days fighting and traveling, the Elemental Empress was tired, but also excited after a long time. How couldn't she not be excited? Fighting for such a long time allowed her to gain a deeper understanding of her powers and she advanced to the 1st Tier.

By killing hundreds of Tier-1 Kitsun and contributing to the death of many Tier-2 Kitsun, the Elemental Empress received more than enough energy influx to break through her first threshold, and advance to the 1st Tier.

That was a great achievement, which was accompanied by a major increase in her combat prowess and better control of the elements.

The Elemental Empress was not the only one who was tired. Opars heaved heavily as well. His face was covered in a layer of sweat and his ragged breathing was clearly audible.

Opars' use of Energy Imprint on the Elemental Empress allowed the Elemental Empress to rescue Michael and the two Greater Eagles. The use of Energy Imprint consumed Opars' stamina, which was also why he ended up in a worse condition than the Elemental Empress.

The Elemental Empress would feel better in a few minutes once her energy storage would be considerably filled. Meanwhile, Opars had to rely on natural recuperation to replenish his stamina which could have been worrisome in the current circumstances. Fortunately, he possessed the Soothing Waves Soultrait which stimulated natural recuperation.

Opars would be refreshed and all ready to fight in half an hour.

Unfortunately, Michael was not sure if they had that much time.

"Stay vigilant. This is going to be...difficult," He ordered, his head flicking to the settlement walls while his mind was rattling.

'The Greater Eagles are done, the Elemental Empress shouldn't overexert herself for a while, and Opars won't be able to handle a full-blown battle without running out of stamina.'

As Michael's mind worked tirelessly, he glanced at Icarus and the female Greater Eagle for a moment. The female Greater Eagle had sustained some more or less serious injuries while overexerting herself to rescue her mate. She had strained a few muscles and her claws looked awfully disfigured. It was nothing that couldn't be tended, but it would take a while to heal her. As for now...the Greater Eagle was probably not even in the condition to fly.

Icarus couldn't fly either for obvious reasons. Thus, Michael's means of transportation had been destroyed at once.

He looked back to the settlement with Eagle Eyes fully unleashed.

'Hmm, isn't that...' Michael thought, his eyes narrowed as he noticed a black blazing bullet forming in the palm of a Kitsun.

The Kitsun's head was covered in blood, and a lot more blood seemed to gush out of his nose and eyes. However, the Kitsun didn't pay attention to his wounds. His eyes were fixated on Michael, who stared back without batting an eye.

All of a sudden the black blazing bullet disappeared. The bullet turned invisible, barely leaving some minor traces of its existence behind. Michael activated the strongest form of Spirit Gaze as well. Distorted energy fluctuations entered his sight and the black blazing bullet disappeared. But not even a second later the distorted energy fluctuations moved. They shot straight at Michael with great velocity.

Michael raised an eyebrow and twisted his body. He took a step aside, predicting the trajectory of the distorted energy fluctuations, and evaded the incoming attack.

"Invisible bullets, huh? So that's what I missed earlier..." Michael mumbled to himself as the invisible black blazing bullet brushed past him.

The bullet exploded upon coming in contact with the ground farther behind Michael, creating a small crater. The dry grass around the crater burned to ash and the surrounding temperature increased drastically. I think you should take a look at

'Evading the invisible bullet without being able to see distorted energy fluctuations seems quite difficult. What a hassle.'

Michael figured that the others wouldn't be able to evade the invisible bullet. He looked over to Icarus and the female Greater Eagle, who refrained from moving too much. They were the easiest targets for the bleeding sniper on the settlement's walls.

"Move Icarus and his mate away," Michael ordered the Golden Stinger Wasp and the Elemental Empress. Even if the Elemental Empress was tired, she could create a tiny spatial portal for the Golden Stinger Wasp to go through.

Meanwhile, the Golden Stinger Wasp could easily move the Greater Eagles using its unique racial ability to swap places with everyone it stung in the last ten minutes.

Michael channeled some energy into the Elemental Empress to ensure that she had enough to create a small spatial portal. After that, he looked over to the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team and Tiara.

Recalling the death of his army in the Elementals Cave, Michael's heart felt heavy. However, the thought of Tiara and the members of the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team dying as well stung even worse. It felt almost like hundreds of searing hot needles pierced through his heart at once.

'I don't want to lose them. Not them as well...'

"I want you guys to return to the Untamed Jungle with Icarus and his mate," Michael thus ordered, his voice as calm and composed as possible.

"Huh?!" Tiara blurted out subconsciously. Her eyes darted to Michael, a deep frown plastered on her face, "Are you serious right now??"

"You shouldn't joke around at times like this. That's not fun, at all," Lilica added, her frown even deeper than Tiara's.

However, Michael's expression remained stoic. He stared at the others grimly and repeated himself, "I want you guys to go home. This fight is a little bit too much to handle..."

"For us, you mean?" Tiara asked, looking like she was about to throw a fit for being called weak.

"No...well, yes. In some way it is too much for you guys to handle. It might even be too much for me to handle. There should be 25,000 Kitsun waiting for us inside the settlement, after all," Michael answered, not even trying to hide the overwhelming number of enemies that were waiting for them in the settlement.

"25,000? How about we retreat and wait until the other Lords respond? They should have heard about the two settlements we set on fire. Maybe, their forces are already gathering. We should retreat, organize our military, and focus on protecting what's important to us..." Liopham voiced out hesitantly.

Retreating never felt great, but facing 25,000 enemies with a few Awakened at the 2nd Tier didn't seem like a good idea. There must also be Tier-3 Awakened and Adventurers among the Kitsun army. It would be much better to stay calm and retreat. Even Michael had to agree that it was more logical to retreat and prepare a second overwhelming attack.

"If the Kitsun Lord can bring 20,000 Kitsun to this settlement through a portal, he should have done something similar in the other settlements. Sun Demos informed me earlier that the reinforcement from the Untamed Jungle should roughly have 30,000 members. If 20,000 came to this settlement, the remaining reinforcement must have split up to help out in the other settlements," Michael said, shaking his head.

He saw that the Kitsun Sniper created another black blazing bullet. However, this time the target was someone else.

With Eagle Eyes and Spirit Gaze activated Michael could roughly pinpoint the trajectory and the target. He moved over to Pheli and pulled her to the side as the bullet turned invisible. The bullet was released and exploded on the ground exactly where Pheli had been standing a moment ago.

The Forest Elves and Tiara stared blankly at the crater and smoke. It was not difficult to understand that Pheli would have died if Michael hadn't intervened.

However, the Forest Elves and Tiara couldn't bear to say anything. They didn't want to retreat and leave Michael with the heavy responsibility.

"I don't want to see the Kitsun Lord's forces invade our territory. Attacking him inside his territory will inflict much less damage to my territory, and my people. I don't want to take the risk of facing a counterattack after retreating. The Kitsun Lord is too scummy and crafty. If I don't deal with him today, I am not sure if I will ever have the chance to eliminate him...not without losing far more than I already did," Michael grit his teeth as the last few words escape his lips.

He knew that it was suicidal to fight the Kitsun Lord right now. But Michael could also tell from various memories of the Kitsun that Haro Ki would do everything in his power to eliminate Michael and everyone close to him the moment he retreated.

The Kitsun Lord was fully focused on him and the Elemental Empress right now. However, that would change once they retreated.

The Kitsun Lord would attack his territory and hunt down his people one by one...and that was not something Michael could accept.

Thus, he did something he never wanted to do. He used his power as Lord to command his subjects.

"Leave!"

Chapter 386 Resistance

"Leave!"

The Power of the Link of Loyalty was fully unleashed the moment Michael's command rang through his subjects' ears. Following that, the Golden Stinger Wasp and the two Greater Eagles began to move at once.

The Elemental Empress created a small portal for the Golden Stinger Wasp, which stung the Greater Eagles before disappearing through the portal. In the next few seconds, Icarus and his mate disappeared. They were replaced by the Golden Stinger Wasp that was about to continue stinging the remaining people when Mika groaned loudly.

The Power of the Links of Loyalty couldn't be underestimated. They forced Tiara and the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team to listen to Michael's command even though they didn't want to.

Mika was the first to approach the Golden Stinger Wasp with a beet-red face. He was trying his utmost to resist against Michael's order but that was easier said than done.

"Even if you want to fight alone, wouldn't it be better if we help you? Let us fight a little bit from a distance and leave once the danger level reaches a high-risk threshold?" Mika asked through his gritted teeth.

He was visibly struggling, but Michael ignored the Forest Elf.

Leaving the Kitsun Lord on his own after causing this much damage would lead to a worse reaction. Furthermore, Michael didn't want to give the Kitsun any more time. They ought to cease to exist in the Savannah region and the Untamed Jungle. Every second of their continued existence made Michael feel restless and angry.

"That sounds like a good idea, but I cannot protect everyone from these invisible bullets. In fact, there might be other long-range attacks that I cannot protect you from as well. It's already hard enough to ensure my safety. I really don't want any of you to die!" Michael answered, his voice cracking a bit at the last line.

He knew that his subjects thought of his approach as risky and suicidal. However, Michael had a plan. The Kitsun Lord could be better prepared this time, but that was given. All fights of life and death held a certain risk.

No risk, no fun.

But the others didn't have to take the same risk. It was not necessary for them to jump straight into the Lion's Lair. He carried the responsibility, so he ought to jump into the pit of fire alone.

"No. We won't leave," Lilica announced, suppressing the power of the Link of Loyalty with sheer willpower.

Using her willpower to fight against the Link of Loyalty was tiresome, and not a permanent solution. The moment her willpower was used up, Lilica would naturally follow the command she'd been given.

"If you force us to leave, we will break our Links of Loyalty with you and stay here, either way. So, how about you accept your fate and let us fight alongside you?" Lilica shouted, reminding Michael of the special clauses that had been added to the Links of Loyalty of the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team.

The conditions to break their Links of Loyalty with Michael could be fulfilled at this moment. Breaking the Links of Loyalty by force was impossible for subjects with a firm Link of Loyalty. Even those with a weak Link of Loyalty could hardly break it without dying due to the backlash. Breaking a Link of Loyalty was the same as committing suicide. It was simply not worth it and unheard of.

However, the special conditions of the Forest Elves' Links of Loyalty would suppress the backlash. They had the right to break their Links of Loyalty.

Michael's eyes furrowed deeply as he looked at the members of the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team. His gaze moved to Tiara, who struggled the most against Michael's command.

Her Link of Loyalty with Michael had reached perfection. Tiara trusted Michael wholeheartedly, and she would do everything he wanted her to do, no matter what it was. Her loyalty and trust resulted in a strengthened Link of Loyalty; a Perfect Link of Loyalty.

Having a Perfect Link of Loyalty with Michael, Tiara couldn't disobey his commands anymore. Yet, here she was, struggling to stay by Michael's side even after she heard his command. Blood trickled out of her nose and her eyes were bloodshot too.

'Are they serious? Why can't they listen to me right now? I am just worried about their well-being!'

Michael sighed heavily. He didn't want to cancel his command, but he still waved his hand nonetheless. It was hard to witness their pained expressions knowing that he was the cause of their pain.

"Ignore my last command. I take it back..."

The moment he said that, Mika slumped to the ground, breathing heavily. He stared at his colleagues and forced a smile on his face. After giving Lilcia a thumbs-up for recalling the special clauses of their Links of Loyalty, Mika got up from the ground again.

He saw that the gates to the settlement were pulled down. Rows of dozens of Kitsun Guards moved through the gates simultaneously. They moved in formation and were heading to Michael's position. It wouldn't take long until they reached Michael and the rest.

"But you have to retreat when I tell you to leave. I have a plan...well, somewhat like a plan," Michael said, the corner of his lips curling upward.

It was annoying that Tiara and the Forest Elves didn't want to listen to him, but it warmed his heart as well. The Forest Elves and Tiara didn't owe him their lives, yet they were willing to take the risk to fight by his side. How could Michael not be grateful?

It felt great to have people around you, especially those who genuinely care about you.

"As long as the Golden Stinger Wasp has marked us we will be fine. We will leave once the situation gets too tricky. Trust me, we don't really want to die today," Lilica joked lightly, glad that Michael accepted their decision.

It might be easier if they broke their Links of Loyalty with Michael right here. That way, they could leave Michael whenever they wanted to. However, no member of the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team wanted to leave Michael.

Lilica turned serious and added, "You should also leave once you realize that you cannot handle it anymore. I know you're powerful and that you can handle your energy and stamina well with Extraction, but there are many Tier-3 Kitsun. The Kitsun Lord should be at the Peak of Tier-3 already as well!"

Michael nodded toward Lilica subtly. Then he summoned Zark and condensed an energy arrow. Activating Eagle Eyes, Michael readied the bow, pulled back and shot the arrow at the gate.

He was not sure how strong the sniper was, but watching the Kitsun sniper condense two black blazing bullets was enough to collect some details. First, Michael found out that the sniper consumed his lifeforce to create the black blazing bullets. This drained his mental power gradually as well.

With the consumption of his lifeforce, the black blazing bullet would continue to grow stronger. This resulted in the creation of enough force to kill most powerful enemies before they even realized that they had been targeted. The only downside of this kind of attack was that the backlash paralyzed the Kitsun Sniper for a few seconds after the bullet was released.

The third black blazing bullet was released, and Michael reacted naturally to it. He manifested a Glacicle in front of Liopham, who was the target of the bullet and released the energy arrow. The black blazing bullet shattered the Glacicle, but it gave Liopham enough time to use Swiftiness to move a few centimeters to the side.

The bullet didn't hit Liopham. It narrowly missed him and impacted heavily on the ground next to him. The crater created through the explosion of the bullet affected Liopham a little, but other than searing heat and some dirt hitting him in the side nothing major happened.

Meanwhile, the sniper received the backlash. He couldn't move for a few seconds, which was perfect for Michael, Lilica, and Mika who had moved near-simultaneously to eliminate the sniper.

A yellow barrier manifested around the unmoving sniper when Michael's energy arrow was about to eliminate the sniper. The energy arrow dispersed after leaving a small mark on the barrier. The next arrow to hit was Mika's. Like before, the yellow barrier ought to block the arrow.

However, Mika's arrow was reinforced through Pierce. The arrow shattered the damaged barrier and hit the sniper alongside Lilica's arrow. The arrows dug deep into the sniper's chest and throat, eliminating one of the most annoying threats.

Mika turned to Opars in the next second. He didn't say anything to his colleague, but Opars knew exactly what was going on.

"Let's do three barrages. After that...I won't be able to continue fighting anymore..." Opars said, ignoring that his stamina had already hit rock bottom. Since they wanted to stay by Michael's side to fight, he might as well give his all and collapse before the Golden Stinger Wasp moved him out of the danger zone by bringing him to the two Greater Eagles.

"In that case, I'll give my best. I shall go beyond my limit and knock myself out!" Mika said, a tinge of excitement in his voice as he retrieved a bunch of vials from his storage space.

"But all I need is a single try, so you should give me your all right off the bat, Opars!!"

He consumed the content of the vials without hesitation before he retrieved an arrow that looked similar to Pieckers. However, it was not quite the same.

Lilica and the others looked at Mika a little surprised, but they smiled in the next second.

"It looks like Mika took a liking to you," Lilica said to Michael, who didn't quite understand what was going on.

"This arrow belonged to Mika's father, who got a handful of them from his grandfather. He had the same Soultrait as Mika. Precisely, everyone in Mika's family had the same Soultrait, and these arrows are their family heirloom. They amplify the Duplicated Arrow Soultrait or something like that. We're actually not sure what they can do. Nobody in Mika's family used their heirlooms in the last 300 years," Opars said, curious about the power of Mika's family heirloom, yet also unsure what to think about Mika's action.

"Don't sweat it. I still owe you a big one for telling the Lionheart about your fault. Being drunk is no excuse. I shall repay my debt with interest. I am a man of my word!" Mika said, smiling at Michael before he nocked the arrow on his Bow Artifact.

"Furthermore, my dad said that I should make use of these old things. I shouldn't be as stupid as he and his ancestors had been for not using their heirlooms when they needed it the most," Mika added, unable to contain his vibrant smile anymore.

"Last but not the least...I've always wanted to see how powerful these arrows truly are. I was just waiting for this opportunity!!"

Chapter 387 Heirloom

Slowly but steadily the area separating Michael from the settlement was being filled with Kitsun Guards and Awakened. There were thousands of Kitsun, all equipped with armor sets and weapons of good quality. The Kitsun didn't charge at Michael straight-up. Instead, they moved slowly and spread out to surround their enemies once the command to attack had been issued.

Rather than commanding their army to attack in a rush, the Kitsun finished their thorough preparations to go all-out against Michael and the rest in a quick manner. Archers moved up to the top of the settlement walls, and various siege weapons were installed.

Big wooden catapults with silver metal covering the siege weapon's joints appeared on the walls, followed by large ballistae, and three large-scale weapons that looked eerily similar to cannons.

It took the Kitsun a while to install the siege weapons, but that didn't mean Michael and the others could calm down. On the contrary, the sudden appearance of a dozen siege weapons was quite unexpected. Usually, siege weapons were not used against a small group of enemies.

In the first place, Michael was certain that the projectiles of these siege weapons would inflict more damage to the Kitsun than they could do to Michael, Tiara, and the Forest Elves.

But even if that was the case, Michael didn't want his people to face the full force of a cannonball, a ballista bolt, or huge catapult rocks. It would be almost impossible to evade those projectiles while surrounded by a bunch of Kitsun. The Kitsun would most-definitely die getting hit by these projectiles as well, but that was not something the Kitsun Lord was concerned about. If he could kill one of ten enemies by sacrificing a few hundred Kitsun Guards, Haro Ki would definitely do that.

"Can you deal with the siege weapons, or is your family heirloom something that can only be used against the living?" Michael asked Mika, who had already begun to channel origin energy into the heirloom arrow.

Mika slowed down channeling energy into the heirloom arrow and looked over to Michael with a thin smile, "My dad said that the arrow can be used as a weapon of mass eradication, or mass destruction. Sooo....I guess it works against the living and inanimate things with the same efficiency."

"In that case, bring down the settlement walls while killing as many Kitsun as possible," Michael ordered right after he heard Mika's answer, "Good luck. You can do it!"

Hearing the words of affirmation, a foolish grin plastered itself on Mika's face. In the next moment, Opars released an Energy Imprint to fuel Mika's body with energy. The flood of energy pulled Mika back to his senses. The young Forest Elf turned more serious and he returned his focus to the heirloom arrow again.

The entire charge of Energy Imprint was used to fill the heirloom arrow. Opars released another Energy Imprint, which Mika used once again to fuel the heirloom arrow with even more energy.

The heirloom arrow responded to the infusion of energy with vigorous humming that felt like a request; a request to be charged with even more energy.

Following that request, Mika didn't hesitate to continue to fill the heirloom arrow with five more fully empowered Energy Imprint charges. At this point, Opars was having a hard time standing on his feet. He swayed left and right, and his sight turned hazy. Nonetheless, the Forest Elf stayed behind Mika. He released three additional fully empowered Energy Imprints to fill Mika's body with energy to the brim.

Then Opars staggered backward. His legs couldn't carry him anymore and the world all around him began to spin at a terrific speed. Opars legs caved in and he slumped to the ground a second later.

However, instead of groaning in discomfort, or saying anything else, Opars used his remaining focus to watch what Mika would do next. He wanted to see the power of Mika's heirloom arrow.

Mika used the energy provided by Opars' last three Energy Imprints to apply a fully empowered Pierce on the heirloom arrow, and to use Duplicate Arrows as often as possible.

As the first use of Duplicate Arrows applied on the heirloom arrow, its humming grew louder and more vigorous. A vibrant white sheen enveloped the heirloom arrow, and it didn't take long before the entire heirloom arrow was fully coated in dense layers of vibrant white. This process was repeated several times, leaving Mika with little to no energy left inside his body.

The last bits of energy inside him were used to course through his body and the Bow Artifact. The Bow Artifact was strengthened enough to endure the power of the heirloom arrow in its current state.

Then Mika began to pull back the bowstring, an expression of complete seriousness plastered on his otherwise childish, playful face.

All of a sudden, Pheli utilized her second Soultrait, Battle Cry, on Mika. A surge of vigor passed through his body, allowing the young Forest Elf to pull the bowstring back in one smooth move. He adjusted the bow and tilted the arrow upward, ignoring his trembling arms and the fact that his sight was starting to blur.

As the bowstring was fully drawn back, the heirloom arrow's humming changed. The humming slowly turned into silent roars; the roars of a predator that was out on a hunt.

The roars grew in intensity. They overlapped and continued to grow louder until they filled the entire surroundings. Even the Kitsun, who slowly approached Michael and his people while impatiently waiting for the command to attack, could clearly hear the roars.

The roars filled their ears, and they forced them to stop moving for a few seconds. An ominous sensation overcame them all of a sudden.

Mika released the bowstring as the ominous sensation reached its climax. The heirloom arrow was released and its tremendous power unleashed. The roar of a fierce and bloodthirsty dragon reverberated through the surroundings. The humming intensified, almost sounding like the dragon took flight as the arrow gained altitude, and was the loudest when it reached the highest possible position.

Everyone's attention was drawn to the vibrant white sheen of the heirloom arrow as it reached the zenith. A loud noise that resembled something getting ripped apart rang through the surroundings as the heirloom arrow split in two. The heirloom arrow duplicated. First two, then four, then eight. After a while, the number of arrows whizzing through the air reached 2048, then 4096, and finally 8192.

The vigorous white sheen of 8192 duplicated heirloom arrows dyed the entire sky white. The bright light dazzled everyone, forcing even Michael to shut his eyes tightly for a second.

The hail of 8192 arrows began to pour down on the enemies, but almost no one was there to see it. Everyone's eyes were tightly shut, and all one could hear was the arrows whizzing through the air before they impacted heavily.

Upon impacting, screens of pain filled the air for a second until the true horror of the heirloom arrows was unleashed.

The duplicated heirloom arrows exploded upon impact!

The entire settlement and the surrounding area of the Savannah region were filled with the thunderous sound of explosions. The explosions overlapped and turned into a cacophony of destruction and terror, drowning the pitiful screams of the Kitsun.

'What the hell' Michael nearly blurted out aloud as he watched the chaos unfold in front of him.

Since he had activated Eagle Eyes and Spirit Gaze simultaneously, Michael could adjust his sensitivity toward light greatly. He could see nearly perfectly at night, and he was only a little affected from flash grenades and the like. The dazzling light of the heirloom arrows had been intense, but Michael could still see something without having to fear becoming blind.

However, what he saw amid the dazzling lights as the duplicated heirloom arrows exploded was terrifying.

More than half of the duplicated heirloom arrows reaped one – if not multiple – souls upon exploding. If the heirloom arrows didn't kill the enemy, they either inflicted severe damage to their enemy, forced

the strongest Kitsun to use their Soultraits, or the special effects of their Artifacts to protect their bodies, while simultaneously inflicting tremendous damage to the surrounding area.

The duplicated heirloom arrows wreaked havoc, destroying almost everything in their sight. The thick towering walls of the settlement and the gates had been torn apart, and more than 5,000 Kitsun had been killed. Roughly the same number of Kitsun had been injured, whether it was through the explosions of the duplicated heirloom arrows, or the rubble that shot through the air due to the explosions.

As the dazzling light of the duplicated heirloom arrows dispersed the true extent of its destruction was unraveled. The entire southern wall of the settlement had collapsed. The siege weapons were either destroyed, or had fallen over. The ones that were toppled had to be re-installed to be used against Michael and his people.

However, the most terrifying thing was the death count.

Mika felt the energy influx of more than 5,000 Kitsun, with most coming from Tier-2 Kitsun Guards. The simultaneous influx of energy from thousands of kills impacted heavily on Mika's mind and body. He was already weak and barely able to stand on his own legs as the impact reached him.

Mika was still wearing a vibrant smile on his face when all one could see in his eyes was white. He swayed a little and in the next moment, he collapsed on the ground.

Lilica was the first to respond to Mika's fall. She rushed over to him with several potions in her hand.

Lilica hastily took off the lids and fed Mika the potions to make sure that they wouldn't lose him today. Not even a second later, she began to smile as she looked at the youngest of her adventurer team.

"Good job, Mika. I'm so proud of you!"

Chapter 388 The Early Bird Catches The Worm

—The early bird catches the worm.

This quote perfectly described the current situation. If the Kitsun Lord's army had been ordered to attack a few seconds earlier, they might have been able to prevent the worst-case scenario.

However, since they didn't move to interfere with Mika's attack, the heirloom arrow's power came to full display. It destroyed the southern wall, killed thousands of Kitsun, and injured just as many.

Mika was the early bird and he caught the worm before the Kitsun could do anything.

Unfortunately, Mika was rendered incapable of continuing to fight. He used one of his few heirloom arrows before using every bit of power inside his body to kill as many enemies as possible. Therefore, Mika ended up utterly exhausted and unable to move now that he achieved his goal.

Opars was exactly the same. He was barely conscious after his continuous usage of fully charged Energy Imprints. His stamina had hit rock bottom, and all he could do at this moment was to smile foolishly.

"Stinger," Michael called out through a pull of the Link of Loyalty, while trying to suppress his shock for a moment.

The Golden Stinger Wasp sensed the Link of Loyalty's pull and began to swap places, bringing Opars and Mika to the place where the Greater Eagles were resting safely for the time being. The Greater Eagles, Opars, and Mika wouldn't be moved away immediately. Instead, they would recuperate a little bit to wait for the rest to arrive. Once everyone was present, they would leave right away to return home.

They were far enough from the battlefield allowing them to rest up a little. Nonetheless, they couldn't be careless. A single vicious monster of the Savannah region was likely to be strong enough to kill the two Forest Elves and the Greater Eagles if they dared to be careless for a moment. Opars couldn't afford to collapse right away. He had to endure a little longer until Mika woke up.

Once Mika and Opars left the battlefield, Michael could focus on the Kitsun once again. However, he couldn't hide his shock well. The power Mika displayed with a single arrow was too devastating to ignore. It was only obvious, but Michael was left speechless for a moment.

The only downside of the duplicated heirloom arrows was that two powerful Adventurers collapsed, and that they wouldn't be able to fight for quite a while. Nonetheless, it was worth it. The heirloom arrow was truly powerful. There was no doubt about that.

The heirloom arrow decimated a large chunk of the opposing army, leaving Michael, Tiara, three Forest Elves, an Elemental, and a Wasp without any combat power to fight against 15,000ish unscathed enemies – though most of them were on the stronger side.

"I wonder if we can recreate these heirloom arrows in the future. If not, weapons similar to the heirloom arrows would be great as well. This is...too amazing!" Michael exclaimed, momentarily forgetting that they had yet to deal with the remaining enemies.

There were still more than ten thousand uninjured Kitsun, and a few thousand injured Kitsun waiting to be killed.

Michael cleared his throat and began to release energy arrows at the enemies. He shot them one by one, with his focus on Low Tier-2 Kitsun. A single energy arrow aimed with great precision was enough to kill a Low Tier-2 Kitsun Summon. Therefore, he reaped their lives one by one.

Meanwhile, Lilica, Pheli, and Liopham did the same. They used Pieckers as if they were cheap, ordinary arrows to kill as many enemies as possible.

In response to their attack, a loud chiming resounded through the surroundings.

The Kitsun's charge began at last.

The Kitsun Lord's forces began their counterattack. Various long-range attacks were released. There were arrows, crossbow bolts, long-range projectiles conjured through Soultraits, and other special devices that resembled rocket launchers.

The rocket launchers were something Michael never expected to see. They looked quite expensive, and one could tell that every charge of energy damaged them a little bit more. However, that was not something the Kitsun cared about at this point. They were forced to ignore their own well-being and told to use any means at their disposal to injure Michael and his people.

The Kitsun Lord was fuming in anger, which resulted in the cloudy lower body of the Kitsun all over the battlefield to expand and spread further. The black cloud was about to reach Michael and his people when a golden sheen emerged from Michael's body.

The golden sheen slowly began to expand. It spread all around them and extracted the energy within the black cloud. The black cloud resisted at first, but given that the Kitsun Lord was too far away from Michael and the expanding black cloud, Michael could easily anchor a few threads of Extraction within the black cloud. I think you should take a look at

He began to drain the energy and annex it to form a handful of enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords. Michael released the enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords with a burst of energy to propel them into the masses of Kitsun. The enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords burst six heads before they shattered, releasing a massive amount of freezing mist in an explosive manner.

The freezing mist spread through the Kitsun's masses, and weakened the black cloud-like lower body of the Kitsun. The freezing mist slowed down the circulation of the black cloud, thus decreasing the movement speed of the Kistun considerably.

Michael's Soultraits were strong enough to deal with dozens of enemies at once. Nonetheless, he wasn't invincible. The bombardment of projectiles affected him and everyone around him as well.

Michael could evade most attacks thanks to his exceptional predictions. Eagle Eyes and Spirit Gaze used together was simply too useful. It allowed him to move through an arrow shower consisting of more than a hundred arrows. Meanwhile, the arrows he couldn't avoid were blocked with Qi Swords or a thicker Glacicle.

One time, Michael lowered his body and burst forward to pierce a Kitsun with the Wyverntooth Spear that had manifested in his hands – replacing Zark. He used the Kitsun as a meat shield to block a dozen arrows before throwing the severely injured and bloodied body aside.

Michael didn't spare the arrow-spiked Kitsun a second glance. Instead, he focused on his subordinates and the enemies that lay ahead.

At first, the situation all over the battlefield was still somewhat fine.

Tiara could still make use of her powers when she charged into the crowd of Kitsun ahead of her. Instead of hesitating and waiting for the Kitsun Guards to arrive and reach her, Tiara pushed forward. Her transformation Soultrait was already fully unleashed to enhance her strength, flexibility, and agility drastically. Adding Inner Force, and Spirit Whip's power, Tiara was able to advance through the horde of her enemies without further issues.

The problems that followed were simple yet not. First of all, Tiara couldn't replenish her origin energy storage as she fought. She could retrieve energy potions and Energy Nourishing Pills, but that would affect her movement, leaving her vulnerable amid a dozen enemies. It was more likely that she would sustain heavy injuries while consuming energy potions in this situation rather than replenishing energy to keep up with her energy consumption.

The energy she consumed while fighting against a single Tier-2 enemy wasn't that high. Unfortunately, Tiara didn't have to deal with a single enemy. Her enemies were numerous – too numerous to deal with all of them simultaneously.

While Tiara had no problem dealing with the crowd of enemies at first, it grew into a big problem as her stored energy decreased slowly. The number of enemies didn't seem to decrease either.

Lilica had it even worse than Tiara. She could detect the weak spots of her enemies using Weakness Detection, and accurately target them with Precise Aim using any type of weapon, However, Lilica couldn't move as fast as Tiara after the woman of the Silverfang Tigerfolk transformed. She was put in a prickly situation as several Peak Tier-2 Kitsun attacked her simultaneously.

The Kitsun were weaker and had a less refined body. Nonetheless, Lilica was only a Low Tier-2 Adventurer. Even though her Innate Talent, her constitution, and her Soultraits were much better than her enemies, she was not like Tiara, let alone Michael.

Even Liopham was doing better than Lilica. The Swiftiness Soultrait improved his movement speed drastically, allowing him to fight several enemies at the same time. This was even easier with Pheli by his side. Pheli used her Battle Cry Soultrait to enhance the allies in her range consistently. Simultaneously, she made use of her other Soultrait, Repelling Shield, to block the most threatening attacks and repel some of their force before counterattacking.

The shield could be used to protect herself and counterattack right away. Meanwhile, Battle Cry was perfect to give her allies an additional edge to their combat prowess.

It was only obvious, but Michael's impact on the battlefield was the most crucial. As the others around him killed a dozen enemies in total, Michael's enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords had already reaped the souls of a few dozen enemies.

He didn't have to pay too much attention to his energy consumption. His energy was rapidly drained, but it was refilled just as fast. Using Extraction with two layers of Enhancement was enough to cover up the energy consumption of Eagle Eyes, Spirit Gaze, and the manifestation of six enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords.

It affected his focus quite a bit, but the external enhancement of his mind owed to the Legendary Ring Artifact allowed Michael to maintain his peak form.

Meanwhile, the Elemental Empress stayed in the back with the Golden Stinger Wasp to make sure that they could rescue everyone if the situation grew worse.

And that was exactly what happened once the strongest Kitsun decided to join the battle.

Chapter 389 Enough

Michael could clearly tell that the situation was getting out of hand as the stronger Kitsun Guards and Awakened paved their way to the frontline. They ignored their brethren, and pushed them aside while utilizing their unique combat techniques and Soultraits.

Some Soultraits inflicted damage to the surrounding Kitsun, but that was not something the Awakened cared about. On the contrary, they harmed their brethren intentionally.

They had savored the pain, the suffering and the deaths of their own brethren long enough, and decided to heed to their master's orders. But that didn't mean they couldn't pursue their desire and bloodlust while following the orders they had been given. They continued to harm those around him and stared ecstatically at those who were suffering.

'How did nobody eliminate them until now? Like...literally...From the looks of it these sadistic idiots must have killed their own more than an enemy.'

Michael could never understand how the Kitsun survived that long as a race. They loved violence way too much. As long as they were not the one in pain, they would sadistically watch and observe whoever was being tortured. Their love for pain was simply too overbearing. It even affected their minds in the middle of a huge war. That was the sole reason Michael and his people had been able to kill that many Kitsun until now.

The strongest Kitsun working for the Kitsun Lord simply hadn't bothered joining the war because watching the desperation and suffering of their own kind had been too enjoyable to watch.

Michael was at a loss as he observed the sadistic race. They were simply unpredictable.

Therefore, Michael steadied his feet on the ground as he awaited the incoming attacks. He released several enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords which he willed to rotate around him rapidly. Michael ensured that the weaker Kitsun couldn't approach him. In fact, they had to retreat and make space for Michael as the Qi Glacicle Swords moved outward.

Following the manifestation of the rotating swords, Michael made use of the information he took in by observing the surroundings. He used Spirit Disturbance on a Peak Tier-2 Awakened, who had been about to stab Lilica in the back, and released a handful of Glacicles to pierce and freeze his neck.

Lilica spun around and thrust her weapon into the Awakened, killing him on the spot. She wanted to thank Michael, but too many powerful enemies attacked her simultaneously. Lilica had hardly enough time to take a breath. Her entire body was tense as she continued to move through the rows of her enemies. She pinpointed her enemies' weaknesses and aimed precisely at them, killing or crippling them on the spot.

However, at one point she couldn't handle the sheer number of enemies anymore. A blade found its way through her defense. The blade pierced through the seams of her leather armor and dug deep into her side. Blood spurted in the surrounding area as the blade was pulled out of her body viciously.

Lilica groaned out in pain, alarming those around her. Liopham and Pheli moved quickly to aid her. Pheli summoned several Repelling Shield around Lilica to protect her from further damage while Liopham

appeared behind three Tier-2 Summons. His hands moved rapidly, and his daggers found their way into their hearts, and necks. He killed the three Tier-2 Kitsun swiftly before he sensed something from behind approaching him with terrifyingly high speed.

Liopham upped his usage of Swiftiness and was just about to disappear from the spot when his legs stopped moving. His eyes widened and he looked behind himself, just to see that a large Kitsun had appeared behind him. The Kitsun's cloud-like lower body seemed to have merged with the ground. However, that was not where the cloud stopped. No, it moved through the shadows and created new shadows wherever it passed by.

Engulfing Liopham's shadow with his shadows, the Kitsun could restrain Liopham's movements. That was the Tier-3 Kitsun Awakened's Soultrait; Shadow Cage.

Liopham cursed under his breath as he tried to escape the Shadow Cage with brute force. Unfortunately, that was easier said than done. Shadow Cage might only be a 2-Star Soultrait, but it had been cast from the refined origin energy of a Tier-3 Awakened. The Kitsun Awakened used a considerable amount of energy to manifest Shadow Cage as well, thus rendering Liopham unable to move.

Following the Shadow Cage, another Tier-3 Awakened appeared near Liopham. He raised his longsword and utilized his Soultrait, which resulted in several spikes shooting out of the shadows. The spikes were black in color and condensed shadows that could only bloom in absolute darkness. It was a 3-Star Soultrait, but required shadows to be utilized, in the first place. The darker the shadows the stronger the Shadow Spikes.

His Soultrait possessed a great synergy to Shadow Cage as it expanded existing shadows at the wielder's will, creating a perfect combination for a small team of two.

Liopham's legs were pinned to the ground through the Shadow Spikes. They pierced through his calves and thighs mercilessly, drawing blood and energy. Liopham screamed out even louder than Lilica did before. However, he had yet to give up. He activated Swiftiness at full power, hoping that the Shadow Spikes weakened the Shadow Cage. The Shadow Spikes removed the shadows from Shadow Cage to manifest lethal spikes. This should result in Shadow Cage weakening.

To Liopham's relief, his guess was correct. He could force his way through the weakened Shadow Cage and move again – even though it was still hard. Liopham forcefully accelerated his movements through

Swiftness. His daggers cut through the Shadow Spikes that pinned him to the ground, and he kicked the ground to blast ahead with a burst of energy.

Unfortunately, there was nowhere for Liopham to run. All he could do was rush to Lilica and Pheli, who were also struggling against their enemies.

Pheli was still unscathed, but using Repelling Shield tens of times, and keeping up Battle Cry consumed most of her energy. She was running on low storage and was about to use her last bits of energy.

Once she was out of energy, the Kitsun would flood her. It was only a matter of time before Pheli would sustain her first injury. I think you should take a look at

Meanwhile, Liopham struggled to control his feet. Fountains of blood poured out from the punctures left behind by the Shadow Spikes. Even if he wanted to keep moving and fight, his physical condition wouldn't allow him to move much longer.

The shadows on the ground expanded once again and they would connect to the Kitsun Awakened's shadows in a second or two. By then Shadow Cage would restrain Liopham's movements once again, and a bunch of Shadow Spikes would pierce him as well.

But just as the Shadows were about to expand, Liopham's body began to glow golden. Space around him twisted and the Forest Elf disappeared from the spot. He was replaced by a fist-sized Wasp that glimmered golden.

A moment later, the Golden Stinger Wasp released two stingers aimed at Pheli and Lilica. A fist-sized spatial portal manifested, and the Golden Stinger Wasp disappeared once again. In the next moment, the Golden Stinger Wasp's swapping power was utilized once again. She switched places with Lilica and reappeared at her earlier spot.

Just as the Golden Stinger Wasp was about to disappear through the fist-sized portal once again, Shadow Spikes shot out of the ground. The Golden Stinger Wasp was about to be impaled when several Repelling Shields manifested around the fist-sized monster. The Shadow Spikes' force was repelled, providing enough time for the Golden Stinger Wasp to disappear through the portal unscathed.

Meanwhile, Pheli had overdrawn her origin energy with the last fully empowered Repelling Shield uses. She collapsed to the ground and was about to be consumed by the Shadow Cage and impaled by Shadow Spikes when her body began to shine brightly. The Golden Stinger Wasp replaced Pheli just in time.

But this time the monster ended up getting caught by the Shadow Cage. It couldn't move anymore no matter how much it struggled.

Yet, instead of struggling desperately to escape the Shadow Cage's grasp and avoid the incoming Shadow Spikes, the Golden Stinger Wasp began to glow golden. It regained its composure as it switched places once more.

This time, however, the Golden Stinger Wasp brought someone to her place.

A young human, shrouded in a vibrant golden dome appeared where the Golden Stinger Wasp disappeared.

"They're done? Well, it's better to be rescued in the middle of the battle than dying. They should have learned their lesson," Michael mumbled to himself after he appeared where Liopham, Lilica, and Pheli had been located just a few seconds ago.

The Golden Stinger Wasp left the battlefield through the Elemental Empress' spatial portal to bring the Forest Elves to Opars and Mika.

Their fight was over.

"Good job! You can leave the rest to me now!!" Michael shouted loud enough for the Forest Elves to hear.

He hoped that Tiara could hear him as well, but a single glance to the side was enough to tell that Tiara was slowly losing herself. She sustained a few minor injuries, but Michael could tell that she was unable to feel the injuries. The adrenaline coursing through her veins, and the bloodlust spreading through her entire being were enough to block the pain receptors completely.

All Tiara could feel right now was the desire to slaughter her enemies.

"Don't ignore us, peasant!" The Tier-3 Kitsun Awakened using the Shadow Cage roared.

His Shadow Cage expanded further, but Michael didn't pay much attention to him.

He expanded the Dome of Extraction and shrouded the entire surrounding in golden light. The golden light dispersed the shadows in the surroundings.

A deep frown appeared on the Kitsun's face, but Michael just chuckled,

"You don't have to try to push away the light. It won't work," He said lightly, "Your Soultrait is a little bit too trashy to work against mine."

Chapter 390 Soultrait Supremacy

The Awakened Kitsun stared daggers at Michael as he realized that his shadows were repelled by the ominous golden light that filled the surrounding entirely.

Not a single inch in a radius of five meters around Michael was able to capture the Kitsun's shadows. Everything was saturated in a bright golden sheen.

"Like I said. It won't work," Michael repeated as a light chuckle escaped his lips.

Watching a Tier-3 Awakened struggle to use his Soultrait against him felt oddly satisfying. The inferiority of Shadow Cage was revealed at this moment.

'Is Shadow Cage a 3-Star Soultrait? No, it shouldn't be. I doubt the Dome of Extraction is powerful enough to repel the power of a 3-Star Soultrait. Even if it could, the Dome of Extraction would drain more energy than it does usually. My consumption is close to zero, right now.'

Michael channeled more energy into the Dome of Extraction and strode closer to the Awakened Kitsun. The two Kitsun narrowed their eyes seeing how confident Michael was. They were Tier-3 Awakened, yet the youthful Tier-2 Lord in front of them showed no signs of hesitation as he approached them.

His strides were slow but steady and confident, his gaze calm and composed.

"Who the hell are you?!" The Awakened with the Shadow Spike Soultrait screamed at the top of his lungs. He stepped back and condensed the shadows around him into large shadow spikes.

The shadow spikes were released with a burst of energy, propelling through the air straight at Michael.

Michael moved his right leg back and twisted his body a little to evade the shadow spikes with as little movements as possible. The Shadow Spikes shot past him and dispersed as the Dome of Extraction devoured their energy slowly.

"But this should be a 3-Star Soultrait. The spikes are quite sturdy and fast as well. The power is definitely above an ordinary 3-Star Soultrait. However, you're restricted. You are dependent on the shadows around you. Glacicle is still better," Michael said loud enough for the two Awakened to hear.

Both of them were too stunned and stared blankly at Michael, unsure what to respond. What was he even talking about? How did he analyze Soultrait's superior attack power, and its deficit so quickly?

Michael smiled brightly. Using Eagle Eyes and Spirit Gaze together was truly a heavenly combination. The Soultraits allowed him to analyze the power of his enemies with great precision. Not even their Soultraits could escape Michael's eyes. His attention to detail was truly spectacular at this point.

Of course, his enemies didn't have to know any of that.

'I wonder what others think about my powers. What would these idiots think if they knew that I have several more 5-Star Soultraits than all of them combined together? Would they fall into depression? Would they rage? OR would they try to capture me to extract my Extraction Soultrait?'

Michael was unsure why these thoughts flashed through his mind at this moment, but they didn't really make him feel good. It was a weird feeling; a tinge of discomfort mixed with fear of the unknown future.

Michael hated this feeling. It was a weakness. His fear of the unknown future, and his worry of the reaction of other people once they found out about his Soultrait always made him uncomfortable.

Michael knew that he worried too much about it. It was a needless worry because he had told the EmeraldLeaf Adventurer team about Extraction already.

But, of course, it would be a little bit different to tell other humans about Extraction because they could hunt him down and attempt to steal his Soultrait or make use of Extraction through force. The EmeraldLeaf Adventurer was under a Link of Loyalty as well. They couldn't do anything against him even if they wanted to – especially since they were only five members with no more Forest Elven Awakened nearby.

'Why am I even thinking about this?' He asked himself in frustration.

In a fit of rage, Michael created six enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords. He kicked his feet off the ground and dashed forward. The six enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords rotated around him calmly, but it didn't take long until they burst past Michael. They shot toward the shadow duo, who struggled visibly as they felt the immense power residing within the enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords.

Being unable to use their Soultraits, the two Kitsun Awakened ended up as mere Tier-3 Awakened. Usually, the physical strength of Tier-3 Awakened would play a crucial role in one's combat prowess. It was a major contributing factor since the external enhancement of most Artifacts depended on the physical strength, the refinement of the mind, and the essence of the soul.

However, as they belonged to the Kitsun race, the two Awakened couldn't even exploit their superior physical strength. They weren't a lot stronger than Michael, who still had numerous Soultraits at his disposal.

The Kitsun Awakened released their combat techniques and channeled origin energy through their bodies. They wielded their weapons and blocked the first enhanced Qi Glacicle Sword. But just as the Glacicle Sword collided with the Kitsun's blade something unexpected happened. The Glacicle Swords burst apart, releasing a tremendous amount of freezing mist in the surrounding area.

The freezing mist formed a dense cloak around the Kitsun, which made it much more difficult for him to pinpoint and block the remaining four enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords.

Two enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords cut the arms of one Kitsun before they shattered, releasing more freezing mist into the world. On the other hand, the last two Glacicle Swords missed their target as the other Kitsun retreated several steps. The Glacicle Swords exploded but they didn't injure the Kitsun any further.

Michael's eyes narrowed when he noticed that the Kitsun split up. One of them abandoned his friend.

'If you insist that I kill your friend first...okay. I can do that!' Michael said in his mind, changing his target to the Kitsun, whom he had injured already.

He twisted his body and entered the freezing mist without any hesitation. Using Glacicle, he could sense everything within the freezing mist. He could not yet control the freezing mist. However, there was something else he could do. Using the massive amount of freezing mist in his surroundings, Michael could create new Glacicles with extremely low energy consumption.

Now that he was inside the freezing mist, the Dome of Extraction reached the Kitsun as well. He couldn't even try to tap into the power of Shadow Cage because there was no response. The Kitsun sensed that he would have to retreat several steps before Shadow Cage could be utilized once again.

But just as the Kitsun was about to do that, Michael's outlines appeared in front of the Kitsun. Smiling at the stupidity of the peasant Lord, the Kitsun raised his weapon high into the air. He cleaved down just as Michael thrust the Wyverntooth Spear forward.

Yet, instead of completing his attack, Michael stopped in the middle of his tracks. He used Spirit Disturbance at full power to hit the Kitsun heavily. The Kitsun didn't expect an attack on a spiritual level. Therefore, he was exposed to the full extent of Spirit Disturbance.

The Kitsun groaned loudly. He struggled to keep his ground and cursed loudly as he forced his attack to continue. His downward cleave cut through the freezing mist, splitting it apart as the origin energy channeled into the blade began to pulsate. A thin membrane of energy coated the Kitsun's longsword. All he had to do was to cut through Michael to slice him apart in one go.

But Michael wasn't hit that easily. He didn't blindly charge at the Kitsun without a plan either.

By the time the Kitsun cleaved downward, Michael had already moved aside. At the same time, several Glacicle Swords appeared around the Kitsun. They were enhanced through Enhancement and the Reinforced Sword Qi Soultrait. Both were applied to the Glacicle Swords, enhancing their destructive power drastically.

Unable to spin his body around due to the momentum of his downward cleave, the Kitsun could only stare at Michael's face which was filled with smiles and mockery.

In the next moment, the enhanced Qi Glacicle Swords pierced the Awakened Kitsun from all sides.

The Kitsun grit his teeth and tried to strike Michael once again. But before he could land another blow, Michael decided to release the Qi that shrouded the Glacicle Swords inside the Kitsun's body. The Kitsun spit out blood and his upper body inflated. The Qi spread quickly through the Kitsun's body inflicting severe damage. But that wasn't even the worst.

Worse than the Qi coursing through the Kitsun with ill Intentions were the Sword Glacicles that burst into millions of particles. The Sword Glacicles turned into a compressed smoke of freezing mist that ravaged the insides of the Kitsun, flowing through his veins and bloodstream.

Michael applied several layers of Enhancement right after he evaded the Kitsun's cleave. Michael was unlike before. He was not inferior to the Kitsun in terms of physical strength anymore!

Michael lowered his body and pushed upward with newly gained speed and strength.

He turned into a flash, and the Wyvenrtooth Spear alongside him also turned into a blur. It swept through the freezing mist, humming dangerously.

One sweep was all it took. Warm blood spurted through the freezing mist. It filled the air for a moment before it solidified in the chilly air and fell down to the ground frozen solid.

Michael created a few more Glacicle Swords around the Kitsun, but he didn't have to release them. A torrent of energy entered his body. It was the energy influx of the Kitsun in front of him. He was dead.

'That was...easier than expected...' Michael thought, his gaze moving over to the other Kitsun, who had retreated even further. The Kitsun disappeared into the crowd of scared Guards, leaving his comrade and everyone else behind.

"Disperse"

The freezing mist dispersed on his command, and he looked around to find Tiara. She was the only one left with him if he excluded the Elemental Empress and the Stinger Wasp.

However, what he found astonished him quite a bit. His eyes narrowed at the commotion that originated not too far from his position.

"What is going on with Tiara over there?!"