

Supreme Lord 511

Chapter 511 Changes

"After you killed the Kitsun Lord, you didn't annex his land in the Savannah Region. The three Lords of the Trilance annexed the Kitsun Lord's former territory, therefore expanding their territory drastically in a matter of days. There was only one major problem: The three Lords' military power had been on a constant low because of the Kitsun Lord's attacks. Therefore, expanding their territory drastically forced the three Lords to spread their already low number of Soldiers all over their newly claimed territory. The other enemies of the Kitsun Lord and the three Lords' opponents used this opportunity to attack. That was why the Trilance was formed. The three Lords combined their forces to protect their lands from invaders, each Lord protecting one border."

Michael listened intently. He understood that leaving the Savannah region to the Zynur, Valyr, and the Laprix might not have been the best decision. But then again, it looked like they managed to handle most issues.

"Since the border to the Untamed Jungle doesn't need much protection other than some Soldiers to hunt down the monsters that may accidentally stumble into the Savannah region, the Trilance has to protect the north, south, and west. Each Lord takes care of one border, therefore decreasing the pressure weighing down on them. That is a pretty good idea. What is the problem then?" Michael asked Opars, who continued to explain the situation.

"The problem is that there has never been an alliance in the Savannah Region. There had been a loose connection between the Zynur Lords, Valyr Lordess, and the Laprix Lord, but that had been uniformly acknowledged as necessary by the other Lords of the Savannah Region. Every Lord in the Savannah acknowledged the Kitsun Lord as the biggest threat due to the Cloud Domain."

"With the death of the Kitsun Lord, the loose bond between the Zynur Lord, Valyr Lordess, and the Laprix Lord was supposed to cease to exist. However, it turned into the Trilance because the surrounding Lords decided to grasp the opportunity and attack them. The Lords decided that it was fair to attack the other Lords, but they were against the Alliance. Therefore, a multitude of alliances were formed over a few weeks and the entire Savannah Region was caught in the flames of war. To summarize the issue of the Savannah Region, I can only say that a chain of unfortunate events turned into a full-blown Region War."

Michael swallowed hard. Region Wars were unpredictable. An entire region at war was definitely not something Michael wanted to get pulled into. However, he quickly realized something that made him frown deeply.

"The Trilance has a decent relationship with me and the Untamed Jungle, but other Lords might try to conquer the Untamed Jungle to procure the rare resources from within. Once the Trilance falls, I might have to join the Region War, even if I don't want to," Michael murmured, "That means I need to make sure the Trilance won't collapse."

It was only obvious but if Michael wanted to avoid fighting the Lords in the Savannah region, his cushion – the Trilance – would have to survive.

Michael had nothing against fighting a Lord or two, but he didn't really want to join the Region War. It was not worth it since Michael had enough Inferior Energy Stones and other resources to strengthen himself, his subjects, and exchange the Inferior Energy Stones with resources needed to develop his territory. Other than that, Michael also had plenty of things to do outside the Origin Expanse. He was willing to start selling some of the Soultrait Symbols stored inside the emerald box. They would earn him a fortune which could then be invested into his territory once again.

Michael might have the means to fight other Lords mindlessly as of today, but he was not stupid enough to waste his time fighting enemies he didn't have to fight. If anything, Michael should focus on earning more money to purchase all the necessary goods to build the Intermediate and Advanced level of the Sacred Knight Temple, expand his army, and improve the living standard of his subjects gradually.

"You should ask the Trilance what resources they need to guard their settlements and borders. I am pretty sure that our blacksmiths can do a pretty good job building large-scale weapons," Michael ordered Opars right before his mind drifted to Zeroa, "The Elemental Empress can probably help the blacksmiths. Projectiles channeled with elemental crystals or elemental energy should be quite helpful, for example,"

Michael could think of a few ideas to support the Trilance, fortify their defenses and maybe even help their military force by supplying a bunch of resources. Of course, he would ask for an equivalent exchange of materials. Michael was not opening a charity organization, after all. Nonetheless, it was more important to ensure the Trilance's survival for the time being.

"Are you sure that you want to support the Trilance this much? What if they turn against us?" Mika asked lightly. He blurted out his thoughts without thinking.

"Interesting thought, but unnecessary. If they go against us, I will bulldoze them long before they can reach our settlement," Michael responded similarly lightly.

If nothing much about the Trilance changed while Michael was away, the Valyr had only one Lowest-rank Tier-4 Higher Lifeform. Meanwhile, the Zynur didn't have a single Higher Lifeform. As for the Laprix, Michael was not too sure. They might have one Higher Lifeform or two at most.

Higher Lifeforms might be scary to fight, but Michael doubted that the Zynur, Valyr, or Laprix owned Soul Techniques; otherwise, they would have been able to deal with the Kitsun Lord a long time ago.

Michael had Soul Techniques, and it was only a matter of time before he created more. His War Rune would reach Tier-3 soon, and he could unleash his full power inside the Origin Expanse. After all, Zeroa and Sun Demos were in the Origin Expanse, which meant that he could use the full potential of the Taming Soultrait.

Maybe he would have been a little bit worried if he were to encounter someone like Killian as a Higher Lifeform on the battlefield. But if someone was as strong as Killian would be once he advanced to Tier-4, they would have already conquered the Savannah Region.

"I don't want any trouble right now. That's the most important. I can deal with future troubles merely fine. There is no require to worry," Michael mumbled. He cleared his throat and switched to the next topic, "So what's the issue with the Zentika Empire? They haven't been close to the Untamed Jungle for a while and given that nobody seems to be worried regarding the border to the Zentika Empire I can only presume that the Zentika Empire didn't even bother to approach our borders. Or am I wrong?"

This time none of the Forest Elves answered. The border to the Zentika Empire hadn't been their focus. Luckily, Tiara answered.

"The Zentika Empire is quite hard to figure out. The border to the Zentika Empire is unprotected, so I decided to infiltrate the empire with Icarus. We were a little bit bored training all day, so we chose to spend some time in the Zentika Empire. Of course, we stayed close to the border to return once someone discovered us. But that never really happened. The land below us drifted past as we moved closer to the inside of the Zentika Empire and we finally found some settlements. There were many small towns and villages, but also a bunch of cities. However, none of them was well protected," Tiara exposed her adventurous side with a bright expression on her face.

She then pointed at her ears as she continued, "I used a special technique that allows me to momentarily increase my hearing sense. I could eavesdrop on the comments made by the residents within the cities. Apparently, the vast majority of the Zentika Empire's military power had been called to the Ice Mountains. Taros turned against the Zentika Empire with the Dragon he bound to his blood, and they seemed to be wreaking havoc. That's all I know."

Michael had a hard time ignoring Tiara's twitching tail. It swished left and right like crazy as she told about her finds even though most of her information seemed rather difficult to make use of.

"So the Zentika Empire is busy dealing with Taros...and his Dragon? I didn't know Taros even had a dragon in the first place," Michael asked again, his eyes following Tiara's tail.

Michael never bothered asking Taros regarding his territory, or subjects. He didn't really attention about that brute, muscular guy to begin with. Michael fought him once but that was it.

"I have no idea since when he started raising a dragon either. But I was wondering if that was somehow related to the Lord Rift since Taros' attacks happened only a few months after we came back from the Lord Rift," Tiara mumbled, not sure if Michael could handle this information.

"You think Taros was accountable for the Red Dragon's rage?" Michael asked, but Tiara could only answer with a shrug, "I have no idea."

Michael fell deep in thought.

'What if Taros started raising a Dragon after the Lord Rift closed? Is it possible that the Red Dragon was a mother, who's been searching for her egg? Is that possible? ...if that's the case, does it mean that Taros stole the Dragon Mother's egg, resulting in the chaotic situation at the end of the Lord Rift? That would mean...Taros is accountable for Danny's second death..."

Michael understood that the probability for this scenario to be true was very low. But it was not zero.

Rage and anger filled his heart.

"Find out if the dragon is a young Red Dragon."

Chapter 512 My Monsters

After Michael got to know what happened in the Savannah Region and the Zentika Empire, he learned a lot about the changes in the last four weeks.

The Bilrox Ranch had been reconstructed into a large Bilrox Nest. Because the Bilrox were not held captive anymore, a simple reconstruction was the easiest way to make them feel at home in the nest. Fortunately, the Bilrox Queen was of the same opinion. She built a nest at the highest point in the Bilrox Nest and organized her kind to make sure that they wouldn't run too far into the wilderness without any protection.

The Bilrox laid over a hundred eggs and it was only a matter of time before the newest generation of Bilrox chicken would hatch. Everyone was curious about the newest generation of Bilrox, not only because it was the first generation born after the birth of the Bilrox Queen, but also because some of the Bilrox eggs had been laid by Elemental Bilrox and other recently transmuted Bilrox. Once the Bilrox eggs hatched, the variety of Bilrox living in the Untamed Jungle – in Michael's territory – would expand rapidly.

Michael was curious about the existing transmutations and evolutions of the mature Bilrox and he found out various interesting facts. The Bilrox gained special Perks thanks to the natural influence the Bilrox Queen emanated. Slowly but steadily, all Bilrox would gain one or multiple Perks, changing the Bilrox's appearance and their set of abilities. All they had to do was stay close to the Bilrox Queen.

It was great to have the Bilrox Queen in his territory. She controlled the Bilrox much better than any Tamer could and she enhanced the strength of her kind just by existing. Michael considered her a cute and fluffy cheat code.

But the Bilrox Queen was not the only one who was cute and fluffy. The little Greater Eagle younglings hatched from Icarus and Ariadne's eggs were just as cute and fluffy as the Bilrox Queen.

Icarus and Ariadne's Nest was located near a new Monster Ranch that had been constructed not too long ago. The two Greater Eagles didn't want to be too close to the center of the territory but they

didn't want to be isolated from the happenings within Michael's territory either. Their nest was perched high in the air, just below the canopy of three enormous trees. The Greater Eagles' Nest was huge. It connected three enormous trees, occupying enough space to construct two large treehouse complexes.

Michael didn't spend too much time with the little Greater Eagles but he didn't neglect them either. He promised himself that he would visit the Greater Eagle Nest in the future to visit the little eaglets every now and then. They should get to know him first before the Links of Loyalty were established.

Other than the Bilrox and the Greater Eagles, Michael decided to visit the other tamed monsters in his territory as well. That did not only include the monsters he summoned through the Summoning Gate but also Sun Demos and Zeroa. He visited Sun Demos in the area of the fiendish trees. It was not exactly close to the settlement in his territory, however, crossing the distance to Sun Demos was something Michael accomplished within a few minutes. He walked through the canopy bridges that had evolved into an extensive network.

Interestingly enough, the canopy bridge network altered a lot. It was far better hidden than before and almost impossible to make out from the ground due to the existence of three particular Enchantments. The three enchantments had been engraved on a small steel plate and merged to become a single Rune to generate a cost-efficient solution to the problems caused due to the sheer size and ease with which an enemy could spot the network of the canopy bridge from a distance.

The Rune was fused by making use of the Ambient Energy enchantment, the Muffler enchantment, and the camouflage enchantment. Fused into one, the Rune's effects turned out to be pretty simple. Ambient Energy ensured that the surrounding energy was absorbed and utilized, whereas Muffler decreased the volume of sounds in a certain range. Last but not least, camouflage did exactly what one expected from the enchantment. It merged the object attached to the enchantment with the surroundings seamlessly.

The fused Rune had been engraved on a steel plate but the steel plate had been integrated into the canopy bridge network, therefore hiding the canopy bridge, and silencing the noises made by those traversing with the canopy bridges. More than 1,000 steel plates had to be enchanted with fused Runes to cover every inch of the canopy bridge network with the Muffler and Camouflage Enchantment. That was not done in the blink of an eye, but it took a while.

Fortunately, Michael had more than enough Enchanter Novices, who were in dire need of experience, and resources to practice. Michael provided everything the Enchanter Novices required. Therefore, they had a pleasant time practicing their skills in merged Runes while simultaneously aiding the development of the territory.

Michael inspected the fused Runes on his way to Sun Demos, and he realized that their effect was much better than he anticipated. It was pretty amazing and would be of tremendous help once foreign Lords ventured to invade the Untamed Jungle – and Michael's territory. Michael, his archers, and everyone else could bombard his enemies from the canopy bridge network eons before the canopy bridges were found.

Even if their enemies would find the canopy bridge network, Michael and his subjects had transformed numerous trees into full-fledged defensive towers. They looked like ordinary trees and were still alive and flourishing. However, parts of their insides had been carved out to create hideouts for the watchguards. Large-scale weapons had also been integrated into the watchtower trees, turning each of those trees into a terrifying obstacle one had to cross to get close to the settlement.

Most enemies would probably be dead before they noticed each defensive tower and the various other means of defense that had been installed over the course of the last few weeks.

'I never grasped why the Kitsun Lord destroyed the Untamed Jungle to create his settlements in the traditional way. My settlement is well hidden and the defenses will take far more lives than traditional settlements could have taken when attacked,' Michael thought as he crossed the last portion of the canopy bridge network.

The network was not yet perfect, but Michael was fairly certain that it was only a matter of time before it would be near perfect. His territory's development was fast enough. There was no need to worry.

[It has been a while, Master. What brings you to my little kingdom?] Sun Demos' voice popped up in Michael's mind and he turned to his right where he saw the Blood Oath Demon Monkey King emerge from the thicket.

In the past, Michael would have deemed Sun Demos extremely powerful. Unfortunately, that wasn't the case anymore. Sun Demos might be a Superior Existence and he had great control of his subordinates, but that was already it. Michael's physical strength surpassed Sun Demos' strength easily. That was not even owned to Superior Constitution. It was just a fact that Sun Demos didn't progress as fast as his master.

The Blood Oath Demon Monkey King was not yet at the limit of his racial potential since he was the king of his kind, but he was slowly nearing his racial limitation. That was also why Michael resolved to visit Sun Demos' little kingdom, where more than 900 Blood Oath Demon Monkeys resided at this moment.

"I brought a bunch of Inferior Energy Stones and Apex Nutrition Serums. There are also a few Memory Crystals filled with Body Refinement Techniques, a technique called Leviathan Diffusion, and so on. All of this should help you reach your racial limitation in the next few weeks. After that, you can try to break past your racial limitations. I have no idea what you might require to break your racial limit or how to aid your evolution, but if you can instinctively tell what resources and materials you need to evolve yourself and your kind, don't hesitate to tell me," Michael said, his eyes locked with the darkness in Sun Demos' eyes.

"I can tell that you're getting restless. Your kind is strong enough to become the Overlord of the Untamed Jungle's outskirts, at least this part of the outskirts, but you want to continue fighting alongside me. I can sense that through our bond, so don't even try to deny it. I'll try to research more about monster evolutions and racial limitations, but that might take a while because I have too many things that require my full attention. Too much happened in the last few weeks, and I neglected my territory for too long as well. There is a lot for me to do!"

Sun Demos stared back at Michael. He retrieved the spatial satchel he'd obtained from his master a few months ago and handed it back to Michael. Michael transferred the resources he had been wanting to give Sun Demos and threw the spatial satchel over to Sun Demos again.

No more words were exchanged, but Sun Demos and Michael knew what the other was thinking and feeling. The firmness of their taming bond allowed them to communicate without speaking aloud, or through telepathy.

At last, Michael broke the silence.

"Take care of your kingdom and make sure to tell me if you need something. You can also talk to me when you're bored or confused about something. I can always make time for you. All you have to do is talk. Communication is the key, you know?" He said with a smile on his lips.

The Blood Oath Demon Monkey King continued staring at Michael for a while before he nodded.

[I'm glad that you're back.]

Chapter 513 Lil Army

One of the most interesting encounters after he returned to the Origin Expanse was to meet the Elemental Empress once again. The large underground hall had developed into a proper home for the Elementals and the first batches of elemental crystals could be harvested soon.

Zeroa jumped at Michael and she coated him in her mythical flames. It was great that her flames didn't burn him, otherwise, her excitement would have turned him into a pile of ash. Given his natural fire resistance, the mythical flames of his tamed monster kept him warm. That was it.

[You're back! Finally! I was already getting worried. You never stayed away from your territory this long!] Zeroa shouted in his mind, inflicting a mild headache.

Michael smiled lightly.

"Your society is expanding rapidly. Looks like you're working very hard. Good job, Zeroa!" Michael praised the Elemental Empress, patting her lightly.

Stalagmites of elemental crystals covered the ground whereas small crystallized stalactites could be found hanging down from the ceiling every now and then. Michael focused his attention on the changes of the Underground Hall, just to see that there were hundreds of Fire Elementals going on with their business.

[Of course, I'm working hard. We've already combined our forces with the Underground Forging Hall to accelerate their forging process. The elemental crystals are also very useful for them. They can create Ranked Armaments with unique traits. That should help the territory's military force to fight stronger enemies with more ease. There are Swords that can be coated in flames with bits of energy, or metal shields that can be coated in layers of water, or earth. In fact, there is much more, but I was so busy creating an Elemental Baron that I had barely any time to focus on something else!]

The Elemental Empress sounded excited. That was probably because she was exhilarated and overjoyed. Since she was not chained to any walls and could move around freely, the Elemental Empress enjoyed

herself thoroughly. Zeroa did whatever she wanted to do, which was to create her own society, oddly enough.

The former lizard cave had turned into a highly productive underground structure where the Blacksmiths, Miners, and Elementals lived together in great harmony.

"So you're getting started with the Nobility already? That's pretty fast. Congratulations!" Michael was happy that Zeroa was comfortable in the underground hall.

Her taming bond was much firmer than ever and Michael could tell that it would grow much thicker in the next few months. That was a pleasant surprise, just like the appearance of the first Elemental Baron.

[It's going to take another week or two, but the Blazing Baron will be born soon enough. Stay patient!] Zeroa said, giggling childishly.

It was great that Zeroa could relive her childhood – something that the Kitsun Lord had taken from her. Michael talked to the Elemental Empress for quite a while until he decided that it was time for him to leave. He had yet to visit the Underground Forging Hall. However, instead of letting Michael leave, Zeroa decided to go with him.

She hadn't seen Michael for several weeks, and the time they spent together before his departure was also not that much. Michael had been busy training and growing stronger in the months before the Interdimensional Flag War.

Now that he was not that busy anymore, Zeroa wanted to make use of Michael's free time. Thus, she continued to stay attached to him like a little leech – a cute one though.

There were many other places Michael had to visit with each of them being quite arduous and time-consuming. First he went over to the Underground Forging Hall to observe the Blacksmith's work and note down how much everyone had improved. Once he was done, Michael traveled to the Alchemists' Lairs to have a lengthy discussion with his Alchemists, Mystic Alchemists, and the Researchers for quite a while.

Apparently, the Researchers and Mystic Alchemists created a bunch of new potions. Not all of them had been tested yet but it looked like they were existing potions that had been altered and mixed with other components, therefore creating better potions more-or-less with cheaper materials.

In fact, the materials were not exactly cheaper in the market. It was merely that Michael's territory possessed the materials in large quantities. This included the bones of specific monsters, monster blood, elemental crystals, the petals of certain elemental plants, and a variety of other plants that had been planted in the farm all over his territory weeks ago.

To put it in simple terms, the new potions were upgraded versions and mixtures of other potions that had been formed with materials Michael's territory had in surplus. That was amazing, especially for the Archers and Mage Novices in his territory. After all, two potions heightened one's focus for half a day. By sharpening their focus, Mage Novices could learn new spells faster, whereas Archers could train for a much longer duration, fully focused on their practice.

These two potions worked on others as well but the results were the most impactful for Archers and Mage Novices.

Thinking about the progress of his army, Michael chose to visit the Sacred Knight Temple as well. He'd seen the Immortal Knight before, but he didn't ask him about the progress of the Sacred Squires and Holy Knights that time. Michael wanted to wait until he reached the Sacred Knight Temple to take everything in and observe the changes within his territory.

Despite being able to sense the Links of Loyalty of his subjects and the changes they underwent as his subjects were promoted to a higher star-rating, Michael waited patiently until the Immortal Knight arrived in front of him.

"I was already waiting for you. You've grown much stronger in the last few weeks, though I presume that you still haven't learned a proper combat technique," The Immortal Knight said, already trying to lecture Michael, "It's great that you can rely on your Soultraits this much. It is also amazing how powerful you can grow by strengthening your Soultraits, but I hope that you can find some techniques that fit your combat style!"

Initially, Michael wanted to smile through the Immortal Knight's lectures, but he decided against it at some point.

He summoned Aethyr in the Tigerfang form and started to shape the Aethyr in his hands slowly.

"My Lord...is that...Aether?!?" The Immortal Knight asked, both frightened and exhilarated.

Aether was the reason the Immortal Knight died. Too many powerhouses took note of him in the Origin Expanse and it was only a matter of time before he died, struck to death by thousands of enemies. All of them desired to obtain his Aether, yet none was able to procure it.

"It is not exactly Aether. It has a trace of Aether inside but it's called Aethyr. It's a semi-sentient alloy that has some capabilities of Aether, including growing stronger, and transforming into dozens of Armaments. It is bound to me as well. The downside is that the Aethyr is a lot weaker in all aspects than Aether, but that is quite obvious. The content of Aether in Aethyr is like 0.000001 or something like that," Michael explained to the Immortal Knight, whose expression eased up quite a bit.

He was still excited but the fright and worry in his heart died down. If the Aether content in Aethyr was truly that low, Michael wouldn't have to be worried about the attacks of powerhouses. The amount of Aether was not enough to wake up the true powerhouses.

But then Michael chose to reveal some more information about Aethyr, which caused the Immortal Knight to stiffen once again.

"However, there is something odd about Aethyr. I can infuse SoulStar Fragments into it. Doing so strengthened my bond with Aethyr and it allows me to transform Aethyr into far more Armaments than I have been informed I could. I have yet to research the phenomenon but I believe that infusing SoulStar Fragments into Aethyr nourished the Aether inside."

"So...you're telling me that you can grow your own Aether using these SoulStar Fragments that you use to upgrade Soultraits?" Siegfried asked, his face as pale as a sheet of paper.

"Basically, yeah." Michael responded, "Of course, I could be wrong. I might be entirely wrong and I am merely strengthening the entire weapon because the alloy has a great synergy with Aether, transforming the entire alloy into a new object, which can coincidentally absorb SoulStar Fragments. But...I believe I can nurture and grow Aether with my SoulStar Fragments."

Michael was fully aware that the Immortal Knight's worries were not unfounded. He saw his subjects' eyes and could tell that the Immortal Knight was truly scared.

"Don't nourish your Aethyr too much for the time being. I know that it would be great to generate enough Aether to replace the Aethyr, but you do not want to turn into the center of attention for dozens of Divine Lifeforms, believe me. Dozens might be an understatement. I don't remember how many Awakened and Lords attacked me and my people. There were way too many to count."

Michael answered with a nod. It was not like he was in dire need of Aether merely yet. Aethyr was useful for him until he reached the Peak of Tier-3. By then, Michael could infuse some SoulStar Fragments to increase Aethyr's limitation just a little – just enough to increase it to Tier-4 and start integrating some Enchantments upon the weapon.

Michael had planned a lot with his Aethyr, as well as the SoulStar Fragments that rested inside his War Rune. He had various plans, all he was missing to execute them was enough time to prepare everything meticulously.

"Since you're revealing such shocking news to me, I guess you won't be too surprised when I tell you that the number of Sacred Squires exceeds 2,000 at this point. Yesterday we managed to welcome the 52th Holy Knight as well," Siegfried revealed with a smile before he turned around to look at the Sacred Knight Temple.

"Maybe, I should step up the game to make sure that the territory will be protected a bit better in the future. After all, it looks like we're going to welcome Divine Lifeforms once your Aether and ability are exposed to the ever-expanding Origin Expanse."

The Immortal Knight laughed, but Michael could tell that it was a forced laughter.

Meanwhile, Michael merely smiled. He was not yet worried. There was no need to worry just yet.

All he had to do was grow stronger and play his cards well. That was all it took.

Chapter 514 Progress

Michael was a bit surprised when he heard that he had more than 2,000 Blessed Squires and 52 Holy Knights. He didn't expect his army to expand this quickly. The Basic level of the Sacred Knight Temple was truly unique.

The high efficiency of the Basic Sacred Knight Temple intrigued Michael and it made him wonder how much greater it would be to have the Intermediate, or Advanced level of the Sacred Knight Temple. He desired to upgrade the Sacred Knight Temple as soon as possible. This feeling intensified when he watched two Holy Knights spar.

One of the Holy Knights wore a heavy armor set. He brandished a large war axe in both of his hands and swung it down on the nimble Holy Knight who wore a leather armor with steel plates covering the most vital areas. The nimble Holy Knight was not as bulky but he was dexterous, and could wield two shortwords with great precision.

Both were considered Holy Knights even though they used vastly different armaments. It allowed the Holy Knights to be more versatile than Spearmen or other ordinary Combat Summons.

The nimbler Holy Knight, who Michael imagined to be named Nimbus, twisted his body until his face contorted in pain to evade the incoming axe cleave narrowly. Bulkan – the bulky Holy Knight channeled Holy Power into the war axe to pull it faster out of the ground. He then executed one of the methods he learned recently to fortify his defenses and amplify his physical strength a little. Bulkan might not be as nimble as Nimbus, but he was not going down that easily.

Nimbus executed a cross-slash imbued with Holy Power but Bulkan blocked the attack with the flat side of his war axe. A white hue shrouded Nimbus' legs and he accelerated all of a sudden, using a movement technique that required a considerable amount of Holy Power to be utilized.

Bulkan eyed Nimbus' movements intently. He predicted his enemies' first attack move and took a stride forward. The incoming shortword was blocked, and as a result, the trajectory altered right before Bulkan appeared only a few centimeters in front of Nimbus. Bulkan headbutted Nimbus, or he tried to, only for him to miss Nimbus' head and meet with the pommel of Nimbus' shortword.

Nimbus couldn't evade the attack completely, but he was barely fast enough to snap his head back, spin his other shortword around, and pull it upward in a sudden movement. Blood spurted out of Bulkan's nose when the hard pommel of Nimbus' shortword impacted hard. Some of the spectators around the sparring grounds could swear to have heard Bulkan's nose breaking. A loud crunch rang through their ears, causing various expressions to appear all over the spectators' faces.

However, Bulkan was not yet done. He circulated Holy Power through his nose as he pulled back. His expression was contorted in pain, but his eyes were fully focused on his opponent. Nimbus charged ahead; his blades coated in Holy Power. He executed the Sacred Knight Sword Style at an elementary level, issuing various slashes that were not only enough to push Bulkan's war axe to the side but also inflict several wounds all over the less protected areas of Bulkan's body.

Bulkan manifested a shield of Holy Power around his left arm to block an attack and he used his superior strength to push Nimbus' arm to the side. He let go of the war axe and punched Nimbus in the face, ignoring the other shortsword in Nimbus' hands. Nimbus cut Bulkan through a seam in his armor, but Bulkan ignored that. He continued to punch Nimbus until he fell back.

Nimbus was lying on the ground on his back with Bulkan towering over him.

"Stop! That's enough," The Immortal Knight intervened before the situation could go too bad, "Both of you are dead. Congratulations."

Siegfried applauded the two Holy Knights sarcastically.

However, Bulkan didn't want to acknowledge that.

"He stabbed into my sides, okay. BUT that is only a minor wound. I can use some Holy Power to execute the Minor Mending technique and heal both my broken nose and the stab wound easily. I am far from dead!" He declared, looking over to Nimbus before he added, "However this guy would be beaten into a pulp in the next minute. My metal gloves would have worked wonders against such a pretty face."

"Maybe you could have survived this battle, but your Holy Power would be drained, and you would have no chance to deal with a second opponent on the same level. What about a third one? How about hundreds? How many enemies do you think you will have to fight with your comrades once we're at war with other Lords? Do you think that you can afford to sustain injuries like this, willingly at that? That's suicidal, and I DO NOT want to train suicidal blokes. I'm training survival experts. Do you UNDERSTAND??"

Bulkan grunted but he nodded his head. He could see where Immortal Knight was coming from and it was not like it didn't make sense. Being victorious in a single battle could feel great, but warfare was

never just a single fight. It was a humongous battle against countless enemies – enemies that had to be defeated with great teamwork and the support of your allies.

Bulkan stared down at Nimbus and extended his hand to help him get up. Nimbus responded by grasping his hand and pulling himself up from the ground.

The Immortal Knight glanced over at Michael, whose expression was hard to read.

"What do you think, my Lord?" He asked.

"It's not perfect, of course, but that is mostly because they haven't had enough time to get used to their weapons, armor, and the versatility of their techniques. I can tell that they learned many methods that demand Holy Power, but they're not yet experienced with using Holy Power. It is not difficult to see that they're still learning the basics," Michael responded.

He thought about something for a moment before adding, "But I guess that makes sense. They shouldn't have been promoted to Holy Knights too long ago. The experiences and memories that had been engraved into their body upon being promoted seem quite useful, but they're not game-changers without giving the Holy Knight enough time to adapt to everything."

The Immortal Knight agreed with Michael's conclusion, "As long as the Holy Knights are given a few months, they can turn into powerhouses of the Elite-Class. They could not be able to deal with Superior Existences, but they can combine their forces and hunt down Superior Existences with ease. For now, however, they need more training and resources. And, of course, more experience. It's a good thing that the population of monsters in the Untamed Jungle has been exceedingly high these days. The Sacred Squires and Holy Knights can easily gather experience in this region!"

Michael had heard about the overpopulation of monsters within the Untamed Jungle before. He presumed that it was due to the Kitsun bodies that hadn't been collected before the Untamed Jungle devoured them. Or maybe it was because of something else. At the end of the day, the reason for the overpopulation of monsters in the Untamed Jungle didn't matter.

It was a good turn of events, especially for his Warriors. Hunting down Tier-1 and Tier-2 Monsters provided a considerable amount of energy to his Summons. And since the Blessed Squires and Holy Knights owned energy circulation methods that converted the energy influx into Holy Power without

losing too much energy in the conversation process, they could increase their rank and Tier rather quickly.

Of course, it was not an instant process, but the Holy Knights and Sacred Squires could gain experience while also improving their rank and Tier efficiently.

Michael talked a little bit more with the Immortal Knight about the events of the last four weeks. After talking for a little over an hour, Michael decided to take a look at the development of the farms in his territory. That was one of the most crucial factors in his territory as it combined the advantageous effects of the Nature Spirit Tree, the Forest Pixie, the Botanica Magicians, the Farmers, and the Untamed Jungle.

The farms became even more crucial now that the Nature Spirit was evolving and that the Forest Pixie had fully matured. It was especially weird since more Pixies seemed to hover around the Nature Spirit. Michael had no idea how it happened, and it was also quite confusing for the Forest Elves, who could only make guesses as to where the Pixies came from. Nonetheless, it was advantageous just like the appearance of a dozen Earth, Wind, and Water Elementals that had been sent to the surface by Zeroa. The Elemental Empress wanted to help Michael and his territory to flourish even more.

But Zeroa was not the only one who wanted to help the farmlands flourish. The Bilrox Queen sent over some of her Bilrox with useful Perks to aid the farmers.

It was only a matter of time before the farmlands became highly nutritious, accelerating the maturity circle of all plants drastically. The farmers were always at work, harvesting the fully ripened products and planting new seeds. The Untamed Jungle's effect and the other influences that affected the growth of the plants turned months-long maturity circles into mere days of waiting before the fruits and vegetables were ripened and ready to be harvested.

Therefore, it was time to expand the farmlands and make full use of the advantage at hand.

It was time to turn into a full-blown farmer!

Chapter 515 Closing In

The farmlands could be expanded and developed into a precious source of rare resources. A wide variety of elemental seeds had already been planted and it was only a matter of time before he'd accumulated enough resources to mass-produce a bunch of potions that required 'rare' resources – resources Michael had in surplus thanks to the Untamed Jungle, the Elementals, the Nature Spirit, the Forest Pixies and so on.

Michael learned a lot about the plants, their products, their by-products, and how they could be utilized. It was a topic that intrigued Michael. Unfortunately, he didn't have several days to listen to the Farmers and Botanica Magicians as they talked to him about their finds, the mutation of a few plants and much more. They were in their own little world, and Michael was fine leaving them there as long as they continued to work hard.

There was only one thing Michael couldn't leave them alone with. It was the appearance of a plant evolving and gaining sentience. It was rare for plants to gain sentience because it required a tremendous amount of energy and unique resources to initiate an evolution. But possessing the necessary resources and enough energy was not enough for plants to gain sentience and evolve. They had to meet various requirements.

At least, that was what Michael had read in a few books and the Botanica Magician who'd been researching the Plant Monster. The Plant Monster couldn't be left alone on the farmlands. Therefore, Michael told the Botanica Magician to work with a Monster Tamer and create a Monster Ranch for the plant monster. It might be quite difficult, but it was not impossible to tame and reproduce the Plant Monster.

Maybe, they could gain something unique from turning a plant monster into livestock – or maybe into a means of defense that blended perfectly with the flora of the Untamed Jungle. Plant Monsters might not be all that powerful under normal circumstances, but if they were raised properly and stimulated to mutate in specific ways, it shouldn't be impossible to turn them into his territory's weapon to fend off enemies within the Untamed Jungle.

It was a very interesting topic and something his Monster Tamers and the Botanic Magician should research thoroughly.

One way or another, Michael was very pleased with the changes in his territory.

Everyone was working extremely hard. Michael might not have been around for a few weeks but the majority remained highly productive. That was nice to see, even more so when Michael found out that

the carpenters and construction workers expanded the housing district in the settlement. His subjects built enough treehouse complexes for more than 20,000 new subjects and it looked like they had yet to stop expanding. The architects came up with a few new inventions and their contagious enthusiasm reached the starless workers, construction workers, and carpenters, resulting in a few new constructions.

One of those constructions was a treehouse tower, a tower that was constructed around the largest rainforest trees in the proximity. The trees were used as a foundation and support pillars to hold the treehouse tower, which shrouded the entire trunk without harming it. The Architects made sure that the tree could continue to grow while similarly ensuring that as many families as possible could live in the treehouse towers.

At first, Michael was confused about the treehouse towers and how they came into existence but when he visited the Architects' offices he found numerous blueprints that had been discarded and thrown aside. There were hundreds of blueprints with most of them being quite interesting. Michael could hardly find any differences in some of the blueprints, but when he asked the Architects about it, they grumbled something about stability, scarcity of flexible material, and various other things.

Through that, Michael acquired a lot about the thinking process of the Architects in his territory. It was an interesting learning process, though he was more often cursed indirectly than he liked. The Architects seemed to love and hate him at the same time. He allowed them to experiment as they pleased but they didn't have enough resources to go all out with their experiments. The scarcity of resources seemed to hold them back tremendously.

That was something Michael would have to solve in the near future. After all, he wanted to support the invention of new structures and such.

Thinking about ways to support his people, Michael's thoughts were drawn to the resources he could procure with the knowledge about Soul Techniques, his possession of more than 60 Soultrait Symbols, Inferior Energy Stones, Mythic Scrolls, and more.

He had yet to come up with a plan to handle High Society. His power had been exposed and it was only a matter of time before more trouble would greet him. It was necessary to grow mightier quickly, otherwise, he might get kidnapped. The chance was slim since he was still in the Tritan Alliance and under the protection of the people around him, but it was not difficult to kidnap him in the Saphirelake Military Academy, or somewhere else.

"I should advance to Tier-3 before I return home. At least, I will be able to deal with some problems by being a tad stronger," Michael muttered to himself on his way to the warehouse where he would Extract the bodies of the monsters that had been stored there for the last few weeks.

He tried to think less about High Society, the fact that he was Maria's Primal Amplifier and the high possibility that Quinn Karta and others forwarded the news about his power to the Supreme Human Alliance, but that was quite difficult. He was not sure what the greed of the human race would cause to him, and how it would influence his future progress.

On the other hand, Michael was not too worried about the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs because they were honorable people. They focused more on taking care of each other, adhering to their traditions and being respectful to everyone. The only people they condoned were cowards. After all, cowards wouldn't be allowed to enter the Realm of the True Warriors upon dying. They were not accepted and their souls would wander through the realm of the living until the end of time.

'I could sell a few Soul Techniques and a Soultrait Symbol or two to the Warlock Centaurs and Berserkers to bait them. If they take the bait, I can tell them that as long as High Society doesn't bother me, I can continue trading without any issues. Of course, I won't be able to trade easily with them but if the War Priestess and the Chieftain pressure the High Society a bit, I should be able to figure it out without too many issues.'

A few plans formed in Michael's mind. He focused subconsciously on the thousands of monsters he had to dissect and loot, but his primary goal was to maximize the efficiency of his plans.

Once he was done extraction, it came as a great surprise that he'd harvested a total of 11,000 Summoning Scrolls. Michael didn't combine the Summoning Scroll Fragments into more Mythic Scrolls. Instead, he focused on amassing more Starless and 1-Star Summons. The reasons he had in mind were pretty simple. He gained more Soul Power from the masses of Summons, and his Starless Summons could turn into 1-Star Blessed Squires, Warriors, Archers, Blacksmiths, Alchemists, or other 1-Star occupations as long as they toiled hard. Last but not least, he could also obtain 2-Star Holy Knights.

Summons with a higher star-rating generated more Soul Power. That meant Michael could gain a lot even if only a dozen out of 11,000 Summons turned into Holy Knights. Last but not least, Michael was still in possession of 42 Mythic Scrolls. They were still unused. If he'd really wanted to, Michael could have used them to summon a bunch of 2-Star Summons with three or four 3-Star Summons. lights

But it was not worth it. Michael tore the Ordinary Summoning Scrolls apart and summoned 11,000 Summons without hesitation.

'In the last 28 days, I should have gotten approximately 308 1-Star or 2-Star Summons from the daily Summons as well. I almost forgot about them!'

At this point, it was growing increasingly more difficult to keep track of his subjects. The number of his subjects persisted to increase every single day and it wouldn't be long before his settlement crossed the threshold of 100,000 citizens. He already had 80,000ish subjects!

Compared to the enormous number of citizens in his settlement, Michael's army seemed to be rather small. The overall strength of his army was far better than it had been in the past, but it was still not extraordinary. He needed more to protect his territory and defend against potential invaders from the Savannah Region, or the aftermath in the Zentika Empire.

There was a lot Michael had to do. But for now, he had to focus on his own strength. He had to advance to Tier-3 quickly to return to the ancient city where he could play businessman to buy numerous things for his beloved citizens.

Michael moved to a rather secluded area in his territory, and he retrieved a portion of the Inferior Energy Stones he'd extracted from the dozens of Tekur he killed in the Interdimensional Flag War. Two small hills of Inferior Energy Stones formed around him. There were thousands of these stones, each worth millions.

If he had been the same as in the past, Michael would have never used such a fortune merely to increase his strength a little bit faster. However, Michael was not the same as before. He had changed. Michael knew what it takes to make the most out of the opportunities that appeared in front of him, and he understood that he had to advance to Tier-3 as swiftly as possible to resolve the problems in front of him quickly.

He closed his eyes and unleashed the Dome of Extraction. Thousands of Extraction tendrils shot out of the ground, each connecting to an Inferior Energy Stone to suck it dry.

Leviathan Diffusion was unleashed in its strongest form and the full power of Superior Constitution was unraveled.

Energy flooded his body which was annexed immediately and forwarded to his War Rune.

It was time to reach the next Tier!"

Chapter 516 Tier-3

Advancing to Tier-3 was no different than advancing to the 1st or 2nd Tier. It was just a little bit more intense – especially with Superior Constitution in his possession.

Superior Constitution had already done miraculous things to alter his physique, strengthening it above the limit of a Tier-2 Awakened. His physical strength was already at Tier-3 even though he had yet to advance to the 3rd Tier. Breaking through to the next Tier would enhance his physical strength once again, therefore boosting his combat prowess drastically. Simultaneously, his body would be altered once again, not only by the advancement of his Tier but also due to the effect of Superior Constitution.

Michael had to absorb a tremendous amount of energy and more than a dozen Apex Nutrition Serums to supply enough nutrients and energy as the breakthrough to Tier-3 had been initiated. Superior Constitution sucked him dry to strengthen Michael alongside the advancements provided by the War Rune.

The pillar of light within Michael contracted and expanded. It expanded until it reached an invisible barrier that kept the pillar in its place. Breaking the invisible barrier initiated the final steps to advance to Tier-3. That was exactly what Michael did just now. First, he allowed Superior Constitution to drain as much energy and nutrients as it required before he continued to channel more energy into the War Rune.

The Dome of Extraction devoured the energy from within each of the thousands of Inferior Energy Stones. It was an enormous amount of energy, yet Michael absorbed and annexed it all. He forwarded it into his War Rune which used every ounce to complete the refinement at Tier-2. The excessive energy was then used by the War Rune to expand itself a little and break the barrier around the pillar of light.

Michael was not sure how much time had passed but it felt like everything happened in the blink of an eye. A burst of power erupted from Superior Constitution and the invisible barrier around the pillar of

light began to crackle. Michael was astonished, not quite believing what he had just witnessed. His Soultrait, Superior Constitution, aided his breakthrough to Tier-3!

Several bursts of energy erupted from Superior Constitution in a specific order, using a unique rhythm – the rhythm of his heart and being. Michael naturally attuned his entire existence to the rhythm and released bursts of energy into the War Rune whenever Superior Constitution's power struck the invisible barrier. The cracks all over the invisible barrier expanded. They grew larger until they encompassed the entire barrier.

At last, the refinement degree of the Tier-2 War Rune reached 100% and Michael released a horrifying amount of energy just as Superior Constitution released another burst of its power. The invisible barrier hummed for several seconds as it tried to repel the energy that swept through the entire structure before loud crackling noises resounded through Michael's entire being. The invisible barrier shattered.

In response to the shattered barrier, Michael's entire body was flushed with newfound energy. His eyes shot wide open as the pillar of light expanded at once, sucking in far more energy than ever. The expansion of his energy storage was great news. It was enough to improve Michael's mood drastically.

Unfortunately, Michael's advancement to Tier-3 was just getting started. The third advancement purification was initiated, resulting in what felt like a stream of molten lava circulating through his body, removing the impurities attached to every single cell within his body.

His body wouldn't be cleansed of all the impurities in one go, but every purification would remove more impurities. Fortunately, Michael could use Extraction during the purification process. It was only during times like this that Michael could use Extraction on himself to remove the impurities within his body. He was not sure why he couldn't extract the impurities within him on a regular Monday, or Tuesday, but it seemed like there were more restrictions on Extraction than he could have hoped for. One way or another, Michael unleashed Extraction with ten-fold Enhancement applied onto the Soultrait Symbol to remove as many impurities as possible from his body.

Michael was meticulous as he jumped straight to work. His proficiency with Extraction had enhanced by leaps and bounds since he removed the impurities within him last time. He was much stronger than before and he would give his all to remove more impurities from within him. And that was exactly what he did.

Michael spent several hours focused on removing impurities. His body ached from the stream of molten lava that seemed to spread through his body, melting his flesh and bones, but Michael ignored that. His only focus was the impurities within him.

Unbeknownst to the fully focused Michael, Superior Constitution was also doing something. Not only did Superior Constitution actively aid his physique into growing stronger with every second, but it used the molten lava that passed through Michael's body to temper it in every possible way. Michael's energy veins widened and developed firmer. More energy could circulate through his energy veins with far more ease than ever before. Simultaneously, Michael's natural regeneration improved drastically, healing small cuts within seconds.

Michael was not sure since when but at some point the thousands of Inferior Energy Stones had been drained empty. The highly compressed, purified energy within them had been used in its entirety.

Fortunately, Michael didn't require a great amount of energy anymore. At this point, the energy dwelling within his body was more than enough to blow a Peak Tier-3 Lord apart.

All Michael had to do was stay calm and allow the final changes within his body to take place. There wasn't much left, either way.

Superior Constitution continued to alter his body, trying to create a perfect physique that permitted him to move around rapidly, execute tremendous strength, endure mighty blows, and circulate energy throughout his entire body instantaneously.

As for the War Rune on the back of Michael's hand, it expanded, completing the final step to become an acknowledged Tier-3 Lord.

Interestingly enough, the Mark of Fate – the Angel with a huge wingspan that was forcefully integrated into his War Rune – began to move around. The Angel's head and body disappeared, leaving the wide-open wings behind. The wings expanded and split up, forming two pairs of wings. One embraced the War Rune tightly as if to keep it warm and well-protected, whereas the other pair of wings spread out further than the other.

Due to the Mark of Fate's changes, Michael's War Rune grew and spread across the entire back of his right hand. It looked a little bit more complex than before, but Michael was not sure if that was a good thing. It was much easier to tell that his War Rune was different than everyone else's War Rune.

"Well, whatever. The problems with the Seraph family have to wait...until it's probably too late," Michael mumbled to himself.

He was fully aware that his train of thought was foolish and naive but he didn't want to bother overthinking regarding problems that did not occur yet. First and foremost, he had to establish a few ground rules now that his power had been exposed. By the time he was done with most of his business, the Seraph family would contact him. At least, that was what Michael presumed.

He was still not 100% sure how the High Society worked, and how much trouble having traitors in the High Society would affect everyone. It was something Michael could only find out by observing the situation and waiting patiently.

Nonetheless, it was a good thing that he progressed to Tier-3 at last. The power coursing through his body was far more potent than before, and Michael could clearly tell that all of his Soultraits had grown stronger. The Soul Power gained from breaking through to the next Tier was not tremendously high, but it was extremely pure.

However, the most important changes within his body were the increase in his physical strength, the expansion of the pillar of light, and the reinforcement of his energy veins.

Even if he were to fight a bunch of Tekur – Soldiers or Elite Soldiers – again, Michael was at ease. He was not even in need of his Soul Techniques. At this point, all Michael needed was his body and the tremendous power that surged through him. That was enough to eliminate the Tekur.

'If I cannot advance to Tier-4 before next year I should participate in the next Flag War as well. If I can hunt down all 1000 Tekur, I should be able to gain close to 500,000 SoulStar Fragments, maybe even more. That ought to be enough to upgrade a Soultrait to 7-Star.'

Michael had no idea what would happen over the next year but he was pretty sure that if he didn't manage to become a Higher Lifeform by then, he might as well use the Interdimensional Flag War as his little treasure trove. He could extract more Soul Techniques, Inferior Energy Stones, Artifacts, Soultraits,

and SoulStar Fragments. It was definitely worth it. Maybe, it was even reason enough to strengthen his foundation and wait before advancing to Tier-4 and becoming a Higher Lifeform.

That was something Michael had to consider next year. He still had a long way to go to reach Tier-4 and become a Higher Lifeform. He barely progressed to Tier-3, after all.

For now, all Michael had to pay attention to was to survive and face both High Society and the Tritan Alliance head-on.

The next year was going to be extremely busy.

Chapter 517 Mess [Bonus]

Michael was a little nervous when he returned to the ancient city. He had no idea what awaited him.

Fortunately, he was quite lucky to encounter the Zenovia siblings before anyone else. He met them in the hallway near his room.

"Michael! I didn't expect you to return this soon!" Kaleb exclaimed, and Alice joined the fray, "We thought that you wanted to stay in the Origin Expanse until the excitement about your power died down. Seems like we were wrong. And...congratulations for advancing to Tier-3!"

Michael smiled lightly and shrugged.

"I would have stayed longer in the Origin Expanse if I was not in need of more resources. My territory doesn't lack anything to survive, but I am not willing to slow down my territory's development just because I'm a tad worried about what is going to happen. Wasting time until nobody is interested in me anymore is not exactly simple. The moment I return everyone's eyes will be back on me. After all, I have Soul Techniques, Soultraits, and the means to strengthen Soultraits. Running away won't help anyone. It might actually harm me in the long run."

Alice nodded, whereas Kaleb gave him a thumbs up.

"It is good that you think like that. The Elders of the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs were already gossiping that you might not be a true warrior and that you're actually a coward," Alice mentioned, "You know how much they hate cowards. Good that you returned before anyone could spread some ill rumors about you being a coward."

"I didn't really return because I was worried that their opinion of me changed. Though, it is a good thing if the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs consider me a True Warrior. That should make everything a little bit easier."

"You must not have heard about it since you came back just now. The Warlock Centaurs and Berserkers threatened the old fogies. They're willing to trade with you. Apparently, one of their Champions is willing to join you as your subordinate. The Chieftain even ready a Token of Teleportation for the Berserker, Zeron Polik, if I remember correctly."

"Zeron Polik? Ah, that is the Berserker who led his group back to the Dimensional Pillar. I remember him. He wants to join me? That is...surprising. I hope he doesn't expect to receive a bunch of Soultraits in exchange for joining me. If that's the case, I will have to decline his offer. That would be awkward," Michael responded to Alice, whose full attention was on Michael.

"How about we go somewhere more private to have food and talk about the post Flag War meeting? I believe you will be very interested in the news I've got to share," Alice invited Michael for lunch. Meanwhile, Kaleb gave his sister a thumbs up before adding, "I will join as well. Mom told me to talk to you about something. It might annoy you a little bit, Michael, but you have to go through lots of private chats in the next few days. Probably. Maybe you'll receive some direct messages on Starnet Messenger as well."

Michael opened Starnet Messenger on the crystal watch in response. More than a hundred messages from unknown numbers were waiting for him. Most introduced themselves as merchants and representatives of Supreme Families, High Nobles, Great Clans, Guilds and so on. All of them had something in common. They extended a formal invitation to Michael to join their families and organizations officially.

Micheal ought to gain some influence by joining their families and organizations, as well as enough resources to grow stronger as quickly as possible. On the downside, he would be restrained from jumping into dangerous situations like he was used to by taking risks, and he would have to share his Soultraits and the power that reinforced Soultraits – the SoulStar Fragments provided.

He scoffed at the messages and deleted most contacts after blocking their numbers. Michael left only a few new contacts and their messages on Starnet Messenger. This included the representative of the Zeus family, who didn't talk about an invitation even once. All the representative inquired about was information regarding the Soultraits in Michael's possession and their price. There were a few more details such as the representative mentioning an additional bonus if Michael possessed Soultraits that suited the Zeus family's Soultraits.

The Zeus representative and many other representatives inquired about his Soul Techniques as well. Apparently, Kaleb had been experimenting with Soul Glacicle Bullet openly, and many had seen him. The information was forwarded to and spread like wildfire.

'Maybe I should have warned Kaleb a little bit. Everyone believes that I favor the Zenovia family now. Well, that is not exactly wrong cause I favor Kaleb and Alice, but I have nothing to do with the Zenovia family – not their higher-ups, at least.'

Just as Michael thought about that, Alice raised her eyebrow. She stared at Kaleb for a few seconds.

"Mother asked you to speak with Michael? Why would she ask you to do so when I'm here as well?" Alice asked Kaleb.

Kaleb's lips parted but he was not sure what to say either.lights

"Maybe she thinks that I'm closer to him? I don't really know. Mom is always a little bit confusing. You know that better than everyone else." He could only respond.

"That...is true. Mother has always been peculiar," Alice decided not to think too much about it. Overthinking her mother's decision would only harm her mentality.

"I'm fine with some lunch. I don't know how many days have passed but I'm starving! All I consumed in the last few days were Apex Nutrition Serums and Lesser Energy Stones. Well, the energy within the Energy Stones," Michael responded, trying to resolve the awkward stress between the siblings.

He had no idea what kind of relationship Kaleb and Alice had with their mother, but it seemed complicated. It was not within his rights to pry into their family business either, so all he could do was change the subject. He was starving. Thus, food was the solution.

The Zenovia siblings agreed to find a nearby restaurant owned by a humongous Berserker. At first, they suspected the Berserker to be some sort of retired warrior from ancient times, and they might actually be correct about that, but his cooking was extraordinary. That was all that mattered.

Michael turned into the incarnation of Gluttony like usual and devoured plate after plate while Alice told him about the happenings in the post Flag War meeting.

He found out about the old fogies trying to turn him into an asset for the 'human race's sake' – which was something he'd expected – and also about the Chieftain, and the War Priestess turning into his impenetrable shield, and destructive spear. They protected him and threatened High Society to steer clear of him. Michael was very thankful for that.

'If only humans were as honorable as the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs, it would make everything so much easier,' Michael thought, only to recall that Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs were way too simple-minded and war-driven. Even though they were honorable, Michael considered them even more war-driven than humans. They disliked trickery, which was a little bit ignorant since using dirty tricks was much better than dying, but Michael could comprehend their traditions to a certain degree.

It was fine to dislike cowards, but Michael heard some bad rumors about how the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs treated cowards. It was not precisely 'nice'.

Michael finished his eight large plates and ordered another two before he focused on Alice and Kaleb, who'd been picking at their food without any intention finishing their meal anytime soon.

"The High Society feels a little bit troubled. They want to make use of my power, which does indeed make sense, but some want to hold me captive and abuse my power to generate as many powerful Soultraits as possible in the shortest time. Others, on the other hand, want to trade with me. They say that it is my Soultrait and that I am allowed to do with it what I want. That means if someone wants to gain something from my Soultraits and Power, they should offer some sort of equivalent trade," Michael summarized the current standpoint of High Society with a few uncomplicated sentences.

"I like the latter much better. How many members of the High Society support each side?" He asked Alice, who sighed heavily.

"Since you can create a monopoly with your Soultraits and the ability to strengthen Soultraits, most members of High Society are worried that you will ask for exorbitant prices. Some are also worried that you will betray the Tritan Alliance once the Supreme Human Alliance offers you something they can never give you. Then there is a minority that is certain you will be kidnapped soon. Your Soultrait can help the Supreme Human Alliance to push forward and progress with their plan much faster. You are far more valuable to them than Maria, Kaleb, or any other Heavenly Chosen. After all, you can probably create 7-Star Soultraits, although nobody knows how long that would take."

Alice didn't really give him an answer to his question, but Michael could make some guesses with the information at his disposal.

"It doesn't look too good, I guess. That means the stress in the Tritan Alliance is...quite high. The Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs threatened High Society to interrogate their members and both find and dispose of the traitors, and they warned everyone to not even think about touching me. What a mess."

Alice couldn't agree more. The entire situation was a big mess. It could be solved rather easily, but there were always complaints from some sides. If Michael was left alone, he could decide who to sell his Soultraits to and which Soultraits to strengthen. That meant if Michael decided to support the Zenovia family they could turn into the Rulers of the human race within a few decades.

Michael's power and distribution of Soultraits had to be regulated for the sake of the Tritan Alliance's balance.

Chapter 518 Clearing Up

Michael figured that the members of High Society were not certain what they were going to do with him either. There had never been a precedent like this before. That was also why he received over a hundred messages from merchants and representatives of High Society members about deals with Soul Techniques and Soultraits.

No one had any idea what was going to happen in the future, therefore everyone used several tactics, hoping that one of them would work out. One of the ideas was to please Michael and give him a 'tempting' deal, whereas the other plan was to gather more members of Higher Society to have the majority of support to confine Michael. It was for his own sake, of course. At least, that was what the members of High Society promised.

The truth, however, was the complete opposite. They wanted to turn Michael into an asset. The easier he was to control the better.

Michael expected something like this, so he was not surprised. It made sense that those who were always trying to control everything loathed losing control, no matter how trivial it was.

That was also why Michael decided to make an official post on one of the forums that could only be accessed by Awakened of the Tritan Alliance.

[I will use my Soultrait for myself and those I care for, but there is no need for anyone to worry. I know how important my products are. Some will be sold every now and then, in exchange for a suitable price, of course. To make one thing clear, I do NOT plan to hurt anyone or destroy the balance of High Society or the Tritan Alliance. I won't use all my power to empower merely one family. And, I also won't hesitate to react to violence with more violence.]

The short text didn't really feel like anything official but it conveyed everything Michael wanted to say. Extraction was his Soultrait and he would use it as he pleased. He needed resources. So, he would sell some Soultraits sooner or later, either way. Michael never planned to hurt innocent people, and he did not plan to conquer High Society or the Tritan Alliance either. Therefore, he couldn't focus his trades on only one family. In fact, Michael wanted to trade with as many families as possible to make sure that everyone depended on him to procure more and upgrade their Soultraits.

The last line of his message was a warning, but he hoped that he would never be forced to turn it into reality.

Michael wouldn't trade his Soultraits and Soul Techniques with all families either. If he disliked someone or sensed ulterior motives, he wouldn't give them anything. He was not that stupid.

The message Michael conveyed to everyone was simple- You guys can discuss whatever you want, but that doesn't mean I will listen to you. Michael wouldn't allow anyone to restrain him, but that didn't mean he would sell his Soultraits and customized Soul Techniques just to get in somebody's good books.

"Are you sure that's fine?" Kaleb asked his sister when he saw what Michael posted in the Awakened forum.

"It should be. Most Awakened won't even see Michael's post. For them, Michael is an ordinary Tier-3 Awakened. His post won't attract too much attention. Only the merchants and representatives of the High Society members will see the post. They will forward it to their superiors, who will react by messaging Michael, or calling for the assembly of the High Society's round table," Alice responded, glancing over to Michael who was seated on a chair taking notes in an empty tome.

Since the tomes that contained the Soul Techniques before were empty after using Extraction on them, Michael could use them to write down everything he knew about Soul Techniques and their customization. He didn't have to write down every little detail, but it was easier to visualize his knowledge while being focused on writing everything down.

"The round table? Won't that be problematic for Michael? What if they decide to imprison Michael? They can easily create some reasons to imprison him before manipulating him into thinking that he could regain freedom if he shared his power with 'everyone', which is the equivalent to High Society keeping everything for themselves."

"I think you're forgetting that we are currently in the territory of the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs. The Chieftain and War Priestess protect Michael right now. You might not have noticed it but there are dozens of guards spread throughout this building alone. No one can kidnap Michael, or accuse him of something without a dozen guards witnessing everything. He is safe in the ancient city."

"But what will happen once we return to the Sapphirelake Military Academy? Do you think that something will happen then?" Kaleb asked, still not convinced, but Alice could only answer with a shrug.

"I think Michael is already preparing to sell some Soul Techniques and Soultrait Symbols to some families to make them stay on his side to ensure that nobody dares to kidnap him. The Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs are also on his side. I sincerely doubt that there will be an issue," Alice could only say, "Of course, I might be wrong. But it is a good thing that Michael has close ties with the Berserkers, Warlock Centaurs, the Bartholomew Corporation, the Zenovia family, the Lavia household, and the Piedra household."

Kaleb stared blankly at his sister for a few seconds. Alice had no idea what her brother was thinking, but she could see the cogs in his mind rattling.

"That's why mom asked me how close I was to Michael. But that happened months ago. Even before the Battle Exchange started, mom asked me how close we were and why you're training him. I think she researched Michael thoroughly long before the other families noticed anything!" He said all of a sudden.

Alice nodded in response.

"Mother was always a control freak. She must have noticed something about Michael a while ago, otherwise, she would have ordered me to stop training Michael and to keep you away from him. After all, she always focuses on the reputation of her beloved family. Being around 'weaklings' and 'useless' people will destroy the Zenovia family's image, after all. That's what mother thinks."

At this moment, Michael looked up from the tome in front of him. He smiled at Alice and said, "Your mother seems like the type of person who is increasingly hard to please."

"It's quite difficult to deny that without sounding like a notorious liar," Alice mumbled, whereas Kaleb shook his head, "The only time mom praised me was when she heard that I awakened Frozen Nova. Awakening Frozen Nova was sheer luck, yet mom acted like it was the best thing I've ever accomplished. But it's not like I actually did anything. I was just lucky."

Kaleb continued to rant for quite a while.

"Mom also lectured me for a long time because my engagement with Jasmine Blade was terminated. She blamed me for not telling her how useless the Blade family was and that they were not worthy of joining the noble rows of the Zenovia family. I couldn't even find the time to tell her that I've been complaining about the Blade family's arrogance and their family issues for months. She is stubborn...way too stubborn..."

Michael smiled lightly at the sibling duo. It looked like everyone had their fair share of family problems.

"Alright. Enough talk about family issues and the High Society. How about the two of you test something for me?" He asked instead, handing over the tome with his notes.

Alice read through the notes first and frowned deeply before her attention moved to Michael.

"You want to mass-produce neutral techniques that allow all Awakened to produce Soul Energy? Why?" She asked.

Michael did not say anything. Instead, he gazed over to Kaleb as if to tell his friend to answer in his stead.

"Sis, it's actually pretty simple. Michael is probably trying to teach everyone how to produce Soul Energy because the principle is pretty easy. Everyone can produce Soul Energy even without knowing the technique. All they have to do is to fuse Soul Power and Origin Energy. The only issue is that producing Soul Energy without a specific technique that teaches the characteristics of Soul Energy can lead to injuries. Severe injuries at that. So, one of the reasons he wants to mass-produce Soul Energy creation techniques is to minimize the injuries and casualties of Awakened, who'll soon witness the true power of Soul Techniques," Kaleb explained.

Alice thought about it for a moment and agreed, "It makes sense that others will try to replicate Soul Techniques on their own. Whenever we found new techniques such as Soul Refinement techniques, thousands of Awakened died trying to replicate them with the little knowledge that reached the public. Mass-producing Soul Energy production techniques will decrease your earnings drastically but it will also help to ensure that fewer people will die from experimenting."

"But that is not all," Michael started to explain, "Learning how to produce Soul Energy in a life-and-death battle is extremely difficult. Kaleb, for example, has to spend more than 20 minutes to produce enough Soul Energy to produce a rather weak replica of a Soul Glacicle Bullet. He cannot even use the full potential of Frozen Nova's characteristics because his Soul Energy production is too slow. If he desired to create a Frozen Nova Bullet that uses the full potential of his 7-Star Soultrait and the Common Soul Techniques, he would have to accumulate Soul Energy for more than an hour. Which fight lasts for an hour, AND allows the combatant to ignore the opponents and focus completely on the creation of Soul Energy?"

"Is it really that difficult to produce Soul Energy?" Alice asked, reading through the notes once again.

"You could give it a try. I will finish the first version of the Soul Energy Fusion technique. It won't be good enough to be sold en masse, but you can test it."

Alice did not respond. Instead, she watched Michael retrieve another empty tome. She observed Michael as he penned down his insights about the creation of Soul Energy. His insights were incredibly detailed, amazing Alice as Michael finished writing after he reached the 12th page. Michael's insight didn't originate from his own experiences alone. Of course, they played a role as well, but that was not all.

Michael used the memories of the dozens of Tekur he'd killed to write down a perfect guide for Awakened who desired to learn how to produce Soul Energy for the first time in their lives. The Soul Energy Fusion technique was this guide, and Michael aspired that it was comprehensive enough to allow every reader to learn how to produce Soul Energy without a rush.

Alice perused through the text, and her eyes widened the more she read.

"This is amazing!"

Chapter 519 The Mother

"I expected this to be much easier. How are you doing this so effortlessly, Michael?" Alice asked, droplets of sweat trickling down her temples.

She quickly realized that it was much harder to create Soul Energy than Michael and Kaleb made it look like. Even after Alice focused solely on the creation of Soul Energy, it took her two hours to get started. That was still several times faster than Kaleb had been, but that was only obvious. She was a Tier-5 Lord, a Higher Lifeform, with extremely high mastery of her Inheritance Technique. She refined her mind, body, and soul to the Peak of Tier-5. That ought to enhance her brain enough to learn most Basic techniques in the blink of an eye.

Creating her first trace of Soul Energy within two hours was already pretty fast, but this speed was pretty much useless in a battle. Alice had to focus her whole mind onto the production of Soul Energy, which would be a death sentence if done mid-battle. It was necessary to learn how to produce Soul Energy much faster and subconsciously without letting her mind be distracted from fighting.

Michael produced just enough Soul Energy in an instant to create a Soul Glacicle Bullet. He manifested the highly compressed Soul Glacicle Bullet and moved it around freely.

"My situation is a little bit different from yours. I reached this level pretty fast, but I won't be able to progress much beyond this point. You, or other Higher Lifeforms will reach my level pretty soon once you get started. I will have to find an even better Mind refining technique, among a variety of other techniques that need to be upgraded, and refine my Mind to the Peak of Tier-3. That will take a while. By the time I'm done mass-producing the Soul Energy Fusion technique and creating customized techniques for some customers, you will be able to produce enough Soul Energy in an instant to use a Common Class Soul Technique."

Michael could create Soul Energy in small amounts instantaneously due to the memories and experiences he'd devoured from the Tekurs' Memory Orbs. That was also how he learned to utilize most Soul Techniques. The only issue was that his mastery with the Soul Techniques was not that high. He could manifest them but he had yet to learn how to utilize them at their full potential. At the same time, Michael had yet to learn how to mass create more Soul Energy to potentially use Elite Class Soul Techniques at any point in a battle.

Alice understood Michael to some extent. She didn't comprehend everything because Michael kept some information to himself, but it was enough to get a gist of what he meant.

"Allowing everyone to learn how to produce Soul Energy is pretty good. Even if it decreases your income, since you are not selling them as limited editions, you can earn a lot more if the demand of Soul Techniques increases exponentially later on. And that will certainly happen once everyone witnesses the tremendous power Soul Techniques can unleash. As long as you market Soul Techniques properly, you can sell them for a hefty price to the vast majority of Awakened. The only problems you have to deal with is how to turn custom techniques into techniques that can be used by more people," Alice noted.

She pointed at the Soul Glacicle Bullet and tilted her head, "If you can remove the freezing trait of the Soul Glacicle Bullet you could sell this technique to all Awakened with Ice Elemental Soultraits. I noticed that your technique demands the replication of the freezing characteristic, which can be found in your Soultrait, Glacicle. That makes it harder for Kaleb to replicate your Common Soul Technique faster. By removing it, you will have a 'neutral' Ice-type Soultrait. Call it Ice Bullet, or something like that, and everything will be alright."

Michael listened intently. It wouldn't be easy to remove the freezing trait from Soul Glacicle Bullet but it was certainly not impossible. The only downside was that the Common Class Soul Technique's power would decrease drastically.

"The attack power would decrease as a result but I could sell it to more people. If someone wants a customized technique that utilizes their Soultrait's unique characteristics, they can put forth a special request for one. Customized techniques can be sold for a small fortune and the masses obtain weaker 'neutral' Soul Techniques that everyone can use. That will strengthen the Tritan Alliance's overall combat prowess significantly since everyone should be able to afford a neutral Soul Technique at some point, and it will earn me a fortune," Michael mumbled as more ideas formed in his mind.

He was slowly getting somewhere.

But before he could start altering Soul Glacicle Bullet to develop Ice Bullet and other neutral Soul Techniques, Michael was interrupted. The door to the office they'd moved into, after finishing their early lunch swung open, revealing a woman draped in flowing robes of pure white. She stood in front of the door like a beacon of serenity. Her attire was adorned with golden intricate symbols, creating an ethereal glow as origin energy circulated through them. Her dark silver eyes, a pool of wisdom, radiating a calming assurance had a light silver colored rim.

Alice and the others froze in their tracks as the woman strode gracefully into the office, her demeanor marked by the overwhelmingly calm pressure she naturally emanated. She carried some sort of gentle authority, but underneath the gentleness on the surface, Michael felt something that caused chills to run down his spine.

The atmosphere around the woman shimmered with hallowed calm, as if the air itself bowed down to her, acknowledging her presence.

"I apologize for my intrusion, but I have some business with Michael Fang," As the woman spoke, her voice resonated with a soothing cadence. Michael's hair stood up on its end and he felt like running away. However, the woman had already turned to him, "You must be Michael Fang. I heard that my little girl found an unpolished diamond, but you look rougher and less polished than I expected."

The woman stared at Michael, whose eyes began to shine brightly. The Stigmata of Spirit Eyes rippled and increased the tension in the office instantaneously.

Instead of taking offense, the woman chuckled lightly, "I should take back what I said. You might be an unpolished diamond, but the first layers of dirt and grime have been removed already. I heard a lot

about you, and your powers. Your powers might be interesting, but they are not the reason why I'm here today. I just wanted to take a look at the boy who became my girl's Primal Amplifier. "

'Primal Amplifier? Is her 'little girl' Maria?'

"Given the look on your face, you must have comprehended who I am. It is quite intriguing to think that there are still people who don't know about me and my family. I expected everyone to know about me, my husband, and Maria at this point. We have the strongest Healing Soultraits all over the Tritan Alliance, after all," The woman, Maria's mother, remarked, her sonorous voice resounding through the entire office.

"But that's fine as well. It doesn't matter whether you know me and my family or not. All you have to know is that the Mark of Fate means a lot to the Seraph Family. You are Maria's Primal Amplifier and I know that you've used Heaven's Descent with Maria more than once. Both of you know how powerful your connection is and that you can save millions of innocent people as long as you stay together and strengthen each other. The stronger your bond grows, the easier it will be for Maria to use the full potential of Archangel's Grace."

Michael listened to the woman's words but he was gradually growing tired of it. He could already tell where this was going, and he didn't really like it.

"I want you to come with me to the Seraph family's household to undergo training as Maria's Primal Amplifier. I do realize that you have yet to finish your studies at the Sapphirelake Military Academy, but that can be solved rather easily. We can teach you far more than the Sapphirelake Military Academy is willing to teach its students. You will also obtain far more resources than most Descendants can dream about. After all, you are Maria's Primal Amplifier. Nurturing you will strengthen Maria as well. And ensuring that Maria can grow even stronger as the Healer with the most potential all over the Tritan Alliance is the most important – especially now that we have traitors in our own rows," The woman explained.

She took a short breath to circulate some oxygen through her system and continued, "The Supreme Human Alliance is quite problematic but they're not omnipotent. They want to kidnap and brainwash our Heavenly Chosen children as well. That can only mean that they do not possess many Awakened with 7-Star Soultraits. Kidnapping our Heavenly Chosen children can change that...or kidnapping a noname without any family backing. The Seraph family can promise to protect you while you're growing stronger. We won't force you to stay outside the Origin Expanse. All we need is for you to stay by Maria's side and nurture stronger while your connection with her grows firmer. Protecting you and Maria together won't be a problem."

Michael didn't really like the woman. She spoke down to him and acted like it was obvious what he had to do next. Her proposal was pretty intriguing because she didn't seem to care about his ability to procure more Soultraits and strengthen them. All Maria's mother cared about was ensuring Michael could aid her daughter in unlocking her full potential by being Maria's Primal Amplifier.

But that was something Michael could take advantage of.

"Your offer is very nice and all, but don't you think you're a little bit rude?" Michael inquired calmly, an innocent smile covering his face.

Maria's mother didn't expect Michael to react that way. She stared at the youthful Lord for a second before she regained her senses.

"What did you just say?" She asked, one eyebrow raised.

"It's pretty simple. I inquired you whether you think you're acting rude, or if that's your normal behavior? Like, barging into someone's office without knocking, let alone an appointment. Interrupting other people when they're working hard. Insulting someone. Acting like the world revolves around the Seraph family."

Michael glanced at Maria's mother, or precisely the small head that peaked out from behind her. It was Maria.

"You didn't even introduce yourself properly, and from the look on your daughter's face you didn't even ask her about her opinion. You're just trying to control everything and everyone." Maria's mother only stared at him as he continued,

"To put it in very simple terms, you act like the majority of High Society, and I don't really like the majority of the High Society because most of them are selfish bastards."

Michael's golden eyes glowed vibrantly as he stared straight into the eyes of Maria's mother.

Chapter 520 Transfer

"To put it in very simple terms, you act like the majority of High Society, and I don't really like the majority of the High Society because most of them are selfish bastards."

Michael's golden eyes glowed vibrantly as he stared straight into the eyes of Maria's mother.

An awkward silence filled the room all of a sudden. The only sound that reverberated through the office was Kaleb cursing Michael and his balls of steel.

The Zenovia siblings were not sure why but Michael was extremely talented at offending Descendants and members of High Society. He was like a child with no filter.

Maria pressed her lips together and tugged at her mother's robe, trying to hold her back and not let the situation escalate. However, Maria's mother couldn't be held back at this point. She broke into a hearty laughter, taking the sibling duo by surprise.

Maria's mother, Giuliana Seraph, continued to laugh while pulling her daughter in front of her to look at her lovely child.

"I acknowledge that he is an interesting young boy. You were right. He is a little bit cute as well," Giuliana told her daughter, "Though he is a bit too straightforward for my liking. Is that your type? Straightforward, handsome, a little bit cute, and ambitious? Well, that's not too bad. Definitely better than liking lazy slugs."

"Mooom!!" Maria blushed and tugged at her mother's robe, trying to pull her out of the office. She felt like dying. Why was her mother so embarrassing?!

Giuliana turned to Michael and nodded sharply, "I think I owe you an apology for my behavior. Please ignore what I stated earlier. I needed to see more about your personality. Reading reports and analysis about your power and personality might be helpful to create an image of my little girl's Primal Amplifier, but I had to see it with my eyes to actually believe everything. It's the same with patients. I need to see them first before I can tell them whether I am powerful enough to cure them, or if they're incurable."

Michael watched Giuliana Seraph for a while as the Stigmata around his eyes dimmed down. His eyes didn't glow anymore and he continued to listen to her.

"I'm sorry for my late introduction. My name is Giuliana Seraph and I'm the matriarch of the Seraph family. When I heard that my little girl managed to find her Primal Amplifier among the participants of the Battle Exchange, I was both surprised and happy. But I was also worried. Dark Heavens attacked Piloq and I was worried that someone might try to do something to my dear daughter. That was when I decided to rush over to Piloq and the ancient city. I had enough time to research you and your family, which was both calming and worrisome."

She took a deliberate pause to judge Michael's reaction but when he did not comment, she continued,

"It is a good thing that you're not a Descendant because it will solve various problems with political issues. We won't have to affiliate with any Supreme Family, or High Noble since you don't belong to either. However, the worrisome part is that you have this unique, ancient power, a power that is as fearsome as the War Empress' power, if not worse. I'm talking about Hesta Fang, your sister," Giuliana Seraph said, her voice still sonorous and kind, but the intent of her words cutting deep into Michael's heart.

"You're pleased that I'm not a Descendant but my power worries you because it will attract the attention of the Supreme Human Alliance and High Society. That makes sense. I am also a bit worried about the next few days and weeks," Michael acknowledged. "But that doesn't explain what exactly you want from me. Do you want me to find a way to remove the Mark of Fate, or were your earlier words the truth? Do you want to take the risk and invite me to the Seraph Family and grow closer to Maria? Is that what you, or the Seraph family wants, Mrs. Seraph?"

Even Alice was starting to feel confused. Giuliana Seraph acted like a Cold Witch before just to test Michael and now she seemed to hesitate to reveal her true intentions. That was certainly not something anyone would expect from the matriarch of one of mankind's most influential families.

"What I want and what the Seraph family can afford are nowhere close. I want you to come with me to the Seraph family mansion. That way you and Maria could grow closer, thereby strengthening the Mark of Fate. We never had a 7-Star Healing Soultrait, or a Primal Amplifier with eight or more powerful Soultraits. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and I do not want to miss it, to be entirely honest," The matriarch started.

"Unfortunately, the Seraph family cannot afford to upset the rest of the High Society at this point. The situation with the human traitors is getting out of control and we're already busy searching and annihilating the remaining traitors within High Society. I know that the Supreme Human Alliance wants

to kidnap and manipulate our Heavenly Chosen children, but they are not too keen on investing a tremendous amount of resources into that task just yet. However, the same cannot be stated about you. You...are a ticking time bomb," Giuliana Seraph explained in all honesty.

The matriarch of the Seraph family was still going around in circles. Fortunately, Maria was getting tired of her matriarch beating around the bush.

"What my mom wants to say is that she hopes you can transfer to the Ascending Phoenix Academy. The University is in the solar system which is far more secure than Kelta in the Lumina Stellar System. It is unlikely that either of us would get kidnapped there, and we can stay together. Of course, only to strengthen the Mark of Fate!" Maria tried to hastily correct herself with the last sentence but she was already blushing.

Michael raised an eyebrow and shook his head, "I won't transfer to the Ascending Phoenix Academy."

"Why?" Maria exclaimed the moment Michael finished his sentence.

"Isn't it obvious? The Suicide Squad's members had more members of the Ascending Phoenix Academy than any other Academy or University. Meanwhile, the Saphirelake Military Academy did not have a single traitor among them. I do not really plan to leave my friends alone either, just because your Soultrait deemed me compatible enough to force the Mark of Fate onto me. I didn't ask for this. If you or the Seraph family wants something, you have to approach me. I'm not a puppet that can be controlled according to your will and tossed around wherever you deem fit."

Giuliana Seraph only watched Michael for a second or two. She had met stubborn people like Michael, but most of them didn't have several trumps and leverage over the Seraph family so it was easy to manipulate them. Unfortunately, that was not the case this time.

"That means, if Maria transfers to the Saphirelake Military Academy you'll be fine being around her and strengthening the Mark of Fate?" The matriarch asked, ignoring that Michael had spoken dismissively of the glorious feat of becoming the Seraph Family's strongest healer's Primal Amplifier.

"Huh?" Alice exclaimed loudly, all of a sudden. She stared at the Matriarch, who smirked. It was almost as if transferring Maria to the Saphirelake Military Academy had been her plan all along.

"We will donate more than enough resources to the Saphirelake Military Academy to ensure that the academy's safety can be upgraded. After all, there will be several Heavenly Chosen children and a ticking time bomb like Michael," The matriarch stated before pointing out something else. "I believe the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs will be willing to establish a trading route to Kelta and the Saphirelake Military Academy with Michael attending the academy. How about asking them to join the military academy as well? An academy that allows the races of the Tritan Alliance to grow stronger altogether sounds great, don't you think so?"

Alice's eyes narrowed as she stared at the Seraph family's matriarch for a while, not a single sound escaping her lips.

Had it been the matriarch's plan all along to transfer Maria to another academy, the Saphirelake Military Academy, to be precise? If that was the case, she played her cards perfectly.

Giuliana Seraph made others point out the dangers of the other academies and universities, following the fact that the Saphirelake Military Academy didn't have a single traitor in their rows. She made sure to point out that Michael's powers were not intriguing to the Seraph family and that she was solely focused on Maria's Mark of Fate, thereby gaining more trust from Michael.

Michael did not trust the Seraph family wholeheartedly but he couldn't deny that he didn't understand her intentions. From acting like a cold witch to testing his personality to asking him to transfer academies, Giuliana Seraph didn't even pressure him into doing anything even though she was certainly capable of doing so. She merely presented the facts in such a way that it would lead to the outcome she wished.

"Maria is nice. I don't see a problem being around her as long as our courses overlap. If our courses are not similar, it might be a little bit problematic since I will be busy in the Origin Expanse, but that shouldn't be much of an issue," Michael responded after a while. Alice was still suspicious of Giuliana Seraph's actions, but Michael did not care much.

It would be quite helpful if the Mark of Fate grew stronger. After all, the Shard of Archangel's Grace inside him was useful. He could use Maria's Soultrait as long as he accumulated enough power by staying near her. There was no reason to reject the offer.

"What do you say, Miss Zenovia? Do you think it will cause problems if my little sweetheart transfers to the Saphirelake Military Academy?" Giuliana Seraph asked Alice, who could only answer quietly.

"I think it should be fine..."

Meanwhile, Kaleb felt like screaming at the top of his lungs, but no words escaped his lips. The scream echoed through his mind.

'Noooooooo!! The enemy infiltrated our home grounds!! MAYDAY!!!!'