

Supreme Lord 571

Chapter 571 Triple Trouble

571 Triple Trouble

A silent week passed quickly in which no untoward incident occurred. Michael had been focused on his new techniques to gain a higher mastery, while simultaneously re-refining his Mind and Body.

Since his Mind and Body had already been refined to a higher degree, it didn't consume too much of his precious time to completely re-refine his physique and mind to the Peak of the 2nd Tier. Following that, Michael practiced Sanctum of Life to refine his Soul and Primordial Pillar to conjure supporting structures around the Pillar of Light.

Michael consumed far more Energy Stones in a single week than he'd been willing to use last year. The energy consumption of the techniques was tremendous, but the results were equally great. It was certainly worth using so many Energy Crystals and Intermediate Nutrient Pills to accelerate his progress.

After the week of silence passed, the situation all around his territory had changed considerably. The dangers posed by the Zentika Empire increased. According to the scouts sent into the Zentika Empire, the Empire's citizens were displeased with the Zentika Empire's council. Their morale was low and a civil war was not far away. The revolutionary forces hiding within the Zentika Empire spread rumors all while preparing for the final strike against the Zentika Empire's Council.

However, the rumors dispersed swiftly. The Native Empire used their connections to procure expensive materials from outside the Origin Expanse to make up for their farmers' losses. Taros and his Red Dragon disappeared after destroying most farms in the Zentika Empire. This resulted in a severe lack of food, which was resolved temporarily with goods from the outside world.

The long term solution was to reconstruct the farms and to expand the empire's range of authority into the Untamed Jungle. The monster population of the Untamed Jungle was incredibly high, and it was a high energy dense area. Reconstructing the farms near or within the Untamed Jungle would grant various benefits to their crop.

Invading the Untamed Jungle turned into one of the council's campaigns to soothe the population's anger and to show their people that their military prowess was still high and mighty.

Micheal had to control himself to avoid bursting out laughing like a crazy maniac when the first scouts returned to report their finds. They said that some of the Zentika Empire's forces had set up a camp near the Untamed Jungle's border. However, instead of choosing the direct path that led straight into the Untamed Jungle, the forces took a detour.

They set up the camp on the northernmost border to the Untamed Jungle to avoid the outer ring that had been bombarded with Chaos Pills a year ago.

[Sun Demos!] Michael reached out through his mind using the taming bond, [Come to me and pick up some Scouts and Archers to observe the Zentika Empire's camp. Allow them to enter the Untamed Jungle and hunt some monsters. Strike the monsters from behind when they expect it the least, but don't kill too many at once. Don't overdo it, otherwise, they will move out with larger groups, which will make it more difficult to hunt them down inconspicuously.]

Michael had been preparing a bunch of weapons for the Immortal Knight and his people in the Savannah Region, but Sun Demos could make use of them as well. He retrieved the Spirit Armaments ordered from the Relic of Draka to hand them over to the Savannah Region's expedition and transferred a few Overcharged Elemental Crystals into a small pouch.

The pouch had been sealed to prevent any energy fluctuations from escaping. That was necessary to prevent the Overcharged Elemental Crystals from exploding. He handed them to one of the Scouts and gave precise orders.

"Channeling a trace of vitality into the Overcharged Energy Crystals is enough to trigger the countdown. Install the crystals in the camp, whenever you can. Do it either close to the most crowded areas where all tents are located, or close to the center where most magical devices have been installed. Once you trigger one of the Overcharged Energy Crystals, you have to run away, or you will die 30 seconds later. I didn't have enough time to experiment with the explosion's radius, but since we're using low-quality Energy Crystals, it shouldn't be too big."

The Scout could only nod weakly. His hands trembled as he accepted the pouch filled with Overcharged Elemental Crystals.

It didn't take long before Sun Demos and a small unit of his Blood Oath Demon Monkeys arrived in the domain center to pick up a few dozen Archers and Scouts to carry them to the northernmost borderline between the Untamed Jungle and the Zentika Empire.

The Legendary Summon, Tatjana, decided to join Sun Demos' group as well. She was curious about Michael's tamed monster and the characteristics of the Blood Oath Demon Monkeys. They intrigued her, and it was not like she was overly busy right now. Tatjana hadn't been assigned a proper task just yet. But to keep herself occupied, she taught the other tamers about the taming techniques and principles that she had been taught in the past.

"The Zentika Empire could turn into a problem if the Savannah Region's expedition fails, My Lord!" One of the older attendants standing next to Michael mentioned.

"I know, but we will be fine," He responded while tapping one of the Spirit Armaments created by the Relic of Draka.

Michael had been preparing a few simple Spirit Weapons for a while now. His initial plan had been to sell them in the Jungle Shop, but it didn't seem like a bad plan to start loaning out weapons and armaments. The Immortal Knight and other powerful Summons would do fairly well with the external enhancements provided by Spirit Armaments. Their combat prowess would increase considerably.

Michael called for another Scout, whom he gave three pouches filled with Overcharged Emerald Crystals and a small spatial satchel filled with the Spirit Armaments and some other goods he'd created with the intention to support Immortal Knight and the Savannah Expedition.

lights

Combining the Overcharged Elemental Crystals with Zeroa's spatial affinity and Stinger's unique perk, it should be feasible to bombard a few settlements with a lethal attack.

Michael wanted to help the Savannah Expedition further but he figured that his current position was the most helpful. If something happened to his left, he could use Icarus to help the Savannah Expedition swiftly. The same was possible if Sun Demos and his Demon Monkeys were to fail their mission. Michael could reach them in no time to help out.

That wouldn't be possible if he joined the Savannah Expedition. Last but not least, the monster population in the Untamed Jungle kept increasing. Facing enemies from three sides didn't allow Michael to make any big moves.

The only help Michael could provide to the Immortal Knight was a bunch of resources, Spirit Armaments, and as many pieces of information as possible. The information included more details about his people's personality, the Awakened's Soultraits, strengths and weak points, and the true extent of Stinger and Zeroa's power.

"My Lord!!!" A flustered voice reverberated through the domain center when Michael was just about to return to his room to continue practicing his new techniques.

He turned to the source of the voice and raised an eyebrow. A young Summon, a teenager, who had been killed too early for his own good, rushed toward him.

"We noticed something unusual on the Pillar of Territorial Awareness!" The teenager blurted out, his voice filled with confusion and a trace of fear.

"Take a few deep breaths to calm down. Tell me what you have noticed," Michael spoke calmly to the young boy, whose chest heaved up and down heavily.

"There are...red dots...northwest of the jungle's outer ring...

dozens of them. They are heading toward the settlement of the Trilance, in the direction of the settlement that is connected to the Untamed Jungle."

Michael tensed up instantly. He stared intently at the young teenager and gave him a curt nod.

"Thanks. I will take over from here."

Michael circulated origin energy through his lower body and exerted his physical strength to the fullest to kick the ground and dash toward the Greater Nature Spirit. He saw the Pillar of Territorial Awareness from far away, including the red dots that were rapidly approaching the border settlement of the Zynur Lord.

'Sun Demos and his people are already moving to the east, and the Savannah Expedition won't be able to do anything even if I warn them now. They must be in a fight right now.'

The timing was impeccable. It was too good to be true. The appearance of the red dots was not a coincidence.

'Interesting.'

Without wasting time, Michael manifested the Legendary Ring Artifact and the Spirit Armor Set. He utilized Enhancement on his lower body and jumped on top of the Greater Nature Spirit to cross over to the nearest canopy bridge network. Once he reached the canopy bridge, Michael's movements accelerated.

He turned into a flash and disappeared. It took only a few seconds to leave the safety of his domain and only a minute before he reached the end of the canopy bridge network. He jumped across the railing and landed smoothly on the closest branch. Michael kept jumping from one branch to another whereas his eyes traveled to the faraway location of the Zynur Lord's border settlement.

He activated Spirit Eyes to see the vitality variability through other objects. It was hard to see through the high energy dense air and the energy conducive trees that were filled with lifeforce and purified origin energy, but Michael managed to make out some details.

The reinforcement of the Council of Xylon had invaded the Untamed Jungle.

Chapter 572 Xylon's Invaders

572 Xylon's Invaders

Michael could easily tell that the invading forces belonged to the Council of Xylon. He didn't know any other alliance with this many different races. Other than the Council of Xylon, of course.

There were more than a hundred Awakened from more than 50 races, and it didn't take Michael long before he realized that the number of invaders was higher than indicated on the Pillar of Territorial Awareness. More Awakened must have entered the Greater Nature Spirit's domain on his way to the border.

'200? No. There are almost 300 Awakened. Every single one of them is at the 3rd Tier as well,' Michael was perched high up on a treetop near the invading forces with Spirit Eyes fully unleashed.

Spirit Eyes allowed him to see a lot. That included the threads that connected the Awakened with their Artifacts. Michael could easily pinpoint Awakened through the special threads of Artifacts. Summons didn't have those threads even if they were wield an Artifact. It was just an ordinary Armament in their hands.

The connection between the Artifacts and the Awakened allowed the wielder to retract the Artifacts at will and to benefit from the advantages of the Artifacts' external enhancement.

Michael had a great advantage by being able to pinpoint Awakened easily. Most would have to look out for their War Rune, or wait until an Awakened used their Soultrait to determine whether they were Summons or Awakened, but Michael could identify them easily.

Spirit Eyes was also how Michael distinguished the combat prowess of his enemies. Awakened were usually stronger than Summons at the same rank. There were exceptions like the Immortal Knight, obviously, but Artifacts and Soultraits made up for a big chunk of an Awakened's combat prowess.

'It's still a surprise to see close to 300 Awakened attack the Trilance from behind. They're rather strong as well. Is that the Council of Xylon's Elite Unit?' Michael wondered, only to recall something he had heard quite often in the past few days.

If the Trilance could request support from their Clans and higher-ups outside the Origin Expanse, the Lords from the Council of Xylon could do the same.

'So some Lords from the Council of Xylon asked for help, and they sent over a bunch of Elite Awakened? Or are those forces the Elite Awakened that had been held back until now, like a trump card to be used at the right opportunity?'

Either way, Michael had to intervene. The border settlement of the Zynur Lord was protected by some guards, but the majority of the Trilance's military power had been called to the battlefield.

'Smart plan. Unfortunately, you are missing out on the fact that the Untamed Jungle is not a playground!'

It was fairly intelligent to send out a small group of powerful Awakened to take a detour around the Trilance's territory and invade the Untamed Jungle to strike the Trilance where they expected it the least. But their intelligent network didn't seem to be all that great, otherwise, they would have known that there was another Lord in the Untamed Jungle; the Lord who exterminated the Kitsun Lord, resulting in the start of the Regional War, in the first place.

Michael returned silently to the ground, Spirit Eyes' power amplified with a Soul Tear and several layers of Enhancement. He used the thicket and monstrous tree trunks to hide from his ignorant enemies while stalking them. They couldn't see him, but Michael could see through the trees and thicket. Their life force and the origin energy compressed into their pillar of light was easily perceptible for him after Soul Tears and Enhancement amplified Spirit Eyes' potency and efficiency.

The cogs in his mind began to rattle and he was just about to manifest Aethyr when he noticed something. The Awakened didn't move in one unit. They were split up into small groups to stay close to each other. Only two groups seemed to communicate with each other, but Michael felt that they were only moving as a huge group because they looked almost the same.

'They don't like to mingle with other races. Not the best move if you were to ask me,' Michael mumbled in his head.

He reached the back of the group and had yet to be noticed. Michael was surprised that nobody had taken note of him, but that played in his favor.

He used Extraction around his body to extract his body odor, the vibrations of his steps, and the sounds he made while stalking around the group of Awakened as well as possible. It was not perfect, but the sounds, sweat, and vibrations of the Awakened did enough to overshadow the last bits of smell, vibrations, and sounds of himself that he couldn't extract.

Michael held his breath and appeared behind the group that was the furthest in the back. The distance to the next closest group was only ten meters but a thicket separated them. Michael shot forward, manifested the Aethyr dagger, covered it in a thick layer of Reinforced Sword Qi, and sliced the throat of the nearest Awakened.lights

He covered the Awakened's mouth to muffle the noises he was about to make, but the two Awakened who had been walking with him noticed that something was off. They turned around, confused as to why their colleague stopped talking all of a sudden, only to see the Grim Reaper stare down upon them with vibrant golden eyes.

Both Awakened held their heads and fell to their knees when Michael's Spiritual Domination impacted heavily on them, making them feel as if their heads would burst apart. However, they couldn't even groan in pain as a Soul Glacicle Bullet covered in Reinforced Sword Qi shot via their parted lips. The Soul Glacicle Bullet pierced through the soft flesh in their mouth and burst apart, releasing highly compressed freezing mist down their throat.

Michael jumped forward, the Aethyr dagger transforming into a long blade correct before he beheaded the two Awakened with swift slashes.

He didn't have any time to calm down or take a breather. Michael extended his origin energy to store the corpses of the three Awakened the moment their energy influx reached him. In the next moment, he disappeared into the densely grown jungle again.

The group near the three Awakened that fell victim to Michael didn't notice anything. One of them looked to the left with a boring, almost lethargic gaze, only to realize that the three Awakened were missing.

"Are we the last in line? I could swear that someone had been behind us," He mumbled, only to give it a shrug. Maybe, he was mistaken, or maybe, the group next to them had moved ahead with fast strides. Whatever it was, he couldn't care less.

It was not until a faint rustling sound behind the Awakened triggered his alarm. His danger senses went haywire and he jumped around, raised his weapon, and attacked. His eyes glimmered as he triggered his Soultrait, but it was already too late. The Grim Reaper with golden eyes had already appeared in front of him.

A long silver blade pierced forward and the Awakened's sight turned hazy as a bad headache impacted him. He could barely open his mouth to utter a single word before the world around him turned dark.

"Run..."

His voice was silent, but following the squishing of the Aethyr blade piercing via the Awakened's neck, the danger senses within the other Awakened next to their colleague were triggered. They turned around, their Soultraits activated instinctively. However, as their heads turned around, all they could see were hundreds of Icicles covered with a silver membrane.

The icicles were manifested from Glacicle and heightened with Reinforced Sword Qi. They shot forward as Michael unleashed them with a burst of energy, impacting heavily onto the Awakened and their Artifacts. The freezing perk of Glacicle came to full effect as they froze the Awakened's Armor, skin, and the flesh underneath in the instance the glacicle shattered. One of the Awakened reacted just in time to conjure a shield using his Soultrait in front of himself, but Michael was even faster to react.

He noticed that the Awakened would respond fast enough to survive and utilized his physical superiority to appear behind the Awakened correct after the glacicles shattered the Awakened's shield. The Awakened tried to conjure a second shield and move around to face Michael head-on, but Michael's physical strength, speed, and his reaction time were much higher than the Awakened due to Enhancement, Spirit Eyes, and Superior Constitution being in full use.

The Aethyr Blade pierced via the Awakened's chest, cleanly cutting through the armor's seams. Michael twisted the blade in the wound before blasting a layer of Reinforced Sword Qi inside his body to turn a severe injury into a mortal wound.

Michael transformed the Aethyr Blade into a small dagger instead of retracting the weapon. He didn't waste any momentum and issued a second attack, slicing the Aethyr dagger via the Awakened's throat. Following that, a fountain of blood gushed out of the Awakened's throat. His eyes widened, terror and disbelief glimmering inside them until the traces of life dispersed.

The Awakened's eyes turned hollow and cold. He was dead.

Michael, however, was not yet done. The other Awakened were half frozen, but not yet dead. He transformed the Aethyr Dagger into a huge Warhammer and spun around his axis, using the momentum to crush one of the half-frozen Awakened. The other Awakened released a bullet conjured from air to attack Michael but he didn't even try to evade him.

The air bullet was aimed at the Spirit Armor Set and it didn't even put a dent into it. Even if it would have destroyed the Spirit Armor Set, it wouldn't have enough power remaining to harm Michael. Thus,

instead of evading the attack, Michael took it head-on to finish the final Awakened of the second small group and end the battle a bit faster.

"7 Awakened down. 290ish left to kill."

Chapter 573 One Vs All

573 One vs All

Michael collected and stored the Awakened's corpses in the War Rune before retreating once again.

He expected to attract the attention of the groups close to him, but nobody turned around in a hurry. The commotion of his surprise attacks was not as attention-grabbing as he had expected. Erupting the Dome of Extraction to extract the majority of the sounds, smell, vibration, temperature changes, and energy fluctuations during the fight had been quite helpful.

It was not perfect, but it was good enough that most of them did not suspect an enemy lurking in the shadows or expected to be in immediate danger. Nonetheless, some Awakened turned around in confusion. They felt that something was wrong but they couldn't make out what happened.

'That won't work anymore,' Michael figured, sensing that everyone was a lot more vigilant than before. Their danger senses picked up something, and it affected the Awakened subconsciously. They raised their guard to be ready to fight at all times.

Michael changed his position and retreated further. His head flicked to the right where some predators were hiding in the shadows of the towering trees. The creatures avoided the Awakened, their instincts telling them that the Awakened were strong enough to end their lives. Maybe, they could kill one of them, but that was not enough against enemies ranging in the hundreds.

Michael appeared behind the predators suddenly and unleashed the full power of the Legendary Ring Artifact's dragon might. The dragon might enveloped the predators, who reacted instantaneously. Their instincts told them to run for their lives, and that was exactly what they did.

They dashed away from Michael and the dragon might. The predators made a commotion as they ran hither thither like headless chickens, which attracted the Awakeend's attention. The Awakened

unsheathed their weapons and glanced to their left side where they saw dozens of predators charge ahead.

Their first thought was that the predators noticed them and decided to initiate a astonish attack on them. However, they noticed quickly that the monsters were running away from something.

Their vigilance increased by a notch, while the tension in their bodies skyrocketed.

The Awakened stared at their left, ready to face a monstrosity strong enough to scare mighty Tier-3 predators. But nothing came. No more sounds reached them from the left. Instead, screams of pain and muffled noises resounded through the vicinity from the other side.

Michael didn't attack the hidden force of the Council of Xylon openly for now. He used the fleeing predators to distract the Awakened and pull their focus away. He then shot to the other side, utilizing the Heavenly Beast Physique.

Michael had been altering the Common Class Soul Technique a little bit, adjusting the technique to Superior Constitution's characteristics. Simultaneously, Michael used up several Soul Tears to strengthen his Soul, along with his Soultraits, Superior Constitution, Enhancement, and Reinforced Sword Qi.

Heavenly Beast Physique's potency raised to new heights thanks to Soul Tear's potency amplification while applying several layers of Enhancement to his physique, Reinforced Sword Qi, and the Aethyr blade that had grown out of his hand.

Every layer of Enhancement resulted in increased efficiency, and power amplification of roughly 63% due to Soul Tear's potency reinforcement. Enhancement's tremendous power was enough to elevate Michael's raw physical strength to the Peak of Tier-3. Meanwhile, Heavenly Beast Physique granted enough strength to push him beyond the Peak of Tier-3.

Michael's raw physical strength skyrocketed and was eerily close to the raw force a Higher Lifeform could unleash.

He appeared on the other side of the hidden force, the Aethyr Blade mantled in Enhancement and Reinforced Sword Qi, and initiated a gruesome massacre. He twisted his body and lunged forward, the

Aethyr Blade beheading one Awakened with a single strike. Using the accumulated momentum to his advantage, Michael released the Reinforced Sword Qi at the tip of the Aethyr Blade, creating a projectile with tremendous destructive power.

The Sword Qi projectile burst through the 1-Star Tier-1 Leather Armor Artifact of the next closest Awakened, piercing deep into his chest.

Michael kicked the ground the moment the accumulated momentum had been used up. A single push was all it took to cross the remaining distance to reach the next group of Awakened. The Aethyr Blade transformed into a huge war axe as Michael plunged the Aethyr downward. Warm blood gushed in all directions as the targeted Awakened split in two.lights

Michael's danger sense kicked in a quarter of a second later. He retracted the Aethyr and leapt high into the air. A Qi Sword manifested beneath him in the air barely a fraction of a second later. It was angled and pointed a little sideways, allowing Michael to push to the side the moment his feet touched the Qi Sword.

Michael didn't hesitate a single second. He kicked the Qi Sword, shattering it as he propelled his body to a different spot within the vicinity. He somersaulted as he was about to crash into a nearby tree and kicked the tree trunk just in time to land back on the ground.

While showing off his acrobatic talent, Michael didn't stay idle either. He conjured hundreds of Glacicles in the undergrowth within his range and inserted a trace of Extraction into them. Everyone's focus was pulled to him, hiding the subtle energy fluctuations his Glacicles exuded naturally. Only a few observed the Glacicles, and even they didn't react fast enough as Michael unleashed them with a burst of energy.

The Glacicle shot in all directions, impacting near-

instantaneously as they reached the closest targets. The traces of Extraction entered the bodies and Artifacts of the Awakened naturally due to Insert's lasting effect. The traces took root inside the enemies and devoured their energy at once.

Michael erupted the Dome of Extraction to extract more life force and energy from his surroundings. Hundreds of Extraction tendrils shot out of the ground and tapped into the flora and fauna around him to replenish Michael's stamina and energy instantaneously. Michael used the replenished energy to empower Extraction and insert the large tendrils into the Awakened, which were daring enough to get close to him.

Dozens of Awakened rushed at him, but none of them could block the Extraction – Insert combination. They tried to block the golden tendrils as they entered their bodies but it was to no avail.

'These guys are definitely not an Elite force from the Council's Clans.'

Michael had enough time to analyze his enemies and it was pretty obvious that though the Council's forces were stronger than ordinary people, they weren't extraordinary. The Valyr Lordess' Super Elite Force would crush the 300 Awakened in the Untamed Jungle with ease, probably without losing a single Valyrian as well!

'Maybe, the Council's Lord didn't receive as much help as the Trilance because everyone is certain of their victory? They're a Patchwork Kingdom with more than 100 Lords, after all. There is no need for all of them to request the help of their respective races' Super Elite forces...'

Michael was not certain whether his guesses were right or not, but he could tell fairly easily that the teamwork of the Awakened could have been better. Their Soultraits were well-

trained, but as they were ordinary Adventurers without Lord Powers, the Soul Power they'd accumulated left much to be desired. The Adventurers' Soultraits were hardly amplified.

The complete opposite was the case for Michael. His Soultraits were all powerful and each of his Soultraits had amassed a tremendous amount of Soul Power, granting him the power needed to manifest close to 100 compressed Glacicle Swords that were further amplified with Reinforced Sword Qi and traces of Extraction inserted in them.

The Glacicle Swords appeared around Michael seemingly out of nowhere. They appeared all of a sudden, almost as if retrieved from Michael's spatial storage, and were released with a burst of energy a quarter of a second later. The Awakened in his immediate surroundings tried to react in time, but they didn't manage to evade the incoming attack despite their quick reflexes. They erupted with origin energy and retrieved shields from their War Rune's storage, or utilized their defensive-type Soultraits, but the massive Glacicle Swords rained down on them like a shower of deadly projectiles.

Following Michael's commands, the Glacicle Swords pierced through the defenses until they were forcefully stopped. By the time the Glacicle Swords were stopped, the layer of Reinforced Sword Qi erupted with tremendous power. The Glacicle Swords shattered, releasing the freezing mist that had been compressed within, while simultaneously pushing the Sword Qi projectile ahead.

Chaos and death descended on the Awakened soon after.

Chapter 574 Roots & Dragon

574 Roots & Dragon

As the fight progressed, the pull of the Cursed Seals grew stronger. Michael's insides felt like burning as the Cursed Seals demanded to be activated, their power unleashed, and their terror rapidly spreading through the Origin Expanse.

Since the day Michael learned more about the Cursed Seals, he could feel their presence within him more easily. He could manifest them at will and unleash their power at once. However, Michael didn't want to do that. It was not necessary to unleash the Cursed Seals. They were dangerous, and it was not unlikely that he would lose his mind mid-battle.

Michael was not willing to manifest the Cursed Seals if it was not desperately required, or if he was not in a safe environment to experiment and study the Cursed Seals.

The burning sensation of the Cursed Seals bothered him a little bit, but Michael didn't have any time to complain. He was focused on the situation ahead because he had underestimated the strength of his enemies.

The hidden forces of the Council of Xylon were stronger than he initially thought. After the initial surprise attacks succeeded, Michael didn't think too highly of them. Almost half of them were dead by

the time they realized what calamity had struck them. However, once they regained their senses, they managed to expel the traces of extraction that had been inserted into them.

After that, their defenses grew stronger and they managed to slow down Michael's killing spree.

Maybe, his initial assessment of the hidden forces had been a little bit too hasty.

The Awakened gathered in a small open area. One of them released blazing flames to burn the undergrowth and surrounding bushes, removing all potential hiding spots and dead angles with ease. The second batch of Glacicles hidden within the undergrowth was exposed and burned slowly.

The flames were not as strong as Zeroa's mythical flames, but they were quite powerful nonetheless. It was enough to melt the fragile Glacicles rather easily.

Michael disliked that Glacicle was quite fragile. He liked the Ice-

type Soultrait for its freezing trait and low energy consumption, but it was way too fragile and weak for his liking.

He clicked his tongue and disappeared in the tree top of the towering trees. Several Qi Swords plunged toward the ground with great velocity, only to be shattered by a large obsidian hand that manifested out of nowhere. The Obsidian Hand blocked two Qi Swords right before crushing them easily. Following the Obsidian Hand, more Soultraits were unleashed.

Michael had Spirit Eyes fully unleashed and pinpointed more than a dozen Armament-type Soultraits, two Summon-type Soultraits, and a handful of Elemental-type Soultraits. The remaining Soultraits either amplified the Awakened physically, acted as a means of support for their allies, or ought to inflict a negative effect upon Michael.

However, Michael couldn't sense anything. His senses weren't restrained and nothing else felt odd or different either.

'Weird,' He thought right before lightning bolts zapped past his head. One of them missed him by a hair's breadth. If he hadn't tilted his head at the last possible second, he would have been struck right in the center of his face.

His eyes widened, realization dawning upon him.

'Prognosis is delayed, and I cannot sense their projectiles anymore!'

But that was not all. Michael was on top of one of the bigger trees and his energy was concealed perfectly. It should have been impossible for the Awakened to sense him. Yet, instead of being unable to detect him, they found him easily and attacked him with great precision.

'Is that a Detection Soultrait?!'

That made everything a little bit more difficult. He initially planned to retreat and attack later at night or warn the guards in the border settlement before toying with the Awakened a bit more. Unfortunately, that didn't seem feasible anymore. The Detection Soultrait made everything a tad more difficult, especially since it was combined with a Soultrait that hid projectiles from Spirit Eyes.

It had been a while since his eyes weren't able to detect something. That wasn't a welcome change.

Michael jumped down to the ground, created the Soul Grimoire, and used two Soul Tears, one for Extraction, and the second to amplify Taming.

The Dome of Extraction spread through the vicinity and tapped into every source of lifeforce and energy in its range right before Michael tapped into the Taming Soultrait to activate Power Share.lights

He was not that close to his companions but it was still possible to use Power Share. The energy consumption increased with the distance, but Michael and the Elemental Empress were fine with that right now. Zeroa was in the middle of a battle against some powerful forces, and she had signaled that she was in need of more strength, requesting his support.

Michael provided this strength by unleashing Power Share, sharing his Soultraits with Zeroa whereas her Elementals Affinities were temporarily unlocked to Michael.

He sensed that the Elemental Empress tapped into the power of Superior Constitution, Extraction, and Enhancement all at once. Meanwhile, Michael coated his body in the Elemental Empress' mythical flames. The sudden surge in temperature took the Awakened by surprise as they were greeted by a blast of heat.

However, even more surprising were the roots that shot out of the ground all around the Awakened. The Awakened were guarded against Michael and the blazing flames that enveloped him like a sacred armor. They didn't expect something to emerge from the ground. A handful of the smaller roots penetrated through the calves of the Awakened without leg protection, whereas thicker roots coiled around their lower bodies, restraining them. Their movements were slowed and it didn't take long before they were rendered immobile.

Not even the Mid Tier-3 Awakened with physical Soultraits could move no matter how much they tried as dozens of roots that were as thick as an adult's waist coiled around them, suffocating their bodies.

A moment later, a humongous dragon head compressed from azure mythical flames manifested in front of them. The dragon head was several meters high and wide and it radiated the terrifying pressure of a real dragon. The Awakened unleashed their Soultraits once again before slashing at the roots restraining them. However, before they could cut through the roots, more roots shot out of the ground.

More and more roots emerged from the ground, tightly coiling around the Awakened as the humongous dragon head shot forward, burning everything in its path.

Screams of pain and terror filled the air alongside the smell of burned flesh. However, Michael didn't pay much attention to the screams. He shot forward and created dozens of Reinforced Qi Swords to pierce through the small gaps in the burning roots, piercing the razor-sharp Qi Swords into the helpless Awakened.

Dozens of Awakened managed to block the majority of the azure mythical flames, but Michael managed to strike enough to receive more energy influxes in the following 30 seconds. The scenery around him was filled with a huge azure campfire, dozens of burning Awakened, and the desperate survivors, who had barely escaped the roots' restraints.

Michael experienced the strain on his body and he dispelled his control of the roots and the blazing armor. He continued to use Power Share, allowing Zeroa to tap into his Soultraits' Power, but he stopped using her power. She was too far away from him to make full use of her Lesser Nature Affinity.

'That was interesting!'

Michael chuckled to himself before unleashing the Legendary Ring Artifact's dragon might once again. This time, however, Michael merged the dragon might with the Dome of Extraction and his naturally intimidating presence. His first actions instilled fear and desperation in the hearts of the survivors, planting the seed of fear inside them. The full extent of dragon might that was merged with his intimidating presence was enough to stimulate the seed of fear and let it blossom into pure terror.

The Awakened retreated subconsciously. They took a step back, their legs quivering in fear and disbelief, and their eyes widened in shock as the scenery around Michael changed once again.

The area all around him transformed, hundreds of Qi Swords and Glacicle Swords manifesting at a time, rising in the air behind him. As the screams of the burning victims around him died down, thousands of Glacicle Swords and Qi Swords had been manifested, filling the proximity with deadly projectiles.

"How do you have so much energy?!?" One of the Awakened screamed at the top of his lungs.

"Soo many Soultraits..." Another one weeped.

Michael merely smiled in response. He had more energy than ordinary Awakened, but it was not like his energy storage was several times bigger. However, he had Extraction, his trump card that could replenish his energy tens of times faster than others could only dream of. As long as his energy consumption didn't exceed Extraction's rapid drainage, Michael could fight for days, weeks, maybe even months without a break...until his body would break apart due to the excess wear and tear.

A corner of his lips tilted upward. The survivors took this as a bad omen and retreated further. But they didn't even manage to take two steps back before the thousands of Qi Swords and Glacicle Swords were released.

A deadly hail ensued and chaos descended. The Awakened created Obsidian Hands, protective shields, and summoned their monster companions to protect themselves, but none of that was enough. The Glacicle Swords and Qi Swords shot through the Untamed Jungle according to Michael's will. Some crashed into the shields of the Awakened survivors, but the majority shot past them, penetrated deep into their flesh.

In a matter of seconds, the remaining survivors turned into lifeless hedgehogs. Dozens of Swords penetrated each of them from all sides, bleeding them out. Those who nearly managed to escape Michael's attacks were restrained and turned into victims of Michael's Spiritual Domination. They didn't expect the spiritual attack and suffered the backlash.

Their bodies were penetrated from all sides, the last remnants of life dispersing before they collapsed lifelessly on the ground.

Michael clicked his tongue reproachfully. He wiped the sweat from his forehead and rubbed his aching temples.

"Well...that was a little intense."

Chapter 575 Council's Trouble

575 Council's Trouble

Michael didn't waste much time after he dealt with the last Awakened. He collected their corpses and traveled to the Zynur Lord's border settlement. The Guards were shocked and changed into a defensive stance the moment they saw Michael. But who could hold them accountable for that? Michael's body was covered in blood and his clothes were half-burned.

His appearance was fearsome enough to shake the bored Guards. Fortunately, one of the Guards on the walls recalled Michael and what their Lord had said about their friend from the Untamed Jungle.

"He is an ally. Let him inside!" The Guard's voice boomed through the vicinity and it didn't take long before the large steel gate to the Untamed Jungle was opened.

Now that the Guards knew that Michael was an ally, they saluted and greeted him formally. Michael, however, merely waved his hand.

"Someone bring me a Communication Crystal that connects me with the Zynur Lord." His voice wasn't loud, but it commanded obedience.

Two Guards left at once, and it took them no more than ten minutes before they returned with an Awakened at the Peak of Tier-3.

"I didn't expect the Lord of the Untamed Jungle to come visit us. Especially not looking like...this," The Zynur Awakened managing the border settlement cleared his throat and added, "It's an honor to meet you. Why do you have to speak with our Lord?"

Despite sounding calm and kind, the sharpness within the Zynur Awakened's voice was notable. However, Michael merely shrugged the Zynur's attitude off. He retrieved some corpses from his War Rune's storage instead of answering. The corpses landed on the cobbled main street of the border settlement with loud thuds.

"I found almost 300 Tier-3 Adventurers near the border settlement. You should understand what they would have done if they'd reached the settlement."

The Zynur Awakened swallowed hard. His eyes were wide open and his jaw dropped to the ground.

"The Council of Xylon," He realized, recalling some of the races that were part of the council.

"All of them were decently powerful. Probably Elite at the lower scale."

It took the Zynur Awakened a while to regain his composure. However, once he regained his senses, he retrieved a communication crystal and handed it over to Michael.

"It's connected to the Trilance's Lords. You might want to talk to all of them."

Michael smiled, "Thanks."

In the following half an hour, Michael called the Trilance's Lords to report what happened in the Untamed Jungle. He didn't leave out too many details. Michael revealed everything that had to be said.

It was no surprise yet the Trilance's Lords seemed surprised by the sudden attack from the Untamed Jungle. The Trilance had been certain that they wouldn't have to worry about the dangers of the Untamed Jungle. Evidently, that was a mistake. A grave mistake that would have cost them the border settlement if not for Michael's timely intervention.

Michael proposed some changes in the Trilance's plans and strategy and they assured him that they would think about it. The Trilance's attitude toward the incident left a sour aftertaste, but Michael decided to ignore that for the time being. The Trilance was already under pressure from fighting continuously for the last few months. Pressing them to change their tactics just because he deemed them useless would harm their relationship.

That was not something Michael wanted for the time being. He didn't want to make another enemy with the Trilance, not with the Zentika Empire stirring trouble, the increasing strength of monsters in his proximity, and the Council of Xylon overwhelming the Savannah Region.

If anything, Michael would continue to use the Trilance as meat shields to eliminate more Awakened from the Council of Xylon without pulling their attention to the Untamed Jungle and his territory. Until the Council of Xylon was taken care of, Michael could somehow bear with the Trilance's attitude. Afterward...

Michael was not sure.

Maybe, the dynamic between the Untamed Jungle and the Trilance would change once the Council was dissolved. But that was a question the future would answer. It was not necessary to break his head over that just yet.

"Please keep the Communication Crystal, my lord! The Zynur Lord informed through his private channel that he would send me another one shortly," The Zynur Awakened's attitude toward Michael changed completely. He was overly formal and spoke to Michael with deep respect.

Michael chuckled to himself but nodded. He kept the Communication Crystal and departed the border settlement not long after. His trip back to his territory was short. He was about to head for a short bath but stopped when his gaze fell on one of the warehouses.lights

"I might as well..."

Michael turned to the warehouse and went inside. He tapped into his Lord power and tugged on some Links of Loyalty ever so slightly. A minute later, a dozen Starless Summons appeared in the warehouse. They'd sensed the slight pull and immediately went to their Lord.

"Once I'm done extracting the Will's loot, I want you guys to bring the corpses to the laboratory. Maybe, they can find some valuable organs, or find something that the Mythic Alchemists can use," Michael ordered before retrieving the corpses of the 297 Tier-3 Adventurers.

He manifested the Soul Grimoire and retrieved a Soul Tear to use it on Extraction before he unleashed Extraction to work on the bodies of the Adventurers.

Extracting 297 bodies did not take long. However, Michael didn't rush anything to extract as many Memory Orbs, SoulStar Fragments, and Soultraits as possible.

The gains were quite decent. He procured 309 Memory Orbs, 31,035 SoulStar Fragments, and 41 Soultrait Symbols.

Michael stored the loot away and gestured the Starless Summons to get to work. He returned to the Greater Nature Spirit's side and sat down next to its massive trunk. Sitting next to the Greater Nature Spirit cross-legged would have been quite annoying under normal circumstances, but the Forest Pixies didn't bother him right now. Instead, he found himself surrounded by tranquility where the Greater Nature Spirit's domain and presence were the strongest.

He initiated consuming the Memory Orbs once he found calm and peace deep inside him.

Consuming 309 Memory Orbs took a while. However, since Michael had focused on Extraction to extract the Awakened's memories about their combat experiences, their techniques' masteries, their Soultraits, and the missions they'd been given, he managed to procure the information he was looking for easily.

"It's exactly what I initially suspected," He murmured to himself.

The Council of Xylon had been receiving support just like the Trilance. It gazed like the Lords of the council were preparing to destroy the Trilance in the following months before using their established settlements and the Untamed Jungle in the back as a protective wall to create indomitable fortresses in the final fight of supremacy against their allies.

From what Michael could tell, almost all Lords of the council were thinking about betraying each other once the Trilance ceased to exist. Several alliances within the Council of Xylon had already been formed, including factions of Lords who'd signed Soul Pacts to rule the Savannah Region together once everything was over.

Three bigger factions attracted Michael's attention. More than 20 Lords were members of these factions, splitting the Patchwork Kingdom into three large pieces of land once the Trilance perished.

The politics and scheming of the 100ish Lords working together to kill the three Lords of the Trilance were disgusting, but they were also the reason why the Trilance was still thriving. All Lords had been given reinforcement from their Clans and the Higher-ups of their races, yet none of them was willing to send out all of their forces.

The majority was hiding their strongest forces, merely sending out the least experienced members of the Elite forces that had been sent to them as reinforcement.

It was a mess, but the massive influx of information he'd procured through the Memory Orbs was also something Michael could use. He could take advantage of the distrust within the Council of Xylon to break them from within.

Michael licked his lips, the excitement within his heart exploding. The Savannah Region could be a Lesser Region that was rather uninteresting for Michael as a Lord from the Untamed Jungle. However, the Savannah Region could develop into a higher-ranked region under the Untamed Jungle's influence.

The land bordering the Untamed Jungle was already more developed due to the influx of the Untamed Jungle's high energy density. It was only a matter of time before more energy would spread into the Savannah Region, thus transforming the flora and fauna of the Savannah Region.

Even if the Savannah Region was only a Lesser Region, it possessed some unique ore deposits and other unique materials. Once they developed to a higher quality, the Lords of the Savannah Region would turn into wealthy tycoons overnight.

Michael desired a piece of that fortune as well. But that meant he would have to work even harder. The Trilance was on the losing side, after all.

Since he learned quite a bit about the Council of Xylon's plans against the Trilance, Michael retrieved a Communication Crystal. However, instead of calling the Lords of the Trilance, he called the Immortal Knight.

Michael shared crucial information about their tactics, strengths, weaknesses, and the military could stationed within every settlement. But most importantly, Michael managed to retrieve a particular piece of information.

He got to know that the Council of Xylon planned a surprise attack, their target being the Laprix Lord's main settlement.

The attack had to be stopped, otherwise, the Trilance would lose a third of their could in the following 24 hours.

Chapter 576 Counter

576 Counter

"Retreat into the groove and wait for the command to attack!" Immortal Knight's booming voice resounded through the surroundings.

His hawk eyes flicked left and right, observing the movement of his Soldiers as they finished the last preparations for the 'surprise' attack of the council.

Since Michael forwarded the details of the surprise attack, it was possible to turn the tide and use the surprise attack to execute a deadly counterattack.

A little bit more than half a day passed since Michael forwarded the details of the surprise attack, leaving mere minutes before the surprise attack was supposed to happen.

The Immortal Knight, his Soldiers and the Awakened were hiding in a large grove with a camouflage net spread out above them. It should be impossible to pinpoint their hiding spot. There was no reason to believe that the camouflage net didn't work. The Super Elite Unit of the Valyrians and the forces of the Trilance were well hidden underneath camouflage nets as well, after all.

It hadn't been easy for the Immortal Knight to convince the Trilance to move their armies and deploy the Super Elite Valyrians near the Laprix Lord's head settlement. There were no signs indicating an attack from the Council of Xylon was about to happen. The Immortal Knight had to use his trump card to convince the Lords that he was right.

He told the Trilance that Michael had interrogated the Awakened who'd invaded the Untamed Jungle to strike the Zynur Lord's border settlement from the back before killing them. That left a few questions unanswered, such as the reason why Michael didn't tell them about the surprise attack earlier, but Siegfried Dragoon couldn't be bothered to answer.

The Trilance chose to believe him – or his Lord, to be precise –, and deployed their Elite forces near the Laprix Lord's main settlement.

Time passed slowly, but there was no sign of enemy forces. Almost 20 minutes of silence passed, yet there was nothing. The ground didn't tremor due to the arrival of the tens of thousands of enemies that had been prophesied to charge at them. There was nobody!

The forces of the Trilance grew restless. They had a premonition, a bad feeling that the Council of Xylon was about to attack the Zynur Lord's main headquarters instead. However, just as the forces of the Zynur Lord were about to jump up to rush back to their territory, something changed.

The fabric of space twisted and distorted. Vibrant sparks manifested in the middle of nowhere. There were hundreds of thousands of them. They revolved around each other and interlinked. The sparks transformed into a vibrant swirl of energy. It expanded and kept on expanding until it was dozens of meters in range. Only then did the mass of energy stabilize.

Everyone held their breath underneath the camouflage nets. Nobody dared to breathe, their eyes locked onto the mass of energy.

The following seconds felt like an eternity. Dark outlines appeared in the mass of energy and it didn't take long before the first beings emerged from the mass of energy.

At first, only a few emerged. However, the number skyrocketed quickly. The few turned into dozens, hundreds...and it was only a matter of 30 seconds before the number reached a thousand. But that was not all. That was just the beginning.

Soldiers, Archers, Mages, Priests, Beast Tamers, Cavalry Riders, Tamed Monsters, Knights, Champions, and countless more types of highly qualified Combat-type Summons appeared from the mass of energy. Their numbers crossed ten thousand in less than five minutes, and the number of newcomers didn't seem to decrease. If anything, they kept pouring out of the mass of energy like a never-ending waterfall.

The first Awakened riding on monstrosities that looked like a cross between an elephant and a rhinoceros emerged from the portal, followed by prehistoric animals such as house-sized Basilodons that had three large-scale catapults strapped onto their backs.

The Awakened stepped ahead of the humongous army once more than 50,000 Summons crossed the portal. The mass of energy flickered once but it didn't close just yet. More Summons, Awakened, and monsters emerged from the portal.

There were easily more than a thousand Awakened, most clustered together, moving in unison. They were led by a few individuals riding on the Rhinoceros-Elephant monsters. On the other hand, the number of Soldiers kept increasing. It wouldn't take more than 15 minutes before their numbers crossed 100,000.

100,000 Soldiers led by 1,000 Elite Awakened were the numbers Michael had forwarded to Siegfried Dragoon. He informed Immortal Knight that he couldn't promise that the numbers were correct, but he feared that it would be the case. Michael could come to help them but the situation at the border to the Zentika Empire was growing dire as well. He would have to travel on Icarus to reach the battlefield in time before instilling chaos in the surroundings just to leave to aid Sun Demos, Tatjana, and the rest on the other side of his territory soon after.

The Immortal Knight did his best to reassure his Lord that there was no need to worry. He would take care of the counterattack and ensure an overwhelming victory.lights

He raised his hand slowly and Zeroa appeared next to him. The tension in the air increased the moment the Elemental Empress moved next to Siegfried. She glanced at him in anticipation, sincerely hoping that the battle would start soon. However, Immortal Knight didn't signal them to charge just yet.

He observed the armies through a small hole in the camouflage and watched them as they approached the Laprix's main settlement. The forces of the Trilance tensed up as the flanks brushed past the grooves they were hiding, but none of them moved. They overwhelmed their instincts and didn't run away. They waited until more than 50,000 foes passed by their location.

The moment his eyes fell onto the most crowded area within the army of the enemies, Immortal Knight gave the final signal. Zeroa exclaimed and her mythical flames erupted. She pulled back to Tiara while observing the chain reaction she'd caused with a simple release of her mythical flames.

As Zeroa pulled back, crackling noises filled the surroundings. The sounds were the loudest near the center of the council's forces. Some Awakened and more perceptive Mages looked down, their eyes narrowing as they perceived something particular. Their eyes widened in shock in the next second and they screamed aloud, warning their allies about the danger from below.

But it was already too late.

By the time the warnings resounded, the ground underfoot the council's army burst apart. Mythical flames exploded all over the battlefield, tearing apart the ground and the people overhead simultaneously. The smell of burned flesh filled the air alongside desperate, pained screams.

Humongous pillars of azure mythical flames, dozens of them, erupted all over the region that was about to turn into a terrifying battlefield. Hundreds of people died instantly and several thousand Soldiers were still burning. Most of them wouldn't make it through the next few minutes, let alone an hour.

"Wohooo!" Zeroa exclaimed at the top of her elemental lungs, while Siegfried, Tiara, and the others could only smile wryly.

It became not honorable to fight like this, but fighting honorably was only something fools and heroes would do. Siegfried and the others were neither. They were not foolish enough to charge at their enemies with a disadvantageous numerical ratio of 1:50. The Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs cursed the Immortal Knight for his deceiving tactic, but they had to acknowledge that many wars were fought with trickery.

Overcharging Elemental Crystals with the Elemental Empress' mythical flames to give the low-grade elemental crystals some more destructive power once triggered wasn't the worst that would have happened. Furthermore, it was not like the blazing pillars killed everyone. All they performed was kill close to a thousand enemies, injuring a few thousand more, and pulling a tight hit on the enemies' faces for being overly confident.

Initially, the Immortal Knight wanted to use the overcharged elemental crystals against the settlement that had been constructed near the main settlement of the Laprix and Zynur Lords, but he changed his mind after listening to the information he had been given by his Lord. Overcharged elemental crystals were a bit complicated to produce, but Michael had Extraction and Insert. This was enough to turn the complicated process into child's play.

The blazing pillars destroyed the orderly formation of the council's forces entirely. Even the well-disciplined Awakened and the Commanders felt a seed of uncertainty and fear blossom in their hearts. Their eyes flicked left and right, only to be pushed on the verge of death right after the pillar of azure mythical flames erupted. The tamed monsters began running around, resulting in a stampede. Their instincts destroyed all means of control, and they charged in every possible direction haphazardly, bulldozing the Soldiers and Awakened around them.

Many died in the aftereffect of the overcharged elemental crystals' eruption, and more would die shortly. Sensing the opportunity, the Trilance's forces moved out in unison. Their timing became impeccable. They removed the camouflage nets at once and charged at the enemy forces from all sides, their morale at the peak.

Watching the chaos in the rows of the council's army and the battle cries and shouts of the Trilance's forces that surrounded them, Siegfried Dragoon would only snicker.

The first step of his plan succeeded.

The Immortal Knight recalled his Lord's words distinctly as the humongous pillars of azure fire died down slowly.

[I know that you're tired of staying back, but it's okay to let loose a little bit. Go wild!]

And that became exactly what Siegfried Dragoon did. He let loose for the first time in what felt like an eternity.

"Charge!!!"

Chapter 577 Savage Battle

577 Savage Battle

The initial plan of Immortal Knight's strategy was pretty simple. Zeroa fueled the altered elemental crystals with her mythical flames, overcharging them. She could trigger them with a burst of energy, which was exactly what she did.

The overcharged elemental crystals had been spread out evenly across the prophesied battlefield to cause maximum damage and destroy their enemies' formation. That worked out very well.

Following the successful attempts to stir chaos in the council's army, the well-hidden warriors revealed themselves and charged at the enemies from the front with the majority of the Trilance's power, and the flanks using the great prowess of their Elite forces and the reinforcement.

The formation of their attack was like the colliding blades of a scissor. The overlapping section of the blades was the area where most Summons and Awakened collided with each other, whereas the tapering ends of the blades represented the powerful forces that charged at the enemy. Slowly, the blades tightened until the scissor snapped shut, cutting through everything stuck between the blades.

The Immortal Knight led his people onto the battlefield. They attacked the left flank where most blazing pillars had erupted.

Taking advantage of the chaos and the lowered morale of their enemies, the Immortal Knight and his soldiers gained a foothold on the battlefield within seconds.

Holy Power circulated through the Immortal Knight's body. His strength skyrocketed while his presence intensified. The enemies facing the Immortal Knight trembled while the allies around him felt calm, all of a sudden. Their wildly beating hearts and the uncertainty that bugged them for the last few hours dispersed, and their morale as well as the focus on the battle ahead heightened.

The Immortal Knight's sword was coated in dazzling light and the ground under their feet crackled suddenly. Siegfried Dragoon's movement speed changed from one moment to the next. He accelerated suddenly, his holy movement technique granting him a burst of strength and speed.

The instant right after he executed his movement technique, raging winds conjured behind him. The wind burst forth and pushed against his back, further accelerating Immortal Knight's movement speed. Sparks exploded around his feet and small blazing flames exploded whenever he kicked the ground.

The earth seemed to make way for the Immortal Knight whereas the wind and flames pushed him beyond his limit. He was among the first to reach his enemies, a massive group of Summons. There were Knights, Mages, ordinary Warriors, and Archers. They were troubled and still shocked due to the sudden eruption of the blazing azure pillars, but they reacted faster than the Summons around them. The Knights jerked around, lifted their weapons and prepared for the impact.

However, before they encountered the Immortal Knight head-

on, raging winds blasted into their faces. Loose grains of soil were carried through the air, splashing right into their eyes, forcing them to take a step back and rub their eyes to remove the dirt. They couldn't keep their eyes open to face the Immortal Knight head-on.

Siegfried was astounded at the great synergy and teamwork of the three Lesser Elementals that had partnered up with him. The corner of his lip curled upward, and he made his move. He strode to the side, twisted the heavy broadsword in his hands and struck out. Despite the heavy weight of his weapon, it whizzed through the air like a feather. The heavy broadsword cleaved through the closest Knights, two with one strike, killing them on the spot.

Simultaneously, several fireballs manifested around his head. They fired toward the Mages and Archers, who'd already cast a spell and nocked an arrow on their bowstring. The fireballs were a little slow, but they diverted the Mages and Archers enough to miss the earth spikes that shot out of the ground.

Surprised squeals and pained screams resounded through the vicinity, resulting in carelessly released arrows flying past the Immortal Knight. Meanwhile, the Mages didn't even manage to release their spells. Their feet and calves had been pierced with earth spikes, forcefully disrupting their spellcasting. Their spells broke down, revealing several gaps that could be used to end the Mages in one swoop.

But the Immortal Knight couldn't charge through the dozens of Mages and Warriors that appeared in front of him. He could disrupt the Mages using the Elemental Might of his partners, but it was a little difficult to use the Lesser Elementals' weak prowess to kill dozens of enemies at once.

Fortunately, the Immortal Knight was not alone. The Forest Elven Adventurers and a handful of the territory's strongest Archers and Sharpshooters were present, and ready to aid the Immortal Knight at once.

Lilica was the long-range unit's captain. She used her 4-Star Soultrait, Weakness Detect, to detect the weakest points in the enemy's forces and strike them with her fellow archer companions. Precise Aim, her other 4-Star Soultrait, allowed Lilica to hit every arrow in the bullseye, reaping the lives of one Tier-2 Summon after another.

lights

Pheli didn't stay behind with the other forces either. She and Liopham moved closer to the frontlines to use their Soultraits with more precision. Liopham used Rage of the Primal to attract the attention of the strongest forces, leading them closer to the Immortal Knight where Siegfried could stall time.

It was better to push the strongest enemies in Siegfried's direction rather than allow strong Summons and Awakened to deal with the weaker Holy Knights. Simultaneously, Pheli was there to unleash Battle Cry, her second 4-Star Soultrait, enhancing her allies' strength considerably.

Pheli observed the battlefield intently and exploded her Repelling Shield wherever it was deemed necessary. She protected one of the Holy Knights who was nearly cut in half from a war axe plunging on his head. The Repelling Shield did not only block the war axe, but it absorbed a portion of the war axe's force and released it right back. The Champion Summon fighting the Holy Knight was surprised and lost balance. He couldn't even react in time as the Holy Knight initiated a counterattack.

The Holy Knight's vibrantly glowing Holy Sword sliced across the Champion Summon's throat. A fountain of blood gushed through the air and the Champion Summon collapsed to the ground, choking on his blood. He died mere seconds later.

While Pheli and Liopham chose to take the risk and approach the front, Mika and Opars stayed back. Opars's hand pressed tightly against Mika's back. He released Energy Imprint, refilling Mika's body with Energy as the young Forest Elf used his two Soultraits, Arrow Duplication and Pierce together.

He nocked an arrow on the bowstring and pulled the bowstring back while raising the bow high into the air. There was no need for Mika to aim precisely. All he had to do was shoot the arrow straight into the crowded areas where his enemies had gathered. That was exactly what Mika did. He released the arrow a second after he pulled the bowstring back and watched the arrow duplicate into two arrows...four arrows...eight arrows...sixteen arrows before inertia pulled the arrows back to the ground.

The individual force of the arrows was not extraordinary, and it was hardly enough to kill a Tier-2 Summon if they weren't hit in a vital spot, but Pierce enhanced the penetrative force of the duplicated arrows drastically. Each arrow that hit an enemy would impact the enemy's combat prowess. Even if the effect wouldn't affect some of them drastically, the tiny disruption in their power and concentration might become the crucial factor in deciding between life and death!

Mika didn't eye his arrow for long. There was no time to do so. He sensed the impact of three energy influx, indicating that his duplicated arrows had reaped the lives of three enemies, but he was already on the way to release his second batch of duplicated arrows. He used Duplicated Arrow and Pierce together once again, triggering both Soultraits several times as he pulled the second arrow nocked on the bowstring back.

The Forest Elves' combat prowess was tremendous. They were natural hunters and their expertise with bows and arrows was exceptional. Archers were always of great use on the battlefield where large-scale armies collided.

But then again, there would be a time when ordinary arrows would lose some of their magic. Their use against metal armor sets, strengthened physique, and various other means to block physical projectiles decreased drastically. They wouldn't be as efficient as they were against Tier-1 and Tier-2 Summons at some point.

However, that issue was a concern for the future. However, the Immortal Knight and the Forest Elven Adventurers were pretty sure that they wouldn't have such an issue in the future either. They had

various advanced arrows that required mere bits of energy to pierce steel armors and the highly durable physique of Tier-3 Summons and Awakened.

Such arrows were quite expensive, but they were worth the price. Furthermore, there were also other means to improve an arrow's power. The Elemental Might of the Lesser Elementals was one of such means.

The Lesser Elementals' Elemental Might strengthened ordinary arrows, set them on fire, and covered them in raging winds to decrease the air resistance and accelerate them, along with providing other means to improve their prowess drastically.

But the Forest Elves and the Archers supporting Immortal Knight were not the only powerful unit under Siegfried's wing. Many more powerhouses were fighting next to the Immortal Knight.

The Holy Knights fought side-by-side, utilizing their Holy Formation to elevate each other's prowess, allowing them to fight opponents that had higher combat awareness and more years of experience.

Some Holy Knights died, but their deaths weren't for naught. Whenever a Holy Knight died, they released a burst of power that strengthened their allies temporarily while shaking their enemies to the core.

Chapter 578 Holy Sword

578 Holy Sword

A pained groan escaped one of the Holy Knights' mouths as a black blade pierced through his thick armor. His chest was pierced in an instant, but he didn't scream out in desperation. His gaze was firm and filled with determination. The grasp around his weapon loosened and he felt the strength in his body disperse slowly.

He instinctively knew that he had only seconds left before the darkness of eternal death would engulf him, however, the Holy Knight was not afraid. His trembling hands grasped the black blade, its razor-sharp edges cutting into the Holy Knight's flesh.

"Kill...him...." The Holy Knight gargled, blood trickling down the corner of his mouth.

The Holy Knights around their fallen comrade grit their teeth. They executed the Sacred Sword Style, and the holy movement technique taught by the Sacred Knight Temple Master, and circled the three-armed Awakened, whose blade was stuck in their comrade.

The Awakened had two more arms to move and two more black blades to wield, but that was not all. An eye the size of a head conjured from darkness manifested overhead. The Holy Knights slowed down and it was increasingly more difficult to observe the enemy.

Their focus was intercepted, allowing the three-armed Awakened to shake the black blade stuck in the Holy Knight. He twisted the blade and used his superior physical strength to hurl the dying body away.

Unexpectedly, the Holy Knight died the moment the black blade was ripped out of his body, and the remnants of his accumulated Holy Power were unleashed in the surroundings. The Holy Knight's comrades received a temporary boost in strength from the Holy Power's Blessing and the influence of the Darkness Eye decreased considerably.

The three-armed Awakened didn't expect a shockwave of holy power to impact the moment he killed one of the Holy Knights.

His eyes flicked around, keeping an eye on all directions. Simultaneously, responded to the holy power shockwave by coating his body and weapons with his dark-attributed origin energy. A moment later, he cut through the holy power shockwave.

The three Holy Knights took advantage of the three-armed Awakened's hurried actions. A dozen fireballs conjured around the Holy Knights as they raised their weapons high into the air.

Their weapons glowed vibrantly. Their Holy Sword technique was unleashed, draining their holy power rapidly as they plunged their weapons down at the Awakened. The fireballs were unleashed simultaneously, putting heavy pressure on the three-armed Awakened. The Darkness Eye overhead shook, destroying half of the fireballs instantaneously, but the remaining fireballs impacted heavily.

Simultaneously, the three-armed Awakened tried to block the incoming Holy Swords. He managed to block one attack and redirect the second Holy Sword to interfere with the strike of the third Holy Knight. However, his movements were too large. He managed to evade getting sliced apart, but it was impossible to evade the incoming fireballs.

The fireballs reached him as the last Holy Sword cut past him. The fireballs impacted, three hitting the Awakened's wrists and two exploding right in front of his eyes.

The Awakened didn't die, and he didn't sustain any mortal injuries as he managed to close his eyes and coat his eyelids with a tremendous amount of dark-attributed origin energy in time, but closing his eyes was a fatal mistake.

The moment he opened his eyes, the Awakened realized his mistake. Another foe appeared in front of him, his Holy Sword thrust forward.

The Awakened didn't know when the fourth Holy Knight appeared, and he didn't have enough time to react. The razor-

sharp tip of the Holy Sword was already in front of him.

The tip pricked the Awakened's throat, drawing a droplet of blood, and the blade's momentum was still at top speed.

All the Awakened could do was curse and unleash the remaining bits of strength inside him in a desperate attempt to evade the fatal attack. However, it was to no avail. The Holy Sword pierced his throat, and a fountain of blood erupted.

The Holy Knight twisted the blade and ripped it out of the Awakened's neck, his eyes following the three-armed Awakened. The light in the Awakened's eyes lost their luster. They went dull. The Awakened was dead.

A massive energy influx flushed through the Holy Knight, but his expression remained stoic. He grit his teeth, his eyes landing on the dead body of another Holy Knight...his friend, and colleague.

They had been Starless Summons of the same batch. Their decision to join the Sacred Knight Temple had been simple. They desired strength and they hoped to help the territory to prosper. Immortal Knight, the Captain of the Forest Elves, and their Lord told them more than once that it was dangerous in the wilderness, that they might die in battle against other Lords, and that they should choose carefully

whether they wanted to join the military, or if they were more fit to become the Guardians of the Untamed Jungle, the defenders of their Lord's territory.

Some decided to become Guardians of the Untamed Jungle. They decided that it was more secure to become a Guard rather than joining deadly battles outside the Untamed Jungle.lights

While that was certainly true, Guardians didn't receive certain benefits that were given to the remaining Combatants.

The Untamed Jungle's Guardians enjoyed a lot but would never grow as strong as their colleagues who chosen to join the Savannah Expedition. The Guardians exchanged their benefits for higher safety. That was fine, but it was not what everyone wanted. It was certainly not what the Holy Knight, who'd slain the three-armed Awakened, and his comrades wanted. They desired more.

The Holy Knight grit his teeth and grasped his Holy Sword tightly, wondering if he'd done something wrong, At that moment, another Awakened emerged in front of them. Thick, spiked roots burst out of the body of the Awakened. The roots slithered around the Awakened like they were alive and lunged forward, ready to reap the lives of the four Holy Knights in an instant.

However, before the roots could reach the Holy Knights, silver flashes filled their surroundings. A quarter of a second later, a silver figure burst past them, azure mythical flames coating her silver fur.

The azure mythical flames burned down the spiked roots, instantly turning them into cinder, whereas Tiara appeared in front of the Awakened, her spear gracefully spinning around her body. Mythical flames coated the spear blade as she thrust out, piercing through the Awakened's armor and chest in one go.

The Awakened coughed up blood and a burst of mythical flames erupted within his chest, but Tiara didn't pay any attention to the Awakened. She used Inner Force to redirect her spear's momentum and retract it at once. A second use of Inner Force was enough to change her momentum once again and move around the Awakened, whose body collapsed lifelessly to the ground.

"Holy shit," One of the Holy Knights blurted aloud, their wide-

open eyes following Tiara's dashing figure.

Tiara's Silvarean Tiger transformation was fully intact. Her eyes turned into dangerous slits that inflicted fear in the hearts of those who were daring enough to look into her eyes, whereas silver fur grew out of her body. Zeroa's body covered Tiara, transforming the youthful woman of the Silverfang Tigerfolk into a replica of the humanoid Netherworld Sabertooth Tigerfolk.

Her movements were dangerously fluid as she moved through the rows of enemies. Inner Force was used a dozen times in a matter of seconds, her spear severing limbs and heads without losing a fraction of her momentum.

Tiara left behind a terrifying carnage, however, she had yet to lose her reasoning. Her wild instincts didn't overwhelm her mind yet.

She was still in charge of her body and made full use of that.

Tiara protected her comrades with all her might. She knew that most Holy Knights were not yet experienced enough to deal with Awakened, or Elite Summons, who had accumulated more combat experience than them. They may be strong enough to fight most enemies based on their combat prowess, but their combat awareness and strategic minds have not developed that well yet.

They had a lot more to learn, and Tiara wanted to give them the opportunity. She gave her utmost to ensure that they survived and that they could use today's battle as an experience for future ordeals.

However, Tiara was not undefeatable either. She was not yet a Tier-3 Awakened and her combat prowess was certainly not high enough to deal with several enemies at Tier-3 either.

Fortunately, she had the Elemental Empress by her side. Zeroa was her partner, and together they were able to do much more than they could manage alone. It was not enough to defeat some of the Peak Tier-3 Awakened that led the Council's army to the Laprix Lord's main settlement, but that was not necessary.

The Super Elite unit of the Valyrians was doing that much already. The Valkyr and their Super Elite Unit burned through the enemies. The Trilance breached through the enemies' defense mere seconds after the azure-blazing pillars had erupted.

Their timing was perfect.

In record time, the Valkyr reached the center of the council's army where the Awakened with Support and Healing Soultraits had retreated.

However, the Valkyr and the Valyr's Super Elite Unit were not the only ones who managed to invade deep into the enemy's rows.

10 Berserkers and 18 Warlock Centaurs had been released into the center of the council's army when Immortal Knight noticed that most Awakened with Healing, and Support-type Soultraits retreated to more secure grounds. They mistakenly believed they could focus on their Soultraits to aid their allies.

Stinger worked with the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs to send the frantic monster-like Awakened into the center of the combat zone where they didn't have to hold back anymore.

The Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs didn't have to pay attention to their allies. They could go all-out and fight to their hearts' content!

Chapter 579 Meeting Of Xylon

Some time had passed and the chaotic battlefield had been reorganized. The forces of the council reformed and tried to retreat, but the Trilance's Cavalry and the Warlock Centaurs cut their path of retreat easily.

Tiara was still focused on protecting her allies, whereas Zeroa aided her with great precision. But there was more to it.

At some point, Zeroa began to use power that didn't belong to her. She tapped into the power of Michael's Soultraits and used them to strengthen Tiara.

Zeroa used Enhancement onto Tiara while also unleashing Extraction to absorb the surrounding energy at once. The Elemental Empress' used-up energy was rapidly replenished, allowing her to use her mythical flames more often and experiment a little with them by conjuring larger attacks.

However, Tiara and Zeroa didn't have the biggest impact on the battlefield. It was just that their actions fit well into the others' plays. The Immortal Knight had an easier time controlling the Holy Knights, Mages, and other Summons from the Savannah Expedition, whereas Stinger and the Savannah Expedition's Awakened teleported wildly throughout the battlefield to wreak havoc where their prowess was required the most.

The Council's forces were far from weak, but the course of events didn't play in their favor. The Awakened played against the Council in the worst possible ways and disrupted their rhythm entirely. This allowed the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs to deal considerable damage.

Mekhaz led the Warlock Centaurs with his Soultrait, Living Armor fully unleashed. Living Armor coated his entire body, leaving not a single inch of his body unprotected. Charging into the masses of enemies with his naturally high physical strength shook his foes to the core. It felt like a train at max speed crashed into them.

Mekhaz wielded a long spear with great precision. He never paid much attention to evading attacks. Instead, he prioritized rapid attacks and swift movements. As long as he moved around fast enough while putting pressure on his enemy, it would be impossible for his opponent to retaliate and hit him.

This worked out decently against most Summons. They had already a hard time weaving around the razor-sharp spear blade and sustained several injuries in no time. Blocking Mekhaz's attacks was not feasible either. The spear's force was too much for most Summons, and even Awakened at the lower range of physical strength, to handle.

Only the combined effort of several Summons, or a Summon with a high star-rating – or decades of experience – would know the ways to block Mekhaz's rapid and mighty spear attacks.

His unique spear technique didn't make it easier for his foes to handle Mekhaz. If anything, it turned Mekhaz into a far more dangerous opponent since the technique focused on executing unpredictable killing blows.

Thaor and Lokai's tactics were vastly different from Mekhaz's. The Berserkers relied on their physical strength to execute the most terrifying attacks in quick succession. They didn't focus on defense too much just like Mekhaz. However, their offense was far more brutal. They charged ahead, relying on their massive physique to smash their enemies left and right.

The Forest Elves' addition completed the perfect combination of disciplined combat, fight to protect, wild combat, and calculus.

The Immortal Knight and his students represented disciplined combat, Tiara and the Elemental Empress fought to protect, the Berserkers and Warlock Centaurs wreaked havoc with their wild combat, and the Forest Elves focused on calculated combat, taking out the enemies that were the most likely to turn the tides on the battlefield before they could do something.

The Council of Xylon's army tried to turn the tides several times but they were stopped before they could do something.

Three hours passed in the blink of an eye and it was no sooner that the prophesied surprise attack ended with a miserable defeat of the Council's forces. A few Awakened managed to escape, but none of them was unscathed. Some lost a limb, while others were burned severely.

The Super Elite Unit of the Valyr pursued the remaining forces of the council whereas thunderous cheers reverberated all over the battlefield.

The counterattack was a great success. They repelled the Council and landed a feisty blow, repaying some of the pain the Council of Xylon had inflicted on the Trilance.

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"General Ratan's army was annihilated. The surprise attack failed."

Only a few hours had passed since the surprise attack on the Laprix Lord's main settlement started, but the conclusion of the battle had already reached the Council of Xylon.

Good news traveled fast, but bad news spread even faster, like a wildfire of death and destruction.

Right after the news reached the Council of Xylon, the Lords, more than a hundred, gathered around a massive blood oak table.

They were seated in a large hall, staring at each other with a mix of fury, killing intent, and disbelief.

"How could this happen? Only our people knew about the surprise attack. We didn't even tell our Soldiers the location of our attack to prevent the Trilance's Seer from unraveling our plan!!" One of the Lords smashed his fists onto the massive table, jumping up in fury.

"Calm down, Lord Xyrz. Everyone is displeased about the turn of events. Everyone here lost precious Monsters and Awakened that had been painstakingly nourished," A second Lord said calmly, his voice accompanied by a soothing aura.

Lord Xyrz grit his teeth, his nails scratching over the blood oak table's surface, but he sat down without uttering another word.

"We lost too many good men," A woman covered in purple scales pointed out.

lights

"Just tell your Clan to send more backup then. Your territory sent the least Awakened to support the attack. You should keep your mouth shut, fishface!" A man on the other side of the table grunted, smoothly pointing his middle finger in her direction.

The woman leaped up, her large eyes expanding even further in fury.

"What did you ju—..."

"Shut up. Both!" A thunderous voice boomed through the large hall.

"There is no use going against each other. We can deal with our internal issues once the Trilance has been removed. Let's focus on our main problem first!"

The source of the thunderous voice was a four-meter-tall man covered in black hide. Large bat-like wings sprouted from his back.

"Our main problem is to remove the Trilance, or am I wrong?" One of the silent Lords asked, not quite understanding what the temporary leader of the Council was trying to get at.

"The Trilance would have been destroyed if we worked together a little bit earlier. It won't be a problem to crush them with our combined forces. Even the Super Elite Awakened sent to reinforce their defenses are not of any help," the Leader uttered casually before pointing out what the others seemed to miss, "The main problem is the backup that arrived a few weeks ago. They were the first to arrive, but they don't belong to the three Lords."

"At first, I was certain that the reinforcements were mercenaries who'd been hired from the Zentika Empire, but I was mistaken. The Zentika Empire wouldn't do something like that."

The Leader retrieved a crystal that projected a few pictures overhead once energy was channeled into it. The picture showed the Immortal Knight, his students, Tiara, the Berserkers, the Warlock Centaurs, and the Forest Elves with great precision.

"Hyumans?!?" A Lord exclaimed in shock right before falling from his chair.

He was not the only one in shock. Many Lords exclaimed, the terror in their voice clear.

"They're not Hyumans. Not exactly, at least," The Leader shook his head, "If they were Hyumans, we would have been crushed already. I'm pretty sure that they're a weaker race that's closely tied to Hyumans."

"Either way, the backup sent out from them is the main problem. They obstructed our surprise attack and have been killing far more enemies than the Trilance's armies."

"It took a while to research this, but our Truthmaster was able to verify that there is a fourth Lord, a Lord supporting the Trilance, who's joined the game. This Lord has a territory in the Untamed Jungle. The exact whereabouts are unknown though. However, it is presumed that the Lord isn't located too far, or too close to the border settlement of the Trilance. The invading Adventurers didn't report that anything was amiss....before they were killed on the spot."

"They were killed?!" A woman exclaimed, seemingly unaware of what had happened.

"Yes. We lost the 297 Adventurers who had been sent out to take a detour through the Untamed Jungle to conquer the border settlement of the Zynur Lord. We lost them and didn't even realize it, at first. The Adventurers didn't even have enough time to retrieve their communication crystals and warn us. Not even their emergency crystals were triggered in time!"

Everyone had known about the secret attack, but only the Lords who'd sent out their Adventurers knew that it failed miserably. The Links of Loyalty of the Adventurers had been severed at some point, informing the Lords that their subordinates had been killed.

However, to prevent everyone from panicking their mission's failure was maintained hidden until the surprise attack on the Laprix Lord's main settlement succeeded.

The attack did not succeed. It was another failure.

"I think that our portal attack was discovered out due to the interference of a capable Interrogator. Somehow, the Interrogator must have bypassed the restrictions put on the Adventurers' Soul Contracts, otherwise, they wouldn't have been able to find out that we were about to attack the Laprix Lord's main settlement. They would have never managed to execute a perfect counterattack like this otherwise!"

The Lords around the table swallowed hard.

"What now?" One asked, visibly confused.

Was the Lord from the Untamed Jungle a Higher Lifeform already? How strong was he exactly?

"We have to eliminate the backup from the Untamed Jungle and bulldoze the Trilance before preparing the final attack against the biggest threat; The Lord of the Untamed Jungle!"

Chapter 580 Michael's Wondrous Techniques

At the same time as the Council of Xylon's meeting was held, Michael found himself busy with his new techniques.

His understanding of Leviathan Diffusion was as high as before, but the upgraded version was even better now. Michael had used the most advanced fractions from a Tekur race's Peak Common Class Technique to replace the least compatible portions in Leviathan Diffusion. They might have been useful for the Zenovia family, but they didn't suit Michael.

Michael could annex the energy that entered his body instantaneously now. There was no need to circulate the absorbed energy through his body in a full circle before it was annexed. All he had to do was follow the principle of Leviathan Diffusion's enhanced version to absorb energy more smoothly.

Combined with the advantages of Superior Constitution, Michael was having a much easier time refining his War Rune and replenishing his energy storage.

But both factors could be further improved with the use of Consirat of War. The Body Refinement technique was one of Michael's unique creations. It used the principle of Leviathan Diffusion and four Body Refinement techniques, with two being from Peak Common Class techniques from Elite Tekur. Merging the techniques allowed Michael to create a Body Refinement technique that accelerated the natural absorption rate of energy permanently.

As he used Consirat of War to refine his body, Michael's physique would grow more adept at naturally absorbing energy to strengthen his physique and refine his War Rune. That way, Michael could grow stronger and refine his War Rune while he was asleep, busy studying, or doing something else.

Combining Leviathan Diffusion and Consirat of War with the Neutral Energy Absorption technique, Pantheon's Dawn, Michael managed to create a set of techniques that complemented each other. By practicing the techniques together, Michael could refine his body and War Rune simultaneously, rapidly at that.

Pantheon's Dawn and Leviathan Diffusion used together with a powerful source of origin energy would allow him to refine his War Rune at an incredible pace. The only 'issue' that slowed down his refinement was the ever-increasing demand for origin energy. The number of his Soultraits was bound to increase and so was their star rating as well, therefore further increasing the needs of his War Rune.

His War Rune was bound to develop into a bottomless pit.

Michael had also some Soultraits that required a tremendous amount of energy as their star rating increased. This included Superior Constitution which drained a tremendous amount of energy and nutrients as he integrated more SoulStar Fragments. Michael was pretty sure that the demand for energy and nutrients would be even worse once he upgraded Superior Constitution's star rating.

Superior Constitution was also the reason his body refinement technique was having such a hard time refining his physique. Superior Constitution altered his physique drastically. His body was in a near-perfect state, yet Consirat of War desired to alter his physique even further, adding certain features and functions, removing what it deemed excessive, and so some further changes that would only take effect as Michael's physique improved even further.

Superior Constitution didn't work against Consirat of War, but it increased the demand for energy and nutrients exponentially. What ought to cost only a few dozen Intermediate Nutrient Pills, and Inferior Energy Stones would now cost hundreds of Intermediate Nutrient Pills, and Inferior Energy Stones.

When Michael practiced Consirat of War for the first time, he was shocked. However, after practicing it for a week, Michael noticed how beneficial Superior Constitution combined with Consirat of War was.

Michael was certain that his physique would be equivalent to a Higher Lifeform once Consirat of War reached the Peak of its 3rd Stage. The technique would devour an enormous amount of resources until it would reach the 3rd Stage's Peak, but the effect would be tremendous. That was all that mattered.

Wisdom Breaker was the technique Michael had chosen to refine his mind. In fact, he mixed an Elite Class Mind Refinement technique with the Inheritance Technique of a family that was known for their great intellect and tremendous mental power.

Their technique was known to be controversial and Michael understood why. The Mind Refinement technique this family used relied on damaging the mind before forcefully regenerating the damage using

the purest essence of willpower. This required the condensation of Willpower Essence and the purification of the essence. That portion was already difficult to achieve, but it was considered the easiest part.

The more difficult part was to damage your mind intentionally using a special method to damage it just enough to avoid fatal damage. It required extreme precision, willpower, and most importantly; resources. Without enough resources, Wisdom Breaker was bound to fail. That was already the case for the Inheritance Technique, but it was even more true in Michael's case.

After all, Wisdom Breaker was even more dangerous than the Supreme Mind Family's Inheritance Technique.

Consirat of War and Wisdom Breaker required both a seemingly infinite amount of energy and nutrient to be practiced properly. Both techniques could turn Michael into a dangerous weapon, but malpractice would lead to severe backlashes. Michael nearly failed to execute Wisdom Breaker properly once. Fortunately, he managed to fix his mistake at the last moment, otherwise, he would have sustained lethal damage to his brain.
lights

If he had failed, Michael would either be braindead, or crippled, by now. As for whether Archangel's Grace and Heavenly Realm would be enough to fix him or not...Michael was unsure. No. He was sure. It was just that the answer wasn't pleasant to the ear.

Unfortunately, the Breathing Technique, Breath of the Underworld, was not exactly less dangerous, or painful. It was merely a breathing technique and thus less important in the eyes of most Awakened, but proper breathing regulated the stamina consumption, increased the perception and focus in the middle of fierce battles and it allowed the execution of powerful techniques beyond their designated limit.

Breath of the Underworld was unique. It didn't focus a lot on the regulation of the User's stamina consumption, but instead focused on the last aspect, allowing the User to implement powerful techniques beyond their designated limit by compressing and purifying energy within the body...by breathing.

It was quite hard to believe at first, but by practicing the Breathe of the Underworld method for an extensive period, it was possible to release a burst of compressed and purified energy into specific regions of the body to unleash the strongest forms of certain Martial Arts without any prior preparations.

This was not easy and it was usually quite painful, but the effect was tremendous. Martial Arts that would require some time to charge could be utilized at once, taking the enemy by surprise, and overwhelming the foe with sheer power.

Michael wanted to focus on that portion of the breathing technique because his breathing had already been altered permanently by the Sun Soldier's Breathing Technique. The Sun Soldier's Breathing technique was not great, but it was enough to decrease his stamina consumption decently.

He was busy enough practicing the Burst ability from Breath of the Underworld without trying to rupture his lungs and die from internal bleeding. That would be rather disadvantageous and certainly not something Michael wanted to achieve. He would much rather stay alive and splurge his wealth.

Splurging his wealth was something Michael could do rather easily. The issue, however, was that everything was so expensive. His Mind and Body Refinement techniques were already extremely expensive. Only refining his War Rune required more resources than practicing Consirat of War and Wisdom Breaker...well, and Sanctum of Life, his Soul Refinement Technique.

Michael had yet to start refining his Soul because it took him quite a while to procure the assets required to refine his Soul securely. He required a immense amount of life force, purified origin energy, and nutrients. Following that, Michael made sure that he harvested enough Soul Tears to strengthen his Soul before he started practicing Sanctum of Life.

The problem of his Soul Refinement Technique was that refining a Soul was quite complex and difficult because everyone's Soul was different. Most techniques require the User to study their soul thoroughly. That was something Michael had to spend several days doing, only to realize that he failed miserably since his Soul was not only infused with 10 Soultraits, but also Aethyr, the Sphere of Light, but also the Cursed Seals, and the True Curse, which was still sealed inside him.

Fortunately, the Soul Tears helped him understand more about his Soul, allowing him to start practicing Sanctum of Life to create the Primal Sanctum from his Soul.

The first stage of the Sanctum was called Primal Sanctum. It was the first step that had to be completed to refine his Soul properly. Refining his Soul using Sanctum of Life would invigorate his Soul, create a barrier that weakened spiritual attacks, and strengthen the potency of his Soultraits.

But there was another function of the Sanctum of Life, a function that turned the Sanctum of Life into one of the most important techniques Michael created: His Soul turned into a literal Sanctum overflowing with life. His Soul Power would be imbued with Life and so would his Soultrait Symbols.

Michael hoped that the Soul Grimoire would be influenced by the Sanctum of Life's presence, and mutate, or evolve. That would allow him to nurture Souls more easily. But Michael understood that it was a little bit far-fetched. It was unlikely that the Sanctum of Life's presence would be enough to stimulate Soul Grimoire's evolution. Nonetheless, he hoped for the best.

In the worst case, Sanctum of Life would merely strengthen his Soul Power, thus reinforcing the power outbursts of his Soul Techniques. That wasn't too bad either.

Last but not least, the Primordial Pillar was a rather simple technique, though it drained a immense amount of resources. Primordial Pillar was a Core Technique that reinforced the Pillar of Light. It was not a refinement technique, but it strengthened the Pillar of Light to protect it well from external threats.

It was more of a safety measure than a necessity, though specific hidden traits could be utilized once Michael's mastery of the method increased.

All he had to do was work hard and practice.