

## **World 1001**

### **Chapter 1001: Divine Interference**

"What happened here?!"

While Jack was still unsure what to make of the notification, a voice was heard from the hole that was made by Tiemezzys. Everyone turned and saw Emris and Duchess Isabelle floating there.

The two flew down and entered the hall. Their eyes immediately fell on Themis who was laying on the floor.

"Your majesty...!" Emris shouted and hurriedly came to the body. Duchess Isabelle saw her dispirited husband and went to him.

"Who did this...?!" Emris uttered. He then saw Sindral's body and also another charred body that was unidentifiable. His eyes fell on Jack who was nearby.

"You...! Why are you not bound?! Are you the one who did this...?!"

"Partly, yes," Jack admitted. The king and the princess were indeed his kills, but charred Mason was not.

"You! I will punish you for this atrocity!!" Emris shouted and a spell formation started forming.

A soothing wind blew past Emris, and his spell formation fizzled before it was completed.

The lord marshal was sensitive enough to understand the cause of his failed spell-casting. He turned and saw a green-haired beauty. "You... You are... Goddess of Serenity!"

Emris never met the Goddess, but he had seen a depiction of her in one of the temples that worshipped her.

"My Goddess, why are you here... What exactly happened here?" Emris asked.

Instead of answering, Serenity gestured to Jack. "Show him."

Jack complied. Jack again replayed the scene from his recording stone.

After watching the recording, Emris was similarly downcast. He was the same as Duke Alfredo, thinking that their country is finished now.

Seeing everyone's down expression, Jack had no choice but to take charge. "We need to keep a lid on this for the time being, while we think of how to proceed. I suggest we have a meeting among ourselves to discuss what we should do and what to tell the country about this incident."

Both Emris and Alfredo remained quiet. Duchess Isabelle stepped up to back Jack's suggestion. "I agree with Storm Wind. Let's move to the meeting room to discuss this. But we will need to bring in a few other officials as well. We can't just do this among us."

Jack nodded and added, "Can I invite two of my friends as well? I believe they will be able to help in the discussion."

Isabelle looked at her husband and Emris who were still mum. She made the decision herself then. "Give me their names, I will let the soldiers escort them here."

Jack told the duchess. The people he asked for were of course John and Jeanny. He then turned to Serenity. "Goddess, may I trouble you to watch over this discussion? I understand it is against the rule for you to interfere with mortals' affairs, but the fate of a country is at stake here."

Serenity hesitated at first, but then she nodded to Jack's request.

Peniel rolled her eyes. She knew that the real reason Jack asked Serenity to be present was so the more powerful natives won't dare do anything to him during the meeting.

Jack also asked Duchess Isabelle to station guards in the hall to protect Arlcard who was still in a cocoon state. The rest of them went into a meeting room with a round table.

Soon, more people gathered. The natives were especially confused when they saw Jack who was a convict inside the meeting room, but Duchess Isabelle just told them to sit down and wait until everyone gathered.

Among the natives were Emris, Duke Alfredo, Duchess Isabelle, Meryl, Claudius, Armstrong, and three other officials who used to be Mason's aides.

Claudius was especially antagonistic when he saw Jack amongst them, but Serenity's presence kept him constrained.

They started the meeting with Jack showing them the recording stone. Those who saw the recording for the first time were extremely shocked by the revelation. After the projection ended, Duke Alfredo narrated the subsequent battle which ended with Themosis' death. This drew another shocked breath from them.

There was a long period of silence where everyone tried to cope with the reality they had just been presented with. This was especially disheartening for Claudius, who always believed that outworlders were at fault. It turned out it was their own kind all along. Even what had befallen his previous lord, Therribus, was all but Themosis' machination.

Eventually, everyone started to ask about what they should do. What will happen to the kingdom, and how they could prevent the kingdom from spiraling into chaos without a leader?

The talk slowly deteriorated into arguments and heated debate. It was getting almost out of control that Serenity had to remind everyone of her presence by clearing her throat.

"Everyone, every problem has a solution, but you need to keep a calm mind to find it," Serenity said to them. Her voice doused the frustration and fear inside their hearts, allowing them to talk more reasonably.

Yet, Serenity could sense that even with her influence, these people were close to surrendering themselves to despair. There was nothing she could do about it. She herself was uncomfortable about being here. Even just by staying here, she was sure she would get criticized by the other Gods.

While the others were arguing and bickering, Jack was conversing with Jeanny and John via messages.

"The chance to what...?!" John asked, he wasn't sure he had read it right.

"The chance to become the king of this country," Jack repeated what he had told them.

"Are you shitting me?" John asked again.

"He is telling the truth," Peniel said to John in the open. She could read Jack's chat messages. The others were too heated in their discussion to pay attention to her.

"But how are you going to do that?" Jeanny asked in messages. "I don't think these people are going to just let you be their new king just because the notification said so."

Jack shrugged.

"The notification said it is a chance, right? Meaning you still have to work for it. At least now we know that the slot is open for you," John offered his opinion. "The way I see it, there are normally three ways someone is named a monarchy outside of lineage inheritance."

"Which is?"

"Public support. When someone had the complete support of the people, the people can overthrow the ruling monarchy and establish the person they support as their new ruler."

"Why don't you just call it a bloody revolt?" Jack grumbled. "We can rule that out. The natives obviously won't give me their complete support. What are the other two?"

"I am actually surprised you want to be one," Jeanny said to Jack. "I thought you would have avoided being a king even if you have the chance."

"I honestly don't want to. But this country is now in a big mess partly because of me. I owed Duke Alfredo my life. If he didn't trust me enough to follow my plan, I would have been executed and lost everything and will probably have to spend the rest of my life locked in an underground dungeon. The least I can do to help him back is fix this Goddamned kingdom."

"Plus, imagine the military power we will have if he truly becomes the king. It will allow us a better chance against World Maker who controls Liguritutum," John added.

"So, what're the other two?" Jack asked John again.

"By force!" John exclaimed. "Beat the shit out of the current kingdom and install yourself as the king."

"Motherf\*cker. How's that different from the first?"

"Of course, it's different. The second one is done without public support. You just rely on your military power."

"He is actually not wrong, you know," Peniel told them. "If a force can storm into the palace, kill the sovereign, and destroy the throne. The leader of that force will be installed as the new ruler of that kingdom, overthrowing the current one. For the current Themisphere, the king and his successors are already gone. So, all one has to do is destroy the throne."

"See?" John said.

"But the throne has very high HP. Once you attack the throne, every soldier of the country will receive notification," Peniel said. "They will come swarming at you. If you still manage to destroy the throne under that condition, this world system will recognize you as the new sovereign."

"Then that is even more unavailable to us. They won't let us bring too many players into the palace. Do you think the three of us have the chance to beat all these natives when they come swarming at us?"

"Then we are down to the last option," John said.

"And that is?"

"Divine interference."

"Huh?" Jack gave John a confused expression.

"You clearly don't read history a lot, do you?" John scoffed. "Many of our ancient monarchs believed themselves to be chosen by God. You can call it the divine right of kings or the mandate of heaven. The point is, if you can make the public believe that you are supported by God, then they will accept you as their king. I mean, who would dare to defy the will of God now, right?"

"And where do you suppose I find this divine inter...," Jack's thought trailed off as he realized something. His eyes turned to Serenity who was surprisingly looking back at him.

Jack heard Serenity's voice in his mind then. "Are you asking me to interfere even more in this affair of mortals?"

## **Chapter 1002: The New King of Themisphere**

"You can read our messages?" Jack asked in surprise.

"I can't. I know through Peniel," Serenity said into Jack's mind. "She can read your messages. At this range, I can talk with her via our minds."

"I see... Great! Then it saves me time from explaining," Jack said to her while sending messages to John and Jeanny at the same time, informing them that Serenity knew their talks.

"Mister Storm Wind, I have interfered in this matter more than I'm willing to. To announce my support to you..."

"You said to me before you have investigated the outworlder group who are meddling with Liguritudum's situation, right? Then you know how Fear's cult is actively supporting them. They will soon come for the rest of the world. We need another country backed by a God or Goddess if we are to stand a chance. I believe Hope and the others value balance, don't they? This is how we have a balance against their forces. With this explanation, they won't blame you."

Serenity didn't say anything. Her face looked serene, but Jack could see in her eyes that the Goddess was contemplating.

So, he continued to persuade, "If we leave things as it is, Themisphere will fall apart. There will be civil wars by various groups looking to take the throne. It will be endless fighting. The ones who will suffer

are the civilians, there will be no peace for them for a very long time. The only ones who can stop all this, are the Gods and Goddesses. Are you truly going to stay impartial even with all this?"

Serenity sighed.

She was the representation of peace. If only everyone is willing to strive for peace, there will be no conflict. But sometimes, she knew peace needed a strong hand in enforcement before it could be achieved. She disliked this kind of peace effort but she also understood its necessity during extreme situations.

The situation they were currently in could be called the periphery of an extreme situation. If she didn't act, it would be as Jack said. Everything would devolve into chaos and wars.

She did another sigh.

She then stood up. As she did, her aura washed over the room. Everyone involuntarily stopped their debates and sat down.

"I can see that this is going nowhere. I don't have the time to accompany you, people, here indefinitely. For that, I'm going to decide for all of you," she announced.

As she was speaking, brilliant green light emitted from her body. The room seemed to enlarge. Serenity's figure also appeared larger than usual even when everyone was sure she was still the same as before.

None of those in the room was aware that her image appeared in the sky above the capital. In fact, not only the capital. Everyone who was inside Themisphere territory could see her image. Then her voice boomed throughout the kingdom. It was not too loud, but her voice permeated all corners so that everyone within the kingdom could listen clearly, even those inside their houses or under the basements.

"Citizens of Themisphere! I am the Goddess of Serenity. I have an announcement to make. Due to unfortunate circumstances, your king has passed away, and so are all his heirs. Currently, the kingdom of Themisphere is without a sovereign.

"As you know, about one year ago, outworlders appeared in our world. This is preordained by our great creator, and the edict that we have passed on to you is to aid these outworlders and welcome them into your midst. There will be incoming struggles and outworlders will play a pivotal point in those struggles.

"Considering these points, I am using my autocratic power and issuing you a decree. I install the outworlder, Storm Wind, as the next king of Themisphere. He will now be in charge of this kingdom and you will obey his orders. Believe me that I know he is a person who will take into account the interest of natives and outworlders at equal measure. Anyone, who rebels against him is rebelling against me! In return, this kingdom will receive my blessing for one year!"

The image of Serenity in the sky dispersed into countless green dust. It filled the entire sky and rain started falling. Those who were outside felt extremely refreshed when this rain fell on them. All their fatigue, wariness, and worry evaporated as if it was never there. They felt at peace.

Back inside the palace's meeting room. The natives in the room were especially speechless by the Goddess' declaration. One of Mason's aides in the room, named Thaergood, finally gathered enough courage to speak up, "Goddess Serenity. With all due respect, even with your sanctification, there will be some who are unwilling to follow this decision..."

"Are you one of those people?" Serenity asked.

"I... No, my Goddess. I obey your decree," Thaergood answered.

Serenity nodded. "I've spoken. Those who disagree with Storm Wind's rule mean they disagree with me. I hope none within this room is one such person."

Serenity stopped and observed everyone. None expressed objection anymore, not even Claudius. He had been especially quiet after the truth about Themis was revealed. He was even silent when everyone was heatedly debating a while ago.

"Please make your preparation. I want the coronation to be carried out tomorrow morning," Serenity demanded. "I will be here myself to crown the new king."

After those words, the Goddess vanished softly like fine sand being blown away by a gust.

After the Goddess was gone, the room was back into silence. Everyone was just looking at one another, unsure of what to do.

Jack decided to stand up. "My friends! I understand that I am the last person in your mind you think of to lead you. I also know that I am not an ideal leader. But know this, as its king, I will work myself for the betterment of this kingdom and its citizen. I ask that you lend me your strength! I know for sure I won't be able to do this on my own. But if you want to leave, I won't hold it against you. I, however, strongly hope that we can keep this kingdom as one, undivided. For this is how we can keep Themisphere strong. The Goddess is right, a struggle is coming. Some of us outworlders know about this, and we will have to prepare ourselves for it."

Claudius stood up abruptly. Everyone was startled by his action. Jack was especially wary. This man had always been hostile to him.

Claudius walked around the table and came to where Jack was. He suddenly pulled out his spear.

Jack was startled, he almost pulled out his weapon as well. But then he saw Claudius plant his spear on the floor and knelt before him.

"I pledge my life to King Storm Wind," he said.

This was all so unexpected that Jack didn't know what to do. Jeanny nudged him to wake him from his stupor. Jack immediately said to Claudius, "Stand up, good Lord Commander! I will need your support from now on."

Claudius stood up and nodded, "You shall have it, Your Majesty!"

Duke Alfredo, Duchess Isabelle, and Lord Commander Armstrong also stood up and bowed. "Your Majesty," they said.

Jack felt weird with these people giving him all these respects. It felt not long ago that these people were individuals that he couldn't afford to offend. Now they were all bowing to him. He couldn't help but feel surreal about all this.

Emris and Thaergood were next to pay their respects. Soon, everyone in the room followed.

"All right, I'll organize the coronation ceremony," Thaergood said. "Luckily, it was not long ago since our planned coronation for Prince Alonzo. All the high officials from other cities are still here. So, it will be possible to carry out the coronation ceremony by tomorrow as the Goddess demanded."

"Wait!" John uttered. Everyone looked at this other outworlder.

"There is one other thing. The matter of Themos' death. We can't let the public know about the truth," John told them. "There will be much unrest if the people know that they have been betrayed by their own king. It will hurt the people's faith in the kingdom. It will undermine the new government."

"What do you suggest?" Thaergood asked.

"Announce the news that Themos' death had been the work of a foreign force. The same as Prince Alonzo's, and it was Storm Wind who unraveled this foreign agent's nefarious deed. Assure the people that the agent has been caught and killed. The identity of this agent is still being investigated to know which foreign force this agent came from."

Thaergood turned to Jack. "Does Your Majesty agree?" He asked.

"Say yes!" John sent Jack a message.

"I don't know, man... I don't like to lie. I think telling the truth is important," Jack replied.

"F\*ck the truth! People losing faith is one of the reasons, the real thing is we don't have the time to deal with the hassle of the mass demanding justice for the vampire that has turned King Themos. This will put us on a collision course with the Sangrod Empire. We don't have the time for that. This kingdom is still in a shamble after Verremor's invasion. If we are now clashing with Sangrod, we won't have the strength to deal with Liguritudum when they arrive."

Jeanny chimed in, "I disagree with you, John. I think the truth is important, no matter how bitter it is. You should have more faith in the people."

"Individual is smart, but people or the mass, they are stupid! They just follow the flow. There will be people with bad intentions aiming to rile up the crowd to challenge your rule. By telling them the truth, you will give them ammunition for that. I've given my counsel. You decide what you think is best," John said.

Jack was dismayed. He was not even crowned king yet, and he had already had to make a difficult choice. But then he thought about the time when he was in Thesylvania. When he counseled Arlcard to hide the truth about Aubelard. It was easy then when he was not the one who had to decide.

"Do what he said," Jack finally said to Thaergood.

"As you wish, Your Majesty," Thaergood bowed.

### **Chapter 1003: Spending the Day before the Coronation**

During the remaining of the day, everyone prepared for the coronation. There was also the preparation for the burial of Prince Alonzo, King Themos, and Princess Sindral. Prince Alonzo's burial was supposed to be carried out after Jack's execution. The prince was now instead being accompanied by his father and sister.

Jack thought of the prince. Alonzo's life was indeed a tragedy. Being treated as a foe by his brothers, lied to by his sister, and schemed and killed by his father. Yet, he could still be kind and supportive and work with the best intention for this kingdom.

Jack remembered the past when he heard people saying that God is cruel. He never agreed with it, but he couldn't help to think about it now. How can God allow someone as good and hopeful as Alonzo to die like this? He couldn't stop thinking that Alonzo's demise was simply to pave way for his ascent to the throne. For what? So he could replace Alonzo to be the king and thus could rally enough power to face World Maker? Sacrificing someone good for the sake of the greater good?

He very much hoped that this was not the case. The Gods and Goddesses of this world had no such power to direct fate, they were simply powerful guardians placed to watch over the world. Even the real God of this world, its creator, was simply a normal human who was a game maker. One that no longer existed.

If there was truly a being that decided and wrote all the events that happened here. He would very much like to meet this being, and perhaps give this being a beating or two, if that was even possible.

Jack wished very much that Alonzo was still alive so he could do right by the prince. Helped Alonzo become the rightful king he was meant to be. Now, Jack had to do it in Alonzo's stead. Jack promised himself he would help this kingdom with the spirit Alonzo had shown him.

The burial ceremony for the royal family should have been carried out before Jack's coronation. But since Serenity demanded the coronation to happen tomorrow morning, they had no choice but to go along with it and dealt with the burials the day after.

Thaergood announced the royal family's demise based on John's suggestion.

Before the announcement, the people were bewildered by the sudden passing of King Themos and Princess Sindral so soon after Alonzo was murdered. But they were even more confused by why the Goddess chose Jack, who was someone to be executed, as the next monarch.

After the announcement, the people could better accept Jack. Jack was not the murderer he was suspected to be. He was a hero who had beaten back the orc invasion, and he was the one who figured out the foreign influence in the palace. Even though he was an outworlder, he was not without merit.

The mass was enraged by the mention of foreign influence in the misfortune that befell the royal family. They demanded the true enemy be found. Thaergood assured their best men were working hard on it.

John was right. If the truth was announced. These people would call for blood from the Sangrod Empire. There had been too much turmoil in the kingdom as of late. Everyone was on edge. The calm they felt from Serenity's rain was slowly being washed off.



Jack had been offered Themis' chamber to spend his night in the palace. He had visited the place. Some furniture was broken there. Seeing the signs of struggle, Jack concluded this was where Commander Quintus had perished. The commander must have found a clue that brought him to this place, which caused him to be killed.

Jack felt the guilt again. He shouldn't have pushed the commander to investigate for him.

He didn't feel comfortable there. So, he decided to spend the night back in Heavenly Citadel. He would return tomorrow for the coronation.

John chose to stay in the palace. He wanted to learn all the current ongoing matters in Themisphere so he could advise Jack on what to do once Jack was crowned. Jack joked that John was more suited to be a king. John said that he didn't mind if Jack wanted to give the crown to him instead. Jeanny reminded Jack to not take the bait. The kingdom would for sure go down the villainy path if John was the king.

At Heavenly Citadel, Jack's closest friends came and congratulated him for being free from the execution and being crowned king. Serenity's heavenly announcement made it so that everyone in this country knew. Some of his friends even joked that it was quite a reversal of fate, from a convicted to a ruler. They were excited, though. Now that one of the leaders of their guild is the sovereign of this country, who would dare challenge their guild?

Some of the leaders of the other guilds came to offer their congratulations as well. Jack felt like chasing them away, but he was too polite to do that. He lamented his fate. Would this be what his life as a king be? Attending court matters and receiving dignitaries all the time? When would he be able to go out adventuring again?

But he had promised himself to rule in Alonzo's stead, so he won't complain now. It was his duty.

What little time he had after those visiting guild leaders left, he spent inside the legacy dungeon and Time Chamber.

After killing Themis and completing the kingdom chain quest, his level had gone up again. His Brave Swordmaster leveled up to level 64 and was close to reaching the next level. His Time Sage became level 63. As for his Beastmaster class, it went up two levels to level 63.

He had 15 points of free attributes. He put them into his Wisdom stat. This stat decreased the magical damage he received, but he was not sure if this stat also made him wiser. Intelligence stat didn't exactly make him smarter, but it helped him remember things more easily and increased his thinking speed aside from boosting his magical damage, so he thought the wisdom stat should somehow help him in some unknown points as well. He would need all the wisdom he could get if he was to rule a kingdom.

The free skill points he had were 6 points for Brave Swordmaster, 3 points for Time Sage, and 15 points for Beastmaster.

Jeanny had copied the Beast Howl technique book that John and Jet procured after killing the adult Dragon Turtle. She had given the book to Jack when they returned to the headquarters.

Jack immediately learned the skill.

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Beast Howl, level 1/20 (Active skill)

Heals 10% HP to all summons when the skill is activated.

Increases Stats by 100% to all summons.

Ally's summons within a 30-meter radius received half the effect.

Duration: 5 minutes

Cooldown: 30 minutes

Stamina: 100

\*

Jack thought the healing effect of this skill was very useful. Although it only heals 10%, pets' HP was high, similar to natives. A ten percent healing of HP could help them survive a significant time. Not to mention, this was a group heal, healing even ally's summons even if it was only half the effect.

Jack leveled up this skill using the 15 free skill points, bringing it to level 16. Each level increased the heal by 1% and stats increased by 5%, bringing the heal to 25% and the attribute increased to 175%.

He didn't use the souls in his Container of Soul to max-level this skill because he was not sure when he would get another Beastmaster's skill. It was better to save the souls for his other two classes which had many skills which were not yet maxed.

He had 2,186,129 souls inside the container. The majority came from killing Themis.

Jack used 6 Swordmaster's free skill points to max-level his Blitz Slash. The skill now delivered seven slashes that dealt 200% damage each slash.

He then used 3 Time Sage's free skill points and 1,600,000 souls to max-level his Ghost Form spell. Each level increased the maximum duration he could remain in ghost form. At the max level, the maximum duration was 30 seconds.

He then used 500,000 souls to level up Mana Beam to level 6. Each level increased the damage by 20%. The spell now dealt 400% magical damage.

Jack also studied the loots dropped by Themis. He had just stored everything in his bag after the loots dropped. The situation at that time didn't allow him to check the loots in detail.

There were the usual coins, mana cores, equipment, and materials, which he just donated to the guild. He kept four of the most impressive loots. Three were unique grades, while one was unknown.

The first one was a rune technique book. It allowed one to learn a rune technique. Peniel couldn't seem to stop stressing about how lucky Jack was for getting a rune technique book. Jack kept on reminding her that luck was never his problem.

The rune technique contained within the book was called Infernal Cleansing Flame. Jack had a feeling it was the same rune technique that Themis used on Mason.

## Chapter 1004: A Mysterious Key

Peniel informed Jack that learning a rune technique wasn't the same as learning normal skills where one only needed to click the book's interface. Accepting to learn a rune technique would take the user into a learning space, which was a separate dimension. There, the user must memorize all the rune symbols scattered around the space. Afterward, the user would have to practice forming the runes.

Apparently, this process was the same as when one learned a mega spell. The difference was, a rune technique had more runes to be memorized, but it was smaller and less complicated than the runes of magic spells. Still, each one was a different rune, so memorizing all of them was a problem if one didn't have a good memory. Luckily, Jack's intelligence stat was high enough to let him memorize all of them easily.

There was a total of thirty runes that Jack had to memorize when he entered the learning space. Peniel said that the more runes to be learned from a rune technique, the more powerful it was. The most powerful rune technique had fifty runes, while the weakest one had twenty runes.

Jack took around three hours to memorize and practice forming the rune until he met the least required time in forming the rune, which was twenty seconds. And that was already achieved by him using multi-rune forming with his hundred synchronous thoughts.

"Hey, Peniel. What if I keep on failing to reach the required time? Will I stay inside that learning space indefinitely?" Jack asked after he was out.

"No," Peniel answered. "You only have a twelve-hour limit to learn. If you are still unable to reach the required time. You will be considered failed and sent out."

"What will happen to the book if that happened?" Jack asked.

"It will vanish," Peniel answered.

Jack was having a cold sweat. Luckily, he had succeeded. Otherwise, the book would have been wasted. Jack complained about why Peniel didn't tell him this from the start.

"I don't want you to be under pressure, you blockhead!" The Fairy returned.

Jack didn't bother to argue with her. He checked the description of his rune technique in his status window.

\*

Infernal Cleansing Flame (Rune technique)

Imbue the power of the infernal cleansing flame into a non-magical weapon, dealing fire and light damage. Power is unleashed when the weapon successfully strikes a target.

Cooldown: 1 hour

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"Huh? No description of how much damage is inflicted. No level as well," Jack remarked.

"Rune technique doesn't have a level," Peniel explained. "Nor does it have a star proficiency. It is already at its best right from the start. The problem is more about if you can complete the runes preparation and land your hit. There is only a one-second interval after you complete all thirty runes preparation. If you don't land a hit in that one second, the prepared power will disperse."

"Damn! Then I prefer Arlcard's Unrelenting Purgatory," Jack said.

Unrelenting Purgatory was Arlcard's rune technique. The one Arlcard had used to kill Aubelard and Garland.

"His rune technique hit an enemy from range. Mine is a melee. Where can I find an enemy stupid enough to run at me after seeing me preparing this rune technique? Unless it is by catching someone by surprise like what Themis did to Mason, this technique is practically unusable!"

"Then don't use it," Peniel simply shrugged. Combat was not her department.

"Hey, speaking about Arlcard. Do you know how much longer he will be in that cocoon state?" Jack asked.

"Can be minutes, can be days, can even be months," Peniel answered.

"Why don't you just say I don't know?" Jack complained. "What about this rune technique's damage? I can't tell how powerful this rune technique is."

"Remember the working of runestones?" Peniel asked instead.

"Yeah. What about it? Wait...? Are you telling me a rune technique's damage is influenced by freakin' willpower?" Jack asked.

Peniel made a gesture that Jack had guessed correctly.

"Bloody hell! What a troublesome technique. Not only will I need to concentrate to form the runes fast, have a headache about how to land the hit, and now I also have to focus on exerting my willpower to drive up the damage. Even with my hundred synchronous thoughts, that is a chore!"

"No one says rune technique is an easy technique," Peniel shrugged. "Arlcard would have used it every chance if it is easy. But even if your willpower is at its lowest, the inflicted damage by a rune technique will still be more than your most powerful skill. Perhaps even rivaling your Lightning God Barrage. Probably even more if you inject enough willpower into it."

"Ah, whatever. Let's just train to complete the rune process fast first."

Jack brandished his Storm Breaker and activated the technique. He was inside the Time Chamber and there was currently no one, so he didn't worry about hitting anybody. He concentrated on forming the runes. Numerous small runes started appearing around his body. When all thirty runes were formed, they all converged into his sword.

Jack's mana sense could sense his sword being covered by intense energy. But since there was no target to hit, the skill ended after one second just as Peniel said. The cooldown started.

"If you are disrupted during the rune forming, the cooldown will not start. You can repeat the technique immediately," Peniel informed. "But if you completed the rune process, then the technique will be considered as being executed, even if you hit no one. You will have to wait one hour again before you can use the technique."

"Like I said, troublesome technique. I still need almost twenty seconds to complete the rune process. Well, let's check out the other loots."

Jack turned his attention to the second loot, which was an accessory.

\*

Ring of Inheritance (Unique accessory)

Wisdom +24

All elemental resistances +10

If damaged, heal 2000 HP every 5 minutes

Inherited Will (active ability): Cleanse all status effects and recover 30% HP for self and allies within a 10-meter radius, cooldown: 3 hours

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Jack immediately replaced his rare-grade Swift Ice Ring with this new one. Now, both his rings were unique grades. This ring gave him great surviving abilities. The healing effect of the ring was as if he drank a free greater healing potion every five minutes.

The third loot was a unique-grade consumable.

\*

Suppression Crystal (Unique consumable)

Lowers a target by one grade and ten levels.

Range: 10 meters

Duration: 6 hours

\*

Peniel informed Jack that this consumable was similar to the Draconic Suppression Crystal that Wong and the others targeted during the world tournament. Except this one wasn't limited to one type of monster. But in exchange, the suppression lasted only six hours.

To Jack, six hours were more than enough for one battle. He was more worried about the range. If he was required to use this item, that meant the opponent was very powerful. Ten meters was too short a distance against such an opponent.

Jack stored the crystal in his inventory.

The fourth item was an unknown grade. It was an old key. The description classified it as a special item without a grade. The name was Themisphere Legacy Key. Considering the name, it was a rather important item. The description only said that the key was to open a secret chamber reserved for Themisphere royal family. It didn't describe where to use it, though.

"Do you know where is the keyhole I can use this mysterious key on?" Jack asked Peniel, to which Peniel answered by shaking her head.

"Well. I'll probably just ask this palace's inhabitants after the coronation," Jack said.

Jack spent the rest of the night inside the Time Chamber training his sword art as well as practicing his rune technique whenever it was off cooldown. He also slept inside there and trained again when he woke up. When he calculated that it should be morning already outside. He exited the time chamber and teleported to Thereath then headed directly to the palace.

Every native who saw him walk by bowed their heads.

"Crap... Walking around the city will be very different from now on," he lamented.

Patrolling guards who happened to walk by even came to him when they saw him. Jack didn't have the heart to chase them away, so he let them escort him to the palace.

Inside the palace, the preparation was almost complete. Everyone had been working overtime last night because they didn't want to let down the Goddess. Jack was escorted into the king's chamber. He could see the red carpet along the way. He remembered when he was rehearsing the coronation. Someone would come to fetch him and they would walk along this red carpet to the throne room where he would be crowned.

Jack felt very weird about how fate had turned out. He was practicing escorting the prince a week ago. Now, he will be the one who was escorted. He felt sad instead of excited. He wished that things never changed, that it was still him who escorted Prince Alonzo to the throne room.

But he knew dwelling on the past was useless. He took a deep breath. This was his task now. He would have to do it to the best of his abilities. He swore he would bring Themisphere to a new height!

## **Chapter 1005: Regal Outfit**

The coronation ceremony was under preparation. It would be carried out an hour from now. Jack had come earlier as Thaergood instructed so he could prepare as well.

Inside the king's chamber, Thaergood took him to a dressing room. There were four large cupboards.

"I understand you have three classes?" Thaergood asked.

"Yes. What about it?" Jack asked in return.

Thaergood went to the cupboards without answering Jack's question. He opened three out of the four cupboards. Behind each cupboard was a set of armor.

"These are the regal outfits," Thaergood informed. "Please pick one."

Jack noticed from the look that each set was a different type of armor. The ones that Thaergood had shown him were medium armor, light armor, and cloth armor. From this, Jack surmised the closed cupboard should have a set of heavy armor behind it, the only armor type he couldn't wear.

"These are for me?" Jack asked.

"These are for the king," Thaergood answered.

"These are heritage equipment," Peniel explained. "As long as you are the monarch of this country, you can wear them. If you are somehow deposed, you will lose ownership of them."

"I see," Jack used an Inspect on them. He expected these armors to be only cosmetic outfits. One that carried no defensive property and only to show his kingly grandeur. But he was then shocked when he found that each set was unique-grade set armors.

"Holy!" Jack blurted. "I may only choose one? Can I take all three of them?"

"Do you have to be so greedy?" Peniel chided.

"Technically, they are all yours at the moment, but can you wear them all?" Thaergood asked. "These regal outfits can't be stored inside an outworlder's storage bag. So, you can only carry them by equipping them. If you somehow lost them or replaced them with other equipment, these set armors will return to this cupboard by themselves."

"And as heritage equipment, they are indestructible," Peniel added. "They have no durability value, like your Storm Breaker."

"Great!" Jack uttered. He then asked Thaergood, "So, I can take them all as long as I can wear them?"

"Uh... Yes," Thaergood confirmed. Though he didn't understand how exactly Jack could make use of them all.

Jack proceeded to take the medium set armor and replaced his current super rare grade Sword Fiend's Gear set. He felt pity because this Sword Fiend's Gear set enhanced his Blade Dancer class, especially the abilities that enhanced and lengthened his sword orbs ability. But he supposed he would have to let them go at one point, and this was the time.

Jack marveled at his new unique-grade royal set armor. Not only did they look dashing cool, but their effects were also great.

\*

Head piece

Themisphere King's Crown, level: 64 (unique set medium armor: Themisphere Royal Battle Armor)

Physical Defense: 346

Magical Defense: 302

Indestructible. Restriction: Human race, King of Themisphere

Intelligence +20

Wisdom +25

Light Resistance +30

Automatically cleanse 1 mental status ailment. Cooldown: 10 minutes

\*

Chest piece

Themisphere King's Scale Mail, level: 64 (unique set medium armor: Themisphere Royal Battle Armor)

Physical Defense: 391

Magical Defense: 338

Indestructible. Restriction: Human race, King of Themisphere

Endurance +25

Strength +22

Dark Resistance +30

When receiving a fatal blow, HP will remain at 1. Cooldown: 3 hours

\*

Shoulder piece

Themisphere King's Pauldrons, level: 64 (unique set medium armor: Themisphere Royal Battle Armor)

Physical Defense: 352

Magical Defense: 307

Indestructible. Restriction: Human race, King of Themisphere

Endurance +21

Reflex +24

Lightning Resistance +30

Automatically cleanse 1 physical status ailment. Cooldown: 10 minutes

\*

Arms piece

Themisphere King's Bracer, level: 64 (unique set medium armor: Themisphere Royal Battle Armor)

Physical Defense: 317

Magical Defense: 269

Indestructible. Restriction: Human race, King of Themisphere



Strength +25

Dexterity +24

Fire Resistance +30

Automatically deal 300% main weapon's damage to the enemy that landed a blow. Cooldown: 1 hour

\*

Belt piece

Themisphere King's Iron Belt, level: 64 (unique set medium armor: Themisphere Royal Battle Armor)

Physical Defense: 303

Magical Defense: 258

Indestructible. Restriction: Human race, King of Themisphere

Endurance +23

Dexterity +20

Ice Resistance +30

If hit by a ranged attack, create a shield that reduces range damage by 70%. Duration: 10 seconds.

Cooldown: 30 minutes

\*

Pants piece

Themisphere King's Scale Pants, level: 64 (unique set medium armor: Themisphere Royal Battle Armor)

Physical Defense: 380

Magical Defense: 329

Indestructible. Restriction: Human race, King of Themisphere

Endurance +24

Dexterity +22

Earth Resistance +30

Automatically heal 30% HP when HP falls below 50%. Cooldown: 30 minutes

\*

Boots piece

Themisphere King's Plated Long Boots, level: 64 (unique set medium armor: Themisphere Royal Battle Armor)

Physical Defense: 347

Magical Defense: 301

Indestructible. Restriction: Human race, King of Themisphere

Reflex +23

Dexterity +25

Wind Resistance +30

Automatically increase movement speed by 100% for 5 seconds if receive damage. Cooldown: 5 minutes

\*

Set bonus of Themisphere Royal Battle Armor:

Two equipment: +300 to physical and magical defense.

Four equipment: +3000 HP, +300 stamina, and +10% to all attributes.

Six equipment: Aura of King (Passive skill). All Themisphere NPCs within a 300-meter radius increase their attributes by 80%, damage by 10%, and reduce damage received by 20%.

Full set equipment: Judgement of Past Kings (Active Skill). Call upon the spirits of past Themisphere kings who will unleash their most powerful attacks. Cooldown: 3 days.

\*

Jack was not exactly thrilled about being the king of this kingdom. But after receiving this set equipment, he thought being a king was actually not bad at all.

Despite being lower level than the level 70 Sword Fiend's Gear set, this level 64 unique set armors provided higher total physical and magical defenses. Combined with the Beastmaster's perk, the total physical defense was 3009 and the magical defense was 2644.

All the set armor's abilities were also incredible. Each armor had reaction skills that aided its wearer in different circumstances. The set bonuses were also great. If they went to war again, the Aura of King would empower a large number of native units since it covered a very large area.

As for the full set equipment bonus, it sounded impressive, but there was no description of the attack and damage this skill inflicted.

"How powerful is this skill?" Jack asked Peniel.

"Very," Peniel answered. "You should be relieved that Themis had turned into a vampire. Otherwise, he would be wearing this regal equipment. If he used this Judgement of Past Kings against you during your battle yesterday. You and the others won't survive."

## **Chapter 1006: Third Disguise**

"Really? That powerful?" Jack asked.

"The skill summons the spirit of past Themisphere's kings, totaling eleven of them until this era," Peniel explained. "Each of these kings will unleash the most powerful attack they possessed during the prime of their lives."

"You mean I will summon Themos when I use this skill?" Jack asked.

"I doubt he will appear," It was Thaergood who answered. "This is a country of the human race. The second he turned into a Vampire, his soul will no longer be accepted into the hall of his ancestors."

He sighed. "I still can't believe His Majesty will do that just to escape death."

"Thaergood is right. I didn't count him among the eleven," Peniel said.

"Good, it will be weird if he appears when I use the skill," Jack chuckled. "I can't help but notice that this equipment has the same level as my level. They also didn't have the upper limit of level like the other equipment."

"That's because you can't upgrade them. This heritage equipment has the same mechanic as pet armor. They will level up when their wearer levels up," Peniel answered.

"What? You are not joking, right? That means I don't need to waste ores on them?"

"No, you don't need to."

Jack thought on the matter. Considering this was heritage equipment that was later passed down to another person, it made sense that it didn't have a fixed level. If for example, this armor was truly level 64, this meant if Alonzo didn't die and was presented with this armor, he won't be able to wear it because the equipment level was too high for him.

Also, although it was a boon that he did not need to waste ores to level up this armor, their potential was also less than normal equipment. For normal equipment, he could level them up until it was ten levels higher than him. Thus, making the equipment more powerful. For this royal armor, he couldn't do so.

But he wasn't bothered. This unique-grade set armor was already powerful as it was. He could now save up his ores in case he got legendary-grade armor in the future.

"I'm glad that Your Majesty like this regal outfit," Thaergood said. "If you don't mind, can I hold the crown first?"

"Oh? Why?" Jack asked.

"So I can crown you in front of the others during the coronation," Thaergood answered.

"Oh, right," Jack said and handed him the crown.

After he did, he went to the cupboard that housed the cloth armor type.

When Thaergood was confused as to what the future king was planning, Jack transformed into a different person in front of him.

Jack had transformed into Unrivaled Arcaner, his mage persona. He then started replacing his current equipment with the royal armor set, which was Themisphere Royal Garment. The set armor was similar to Themisphere Royal Battle Armor except that the boosts it provided cater more to magic-based players.

It also had the same Judgement of Past Kings for the bonus of full set equipment.

An interface appeared when he donned the cloth armors. The interface asked if he wished to use the armor's original appearance or use the previously set appearance.

Jack chose the latter. This was supposed to be a disguise. If he went around wearing something that looked like a king, then his disguise would be pointless.

After finishing, he went to the light armor's cupboard.

During the week when he was attending the rehearsal, he again upgraded his Orb of Disguise using the divine gem and magic crystals copied by Jeanny. The orb was now in the third rank which was also its maximum. It could not be upgraded anymore.

After the upgrade, the orb could store another disguise, giving him a total of three options. The first one was Unrivaled Arcaner, a mage human. The second one was Master Slayer, an ethereal Blade Dancer. For the third one, he chose the orc race, with an appearance from the Beastmaster class.

Of course, considering his pet and beast form was distinctive. The disguise would be useless the second he summoned his pet or transformed. Still, he chose this so he could have wide disguise options. Most disguises would be revealed once a battle starts anyway, so he didn't concern about it too much.

The reason he chose the orc race was so that he could travel into Verremor nation in case he somehow needed to. Currently, humans would be chased out if they were sighted inside that country.

As for the name, his orc disguise had the alias of Iamanorc. Peniel was confused at first by the weird name until Jack explained to her how to pronounce the name.

The light armor was also similar to the medium armor and cloth armor versions, except they were more geared toward agile players. Jack also changed the appearance of the equipment to make it look less regal.

The only armor he didn't touch was the heavy armor version. Too bad he couldn't lend it to another, this armor was restricted to not only the human race but also to Themisphere's king.

He transformed back into Jack afterward and said to Thaergood. "Okay, I'm ready."

Thaergood nodded. "It shouldn't be long now," he said.

They waited a few more minutes until the guards outside the chamber announced the arrival of the group that came to escort Jack to the throne room.

Jack came out of the room and met Duke Alfredo, Emris, and Meryl. The three bowed. Seeing the three, Jack had that weird feeling again about how things turned out.

"Are you ready, Your Majesty?" Alfredo asked.

"Yes," Jack replied. "Let's go."

Alfredo nodded. He took the lead and Jack followed him, flanked by Emris and Meryl. Thaergood and the two guards who guarded the king's chamber followed from behind.

They followed the path marked by the red carpet and soon arrived before the throne room. The room was fully packed with people. Even more so than during the rehearsal. That was because some high-profile dignitaries weren't required to join the rehearsal. They only came during the real thing.

Additionally, there were also leaders from influential outworlder guilds. It was John who arranged the invitation. Different from the previously planned coronation. This time, the crowned king was an outworlder. So, it made sense that representatives from outworlders should also be present.

Jack watched all these people. These people would be his subjects starting today.

### **Chapter 1007: The Coronation of the New King**

The head priest of the church of creation was there beside the throne. Thaergood went and took his position beside the priest. Jack came forward and knelt before the priest. He had gone through the rehearsal so he knew how the proceedings go, even if his current role was different from the rehearsal.

The head priest uttered a long prayer as a blessing to the new king. After it was completed, it was Thaergood's turn to read the vows of kingship. But before he did, a voice was heard from above.

"Let me be the one to read his vows," A soothing but powerful voice was heard. Before everyone's eyes, Serenity appeared followed by a comforting gust of wind. The temperature in the room which was heated by the presence of so many people now dropped to a comfortable level.

Her appearance captivated everyone's attention. She wore a common green dress without any ornaments on her body, yet everyone was certain they had never witnessed a more beautiful woman. Just the sight of her brought comfort and adoration to their hearts. They felt that all their worries were now small problems that no longer troubled them.

Serenity floated down slowly and landed before Jack. Jack was still kneeling.

"Are you willing to take your kingly vows?" Serenity asked. Her voice was gentle but everyone could hear her clearly.

"I am willing," Jack answered with a firm voice.

"Do you swear to rule the kingdom of Themisphere and its people, natives or outworlders alike, with fairness and integrity, and to uphold its laws with an authority that is free of selfishness and personal interest?"

"I swear."

"Do you swear to protect the kingdom of Themisphere and its people from outer and inner threats, and dedicate your life to the betterment and the prosperity of the kingdom? And to stay true to this country?"

"I swear."

"Do you swear to use your rule to bring good and peace to the world? To strive for a better future for all the countries and races outside of this kingdom? And to not cower away from any evil that arises and threatens the peace of this world?"

"I swear."

"Then rise, King of Themisphere. Rise and take your rightful place on the throne. Remember your oaths and do not stray from them."

Jack stood up and said solemnly, "The oaths I have sworn, I will perform and keep. This I swear with all my beings. May the Gods and Goddesses strike me down if I break them."

Serenity nodded her approval.

Thaergood looked at the parchment of kingly vows in his hand. The oaths given by Goddess Serenity were a bit different from their traditional ones, but he figured it was not wise to protest against a Goddess.

Jack walked to the throne. It was a large chair made of a combination of wood, gold, iron, and leather. He never truly paid attention to this throne before. But now, it seemed very large and imposing as he stood up close. Two people could sit on it side by side.

He touched the leather that lined the armrest. It was soft and warm. It had gold rims fixed atop wooden frames. Jack took a deep breath and sat on the throne.

Thaergood came then, he was holding the crown that Jack had handed him earlier. He slowly lifted the crown and rested it on Jack's head.

Two aides came beside Thaergood. One of them was holding a sword, the other was holding a staff.

Thaergood took the pair of weapons and announced, "I presented the king with his regalia."

Jack accepted the weapons. He expected them to be just ornaments. But as he had seen that his regal outfit was combat-effective gears, he inspected these two weapons with a hopeful feeling. He was not disappointed.

\*

Themisphere King's Sword, level 64/90 (Unique one-handed sword)

Physical damage 635

Attack speed 2

Indestructible. Restriction: Human race, King of Themisphere

Strength +22

Endurance +25

If the wielder wears one of Themisphere's royal outfits, physical damage +10%

King's Slash (Active skill): Sent a sword energy that travels forward, dealing 800% physical damage to all enemies in its path. 30% chance to cause Fear and Fatigue. Range: 20 meters. Cooldown: 5 minutes.

\*

Themisphere King's Staff, level: 64/90 (unique magic weapon)

Magical damage: 610

Range: 60 meters

Attack speed: 1

Indestructible. Restriction: Human race, King of Themisphere

Intelligence +21

Wisdom +25

If the wielder wears one of Themisphere's royal outfits, magical damage +10%

King's Punishment (Active skill): Blast a 10-meter radius area, dealing 500% magical damage to all enemies within the area. 30% chance to cause Charmed and Confused. Range: 50 meters. Cooldown: 10 minutes

\*

"Hey, Peniel. I suppose these are also heritage equipment?" Jack asked via his mind. "So, I don't need to level them up, right?"

"Yes," Peniel answered. Then added, "Just to be clear, you won't be able to feed that sword to your Storm Breaker. Heritage weapons can't be sacrificed like that."

"That's okay. I will just imprint it for my Magic Weapon later," Jack said. As for the magic staff, he didn't plan to use it yet. His current Mana Leech Staff was a level 72 unique staff. Its magical damage was higher than Themisphere King's Staff, so no sense to replace it.

Jack held the two weapons in his two hands. Thaergood turned to the crowd and announced loudly, "Behold the new king of Themisphere!"

Everyone applauded. At the same time, he heard a system notification, "Congratulations on being the first player to become a monarch. You are awarded 100 ruling power."

'Ruling power?' Jack thought. He remembered Alonzo mentioned something about this.

"Wow! That's a lot," Peniel exclaimed after hearing the notification.

"Is it good?" Jack asked.

"Very! We will talk about that later," Peniel said.

Jack nodded and returned his attention to the applauding crowds. Even if they were all applauding, Jack could see a few with unsatisfied expressions. If not for the Goddess, he guessed these individuals had

thrown protests or might even rebel. He could see already that this role of being a king won't be a smooth road.

"Everyone will now be required to swear fealty to our new king!" Thaergood announced. He then knelt before Jack, volunteering as the first one to swear his fealty.

"I am Thaergood, advisor to the Themisphere's court. I swear that I will be faithful to my king, never cause him harm, and obey his will to the best of my abilities and without deceit."

## **Chapter 1008: Funeral Ceremony of the Past King**

Jack nodded his acceptance. Thaergood rose and Duke Alfredo came next.

The swearing of fealties went on for a long while as there were many people in the hall. The outworlders who were invited also did the same. They had been advised about this when they came to the palace. If they were unwilling, they were turned away.

Swearing fealties were not just symbolism to the outworlders. If they did, they were automatically accepted into the Themisphere Kingdom faction if they weren't already. If they were already a kingdom faction member, they would receive merit points that were enough to level them up to Baron at least.

The outworlders that John had invited were mostly those with guild headquarters as well as leaders of other influential guilds or groups. By tying them to the kingdom faction, it would help to strengthen the kingdom more.

Through Serenity's divine ability, both Jack's vows and the current swearing of fealties were broadcasted to the entire country. She did this to help Jack solidify his status as the king so that no one would question the legitimacy of his kingship.

It was past afternoon before the fealty-swearing ceremony was completed. Jack was then ushered to the royal balcony. The throne room was situated rather high up in the palace, so he could see almost the entire capital from this balcony.

Down there in the palace courtyard, many civilians had gathered. They crowded until outside the courtyard's wall. They cheered when they saw Jack who was now in the king's uniform.

Jack wondered if they truly cheered for him or if it was something organized by the kingdom's officials.

As his enhanced eyes looked through the crowd, he spotted Amy, Samantha, Gruff, and young Janus. Amy and Samantha cheered passionately. At least Jack was sure these two cheered for him wholeheartedly.

Gruff and Janus weren't invited to the throne room to swear fealty because they were executives of league factions. Their loyalties lay elsewhere. But Bailey, who was also a member of the League of Champions, did. She even informed Jack that she would focus her time more on the kingdom faction than the league.

Jack also spotted Haestus from the Blacksmith Circle and Andrea from the Healer Society among the crowd. He believed there were also other representatives from other league factions down there.



Jack lifted his hands. He was supposed to address the crowd. The voice from the crowd slowly lowered to a murmur.

"People of Themisphere...! I stand before you now as your king. But I believe you have seen me walk amongst you in this past year. I understand that many of you, maybe all, see me as an outsider. I won't deny that. I and my kind, whom you call outworlders, are indeed outsiders. But please rest assured that I don't see you as any different than I see the other outworlders. I swear to you that I have taken an oath to devote myself to making this country a better place, for both natives and outworlders. I truly intend to uphold that oath! For we are one. Whether you are a native or an outworlder. We are all the citizens of Themisphere...!!!"

Cheers erupted, louder than when Jack first came out of this balcony.

'Probably someone down there is choreographing the crowd,' Jack thought amusingly. He didn't mind. This was just a show anyway. The real chore was just about to begin. He would have to prove to the people through his deeds that he was worthy of this crown.

Jack made a slight bow to the crowd before retreating to the throne room.

A feast had been prepared. Everyone moved to the gathering hall to enjoy the refreshments and also let them mingled around. A feast was also prepared for the civilians gathering in the courtyard outside. Everyone was celebrating the coronation of the new king.

Duke Alfredo took Jack around the gathering hall, meeting nobles and other influential natives. He could see some of them were just wearing a friendly façade. He hated this kind of political gathering. Nobody seemed to be their real selves. But he guessed he had no choice but to play this game now. He acted as polite and as friendly as possible, not giving in to his usual casual and carefree manners.

John shamelessly tagged along whenever they went. Jack didn't mind. John was more suited to this kind of function than he was. Jack pulled Jeanny to tag along as well, just to balance up in case John made an insensitive remark. Jack mostly just nodded and answered questions with short comments.

Despite this feast being meant for people around the country to know one another, Jack noticed one sad point. There was a clear separation between a couple of groups. The native group and the outworlder group. The two seemed to form their own circle and just chatted among themselves. Very few out of the two groups made the effort to greet the people from the opposite group.

Jack sighed. It might take more effort and more time if he wanted to bring these two groups together.

The feast went on until late at night. Guests from outside the capital again stayed in the guest rooms prepared for them inside the palace. Even the outworlder leaders were given ones. They happily accepted. Not every day they received such hospitality from the kingdom.

The next day, everyone gathered again. This time for a more somber affair. The funeral ceremony for King Themos, Prince Alonzo, and Princess Sindral.

Only a few people knew the truth about Themos and Sindral. So, to most officials and the mass, Themos and Sindral were still the kind monarch and the gentle princess whom they knew in the past.

Under Jack's insistence, Commander Quintus' funeral was included in this royal funeral ceremony. Lindsey was there. Jack tried to strike up a conversation with her but she was mostly quiet. Jack didn't have the guts to tell her that her father died because of doing a favor for him. He could only secretly swear that he would take care of her.

The ceremony similarly lasted for a day. The head priest from the Church of Creation performed a lengthy ritual. The army then carried the four's bodies in a ceremonial procession to the royal crypt, which was located in a cave inside Mount Thenias.

After the funeral ceremony was over, some officials who were from other cities left. Some stayed another night. Emris and Meryl were among the ones who left the next day. They had to return to their border forts. It had been some time since they left those posts. Their long absence was not good for the safety of those borders.

It was after everything calmed down that Jack had the chance to deal with the matter of actual ruling. By using the monarch system.

### **Chapter 1009: The Monarch System**

"The what system?" Jack asked.

"The monarch system," Peniel repeated. "That's how a ruler rules a country."

"Maybe it's some kind of a control panel," John said. He was there in the throne room with Jack, together with Jeanny. Jack had invited the two to help him learn how to rule.

"You need to sit on the throne for that, Your Majesty," Thaergood said. This advisor was also there with Duke Alfredo and Duchess Isabelle. They were also there to assist Jack on his first day in doing kingly duties.

"Oh? I sat there two days ago but nothing happened," Jack said, indicating the time during his coronation.

"You are still being coronated on that day," Thaergood explained. "You are only formally considered the king of this country after the coronation day ended."

"Just sit on the throne and try it, will you?!" Peniel said impatiently.

"All right, all right," Jack said and went to the throne.

As he sat on it, several holographic screens appeared.

"Whoa!" He shouted.

"What is it? Something happened?" Jeanny asked.

"You can't see it?" Jack asked. "A whole bunch of screens just popped up."

"It seemed only you are privileged to them. Hm... This will make it difficult for us to help," John said.

"You will need to describe everything you see if you want our help."

"There are a lot... I'm not sure which to start first," Jack said. He felt overwhelmed by the displays in front of him.

Thaergood came to explain then, "Those screens held the general information of the country, officers we have, and also tasks needed attending to."

"Oh? You can see them too?" Jack asked.

"Yes," Thaergood replied.

"You can click them one by one to see their details," Peniel added.

Jack clicked the one that showed the map of the country. The map zoomed out and showed him the overview. John had seen this complete map when he was strategizing for the orc invasion, but for Jack, this was the first time he laid eyes on a complete map.

After having a general view of the map, he could see that he had not even traveled one-tenth of this country. He simply didn't have the time to.

Multiple dots were marked on the map, signifying human settlements. Besides the map were numbers of the settlements, which were classified into five categories: Village, town, city, metropolis, and megalopolis.

Currently in Themisphere was 22 villages, 16 towns, 8 cities, 11 metropolises, and 0 megalopolis.

"The settlement classification is based on the population of the said settlement," Peniel explained. "A village has a population of one hundred to five thousand, a town has five thousand to one hundred thousand, a city is one hundred thousand to one million, a metropolis required a population of one million to ten million, while anything above ten million is considered a megalopolis."

"We have eleven metropolises, the same number as the main cities," Jack said.

"Yes, only a city that becomes a metropolis can be the main city," Peniel confirmed.

"Is the population fixed? Or can it grow?"

"It can grow and decrease. Aside from external factors like disaster or warfare, the population will mostly be affected by how you rule."

"So, if we help a city grow and become a metropolis, we will have twelve main cities?" Jack asked.

"Yes," Peniel answered.

"Then will that mean the number of guilds who can have a guild headquarters become twelve as well? Will a bandit outpost appear in the region of that new main city?"

"Well... In theory, it should," Peniel answered.

"If we can have more guilds with headquarters in our country, that will help boost our military power," John remarked.

"It's not easy growing a city you know, and it certainly will not happen in a short time," Peniel said.

When Jack clicked on the list of metropolises, the eleven main cities were shown. Out of the eleven, the capital Thereath boasted the largest population, with 7 million natives and 1 million outworlders.

The two next most populated metropolises were Theneward and Thehemburgh, with a total population of natives and outworlders at around 6 million.

The next four metropolises had a total population of around 4 million. These metropolises were Thenident, Themetus, Thebrington, and Therimdell. The remaining four, Theveyork, Thedoonvall, Therowld, and Thevoltes had around 2 million populations.

Thesewal and Thesylvania where Jack had visited were considered towns. Thesewal used to be a city before Verremor's invasion, but its population had declined due to the invasion. Even though much of its population had returned, it was still not enough to push it back to the city status.

Jack continued his observation on the general overview display. Aside from information about the number of settlements, other main information was listed there. They were kingdom coffer, kingdom mana, and kingdom enchantment.

When Jack saw the kingdom coffer info, he couldn't help but draw in a deep breath.

"Five... five million gold coins?" He stammered. "I... Can I take some of those?"

The question was answered by a slap on the head by Peniel. Thaergood was unsure whether he should scold the fairy for such disrespectful treatment. The king himself seemed to just treat the slap as if it was the most normal thing in the world.

"The coins inside the kingdom coffer are for use to develop the kingdom. It is not for private use," Duke Alfredo explained.

"Ahaha. I'm just kidding, just kidding," Jack laughed. Jeanny, John, and Peniel shook their heads at the three natives, telling them that Jack didn't joke.

"Well, let's move on," Jack said, trying to change the subject.

By the side of the kingdom coffer were two sub-details, total coin income and total coin expense. The income was 2,106,000 gold coins while the expense was 1,399,000 gold coins.

"Those are the monthly income and expense," Peniel informed.

"Which means the monthly net income is 707,000 gold coins," Jack said. He then looked at the five million gold coins in the kingdom coffer. "These coins must have accumulated for some time already."

Thaergood explained, "It has been almost a year since King Themos ordered any development. It was the royal advisor who dealt with the matters. But his authority is limited, so he couldn't fully use the coins in the kingdom coffer."

Jack nodded his understanding.

In the kingdom mana section, two million mana was listed there. Jack didn't know if that was a large amount or not. If this mana was equal to the mana cores, then it was certainly a lot. Similarly, there was

total mana income and total mana expense by the side. The income was 581,000 mana with an expense of 386,000 mana. So, the monthly net income was 195,000 mana.

For the kingdom enchantment, there was no number. Instead, it had a name listed there.

"Hey, it said here we have Serenity's blessing," Jack said after reading the name listed under kingdom enchantment.

Jack hovered his attention over the description and some extra details popped up.

\*

Serenity's Blessing

Boost food production.

Increases population growth rate.

Boost Happiness and Economy.

Happiness will never fall below 50%. Drafting will not cause happiness to fall.

No natural disaster will happen in the country.

Duration: 1 year

### **Chapter 1010: Officers Overview**

"That's right! Goddess Serenity did mention giving this kingdom her blessing," Peniel said. "We are very lucky she did that. This will help cut down your work in keeping this kingdom stable."

"Hehe, I know my big sister won't let me down," Jack said. He moved his head away just as Peniel's hand came slapping again.

Missing the slap, Peniel grumbled about how Jack called the Goddess his big sister.

Jack was already moving to the next screen. It was marked with the title, Officers Overview.

The main page showed that there were 526 active officers with an allowable maximum of 569 officers. The 569 maximum was divided into 251 for court officials and 318 for military officials.

"These are the senior-level officers whom you are entitled to appoint or discharge," Peniel explained.

"The 526 active officers from the maximum allowable of 569 meant there are 43 vacant spots at the moment. Go into its details so you can get a clearer picture."

Jack complied. When he opened the military section first. The top row had three boxes. Two had portraits in them, one was empty. The two portraits were people he knew, Emris and Meryl. The row was marked with the words, Lord Marshall.

"I guess this third box used to be filled by Arther Pendrake," Jack said. Arther Pendrake was the lord marshall who quit his post after Therribus lost in the civil war.

"So, I can appoint anyone to fill this empty post?" Jack asked.

"Not that simple," Peniel answered. "There is a restriction for each rank. Lord Marshall being the top rank requires the highest restrictions. Lower ranks have lesser restrictions. You can check their restrictions by clicking the empty portrait."

Jack did so. The requirements soon showed themselves. To be appointed as a Lord Marshall, someone would need to be at least level 70, mythical grade, and have leadership and discipline stats of at least 80 points.

"Leadership and discipline stats?" Jack asked after reading.

"It's the officer stats. Now try clicking the box with a portrait," Peniel suggested.

Jack chose Emris' portrait. Detailed information soon appeared. A brief history of Emris was shown. It depicted that Emris came from a declining noble family which was later ransacked by bandits. He lost everyone except her mother, who then brought her to the Circle of Magi. Her mother left him with the mages there. Because despite surviving, her mother also suffered a fatal wound. Her mother passed soon after.

Emris studied inside the Circle of Magi until he became a powerful mage. Yet, instead of continuing to serve the Circle of Magi, Emris chose to leave the faction and joined the kingdom. He quickly climbed up the rank with his prowess. With his rank, he finally tracked down the bandits who had murdered his family and exacted his revenge. From then on, he vowed to protect this kingdom from any bandits or foreign enemies and spare anyone else from suffering his same childhood tragedy.

"Oh... I didn't know that old man has such a sad backstory," Jack commented. He looked down and saw the other details from Emris.

The info listed Emris' level and grade, which Jack already knew. It also listed his HP, MP, and the six attributes similar to players. Below them was another set of data. They were loyalty, leadership, discipline, wit, politics, and traits. Besides loyalty was number 76.

"Um... Peniel. Does this loyalty stat mean..."

Peniel answered before Jack finished his question, "Yes, that indicates his loyalty to the king, you!"

"Uh... It's 76 good?"

"The maximum is 100, which means he is utterly loyal to you. Officers will start to consider quitting or defecting if their loyalty is 60 or below."

"Oh... So, not too good," Jack said.

"Yeah, I will say it's average. I will say he just considers it his duty to obey you as his king. he didn't truly have any opinion on you personally."

"Hm... Hey, are those what I think they are?" Jack pointed to a series of buttons beside the loyalty number. They had words on them. Pay, gift, summon, promote, demote, and discharge. He was pointing to the ones marked with pay and gift.

"Yeah. That is if you want to give him coins or a valuable item. It will increase his loyalty points," Peniel answered, understanding Jack's meaning.

"Great! Let's give him some coins to increase his loyalty! The guy is a level 85 mythical, after all. I will want him on my good side... But by paying, I assume I use the kingdom coffer. Not my own coins, right?"

"Yes, paying an officer will use the coins from the kingdom coffer. But you can pay him later. There is a mass pay function where you give coins to all or multiple selected officers at once. It is faster rather than paying them one by one."

"Oh, I see. Okay," Jack said and studied Emris' other data. He had 86 for leadership, 93 for discipline, 81 for wit, and 66 for politics.

"Those four also have the maximum point at 100," Peniel explained.

Studying these four stats, Jack understood that they were different from attributes. While attributes indicated one's prowess in combat, these four stats reflected one's social capacity. Officers with leadership and discipline excelled in military service. Leadership showed how well one led another, while discipline showed how well one carried out an order. As for wit and politics, they were more suited for court officers.

Jack scrolled down. There were lots of officers. A few he recognized. Most, he didn't. The ranks that were visible to him were lord marshall, having three spots. Lord commander, ten spots. Knight Commander, twenty-five spots. One of the Knight Commander's spots was empty. That empty one must be one that used to be occupied by Quintus' portrait. Sadness returned when Jack was reminded of that knight commander.

Knight captain had eighty spots. The last, knight lieutenant, had two hundred spots. Plenty of empty portraits in these two ranks.

"I understand there should be more military ranks below knight lieutenant, right?" Jack asked.

"There are," Thaergood confirmed. "But Your Majesty needed not to bother about those lower ranks. They were appointed by the upper ranks in this list."

Jack nodded. It won't be practical if he was to be in charge of selecting every single officer in this kingdom.