

World 1101

Chapter 1101: Sneaking into the Manor

Jack first divided them into four teams. Duke Alfredo summoned his Asura and became the first team. Jonathan and Lindsey were on the second team. Yrin and Howard formed the third. Tenka and Amy were the fourth.

The four teams then sneaked out and took positions at different sides of the manor. In the meantime, Jack summoned Pandora and told her of his plan. She was very complying since it was for the sake of rescuing her sister. After making sure Pandora understood, Jack sneaked down to near the main street heading to the manor's entrance.

Jack hid behind a large boulder and waited. Not long after, Pandora ran through the front of the manor. Her blazing trail was hard to miss. But just to make sure that the demons saw her, she stopped and stood there gazing at the manor's entrance.

The demons who guarded the entrance were immediately riled up. They made lots of sounds. As they did, more demons came out of the mansion.

They then started running toward Pandora. Some of them carried some kind of nets that seemed to be made of fire. Peniel said that those fire nets were tools to capture fire-based creatures. It was sturdy and won't get burned by a nightmare's flame. Hraghshu had managed to capture Luna most likely due to these fire nets.

The demons started swinging their nets around like they were lassos. Pandora let them come close enough that they threw the nets at her, which caused Jack to worry. But before the fire nets arrived, she was gone already.

'Damn it, ma'am. Do you have to cut it so close?' Jack cursed within.

Pandora ran away from the manor, but not at her fastest speed. The demons chased after her. More demons came out of the manor and joined the pursuing party.

Jack sent a mental message to his royal agents then, who commenced with their tasks.

All four teams attacked the demons who guarded the slave workers. None of the demon guards were rare elite. There were also not too many of them, so it was not a problem for Alfredo and the rest. In a short time, they took care of the demon guards and started destroying the shackles that held the slave workers.

They instructed the workers they had freed to run away while they continued dispatching the demon guards and saving more workers.

As more and more workers fled, the demons inside the mansion finally noticed. An alarm was sounded. More demons came out and rushed in every direction to capture the fleeing workers. The four teams hid again as these demons came out.

After the pursuing demons passed them by, they came out and ambushed the demons from the rear. The demons at the back turned back and fought the ambushers while the ones in front ignored the ambush. They continued pursuing the fleeing workers.

Jack had reminded Tenka and Yrin to continue staying hidden during this phase. If they wanted to join the fight, they had to ensure they killed the demons who saw them. Jack hoped the two listened to his instructions.

Once no more demons came out from the mansion, Jack ran to the entrance. He figured the mansion should be mostly empty by now, allowing him more ease in searching for the teleportation chamber.

As he neared the main door, he saw several red dots coming from inside the mansion. One of them was even slightly larger and darker than the other red dots.

Jack hurriedly looked around and located a part of the wall that had recesses. He hurriedly hid inside one of those recesses. Luckily, this place was mostly dark due to the dark sky. The shadow meld ability of his Cloak of Shadow soon turned him invisible just as the door opened.

From inside, a few demons walked out. Including a tall demon in light armor. He had two large and sleek bat wings on his back. His skin was dark green instead of the usual red. Jack used his Inspect and found that this winged demon was classified as a high demon. This high demon was one of Hraghshu's mythical-grade bodyguards. He was level 67 and went by the name of Xelvorath.

The first thing Xelvorath did after walking out of the door was look in Jack's direction.

Luckily, Jack knew about the mythical grade's sensitivity to mana. He had applied mana concealment once he hid inside the recess, erasing his presence.

Xelvorath did sense something when coming out of the door, but that sensation was gone now.

"Sir, what should we do? Should we chase after this other nightmare or should we chase after the slaves?" A demon asked Xelvorath.

Xelvorath stopped gazing in Jack's direction and replied, "You all go chase the slaves. I will deal with the nightmare."

After saying his piece, his large bat wings flapped. The air around him exploded as he shot into the sky. The demons around him were blasted by that air explosion and fell.

None of them showed any discontent. They rose and then went in different directions to pursue the slaves.

'That mythical demon is very fast. Will Pandora be okay?' Jack asked Peniel who hid inside her hidden dimension.

'Don't worry. She is a smart nightmare, she should know when to retreat,' Peniel replied.

When Jack was explaining the plan, Jack told Pandora to just unsummon herself if she was in a pinch. This was one of the perks of having an owner. Unless the enemies used a tool or a spell that stopped her from unsummoning herself, she should be okay. Jack just hoped that she didn't let the mythical grade

get too close. That demon surely had a restraining skill that might prevent Pandora from unsummoning herself.

Jack didn't have the time to worry about others, he had his own task to take care of. After checking his radar and making sure no one was near the mansion's entrance, he came out of hiding and entered through the door. That door was not locked with so many demons coming and going frequently.

He came into a luxurious foyer. He had no time to admire the interior, so he just headed to the first forbidden area mentioned by Wotai. The forbidden area on this ground floor was at the opposite end of the entrance.

He studied his radar. Some red dots were still inside this mansion, but he couldn't tell if they were on the ground floor or the upper floors. He chose the path that was more vacant and ran toward the opposite end.

Chapter 1102: Lockbox

Jack remembered that the underworld demon had a natural shadow meld ability, so he didn't trust his eyes and depended more on his radar. Due to his radar, this stealth mission became much easier because he knew which section was empty. But most of all, it was because his ploy had drawn out most of the demons that he could now move freely inside this mansion.

He looked around at the walls and the ceiling while he ran. Peniel asked what was he looking for. Jack answered that he was looking if there were signs of rune diagrams. If there was, it would be troublesome. Luckily, this mansion didn't have one.

Without obstacles, he arrived soon at the door of what was supposed to be one of the forbidden places. Considering that it was a forbidden room, the door was of course locked.

"Damn it! Do I have to waste time doing lockpicking?" He cursed. He had a large stock of lockpicks but the attempt would take some time.

"You can try hitting it," Peniel said. "There are never indestructible items. It's just whether you are strong enough or not. Some things are more durable than others, as you should know since you have broken a few structures in the past. For one that is more durable, if your strength is not enough, your attacks will just produce zero damage, which makes it appear indestructible. At your current level, you already have enough strength where you should be able to break locked doors."

"Really?" Jack tried hitting the door. True enough, damage numbers appeared and an HP bar above the door was seen.

The damage number was small though, and only a very tiny portion of the HP bar was reduced.

"This takes quite some time," Jack said. But he figured it should still be faster than using lockpicks. Although this was a good chance to increase his lockpicking skill, he was currently short on time. He had to destroy the teleportation chamber and save Luna before the horde of demons returned.

Jack sent hits rapidly to the door. Each hit produced a banging sound. Luckily, no demons nearby to hear the sound. If there was, then using lockpicks was the safer option.

After more than a minute of hitting the door, it finally broke.

'Not teleportation chamber,' Jack thought. It was some sort of a warehouse. Jack was about to leave when his God-eye monocle register something with a silver marking.

Silver was the color of a unique-grade item. This made Jack enter the room and the markings in his monocle lit up. The room was full of silver color markings.

"Holy...," Jack uttered as he picked one of these marked things. It was a small rock. Adamantine Ore. It's a unique-grade blacksmith material.

Jack looked around the room. Probably hundreds of these ores filled the room among other common-looking ores.

"Maybe these are what they were mining outside," Peniel said.

Without delay, Jack scooped up these rocks and transferred them into his inventory. Even though he had limited time, he supposed he could risk a bit for these unique-grade materials. Peniel said that this ore was required when one started to level up the equipment from level 80 to above.

"No wonder this place is forbidden. Hehe, this will help me cut down the materials I use using my transformation prism."

Jack only took the adamantine ores. There were also uncommon and rare grade ores, but he didn't waste the time picking those up. He still knew how to restrain himself. He had other objectives here.

During the chore, he noticed a purple color marking on one of the items in the room.

"A legendary grade!" He uttered and went to the marked item. It was a small lockbox.

"Uh... Peniel. Can I hit this lockbox to break it like the door?" Jack asked. He had no time for lockpicking this lockbox, but a legendary item like this was too tempting to let go.

"Lockboxes or chests are typically more durable than locked doors, but as long as your strength is high enough, you should be able to. However, breaking a lockbox or chest is highly likely to destroy the items inside. So, you will end up with nothing instead."

"I believe in my luck stat," Jack said and lifted his sword.

"Hold...!" Peniel shouted. "I've not yet finished talking. Lockbox is different from a treasure chest. You can't move a treasure chest around but you can with a lockbox."

"Oh, you mean...," Jack grabbed the small lockbox and picked it up. He then transferred it into his inventory.

"Yeah, you can just slowly lockpick it later," Peniel said. "Do note, however, that when treasure chests give you lots of items, lockboxes only give one or a maximum of two items."

"At this moment, I prefer less but I can get it rather than more but I have to leave it," Jack said.

He then quickly finished cleaning up the adamantine ores in the room. It was a much easier task with the help of the markings from his monocle.

He collected around three hundred adamantine ores. He swept around the room to make sure there were no more silver or purple color objects before leaving through the broken door. He had seen the stairs that led up to the second floor on his way here, so he ran there now.

Using the stairs, he ran directly to the third floor. Based on Wotai's information, the second floor had no forbidden area. Arriving on the third floor, he first got his bearing to make sure which way was the left wing before heading over there.

He again paid attention to his radar and avoid any of the scarce red dots. A white dot was also seen, which was most likely the captured nightmare. With that white dot on his radar, he would know which way to go later. But first, he had to find the teleportation chamber.

He quickly found the locked door that was on the left wing of the mansion. Luckily again, there was no red dot nearby this section, so it was safe for him to make a little noise.

He chopped at the door and shaved its HP bar little by little. This door was sturdier than the warehouse. It took him a bit longer to destroy.

When the door broke, he saw the familiar contraption of a teleportation chamber.

Chapter 1103: Going for the Prize while Everyone was Occupied

"Yes!" Jack exclaimed. "Thank goodness everything has been easy."

He then slapped his head. "Oops! Usually, things take a turn after I said that." He looked at his radar, making sure no red dots happened to move in his direction.

Relieved that everything was still fine, he went into the chamber. The teleportation device was a large round platform with a glowing power stone hung directly above it. That power stone was the device's power source. So, destroying the stone would cripple the teleportation device.

Jack used Sword of Light. His crescent light hit the power stone. A damage number appeared accompanied by an HP bar. He estimated this power stone was sturdier than the door he just broke. He was just about to cast Soar to reach the power stone when that stone suddenly glowed. A demon wearing a robe then appeared at the center of the platform.

Jack and the demon were frozen as they looked at one another for a second.

"INTRU...!!" The demon started shouting but was cut midway when Jack's boot came into his face.

The kick using mana manipulation sent the demon flying to the wall. Jack followed by using fast spells. He cast Ice Bullet and Electric Bolts, keeping the demon frozen and paralyzed while he approached. He then battered the demon with fast slashes.

The demon was only a special elite, so his HP was drained at a fast rate. However, the demon proved to be one with a solid concentration. Despite Jack's non-stop slashes, he could still cast a spell. His speed of casting was also not slow.

He finished his first spell and a barrier enveloped his body. He then proceeded with a second spell which spell formation contained five runes.

Jack recognized the runic symbols from the spell formation. It was Warlock's Hellish Explosion.

He wasn't worried about the spell. He was able to tank this explosion even without his defensive skills. He continued to deliver punishments on the demon, trying to finish him as fast as possible.

When the demon was on the brink of death, the demon completed his spell. Jack braced himself for the explosion, but his mana sense didn't detect any incoming one.

He then heard a loud explosion from behind. The demon had targeted his spell outside the chamber. The demon's purpose was not to injure Jack but to alert the other demons in this mansion.

"Shit!" Jack cursed as he delivered the final blow that killed the demon. He saw the few red dots on his radar, which were static a moment ago, now rushing in his direction.

He had to act fast! He took out his companion token and summoned Arlcard.

Arlcard was now level 68, one level higher than when he left after the incident with the archdemon. As a mythical grade, he immediately detected the abnormality of the mana.

Before he asked about the mana, Jack spoke first, "We are in the underworld. No time to explain! This is currently an emergency. Use your Sonata of the Night to hinder anyone from entering this room, then quickly destroy that power stone. Afterward, kill any demons that you see!"

Finished speaking, Jack rushed out of the room. Arlcard didn't dilly-dally. The fog that was the signature of Arlcard's Sonata of the Night soon filled the space outside the teleportation chamber. Jack also heard the sound of Arlcard starting to assault the power stone.

The stairs to the fourth floor were behind a locked fence. Jack had passed by that fence and it was not far from where the teleportation chamber was located. He rushed over and then hid in a corner near the stairs.

Despite his agitated state, he slowed his breathing and urged his heartbeat to slow. He was using the mana concealment technique again as his Cloak of Shadow turned him invisible.

Jack saw the fence to the stairs open and four demons appeared. Two were winged high demons and the other two were wingless regular demons. His Inspect informed him that one of the high demons was the Hell Baron, Hraghshu. He was a weak level 60 special elite, but Jack didn't dare do anything to him yet. It might cause his father, Mammon, to teleport here before Arlcard destroyed the teleportation device.

The two regular demons were level 70 special elites. Nothing to worry about. It was the other high demon who posed a problem. A level 70 mythical demon by the name of Algerad.

The four weren't aware of Jack's presence. They turned to where the explosion had been heard and headed there. They left the fence open, which Jack was thankful for.

The four passed by Jack's position. Jack waited until they encountered Arlcard's spell before he jumped out of hiding and then summoned his wolves, his spirit weapon, and Therras.

Jack gave them a brief instruction before turning around and heading to the stairs.

Therras, the spirit weapon, and the ten wolves rushed toward the four demons. They were to hinder the demons with the help of Arlcard's fog until Arlcard finished dealing with the teleportation chamber. Jack gave them a strict order to not touch Hraghshu.

The ten wolves ran forward and attacked the two special elite demon guards. They also ran around Hraghshu, confusing him without attacking him.

Therras used its Tyrannical Charge and slammed into Algerad who was surprised to find a strong enemy was suddenly behind them inside this manor.

The spirit weapon supported Therras and the wolves with ranged attacks.

While his minions were keeping those demons occupied, Jack ran up the stairs and arrived on the fourth floor. He was greeted with an enormous hall full of luxurious furniture and decorations. He didn't have the time to admire them. He checked the position of the white dot on his radar. There was another red dot near that white dot.

Jack was not worried. This red dot was normal color, which meant it was not higher than his power level. A single same-level enemy won't give him much trouble. He rushed over to their positions.

Fortunately, the room he was heading to was not blocked by locked doors or other obstacles. He crossed through an opening in a wall and entered another large hall. This hall had rune diagrams all around its walls and ceiling. They were flaring with dark light and tendrils of energy could be seen coming out of them and flowing to the center of the hall.

At the center of the hall, a nightmare was being wrapped by these tendrils of dark light. The dark light wound around her body and slowly seeped into her orifices. She was struggling but appeared weak. The flame that usually burned around a nightmare was not seen. She looked like a simple horse with dark red skin.

Jack used his Inspect and confirmed that the bound nightmare was Luna.

Chapter 1104: Space-bending Power

"A human...? An outworlder human...?"

Jack heard a feminine voice from the demon who stood not far from the flameless nightmare in captivity. She was the lone red dot staying near the white dot. She was wearing a mage robe. She was probably the demon mage Wotai mentioned in his story.

Jack used Inspect on her. Her name was Saakir. She was a level 72 rare elite demon. Her level was higher than his, but Jack believed he could take her on with no problem.

"How can you be here on this plane?" Saakir asked. Next to her was a floating dark red orb that seemed to be swirling with strange flames. Jack sensed a similar aura to Pandora from that orb.

Jack didn't bother conversing with the demon. His mission was to save Luna, which meant taking out her demon captor.

Jack used Wind Slash. Five wind energies rushed to Saakir.

Saakir's one hand remained close to the orb, while she put her other hand to her front. The air in front of her was distorted. When the five wind energies came, they vanished within the distorted air.

"What...?"

Jack's surprise turned to shock when he sensed strange mana movement at his back. He then sensed his wind energies from there. He immediately used Roll just as the five wind slashes hit the floor where he stood a moment ago.

"Displace?" Jack asked. Displace was Mage Knight's level 45 skill that was able to redirect range attacks.

"No. Whatever she did just now, it wasn't a skill," Peniel said.

"You are right," Saakir said. A wand appeared in her hand and she cast a Fireball spell.

Jack used Flame Slash and destroyed the fireball. He then shot Ice Bullet, Electric Bolts, and Tracing Beams back-to-back.

As the numerous projectiles came at Saakir, the air again distorted around her. All of Jack's projectiles disappeared before they could hit the demon mage. Jack then sensed the mana around him stirred again.

Jack's projectiles came out of empty air and headed to him from multiple directions. He had to use his Eight Diagram Illusory Steps to evade them all.

"It truly is not a skill. It got no cooldown... How did she do that?" Jack asked.

"I don't know. Probably that strange orb... I think she is harnessing the nightmare's power using that orb," Peniel said. "A nightmare had the power to cross over planes. Perhaps she modifies it using that orb to give her the ability to bend space."

"Haha. High fairy, you are rather knowledgeable. Let me capture you and study your mind," Saakir laughed.

"You think you will win just because I can't hit you with ranged attacks? Think again!" Jack exclaimed as he activated Strength of the Wild and Life Burning Art. His stats greatly increased. He used Shooting Dash. Within an instant, he was already in front of Saakir.

Saakir was startled by Jack's speed. She didn't expect this lower-level outworlder to be this fast. But she wasn't someone who easily panicked. She tapped into the orb's power. When Jack's sword came slashing, she vanished.

She then appeared some distance away.

"What...?" Jack looked over to where Saakir was now.

"She not only can displace ranged attacks. She can teleport herself as well," Peniel said.

Saakir was grinning as she cast her spell. A group of flame spears shot at Jack.

Jack also cast a spell. He completed the casting of Teleportation when Saakir's flame spears arrived. He teleported to right beside Saakir. But when he slashed his sword, she again disappeared and appeared somewhere else in the hall.

"Damn it! This is like she had a teleportation spell with no cooldown," Jack cursed. He couldn't catch up to her in melee due to her constant teleporting. All his ranged attacks were returned. He had no way to defeat her!

Saakir continued throwing her spells at him. All Jack could do was just defend and dodge.

While Jack was out of ideas, he heard a loud explosion from downstairs. The place also shook heavily.

'Was that explosion from the teleportation chamber getting destroyed or something else?' Jack thought.

While he was wondering, Pandora suddenly appeared beside him.

"Another nightmare?!" Saakir uttered with amazement. "Great! If we can catch you as well..."

Pandora was staring at Luna once she appeared. She had sensed it when Jack came near Luna. That's why she unsummoned herself from the cat-and-mouse game with the demons. Although the mythical-grade Xelvorath was fast, it was not easy to catch a speeding nightmare. After unsummoning herself, Pandora summoned herself out to Jack's side.

Seeing her sister's miserable condition, Pandora stomped her foot and neighed loudly. The flames on her blazed with wild abandon. Even Jack, who was normally immune to her flame, felt strong heat from those blazing flames.

Pandora then turned to Saakir. Her eyes suddenly turned white. It was only a split second but she suddenly reeled back while shouting, "Away from my mind, you fiend...!!!"

Jack immediately saw it as a chance and fired Mana Beam.

He must admit he was amazed by Saakir's swiftness, though. Even though she had just suffered a mind attack, she was still fast enough to manipulate the power orb. She managed to displace the beam just a short instant before it hit.

The beam came back next to Jack, at an angle that should hit both him and Pandora. Jack had warned Pandora when he saw the air distortion before his mana beam hit, so the two successfully dodged the beam.

Pandora looked at the orb in Saakir's hand before turning to Luna. She then ran to Luna.

"What are you....," Saakir was puzzled by Pandora's act.

Pandora arrived before Luna and then stomped her feet hard. Her flame wrapped around Luna. It could not free her from the dark light that surrounded her, but what she did also stopped Luna's power from seeping out.

Jack saw the floating power orb next to Saakir turn dim. The flames that used to swirl around it were also gone.

"You...! Get away from her!!!" Saakir yelled and fired dark energies from her wand.

Those dark energies were destroyed midway as Jack stood between her and the two nightmares.

Jack was grinning. "Let's see how you fare now without that space-bending power."

Chapter 1105: Forced to Escape

Without her ability to displace and teleport, Saakir was not Jack's opponent. She was six levels higher than Jack, but Jack was able to go against multiple rare elites of the same level at the same time. So, fighting only one rare elite with a slightly higher level was not a problem for him.

Jack must admit, though. This Saakir was stronger than the average rare elite. Jack even had a feeling that she had a mana sense ability.

Even so, after a few clashes, Saakir was aware that she was not Jack's opponent. She wasn't able to keep Jack at bay. Jack was simply too fast. She had no problem concentrating in a melee but it was still very disadvantageous for her to fight in a melee.

Her expressions showed that she wanted to retreat but was unwilling to. She kept on glancing at the dim orb floating beside her. Jack was aware then that the orb might not follow her if she left. Perhaps because it was tethered to Luna at the center of this hall.

Not like Jack was going to let her leave, anyway. Jack increased his pace to quickly defeat this demon mage before the others came, so he could work on saving Luna.

"Damn you, outworlder! I will get you back for this...!!" Saakir yelled.

She had been preparing a six-runes spell, Flame Wrath. Multiple large fireballs came out and chased after Jack.

Jack jumped back before using Swords of the Brave. The ten golden swords destroyed ten of the fireballs, and Jack used his slashes to destroy the rest.

While he was doing that, Saakir took out a small red stone.

Jack used Charge and returned to Saakir's side just as she was enveloped by red light. She then vanished when Jack's sword came slashing.

"Huh?" Jack was unable to sense where she had moved to. His radar also didn't show any red dot appearing in its scope.

"That was a displacement stone she used," Peniel informed. "She is gone already. The stone is a unique-grade consumable. It teleports its user a large distance away even during combat. The direction is random. Even the user won't know where she ends up at. It is a pure escape tool."

"She must know that she can't outrun me with normal means," Jack said, which was true. Even if Jack didn't use any movement skills, he could easily catch up with her slow-moving speed if she tried running to the stairs.

Since the demon mage was gone, Jack didn't dwell on her. He turned back and ran to where Luna and Pandora were.

Now that he was closer and was allowed to focus his attention, he could sense the mana tendrils from the rune diagrams were locking Luna in that spot.

"I suppose Dispel is not strong enough for those rune diagrams?" Jack asked.

"No. You need Greater Dispel," Peniel said. "You can try working on the diagrams, though. They are a bit more complex than the one you solved when you freed Pandora. But with your current level of mana sense, you should be able to undo the binding."

"I can, but it will take time. We don't know how long before other enemies arrive," Jack said.

As he was saying that, he heard a crash from outside. He looked through the opening to the outside hall and saw the familiar green-skinned demon standing near a broken window.

"Speaking of the demon...", Jack muttered.

After Pandora vanished, Xelvorath flew around the place to search for the missing nightmare. But a loud explosion from the direction of the manor drew his attention. He quickly flew back.

Xelvorath saw a huge hole in the wall of the third floor. He also saw signs of conflict there, but he decided to go to the fourth floor first before checking out the third floor.

He directly crashed through the window of the fourth floor. He was very surprised to find the hell baron was not present. Instead, it was a human intruder with the nightmare he had been chasing a while ago.

"You... Outworlder. How did you enter this place?" Xelvorath said as he walked over.

Jack prepared himself. He transformed into his supreme dragon form. He had been saving it if he had to face a mythical-grade opponent.

But Xelvorath suddenly turned to the side when a shadow crashed into him. This shadow zipped around at a very fast speed. Xelvorath was caught unprepared by the ambush. Damage numbers over damage numbers appeared every time the shadow swept past him.

"Arlcard!" Jack called.

The shadow turned into Arlcard. Spell formation was seen at the tip of his crimson rapier. A gigantic black sword soon appeared. The Dark Lord's Sword flew toward Xelvorath who had used the pause to erect a protective stone shield.

The black sword stabbed into the shield. Xelvorath was unable to stop the sword's momentum. He was pushed until he hit the wall at the far end. His stone shield was finally split in two after being unable to move back any further. The black sword continued and stabbed into Xelvorath, delivering huge dark damage.

Xelvorath roared in fury as he grabbed the two sticks strapped to his back. Blades came out of the sticks' two ends, forming two twinblades.

The vampire and the demon then exchanged moves using their weapons.

Arlcard seemed to be at an advantage. Arlcard was one level higher and Peniel once mentioned that Arlcard was an exceptional native who was generally stronger than the average natives of the same level and grade.

Jack wasn't worried about their fight. He considered helping Arlcard to speed up the battle, but he looked back at Luna again. He saw the pleading look from Pandora. It was a rare sight from this aloof nightmare.

Jack considered unraveling the rune diagrams. But if he started it, he couldn't stop the process midway. Or else, he and Luna would receive a backlash. However, with a battle happening so close, he thought it was too high a risk. The battle could unexpectedly come his way and force him to stop.

After thinking for a bit, he said to Pandora, "Stay here with her. I will be back soon!"

Jack then flew out of the hall and headed to the stairs.

Chapter 1106: Out of Ideas

"What are you planning?" Peniel asked while Jack was flying down the stairs.

"I need an assurance that no enemies will come near me when I work on the rune diagrams," Jack answered.

"So, how will you get that assurance?"

Jack arrived on the third floor below. He was immediately greeted by the battle down there. His spirit weapon, all of his wolves, and the two demon guards had already died. Therras was alone fighting Algerad and Hraghshu.

It was mostly Algerad fighting Therras, Hraghshu just stood a safe distance away because he was just a special elite. If only he knew that Jack asked Therras to not touch him, he need not be that careful.

There was a huge hole in the wall. Jack wondered if that was caused by his spirit weapon's finishing mode. That might have been the loud explosion he heard earlier.

Algerad fought using a giant flaming axe. Therras was losing because Algerad was many levels higher. But Therras' HP was very high due to Jack's max-level Tame Pet skill. Added to Therras' high defense from its armor, it was not easy taking Therras down.

Jack sneaked near Therras and executed Combination Assault. The assault took Algerad by surprise. Algerad was sent tumbling back as a result. Jack then used Ultimate Beast and cast Accelerate, turning Therras into its sovereign mode and increasing both their speed.

With the enhanced speed, Jack used Lightning God Barrage and Soul Breath while Therras shot its Earth Core Bomb. The combined attacks caused a huge explosion, creating a second hole in the wall.

Jack then used his Beast Monarch's first skill, Gigantify Pet. Therras grew to twice its size. Its head scrapped the ceiling. Its overall attributes were greatly enhanced. Jack believed his pet would have no problem going against the higher-level opponent with all these buffs.

He then left Therras to keep Algerad busy. He turned back and headed to Hraghshu.

The hell baron panicked when he saw this dragonman come at him. He had been casting some spells and shooting standard attacks from a range at Therras, but the damage he caused wasn't much to speak of. He was now shooting his attacks at Jack.

Jack flew in a zig-zag pattern, dodging the projectiles. He was still affected by Acceleration, so he was very fast. In a short time, he was already upon the hell baron.

Jack unleashed his offensive skills in conjunction with his sword art, quickly reducing Hraghshu's HP.

"Algerad! Save me...!!" Hraghshu shouted in a panic.

Algerad, who heard his lord's panicked voice, tried to push through Therras. But Therras in its sovereign and gigantify mode could not be easily pushed aside. Algerad was unable to come to Hraghshu's aid.

When Hraghshu's HP fell to a critical level, he yelled in desperation, "Stop! Stop...! Do you know who my father is?! You will never have a peaceful life if you kill me!!!"

"I know who your father is," Jack answered. "But don't get too excited, demon prince. I'm not killing you yet, but I will if you don't follow my words."

Jack grabbed Hraghshu by the neck. Hraghshu's HP was so low that one attack was enough to kill him.

He then yelled at the mythical demon who was still fighting Theras, "Algerad, is it? Stop your fighting if you want your liege to live!"

Algerad stopped after hearing Jack. Jack also commanded Therras to stop. He didn't want any sudden incident for his plan. A chaotic battle was a recipe for sudden incidents.

"Let's move upstairs," Jack said.

Algerad followed under the heavy gaze of Therras.

Arriving upstairs, Jack gave the same ultimatum to Xelvorath. The demon was secretly relieved of his opponents stopping the battle. He was losing to Arlcard.

"Now, everyone stays cool! No one does any sudden things, or this demon prince is a goner. Does everyone understand?" Jack said to both Algerad and Xelvorath.

The two demons didn't give any response, but they were also as still as statues. So, Jack assumed they got the message.

Jack asked Arlcard to approach and took over grabbing Hraghshu. "If any of them tries anything funny, finish him," Jack said.

Jack then walked to where Luna was bound. Pandora was still by her side. Jack studied the rune diagrams using his mana sense as he tried to figure out a way to unravel the binding.

"This is difficult... But I think I should be able to undo the binding in less than two hours," Jack said.

"Hehe... Hehehe..."

They heard a laugh. Strangely, it came from Hraghshu. It seemed that the fear he felt a moment ago was gone now.

"So, you are trying to save that nightmare. Hahaha. You are doomed. Two hours? You will be dead already in one hour."

"What do you mean?" Jack asked him.

"Hehe. In one hour, my father will arrive. I've already activated the beacon that called him some time ago. You will wish that you are dead when he arrives," Hraghshu said. "If you are smart, you let me go and leave right now. I will forget your sin of attacking me and destroying my home."

"What about the sin of killing your guards?" Jack said.

"They are inconsequential. You can kill them for all I care," Hraghshu replied.

"What about the sin of freeing all the slaves you have out there?" Jack asked again.

This time, Hraghshu didn't say anything. He stared at Jack with a frown.

"What about the sin of stealing all your adamantine ores in the warehouse on the first floor?"

"You, what...?!" Hraghshu uttered with agitation.

"Stop it! We are short on time and you still joke around," Peniel scolded.

"I'm in distress right now. I can't unravel these rune diagrams within an hour. I need these jokes to calm myself down." Jack defended himself.

Jack then turned to Hraghshu. "You! If you want to live, free her!" Jack demanded.

"I can't," Hraghshu replied.

"You can't or you won't?"

"I can't! Those rune diagrams had been reinforced by the demon mage that should be here with the nightmare. Only she can shut these rune diagrams down. But since you have killed her, then it is impossible now."

Jack didn't kill her. She escaped. But it made no difference for their current situation, he didn't want to waste time explaining.

Jack gritted his teeth. Time continued to tick, and he was running out of ideas.

Chapter 1107: Nightmare's Essence

'Should I just try solving the rune diagrams as fast as I can?' Jack thought. He did hear that when someone was pushed, that person could perform better than he actually could. He never believed that crap, but perhaps he should give it a try?

No. He couldn't take the risk. If Mammon arrived first, they were all f*cked. If he stopped midway, Luna and himself were also similarly f*cked.

Luna had been observing everything ever since Jack came into the hall. She was the same as Pandora, she understood spoken language. She was very happy when she saw her sister, Pandora, come to her rescue. Pandora had been consoling her that everything would be okay. She would be freed soon. But she understood from what she heard just now, things were not so encouraging.

She forced herself to stand. Her legs were trembling. The tendrils of light around her continued to sap her strength. Pandora neighed beside her, telling her to not do anything. She should be saving her strength so she could flee once the binding was removed.

Jack, who was still thinking hard about what to do, was annoyed when the two nightmares behind him started neighing back and forth.

'Damn it, can't you see I'm trying my best here?' Jack thought as he looked back at the two nightmares. He thought Pandora and Luna were dissatisfied with his indecision.

But after seeing them, the two nightmares looked more like they were arguing about something.

"Hey, what the hell are they fussing about?" Jack asked Peniel.

"She... She asked Pandora to take care of her two kids." Peniel answered.

"Her two kids...? What does she mean by that?"

"Stop! No, don't do it!" A hasty voice was heard and Jack saw Tenka and Yrin running into the hall followed by Jonathan behind the two.

"What the... Hey, didn't I ask you two to hide?!" Jack yelled at the two satyrs, who ignored him and ran to where the two nightmares were still arguing using their weird horse language.

"Why the hell do the three of you come up here?" Jack asked Jonathan.

"They insisted on it. They said they just have to make sure for themselves that the nightmare is saved," Jonathan answered. "The duke and the others are still out there fighting the demon soldiers. I was told to accompany this two inside."

"Hmph! Satyrs...? How dare you, lowly creatures, collude with this outworlder," Hraghshu said.

Arlcard tightened his grip. "Shut up!" He demanded.

"Where is the nearest satyr's settlement?" Algerad asked Xelvorath.

"The nearest one is Pilenus village. A bit over one day of travel from here," Xelvorath answered.

"They must be from that village. We will punish them once this is over," Algerad said.

The thing that Jack and Yvok feared had happened. If he wanted to save the village, he would have to kill all three demons here and make sure that no one outside of this room knew of the satyrs' involvement. He saw no problem with Hraghshu, the two mythical demons were another matter.

"Ah, shit...! Everything is a mess...," Jack cursed.

"No, please. You cannot do that..." Jack heard Yrin's pleading voice. She was crying as she talked with Luna.

"What the hell are they all talking about, anyway," Jack asked Peniel again.

"She knows that she can't be freed before the king of hell arrives. She wants to sacrifice herself but she knows that her two kids need her essence to grow. So, she asked Pandora, Tenka, and Yrin to make sure that her kids got her essence."

Jack frowned. Sacrificing herself? Which meant they failed this rescue mission. He gripped his sword tightly. He wanted to do something to stop Luna from sacrificing herself. But what could he do? He had run out of options. He cursed his powerlessness.

The power orb that Saakir had been using had somehow come to Luna's side. Despite looking weak, the resolve on Luna's expression was clear for everyone to see.

Pandora, Tenka, and Yrin continued persuading Luna to stop, but there was nothing they could do as well. The light tendrils prevent them from touching Luna.

Luna's body, which was devoid of flames a moment ago, suddenly blazed with one that was even more intense than Pandora's. The flame burned fiercely. Traces of the flames slipped past the gaps between the light tendrils and then entered the floating orb.

The orb which was dark red slowly turned a brighter red. It also grew larger as more and more of Luna's flame flowed into it. After a while, the orb was blazing with fire. Jack had to shade his eyes a bit, it was like looking at a miniature sun.

The flames finally stopped going into the orb. Luna was very weak already. Pandora had continuously neighing all the time. She even banged on the light tendrils, trying to get to Luna, and stopped what she was doing.

Luna was now looking at Pandora with gentle eyes. She neighed one last time, before bursting into tongues of flames.

Peniel was crying. She told Jack what Luna said in her last moment, "She... She said, goodbye sister. I'm glad that I can still see you one last time. I give my last essence to you."

While hearing it, Jack saw these last flames from Luna flowed to Pandora, who had been neighing and stomping madly. The flames became a part of her. They converged on her back and slowly sprouted, forming into a pair of fiery wings.

As the last of Luna's essence fused with Pandora, Luna's existence ended. Pandora lifted her head and neighed loudly. The neigh this time was as if a beast's roar.

Everyone felt their ears hurting. At the same time, everyone's mind was assaulted by a torrent of horrifying visions. Even the four mythical-grade beings in the room felt their minds slightly shaking. The one affected the most was Hraghshu since he had the lowest grade.

When everyone's mind recovered, Pandora had somehow moved in front of Hraghshu who was still being held by Arlcard. Her eyes were burning. She was staring directly into Hraghshu's eyes.

Hraghshu wanted to look away, but he was unable to. The two burning orbs of Pandora were like a magnet pulling at him. Then, he saw the most horrifying things that ever existed.

No one knew what he saw. They only heard his frantic screaming.

Then, the small remaining HP he had left was drained completely.

Chapter 1108: Mammon's Approach

After Pandora drained Hraghshu's HP, his body turned to stone. It then cracked and burst apart, turning into dust that fell on the floor. Even the resurrection spell won't bring him back to life anymore.

"NO...!!" Both Algerad and Xelvorath exclaimed at the same time.

But things had happened too fast. The first mind assault from Pandora caused their reactions to slow. By the time they could think properly again, Hraghshu was gone already.

'Holy! I thought a steed couldn't cause any damage?' Jack asked Peniel in his mind.

'Um, I thought so too... Perhaps Hraghshu was simply close to death, or the energy from Luna allowed Pandora to cause damage, or Pandora's emotion drove her to exceed her boundary... I don't know! I am surprised as well!'

Algerad watched in disbelief the pile of dust that used to be his liege. He then brandished his giant flaming axe. "You...! What have you done? You will pay for this!!"

"Wait!" Xelvorath stopped Algerad from rushing forward.

Algerad stopped and looked at his partner.

"The situation is not advantageous. We should retreat and gather more force before we take revenge," Xelvorath said.

Xelvorath had a cooler head. Additionally, he had fought against Arlcard and he knew he couldn't win. The opponent numbers had also increased. Clashing blindly would just work against them.

Algerad was also aware of the situation after the warning. He was upset because he knew for sure they would be punished by Mammon for this failure in protecting the hell baron. But if they stayed, they could die. He had only clashed with the outworlder for a short instant, but he could estimate the outworlder was also close to a mythical-grade combatant. Combined with the other rare elites, they were completely outmanned.

"None of you leave...!!" Jack exclaimed. He used Shooting Dash to approach the two high demons while casting Lightning Strike.

Therras used Oppressive Wave. Arlcard summoned multiple smaller dark lord's swords.

Xelvorath cast a spell that conjured a large fiery pentagram symbol that served as a shield. This pentagram shield absorbed Jack's lightning strike and Therras' oppressive wave. Algerad spun his flaming axe and destroyed Arlcard's dark swords.

Algerad and Xelvorath turned around once they defended that first round of assaults. Arlcard was already casting his Perpetual Sword of Death while Jack cast his Perpetual Lightning Judgement. The two demon's wings flapped and they shot at high speed toward the windows.

Jack's lightning and Arlcard's swords battered their bodies as they flew away. Both had prepared their defenses while they fled. Algerad's skin turned hard and grey like metal, while a mana shield protected Xelvorath. The two endured the lightning and sword energies before crashing out from the windows.

The two then flew at high speed away from there.

Arlcard was about to give chase when Jack shouted, "Stop!"

"I thought you don't want them to leave?" Arlcard asked.

"I'm just bluffing. I would have cast Time Domain if I want to keep them here," Jack said. "Problem is, my beast form and Therras' sovereign form are ending."

As his words ended, he transformed back into his human form. Therras also turned back into its quadrupedal form not long after.

"We can win, but it won't be done in a short time. If they delay us by playing defense, Mammon might arrive before we kill them. We will be finished then. I made the bluff to scare them away so they didn't think of delaying us. What we need to do is escape this place now!"

Jack sent a mental message to duke Alfredo and the others who were down there. He then used his king badge to unsummon all his royal agents back to the upworld. He then unsummoned Therras and Arlcard as well. Arlcard didn't protest. Although he thought it was a pity they didn't kill those mythical demons for the exp points, he also thought Jack's reasoning was valid.

Jack turned to the two satyrs, who were still in grief. "We need to leave, now!" Jack told them.

The two understood. They walked silently to the broken windows where the high demons had flown out from. Both of them took out a strange tool that turned into a large hang glider. They then took to the air with these hang gliders. The gliders rode the air with incredible speed. Yvok was right, those tools were not slower than Pandora's speed. Luckily those two satyrs brought an extra pair for the journey home.

Jack then came to Pandora who was still standing silently. The power orb filled with her sister's essence was floating beside her.

Jack looked at the pile of dust near the nightmare's feet. Some items were there. They were loots dropped from killing Hraghshu. Jack picked them up without checking them.

"Ma'am...?" Jack said to Pandora. "I'm sorry, ma'am... I failed you. I'm unable to save your sister..."

Pandora didn't respond.

"Ma'am... We need to leave now. If you are not in the mood to carry me, I will unsummon you and I will leave on foot."

Pandora turned to face the broken windows and grunted.

"She said, climb up," Peniel translated.

"Thank you, ma'am," Jack said and jumped to the nightmare's back

He had to sit slightly more forward than usual due to the new fiery wings on Pandora's back. He wondered if this meant that she could now fly?

His question was soon answered.

Pandora jumped out the window and stayed afloat in the air. Her fiery wings flapped and she soared higher into the air. The power orb followed after her, matching her speed.

Jack had the urge to shout out excitedly but he remembered Pandora was still grieving, so he restrained himself. He so very much wanted to show this upgraded nightmare to Paytown though. Now, his steed could also fly like Paytown's Pegasus.

A sudden change in a distant sky made him turn. Pandora also stopped and looked over. Jack saw the cloud in the distant sky turned turbulent. Some ominous green fog seemed to be devouring those dark skies in the distance. He also felt unspeakable dread as he watched the incident.

"F*ck!! Run! We have to run, now...!!!" Jack exclaimed. Anything that could emit pressure from such a large distance was not something he could go up against at his level.

Pandora could also feel the power from that ominous green fog. She flapped her wings and then shot forward with incredible speed. Jack felt as if he was riding a fighter jet that went from zero velocity to full speed in less than a second. He was sure that if no magic glue held his ass on Pandora, he would have been left behind where he was.

Not long after they left, the sky above the manor turned fully green. Out of the green fog, a gigantic being descended. His size rivaled the dragons. On his head were six large horns. Two live wolf-heads were on his shoulders, they snarled and looked at everything with eyes full of greed. Two pairs of enormous bat wings covered his back.

The demon's green eyes locked on the manor. His sight pierced through the roof of the mansion and saw the pile of dust that used to be his son.

"RAARRGGHHH...!!!"

He roared and swung his massive fist down. The air compressed and the entire mansion collapsed and turned flat with the ground in a matter of seconds.

He turned in the direction where Pandora hovered a few minutes ago. He sensed the nightmare's unusual aura, but he couldn't trace where this nightmare had gone to. Its scent disappeared midway.

'Doesn't matter,' he thought. Whomever these people who murdered his son, as long as they were in the underworld, he would find them.

Chapter 1109: Returning to Pilenus Village

Pandora's flying speed was even faster than her running speed before she got her wings. Not only that, she zapped in intervals during her flight. Repeated use of this zapping caused Jack vertigo after a while. Jack understood then that Pandora was actually teleporting when the zap happened, further increasing her speed.

Unbeknownst to Jack, this repeated teleportation was what allowed Pandora to cover her tracks. Her aura was too strong and she wasn't able to control it from exuding from her body since she had just been upgraded. A powerful devil like Mammon could trace this aura of hers. But due to her constant teleporting, the trace was cut off.

Jack also worried that Mammon saw them when he saw the green fog. He directed Pandora to fly in a different direction from Pilenus Village. They made turns as they traveled, taking a detour. Even so, they still arrived before Tenka and Yrin who used the Hang gliders. This proved Pandora's speed had increased after the upgrade.

Yvok greeted them once they arrived. He was pleasantly surprised by Pandora's transformation, but his emotion took a great fall after Jack informed him of what had happened.

Yvok let out a long sigh after Jack finished his report.

"I guess it can't be helped. At least we got Luna's essence. With that, the little ones can grow into adulthood," Yvok said as he gazed at the power orb floating beside Pandora.

"There are bigger things to worry about," Jack said. "All of you have to leave. You can't stay here anymore. The two high demon bodyguards will surely report about seeing Tenka and Yrin after they meet Mammon. We don't know when the demons will come. You need to be out of here before that happens."

"We will talk about that after we tend to the little ones. Come," Yvok said, walking to the woods where they hid the small nightmares.

Jack wanted to urge Yvok to not delay their departure, but the old satyr didn't seem to be in the mood to discuss. So, Jack just followed him into the burning forest.

Yvok blew his pipe and they entered the secret dimension where the two little nightmares resided. Pandora went to them with the power orb.

Sol and Fira were excited when they saw their aunt again, but they stopped when they noticed the power orb floating beside her. They could feel their mother's aura from that orb. Pandora then told them what had happened.

Jack didn't understand the nightmare's language, but he could see from the three gestures that it was an emotional discourse. Yvok, who stood beside him, sighed and shook his head on repeated occasions.

The power orb floated above the two nightmares and started emitting energies that nurtured Sol and Fira. It was like the orb was alive and knew when Luna's two offspring were nearby.

Not long after, Tenka and Yrin came into this dimension. They had another round of emotional discourse.

Jack didn't want to disturb them, but he truly thought that they should start packing. So, he said again to Yvok, "You truly need to tell your people to start packing."

Yvok gave another long sigh before calling Tenka and Yrin.

"We will need to leave," He said to the two.

Tenka and Yrin gave apologetic expressions. They knew it was due to their impulses that their village was now in danger.

Yvok continued, "But, the two little nightmares won't survive if we keep on moving. So, we are going to do it like this. We will find a different hiding spot and create another secret dimension to hide the little nightmares there. You two will be staying with them. As for the rest of us, we will move to a different place and then wait for the demons to come."

"What do you mean? You should keep on moving. If you stay in one place and the demons find you, they will kill you all," Jack said.

"Then so it shall be," Yvok said.

"Father...!" Yrin called, but Yvok stopped her by lifting his hand at her.

Yvok said, "The two of you are these little ones' main custodians, so you have to stay with them. As for the rest of us. It's fine. You don't need to worry about anything. As long as we ensure the two little nightmares survived, everything is worth it."

"You don't mean... Are you going to intentionally let the demons find you and sacrifice your whole village?" Jack asked with disbelief.

Yvok sighed. "This is the only way. If we keep on running, Mammon will keep on searching. We can't constantly move the nightmares around. But if we leave them, Mammon's persistent search might stumble onto their hiding place. Mammon needs an outlet for his anger. We will give him that. Once he is done with us, he won't bother searching anymore. The little nightmares will be safe."

"Then we should be the sacrifices!" Tenka exclaimed. "Hraghshu's bodyguards saw us. Yrin and I are their main targets. We will let them get us. You and the villagers keep these nightmares safe."

"It is because of your impulse that we are in this mess. So, for once, listen to me!!" Yvok chided. "You two are Sol and Fira's main custodians. Their connection to you is not something that other satyrs can replicate. They needed you so the two of you will hide with them, and that will be it!"

Tenka and Yrin wanted to argue further but they could see their father's decision was made.

Jack understood that just as how Luna sacrificed herself for her children, Yvok was doing the same. He again cursed his powerlessness for not being able to do better for them.

"If only Pandora can bring passengers back to the upworld....," Jack muttered.

When Jack was still lamenting, he found Pandora in front of her.

Peniel said to Jack, "She asked, what do you mean by bringing passengers to the upworld?"

"Uh... I mean that if she can, perhaps we can bring these nightmares and satyrs one by one to the upworld. Mammon can't break through the planes between the worlds, right? That way, they will be safe."

Pandora turned to Peniel and spoke some nightmare languages.

Peniel then translated, "She said, she couldn't bring everyone to the upworld. But at this current moment, she could bring the two little nightmares and two satyrs for one trip."

Chapter 1110: Main Quest

"She can do that?" Jack asked.

Yvok heard Pandora's words directly. He was now conversing with her.

After they were done talking, Yvok explained to Jack, "The energy that Luna transferred to Pandora is a lot, she can't digest all that energy. With Luna's power orb, she can channel this excess energy to connect with Sol and Fira and for a moment, renders their abilities as if they are adult nightmares. This way, they can bring two satyrs as if these satyrs are their riders and travel to the upworld. This can only be done once though. After that, Luna's excessive energy within her will be used up."

"And if the nightmares are safe in the upworld, you can continue fleeing to avoid the demons," Jack said.

"That will be a tiring ordeal to be done for life, but yes, we can do that," Yvok said.

"Father, you are a more experienced custodian, you should be the one to go with the little nightmares," Yrin said.

"No," Yvok replied. "As I said, the two of you are their main custodians. You two have to stay with the nightmares. I know you are worried about me. You don't need to. Before becoming custodians, we satyrs are a nomadic race. We have no problem living while continuously wandering."

"Well, whatever your decision, we need to do it fast," Jack said. "The demons could come any minute now."

Yvok nodded. "I will go inform the others. We should be able to leave by today."

The elder satyr left then. Jack saw him more spirited now that there was a way out for both him and his children, even though Jack thought Yvok was still sad since this meant he couldn't see his children anymore.

While waiting, Jack checked the loots Hraghshu had dropped. That hell baron was only a special elite, so he didn't have much hope. Additionally, he didn't use his runestone of luck. Pandora's action had been so swift and unexpected that he didn't know that Hraghshu was going to die.

As expected, there were only three items. A pile of coins, a pile of mana cores, and one small item that his monocle marked as a super rare grade.

Jack used his Inspect.

*

Level-down pill (super rare consumables)

Reduce one level

*

"Huh? What's the point of this item?" Jack asked after reading the description. "Who wants to reduce his level?"

"This is a very useful item. This pill only drops in the underworld," Peniel replied.

"How is this useful?"

"If it only reduces a level, then yes, it is counter-productive. But what if I told you that the increased stats and the skill points you got from the previous level-up remained the same?"

"That means I can get a bonus level-up," Jack said as he made a realization.

"Bingo," Peniel remarked. "You need to note also that every class had a limit of level 99. After that, you will not receive another level-up no matter how many exp points you collected. This level-down pill allows you to have extra level-ups more than the standard ninety-eight times."

"Great!" Jack stored the pill in his inventory. He would give it to Jeanny first for safekeeping and for her to make a copy when she had spare mana cores.

Jack then took out the lockbox he had stolen from Hraghshu's warehouse.

He asked Peniel, "This is a legendary grade, so the items it drops should be legendary grade as well, right?"

"Not necessarily, but legendary-grade treasure chests and lockboxes do have the highest probability to yield a legendary item. It depends on luck."

"Hehe, then we both know that getting one is a certainty, don't we?" Jack grinned.

"You should know that lockboxes only produce one or two items at most. Don't expect to get a bunch of items like you did when you opened a treasure chest."

"One legendary item is already better than a bunch of non-legendary items," Jack commented as he took out his enduring lockpicks.

Peniel wanted to slap him and reminded him that getting a legendary item from this lockbox was not a sure deal, but she didn't because it would just be like talking to a brick wall.

Jack proceeded to use regular lockpicks after exhausting the usage of his enduring lockpicks. Since it was a legendary grade, his failure rate was also astronomical. Luckily, he had prepared tons of lockpicks. So, he could try lots and lots of times. He also summoned his runestone of probability to enhance his success chance.

He was too focused on doing the lockpicking that he was not aware of the passage of time. It took almost half a day and he nearly used up his stockpile of lockpicks before he heard the successful click. He wasn't truly worried about running out of lockpicks. He could bring this lockbox away, so he could just buy more lockpicks and continue lockpicking it another time.

Both his lockpicking and runecrafting skills leveled up during the process. His lockpicking was now at advanced expert, while his runecrafting increased to basic master.

Jack didn't forget to use his runestone of luck when he heard the successful click from the lockbox. The lid opened and released dazzling light similar to the visual effect when one opened a treasure chest.

Once the light dissipated, Jack saw only one item inside the lockbox. Even though there was only one small stone inside, Jack was ecstatic. This was because his monocle marked that item with purple color.

He wondered then if it was possible to get equipment from a lockbox. A lockbox seemed too tiny to hold something as large as a weapon or armor. Peniel later informed him that it was possible. The equipment would simply be thrown out of the lockbox when it was opened. Jack didn't question the logic in that.

Jack picked up the tiny stone from the lockbox and used his Inspect.

*

Portal-closing Stone (Legendary consumable, main quest)

Close the portal to the underworld.

*

"Main quest...?" Jack turned to Peniel. "What does this mean?"

"I... I don't know..." Peniel replied.

If this was a regular game, then Jack knew what a main quest was. It was the goal that every player who played the game had to complete to achieve the final victory in the game.

Now that he saw this term, it made him think. Considering this world was based on a game, there should be a main quest, which should have automatically triggered for every player. But after going through a year in this game world, he never encountered what looked like a main quest.

The most epic quest he got was the kingdom chain quest that ended up putting him as a king, but that was not the main quest. A main quest spanned globally and affected the whole game.

'The underworld,' he thought. 'Can the main quest of this game world have something to do with this underworld? Then why doesn't everyone get a quest that connects to this place?'