

World 1281

Chapter 1281: Autonomous Area

Jack reaped tons of exp from the battle. He received a lot of exp when he was leading the ambush troops and obliterated the zombie soldiers on the road beside the cliffs. Since he also received the exp from the kill by his nearby troops, it was the same as if he killed all those zombie soldiers.

Yet, most of the exp he received was after he joined the main battlefield. Especially after he summoned the archdemon lord. The archdemon lord killed enemies in bulks. The number of kills from that archdemon lord was enormous.

It was a battle with a period of less than half a day, but the exp he received allowed his three classes to level up a total of eight times! All his three classes were now level 73, all three were now higher than Grace's level. If compared to the average players, he left them in the dust. Most average players were still around level 64, while the top players were level 69.

He had 36 free attribute points from these and previous level-ups. He invested these points into his Endurance stat. After using those free points, all his attributes crossed the 2,000-point mark.

He had 12 free skill points for Brave Swordsmaster, and 9 free skill points for both Time Sage and Beast Monarch. Inside his Container of Souls were 5,426,258 souls.

All of his Brave Swordsmaster skills were already maxed out at level 20 except for the Drilling Thrust, which was still level 7. He used 100,000 souls and 12 Brave Swordsmaster's free skill points to max that skill. At level 20, Drilling Thrust dealt 400% physical damage and reduced the target's defense by 50%.

He then used 700,000 souls and 9 Beast Monarch's free skill points to max Iron Mammoth Stampede. At max level, the iron mammoths summoned from this skill would rampage for two minutes long.

For his Time Sage's spells, he used 4,300,000 and 9 Time Sage's free skill points to max out Reset, Wind Jet, Orb of Storm, and Lightning Strike.

Max-level Reset reduced its cooldown time by one hour. Its cooldown was now five hours.

Level 20 Wind Jet increased movement speed to 1000% and it propelled the caster a distance of 100 meters.

Fully leveled Orb of Storm now lasted thirty seconds.

Lightning Strike at level 20 dealt 700% lightning damage and its range increased to 100 meters.

After all these level-ups, Jack still had 326,258 souls inside his Container of Souls. He had run out of skills to use these souls on. All his skills and spells were maxed out! He was probably the only player who had maxed all the skills in his arsenal.

Several of his skills also had their stars upgraded. Brave Slash and Perpetual Lightning Judgement received their first star upgrades.

Each of Brave Slash's star upgrades increased the weapon's reach by an additional 20% and reduced the defense of struck enemies by an additional 2%.

Each star of Perpetual Lightning Judgement increased the efficiency of the spell in absorbing the lightning elements. The more stars it had, the faster the spell could be released and its damage output was also increased corresponding to the amount of lightning elements in the surrounding environment.

Jack's minions all survived the battle. Thus, they also leveled up. Therras, Arlcard, Alfredo, Laurent, Jonathan, and Robinson leveled up once. They were now level 73, 74, 75, 74, 68, and 76 respectively. Lindsey, Howard, and Amy leveled up twice. Their levels were 63, 66, and 59 respectively. Nerd leveled up thrice to level 54.

Jack also received a new title, Warrior King.

*

Warrior King (Title)

All Themisphere soldiers +10% additional attributes, max HP, and max stamina/MP.

All Themisphere soldiers +5% damage and damage reduction.

Every Themisphere soldier within a 1-kilometer radius from the king received double the effect.

Only effective if the king is not inside the palace.

*

This title was gained because Jack fought with his army on the front line during a battle. This title was even more beneficial than the war general title that Jack had. Hence, this would be the title Jack used whenever a war happened. However, against Liguritutum, this title didn't bring benefit because Master sure got the same title as well.

*

Jack and the others arrived in Lefkauselis after three days of marching. During the travel, Jack had discussions with John about their options. After a long talk, they decided that they had only one best option in the current situation.

Everyone was now gathering in Lefkauselis' city hall for a meeting. Zoikod was also present. Jack conveyed what he and John had discussed.

"Give up on Hydrurond...?!" Aldryth couldn't believe the suggestion.

"Are you leaving and telling us to fend for ourselves?!" Dytess, the only remaining Lord Dominator of Hydrurond, yelled in anger.

"That's not what I'm saying," Jack said. "I'm asking you to come with us to Themisphere."

"That is absurd! How can you expect us to turn our back on our country? We will fight to our death rather than give this country to the enemy!" Dytess exclaimed.

John took over. "Let me lay it out for you all. With our current forces, we are not in a state to possibly win against our enemies. This city is not a proper fortress. It is even weaker than Messephyria. Its surrounding terrains also don't provide any meaningful advantage we can exploit. Nor is the enemy's tactician someone who will fall to normal tricks. When the Liguritudum and Aurebor armies come here with their additional zombie army, we will be sitting duck if we stay. Any reinforcement we can call will take a longer time to reach us than our enemies arriving here. Even if they can somehow arrive before this city fall, we won't be able to support them with supplies provided by only this city. Maintaining supplies from Themisphere for the moment is both too expensive and takes too long to prepare. If you people want to be stubborn for your pride. Then okay, we will leave you to fend for yourselves."

"Queen Aldryth," Jack said. "I'm not asking you to completely give up your country. This is just a temporary retreat. By taking shelter in Themisphere, my army can better protect you. I promise I will help you retake Hydrurond once I make enough preparation for an offensive campaign."

When Aldryth remained silent, Dytess said, "My Queen, you can't be seriously considering this. If we go to Themisphere, it means we accept being the subjects of another country."

"I will give Queen Aldryth and the force he brought to Themisphere an autonomous area," Jack said. "I have a large-sized fort currently in construction. It was also closest to the border region with Hydrurond. You can take your force and any civilians who are willing to follow you there. You can construct a new settlement around that fort. You will have complete freedom. You won't have to answer any of your decisions to me. You can return that fort to me once we retake Hydrurond."

Chapter 1282: Curtail one's Pride

"My queen, let us forget about this Themisphere people. We will protect this kingdom ourselves," Dytess uttered. "For all we know, the Themisphere is simply the same as Liguritudum. They just want to conquer us!"

"Lady Dytess, I don't believe King Storm Wind is one such person," Zoikod said to Dytess. He then turned to Jack, "That being said. King Storm Wind, if you know us, draconians. You should know that you are asking a lot. Asking us to leave our country while it is occupied by the enemy is the same as throwing away our pride. This is something that we simply can't do."

"You can shove your pride up your—Mmhh!" Jeanny pressed her hand onto John's mouth to stop him from completing his words.

Jack didn't respond to either Dytess or Zoikod. His eyes remained on Aldryth who was still silent.

"Queen Aldryth...," Arthur who was beside Aldryth tried to say something to help Jack's case, but Aldryth lifted her hand to stop him.

Aldryth then turned to face Dytess, Zoikod, and the other native draconian officers.

"My fellow draconians!" Aldryth announced. Her voice was clear and strong. "You all know me. You all chose to follow me instead of the invader who had been acknowledged by the world system for a reason. I want to believe that reason is that you believe in me. I am a pure native draconian! One that descended from the long line of the great Eorsvleg, the founder of our mighty Hydrurond country! So,

heed my words when I say I carry his pride in me! That I carry the pride of every single draconian living in Hydrurond!!!"

Aldryth stopped for a beat, her eyes surveyed each of her followers with a determined stare. She continued, "Each of you placed your trust in me, believing I can beat the invaders back and reconquer this kingdom. I will not betray your trust. I will defeat the Liguritutum and Aurebor forces and chase them away from our beloved kingdom! I will take back my birthright and avenge my mother, Queen Frorryntiar! But I won't be able to do this alone. I will need each and every one of you to give me your complete trust. Believe in my decision as you have done when you decided to follow me, even if it is against your wish. Because that is what we will need to defeat our enemies. I insist that you let go of your pride...!!!"

Aldryth's last words caused many of the draconian officers' eyes to turn wide. They couldn't believe what they had heard. Aldryth let them be for a few moments. The draconian officers looked at each other, unsure of what to say.

"Listen!!!" Aldryth hollered, which snapped the officers' attention back to her. "All of you, when the Themisphere King sent us the offer to help us with the invasion, none of you believe his good intention. But throughout this war, all he had shown is nothing but support and sincere help. He even risked his freedom when he came before my mother. He sacrificed his troops and risked his life in the battle to help us escape the enemies. Without him, do you think you can still stand here today? I will not let any of you shame our dignity by second-guessing our ally. Not even if you are a lord dominator!"

Aldryth's stare was on Dytess when she said her last words. Dytess' head was down. She regretted her earlier outburst.

"My mother was a prideful queen. I love her dearly. She had nothing but Hydrurond's interest in her mind. But even so, pride blinded her. Things would have gone very differently if she had accepted Themisphere's offer of help right from the start.

"Our pride is something integral to us. It is what defines us. It is what makes us strong. Yet, perhaps we have been too indulgent in it. We have let it grow too much that it prevents us from doing what we need to do to preserve our kingdom. If we continue to cling to this excessive pride, we will repeat my mother's mistake. We will lose our ally. We will lose our kingdom. We will lose our lives. We will lose everything!

"If you believe in me. Then hear me! It is time for us to take a step back. It is time for us to curtail our pride for a moment and think about what we need to do to ensure Hydrurond returns to its former glory! I believe in King Storm Wind of Themisphere. He is a true friend of both me and Hydrurond. If you believe in me, then believe in him!

"I will take him up on his offer. I won't command any of you to follow my decision. But if you still believe in me, I ask you to follow me. We will head to Themisphere. We will bide our time there and rebuild. And when the time is right, we will return and claim Hydrurond back! Now, who will follow me...?!"

The officer again looked at one another. They were silent for a long while. Jack and the others also didn't utter any words. After what seemed like an uncomfortably long stillness, one draconian finally broke the silence.

"My queen, I will follow you," Zoikod declared.

One by one, the other officers voiced the same declaration, until only one left. The lord dominator, Dytess. Everyone was looking at her.

Dytess' eyes stayed on Aldryth for a long while. She then looked in Jack's direction. Jack didn't shy away from her gaze. Jack looked back with resolute eyes.

Dytess then turned back to Aldryth. She said, "You have my spear, my queen. My troops and I will follow you to Themisphere if that is your wish."

Aldryth nodded. Her face was steely, but he was secretly relieved within. She announced, "In that case, announce this decision to everyone in this city. Have everyone make preparation. Those who are willing to come, we will bring them with us. Those who don't, are free to stay. We leave at first light tomorrow!"

Chapter 1283: Start Marching

Jack and the others spent the remainder of the day discussing the relocation in detail while the officers made the preparations.

On the morning of the next day, both Themisphere and Hydrurond armies were in formation outside the city. Numerous caravans and carts lined within their formation.

After the announcement, there was much uncertainty among the citizens in the city. Aldryth didn't expect many of the officers and civilians from the city to follow her. She thought she would leave with only the army she brought when they escaped Messephyria, but it turned out that around eighty percent of the officers in the city expressed their desire to follow her to Themisphere. Furthermore, around half of the city's civilians followed as well. Hence, the number that gathered outside the city was much more than what she expected.

"With this number, I think you will have no problem building a new settlement in no time," Jack said to Aldryth.

Aldryth nodded. She took a look at the city and then at the horizon in the direction of the capital, Messephyria. Jack saw a glimpse of sadness and frailty in her look, but it lasted only a moment. She turned back facing the direction of Themisphere. Her expression was unwavering.

Without saying any word, she motioned to Dytess who then blew a horn. Everyone started marching after hearing the horn. Everyone was silent. It was as if a funeral procession. But everyone saw their queen's indomitable face, they adopted the same steely resolution. One day, they will return to claim this land.

It took Master almost two days to resurrect all the fallen soldiers who fitted the requirements. The zombie army numbered 1,300,000 troops. With the surviving Liguritudum army and Aurebor army, they had enough to crush those enemies who were hiding inside Lefkauselis.

However, there were still five days before the ceasefire forced by Hope expired. His army won't be able to do anything to the enemy before that.

On that night after he finished with the task of resurrecting the dead, Master was visited by one of his allies inside his mobile tent.

"What do you mean explain?" Master asked.

"We haven't been able to contact our God," Strah said.

"How is that my problem?" Master asked again.

"Everyone saw what Hope did to our God. You guaranteed the Godkiller will work!"

"It does if it hits. Obviously, Fear failed to land the hit."

"You will address him as God Fear!" Strah rebuked. "And it's impossible our God failed!"

"The fact is Hope is alive, so God Fear failed. That is the only explanation. If you are not satisfied with that answer, then I'm sorry. I can't help you."

Strah narrowed his eyes. He never liked this outworlder. Their affair with Master was simply a simple transaction. Both were using each other for benefits. "Until we can contact our God again, you can forget about gaining our assistance!"

"So be it," Master replied.

Strah turned into a shadow and slipped out of the tent. The instant he did, the temperature inside the tent turned excessively hot. Master cast one of his non-standard spells, Ice Armor. The unnatural heat didn't cause him any damage but it caused him extreme discomfort. The ice armor helped reduce that discomfort.

A woman who is both beautiful and terrifying at the same time materialized out of thin air inside the tent. It was Wrath.

"Goddess Wrath. I am honored by your visit," Master gave Wrath a bow.

Wrath glanced at Master. The ice armor on Master's body immediately melted. The blistering heat again assailed him. He forced himself to endure.

Wrath spoke, "Fear's lapdog who left just now might not know for sure, but I know for sure that Fear did not miss. The Godkiller successfully hit Hope. Yet, it didn't work as you said it would. Are you playing us, outworlder?"

Master creased his brow. After a few seconds of pondering, he said, "In that case, then Hope is no more."

"You still dare say that?!" Wrath scolded. Her outburst caused the large tent to burst into flames. It was burnt into nothing in a mere second.

The soldiers that saw their ruler's tent went up in flame immediately came rushing. The first few who arrived combusted into raging flames. They turned into ash in a heartbeat.

Master gave the order for everyone to hold and not approach. He didn't want to lose his soldiers for nothing.

"Goddess Wrath, please, calm yourself," Master beseeched. "What I told you is the truth. Since the Godkiller hit its mark, it will do its job. Not even Hope can escape it."

"Then how do you explain Hope was still able to wound Fear so, and even render us all powerless? That is not the act of someone who is dying."

"On the contrary, a dying being struggles the hardest. What Hope did was simply his last burning ember before he expired."

Wrath gave Master a skeptical look.

"If you don't believe me, you can try to go find Hope," Master added. "I guarantee you that Hope is no more."

"And risked his ire? I'm lucky he didn't finish me off the last time. Or is this your ploy to get rid of me?!"

"I wish you no ill will. If Goddess Wrath doesn't believe me, there is nothing else I can say."

Wrath glared at Master with eyes filled with suspicion. Master himself had the one remaining ultimate defense tool in his hand behind his back, ready to be used at a moment's notice.

Without any notice, Wrath disappeared from the place. All the soldiers standing around Master's tent remained tense even after the Goddess was gone. Master himself was contemplating this series of events.

He then called the commanders of his army and gave them his command. "Ready everyone! We will leave for Lefkauselis tomorrow morning!"

The commanders went and relayed his order. The army camp that was ready to rest for the night suddenly turned lively again.

Master also sent his orders to Linda and the other player leaders to make the same preparation.

Linda had returned to the army after teleporting to the closest settlement. Unfortunately, the war table had been destroyed. It would take some time before a new one was made. Hence, she won't be able to command the native army as well as before. But having her in the army was still essential to make the plans before they engage the enemy.

Master gave the order because he knew now that Hope no longer existed. Others might have doubted, but he did not doubt the potency of the Godkiller. He designed that tool himself.

With Hope gone, so too was his threat. There was no longer the need to wait one week before attacking.

They were already two days later than the enemies who left earlier. He didn't worry too much. The enemies won't be able to do much with those two days' head start.

Chapter 1284: Ask the Specialist

When Master arrived at Lefkauselis, he first surrounded the city with a portion of his army before preparing the bulk of his army to charge the entrance.

Both his and the enemy's guild armies were still on cooldown, and so were their country guardians. So, it was all down to the force of the native army and the players who participated. He had confidence his army will win in a direct confrontation.

As his army was about to charge, the gate to the city opened. This caused Master to halt the charge.

A white flag was seen above the opened gate. Even Linda was confused by this event.

'What is this? Does John try the empty castle tactic?' Linda thought. She didn't believe her son to be that shallow. This tactic only worked if one had a strong reserve and the opponent had no prior knowledge of the trick.

She knew John should know that she knew about such a tactic. Hence, it didn't make sense to use it. Both Themisphere and Hydrurond also no longer had any reserves inside Hydrurond territory. They would have used it in the battle a few days ago if they had.

Still, out of prudence, she advised Master to send one small detachment to enter the city. One that won't make any difference even if this detachment was obliterated.

Master sent one of the six Liguritutum guilds to enter the city and checked. Being used as such cannon fodder, this displeased the guild. Even so, they dared not disobey.

They rode their steeds and entered the city, only to find out that it was mostly empty. There were no troops. Even the civilians seemed lacking for a city of this size.

An official of the city who had chosen to stay behind came to meet the guild players. The official was then taken to Master. Master learned then that Queen Aldryth and her force had left for Themisphere with Jack.

This surprised him immensely. He understood the characteristic design of the draconian race was unreasonably prideful. To persuade them to retreat to another country was a possibility he never thought of.

"It seems that the Themisphere King's persuasion ability was something we need to take into account in our future planning," Master said.

"I never imagine him as someone with a silver tongue," Spring Crown said.

"He made his case mostly with his deeds rather than his mouth," Linda said. "Those deeds could persuade even this hard-headed draconian race, but I think the princess who was now a queen was also a factor. She was different from her mother. We probably should have targeted her first in our serial killing ploy."

Long, who heard that, uttered, "Speak for yourself. It's already difficult murdering high-ranking officers stealthily in a settlement. Even I can't pull off murdering the princess."

"What's done is done. No need to mull over it," Master said.

"Should we chase?" Linda asked. "They took civilians. Their marching speed should be slower than ours. We still have some Army Haste magic scrolls."

Master pondered for a while before answering, "No. That Themisphere King also has something that increases their marching speed. If we chase, we might engage them in the middle of the Khan region. I'm sure they had called the reserve army in Themisphere to come to meet them halfway. We won't have the advantage in number then."

Linda nodded. She agreed with the assessment. "In that case, I will divide our troops to head to the rebellious settlements to subdue them."

"Go," Master gave his approval.

Linda went and organized the army.

Master took a deep breath. He knew plans easily went awry, but this still frustrated him. He planned to absorb the Hydrurond army into his. He failed that after conquering Messephyria because he was unaware of the descendant rule.

He hadn't given up yet on getting Hydrurond's army when the battle near Daboga Marshland took place. That's why he had his force focus on the Themisphere army, he didn't want to kill too many Hydrurond soldiers.

Once he decimated the Themisphere army, it would be easier to box in the Hydrurond army and take out the queen with a precision strike. Once the queen was out, the system would force the low-ranked soldiers to switch to his side. So would the rebellious settlements, he didn't need to expend his time and force to take over those settlements.

Now, he had to do that manually.

"Never mind," He said to himself. "This is just a slight delay."

Khan region and Jagara regions were the two regions between Themisphere and Hydrurond. Khan region was smaller and thus required less time to travel. This was also the region Jack currently used to lead everyone to Themisphere.

His runestone of Marching was floating alongside him. The runestone glowed from a constant injection of willpower. It hastened the movement speed of the massive force. Even Aldryth's force and the Hydrurond civilians received the increased movement speed. They were all currently considered to march under Jack's lead.

Grace rode alongside Jack. The two chatted most of the time, catching up on the things that had happened. The others intentionally left them some spaces and blocked anyone who was imperceptive enough to wander near them.

The two touched on the subject of Godkiller at one point in their conversation.

"I am worried," Grace said. "Greed mentioned that Fear produced that weapon out of instruction from Master. What if he can make more? Won't the other Gods also be in danger? If Master took out all the Gods except the ones who support him, he will be unstoppable."

"Hm... You are right," Jack said. "Let me ask the specialist."

"Specialist? Who?" Grace asked.

"The person who designed this game world, of course," Jack answered.

Jack sent the message without delay.

"How is your battle against Master going?" Wilted sent a reply. "I heard about Messephyria falling. The last I heard is you continue to march your army into Hydrurond."

"We lost," Jack answered. "But we saved the Hydrurond's queen. I'm currently bringing her and her army to take refuge in Themisphere. Why don't you just come here and join us in battling Master?"

"I'm causing mayhem in Liguritudum, remember?"

"Can't you take over Liguritudum when Master is away?" Jack asked.

"I don't have a functioning army. What I have is just some of the disgruntled natives who used to be Liguritudum's officers, but our number is too small to take over the capital. Master left a million troops stationed around the country."

"Then you should just come here and join us. It will be more effective than that little mayhem you do."

"What do you know? This little mayhem is what prevents Master from amassing more armies and having the resources to conquer other countries faster. You should thank me for doing this and buying you time."

"Okay, okay. I didn't call to argue with you. I want to ask about the Godkiller."

"Godkiller? What is that?" Wilted asked.

Chapter 1285: The Locations of the Divine Factions

"Huh? Are you truly the designer of Second World?" Jack asked.

"Stop spouting nonsense. There is no such thing as a Godkiller," Wilted said. "From its name, I assume it is something to kill a God?"

"Your assumption is not wrong. Master used one to kill a God during the war."

"He did?! Tell me everything about what happened!"

So, Jack told her Greed's tale about what happened when the Gods were tussling up there in the sky.

"Pride and Greed switched sides...? Hope died...? This... This is a lot to process," Wilted uttered. "But the most worrying thing is that Hope is gone..."

"Yeah, I know. Now the Good Gods have no advantage over the bad ones anymore," Jack said.

"That is not why I said it is worrying. You asked me before about the main quest, didn't you?" Wilted asked back.

"Yeah. What about it?"

"Leading the underworld force are the seven devils, and leading the seven devils is Lucifer."

"Yeah, I know. I also know that Lucifer is a being of God's level. Are you worried because the bad Gods will increase their number by one and thus gain an advantage over the good ones? We don't have to worry about that since the main quest is no more, correct? The underworld force won't be invading."

"So, you know. But my reason for worry is not that Lucifer will aid the bad Gods. If he comes into the upperworld, he will also treat the bad Gods as enemies. The reason for my worry is that the only God capable of stopping Lucifer is Hope. If he is gone, then Lucifer will be unstoppable."

"Oh..."

"But you are right. Since the main quest is no more, the underworld force won't be invading... Let's hope it stays that way. Anyway, my partner and I truly didn't design the Godkiller. We put the Gods as the caretakers of this world's balance system. Why would we design something that can kill these beings?"

"Well. Even if you said so, the fact is still that Godkiller exists. I take it that Master is the one who created this tool. Is it an alien entity?"

"No. He won't be able to create an alien entity of that power. The world system won't allow it. He must have created the tool by modifying something already existing in this world. You mentioned Fear created it using a recipe, right? Then it is part of this world. Even so, I can't imagine how he circumvents the world system to create such a powerful item. We design the Gods so that they can only be killed by one another, no other things in this world can kill them. So, he will need to create an item at the level of a God... Wait, unless..."

Jack was just silent without sending Wilted any messages. He could see the girl was deep in thought. He didn't want to disturb her thought process.

"... I understand now," Wilted said. "That's why Master invaded the Council of Virtus. I have always wondered why he bothered to spend his resources to take such a risk. Earning the ire of a divine faction is no small matter."

"Are you saying the reason is to create this Godkiller?"

"The Godkiller will need a component at the level of God's power. Divine treasure is one such item, but he needs those treasures to become a God, he won't waste those divine treasures to kill other Gods. But there is another thing with a power of that level. It is the divine heritage."

"Divine heritage? So, Master destroyed the Council of Virtus to get that thing?"

"Most likely. The divine heritage is the essence of a God in the rare case they die because of fighting one another. However, Gods are immortal. They don't truly die. Their essence returns to the altar of their most devout followers. In this case, their divine faction. Inside this altar, this essence hibernates. After several hundred years, give or take depending on how much prayer they receive, they will come back to life again."

"And this essence is what Master used to construct the Godkiller..."

"I can't think of another scenario. This should be it. It explains everything that had happened."

"Since Hope dies, there will be now another divine heritage that Master can use to create another Godkiller," Jack said. "We have to prevent him!"

"Two. Goddess Joy was also gone from the start. We can't be sure if Master hasn't invaded her divine faction. If he had, then there is a chance he has another Godkiller."

"We have to find out! Give me the locations of Hope and Joy's divine factions. I will go and check," Jack said.

"I can give you the coordinates to Hope's divine faction, but for Joy's, I don't know where is the location of her divine faction," Wilted replied.

"What? How can you not know? For a creator, there is a hell of a lot of things that you don't know. Why do you know the location of one but not the others?"

"Because this is now the real world, not something that follows a predesignated program. A lot of things change!" Wilted talked back. She was upset by Jack's words.

"I apologize," Jack realized he had been too blunt. "Give me the coordinates for Hope's divine faction. I will try to find Joy's faction myself."

Wilted sent him the coordinates. She said, "As I said, a lot of things have changed. I can't guarantee Hope's divine faction is still at the coordinates I sent. I know Joy's is no longer at its original place because I tried going there and it was not there. Perhaps they have relocated because their Goddess was gone. As for Hope's, I've never gone there."

Jack understood. It was the same as Greed. After finding out the truth about this world, Greed's reaction was even more extreme. He wiped out his followers, which meant his divine faction was no more.

"That's okay. I'll take it from here," Jack said to Wilted and ended the chat.

"How is it?" Grace asked.

Jack repeated to her what Wilted had said.

"I can help you with the location of Joy's divine faction," They heard a voice from behind. They turned and saw John. This guy had somehow sneaked through the perimeter formed by the other guild members and come close to them.

"You know the coordinates?" Jack asked.

"I have Hope's knowledge, remember?" John replied. "Hope kept tabs on the locations of the other divine factions, so he knew where Joy's one is after they relocated."

Chapter 1286: Returning to Themisphere

"You do?! That's great!" Jack exclaimed. "Okay, once we settled Aldryth's force in Themisphere, we will have two teams to go to Hope and Joy's divine factions. We need to warn them about a possible invasion by Master and the Cult of Phobos. In Joy's case, it is also to make sure the divine heritage is still there."

"I've been thinking," Paytowin said. This guy had also come closer. Actually, everyone who was forming the perimeter had now come crowding around Jack and Grace. "Since John knows about the divine

faction's location. He should know about the location of the Cult of Phobos. How about we go hit them when they least expect us?"

"I advise against it," John said. "Fear is wounded but not down. The most likely place he is recuperating is inside his divine faction. Even wounded, do you think you can take on a God? I suggest you don't tell those Council of Virtus people. If they recklessly rush there for vengeance, they might get wiped out by Fear. I don't think the other Gods will interfere since it is the Council of Virtus who come looking for trouble."

"Considering how Serenity and Love were when they left, I'm afraid they have no interest to interfere at all anymore," Jeanny said.

Jack sighed. He hoped that was not the case. He hoped Serenity didn't just leave them to fend off by themselves. The only thing that currently held the bad Gods back was Hope's threat, but that was just an illusion. Sooner or later, they would know that Hope was gone. It would all go downhill when that happened.

"Well, anyway. The ones who go to the two divine factions have to be the four of you," John said, pointing at Jack, Grace, Jeanny, and Paytowin.

"Why?" All four asked at the same time.

"You all have Hope's sanctification. The leaders of the two divine factions should sense this sanctification within you. They will treat you better out of respect or fear for Hope."

"The hell? You also have this sanctification, why don't you go as well?" Paytowin protested.

"I'm too busy managing Themisphere. Also, I'm too important a figure to risk this endeavor. I will leave this risky stuff to you, expendable pawns."

"The f*ck... Are you calling your king an expendable pawn? You must be the world's rudest advisor," Jack said. "Anyway, I do plan to go to the divine faction myself. We will form two teams then. I will go to Joy's, and Jeanny will go to Hope's. Grace and Paytowin are free to choose which they want to go."

"Um... I will go with Jeanny then," Paytowin said. He could feel the stares from the other guild members.

"Why do you go to Joy's and I to Hope's?" Jeanny asked.

"Uh... No particular reason. I think Hope will like for you to be there in his divine faction more than me," Jack said.

"He chose Joy's because he thinks that divine faction should be more fun," Grace said to Jeanny.

"Hey!" Jack said to Grace. Everyone laughed.

"Okay then, it's settled," Jeanny said. "Once we finish settling our tasks in Themisphere, Paytowin and I will go to Hope's divine faction. Jack and Grace will go to Joy's."

"I suggest you keep the team small," John said. "The members of Hope's divine faction might get alarmed if you go there with a large number. They might attack first and ask questions later if they think

you come with bad intentions. As for Joy's, Hope only kept tabs on the location. He wasn't aware and wasn't interested in finding out what the members were doing."

Paytowin nodded. "Then Jack and Grace will go with only the two of them. As for Jeanny and I, we will take two more persons who are willing to tag along."

"Hey, why do you get to let people tag along while Grace and I don't," Jack asked.

"If you can find anyone willing to join, go ahead and ask," Paytowin said.

So, Jack asked. The others just treat his call as wind. Paytowin simply smiled by the side.

"Smartass," Jack said to him.

Jack also chatted with Domon. During their chat, they touched upon the subject of Long. Jack told his grandfather about the fist art Long used to block Terras' earth core bomb.

Domon's expression turned solemn after hearing Jack's story.

"That kid is even more talented than I thought," Domon said. "Such a pity he has an evil personality."

"This means you know the fist art he used?" Jack asked.

"I've only heard about it in stories of the past. It is another legendary ancient art that has been lost to time. He probably found that art the same way he found the eighteen subduing dragon palms."

"I see... No wonder. That art is incredibly powerful," Jack remarked.

Domon nodded. "That art is called the Nine Yang Exploding Fist. My Beyond the Fist can be said as the pinnacle of fist art. This is due to its destructive power and it also cannot be dodged or defended. But if we are looking at only pure destructive power, Long's Nine Yang Exploding Fist might possess even more power."

"Added with his two classes' attributes, his damage output using that art rivals even the most powerful game skills," Jack added.

"Such a powerful art consumes a lot of mana. He won't be able to repeat it often," Domon said.

"Yeah," Jack agreed. That's why after performing that art during the fight on top of the cliff, Long was noticeably slower and ended up choosing to retreat.

This revelation pushed Jack to train harder. He practiced the Sword's Heart by meditating while riding Pandora and maintaining the runestone of marching. His Hundred Synchronous Thoughts allowed him to perform all those tasks at the same time.

There was one thing Domon didn't tell Jack. The Nine Yang Exploding Fist was one of the three martial arts contained within the Nine Yang Scripture. He hoped that what Long had found was only one art, not the entire scripture.

*

After several days of journey, they finally crossed over into Themisphere. They placed scouts far at their back to warn them in case Liguritum or Aurebor came chasing, but there was no sight of the enemy.

Even if the enemy came, they didn't worry. A part of the Themisphere army stationed within the country came and joined them two days ago. With this addition, they could fight on even ground with the enemies. More reinforcement from Themisphere was also on the way as they marched. They had no cost problem for mobilizing within their country, they just took time.

Once passing the border, Jack left by using Town Return Scroll. John stayed with the army and led Aldryth's force to the large-sized fort to be stationed into. The fort was still under construction, Jack wanted to use his ruling powers to complete its process before Aldryth arrived.

Jack wasn't worried if the enemies attacked. This was his turf. He could teleport to a nearby settlement and rejoin the army quickly if needed.

Once back inside Thereath palace, Jack went directly to the throne room and used the Monarch system.

Chapter 1287: Sanctuary for Courage

The day that Jack returned to Thereath was coincidentally also the day his human race age turned eighteen months. His Limitless Potential increased to rank 12. This skill now gave +3500 to HP, +350 to stamina and MP, and +12 to all attributes except for the luck stat.

After he dealt with the serial killers, he sent the investigator teams back to work on the affairs. Since then till now, Jack had completed seven affairs. Three were mediocre results. This was because Jack simply picked from one of the multiple choices provided. These three were the affairs that the investigator teams had no time to investigate.

The number of affairs appearing in the monarch system slightly decreased due to that. The remaining four were completed with three good results and one perfect result. The total number of rewards he received was 430,000 merit points and 5 ruling powers.

His sovereign level increased to level 11, receiving 10 ruling powers. He also acquired a new sovereign power mentioned by Peniel before. The power to punish guilds based in Themisphere, but he did not need this power for now.

Five days before he returned to Thereath, he received the monthly income of ruling powers from his sovereign level. At that time, his sovereign level was still at level 10, so the ruling power he received was 100 ruling powers.

The boundless cache had also been collecting ruling powers every week. The collected ruling powers were 15 ruling powers.

With the previous 33 ruling powers, the total ruling powers he now possessed was 163 ruling powers.

There were still 57 days before the construction of the large-sized fort was completed. Aldryth was on her way to this fort with his army and refugees, so Jack had to make sure this fort was already completed when they arrived.

Jack opened his sovereign power screen and used 6 ruling powers to hasten the construction. The fort was immediately completed. A prompt appeared and asked him to input the fort's name.

Jack simply gave the matter a brief thought and input the name, Aldryth. This caused Peniel to roll her eyes.

"What? I give the fort to her. What's wrong with using her name for the fort?" Jack commented.

"You are simply lazy to think up a proper name, aren't you?" Peniel said.

Jack didn't answer her. He called Thaergood over and informed him about his intention of giving the completed fort to Aldryth. He also informed him about giving Aldryth autonomous power over the area around the fort. He asked Thaergood to announce this to the military and also to make the preparation to provide Hydrurond refugees with the resources to build a temporary settlement around the fort.

Thaergood was a bit hesitant about sharing resources with a foreign power but Jack was adamant about it so he had to comply. Thaergood left to make the arrangement.

After completing that most urgent matter, Jack dealt with the other matters using the monarch system. He appointed eight native officers to the ranks of knight captains and knight lieutenants who had died during the war. He had previously discussed with Armstrong and Isabelle regarding which officers to be promoted, so he completed the tasks quickly. These promoted officers were the soldiers who had performed well during the war.

Jack left the research and the settlement's buildings to John. John would be returning to the palace tomorrow. He had also left the army and let Armstrong accompany Aldryth. He was currently in Heavenly Citadel, helping Tip organize the rebuilding of their guild army which had suffered quite a loss.

Jack used 80 ruling powers to do the monthly Call to Arms and Mass Drill. He also used manual drafts and training on each settlement. This act brought 364,000 recruits. Considering they lost 700,000 soldiers during the war, this number only covered about half of their losses.

Jack browsed the newly recruited soldiers to see if there were any mythical-grade recruits. He had used his Runestone of Luck when he did the Call to Arms, he hoped that helped increase the probability. There was one. A young woman named Ana.

When his sovereign level reached level 12, he would be able to add another royal agent. If there was no better candidate by then, he would consider offering Ana to become his ninth royal agent.

He then used the monarch system to send formal letters to Sangrod and Palgrost. In his letter, he pointed out Liguritutum who had invaded and taken over Hydrurond without any provocation. This showed Liguritutum's desire to conquer other countries. It was time to acknowledge Liguritutum as a threat and to band together against this common threat. Otherwise, Liguritutum would pick them off one by one.

As for Verremor, Kabaka had sent Jack a formal letter. The letter contained Kabaka's apology for not being able to convince the lord chiefs and elders of his nation to join Themisphere in the expedition into Hydrurond. Most still didn't think they should be embroiled in other countries' wars. Kabakas expressed that he would continue to try to convince the others. He also assured Jack that if Liguritutum or Aurebor forces ever set foot on Themisphere's soil, Verremor would send help.

Jack hoped Sangrod and Palgrost were more inclined to join in tackling Liguritutum. Palgrost bordered Liguritutum from the start. Sangrod was now the same after Hydrurond fell under Liguritutum's domain. In this situation, they should see Liguritutum as an immediate threat to them.

Jack ended the diplomacy screen and then went to the City Overview. He left most of the planning of settlements to John, but he needed to build one building he had promised.

He opened the screen of Therimdell, a main city close to both the territories of Sangrod and Hydrurond. He had discussed this with John before he came back. It was not ideal to build all the Wonder Buildings in Thereath. Aside from the benefits provided in the building's description, a Wonder Building also had the hidden effect of becoming an iconic landscape of the city, improving its prosperity and increasing the population growth rate.

Another reason why he chose Therimdell was that it was close to the future battlefields. He believed this was what the future residents of this Wonder Building to have wanted. He scrolled down the available buildings that could be built in that city. At the bottom of that list was what he was looking for, the Sanctuary for Courage.

Chapter 1288: Thereath Becomes a Megalopolis

Sanctuary for Courage (Wonder Building)

Houses the Council of Virtus. Not part of the kingdom's army, can't be promoted into official positions, can't be commanded, but will actively defend the city if the city is attacked.

Increases the overall Security in the country. The effect is doubled in the city this wonder is built.

Allows 1% of the kingdom army to register to become the special unit: Brave Champion.

Greatly increases the army training speed throughout the country.

Construction cost: 60,000 gold coins, 40,000 mana, 5,000 lumbers, 5,000 minerals.

Construction time: 50 days.

Upkeep: 10,000 gold coins/month, 10,000 mana/month

Requirement: Receives an official request to build the sanctuary from the Council of Virtus.

*

"Another special unit!" Jack exclaimed. With this addition, a total of 12% of his army had the chance to be converted into special units.

"That is not even the best feature of this Wonder Building," Peniel remarked.

"Yeah. With the Council of Virtus' warriors stationed here, I won't need to spare an army to defend this city," Jack said.

"That's not what I meant," Peniel said. "The best feature of this Wonder Building is its ability to increase the army training speed. The effectiveness of Mass Drills and regular barrack training will be significantly improved. Normally, you will have to wait a few months before those recruits can be sent to the battlefield. With this enhanced training speed, the recruits might reach the minimum required level to join the battlefield in just one month."

"Great! Then let's not waste any more time," Jack said.

He proceeded to start the building of Sanctuary for Courage in Therimdell. He then used 5 ruling powers and completed the construction process in an instant.

Jack sent a message to Paytowin. Paytowin would let Mihos and Pallas know that their new base was now ready for them in Therimdell City.

Afterward, Jack took a quick look at the settlements. He hadn't paid attention to them much, but now he noticed that several of the settlements had upgraded. Three villages had become towns. Two towns had upgraded to cities, and one city had upgraded to a metropolis. John had indeed been efficient in developing these settlements.

The one that recently became a metropolis was Themonium, the town where the demonic portal used to be. Diana Malva, the governor, was able to focus her attention on managing the city after the demonic portal was closed. This should be another factor in the city's growth.

With another city becoming a metropolis, another player guild was available to get guild headquarters. A bandit outpost should now emerge in the region surrounding Themonium.

Jack sent this info to Jeanny. She already had a vast network of allied guilds within Themisphere. She could choose among these allied guilds and help one of them secure the headquarters. This should improve their battle power in the coming conflict.

While studying the settlements, Jack also noticed that Thereath was extremely close to becoming a megalopolis. Thereath's population was now 9,923,154.

Jack smiled and said, "Well then, let's turn you into a megalopolis."

He returned to the screen where his sovereign powers were located. He clicked the power, Increase Population. His 10 ruling powers were absorbed for the activation of that power. 100,000 population was added to Thereath, boosting its population past the ten million mark.

He heard a notification, "Thereath has become a megalopolis. Congratulations to be the first country to possess a megalopolis. Themisphere receives 500,000 gold coins and 200,000 mana. King Storm Wind receives 30 ruling powers."

"Whoa! There is a reward!" Jack exclaimed with glee. "I thought the reward for being the first is only getting the chance to build that Wonder Building you mentioned."

"The Wonder Building is a secret reward. You won't notice it if you don't check the building list. This one is a direct reward," Peniel said. "A megalopolis is a big deal, after all. You will receive more coin income from a megalopolis. You will also draft more recruits from a megalopolis. Open the map of Thereath."

Jack followed her instruction. "Wow! Its size had increased tremendously."

Previously, the land inside Thereath was already getting scarce. There were very few empty plots of land available. There had been a few instances where John had to choose the expanse option for one of the building slots. This option shifted one part of the city wall outward and provided a new, albeit, small area to be built upon.

Now, the capital wall had miraculously adjusted itself and expanded. The capital was now almost twice its previous size. This expansion provided many large districts ready to be developed. The wall itself also became taller, thicker, and tougher.

Jack didn't waste too long time admiring the change. He went into the building interface of Thereath and scrolled down to where the special buildings were located.

"What the... I can build a theme park?" Jack stopped upon seeing one of the new available buildings that could be built.

"It increases happiness. It also raises the economy a little," Peniel explained.

"Let's leave that for later," Jack said and scrolled down again.

He received a message from John while scrolling down. "Yo, expert! You upgrade Thereath into Megalopolis without waiting for me?" As a Royal Advisor, John also received the notification.

"Do I have to? Hurry up back here. There are lots of things you can play with here."

"There are still a lot of matters to sort out at the guild. We took quite a hit. Will be there tomorrow morning. Don't build anything other than the World Commerce Center. I don't want you to mess up the city layout."

"Is that how you talk to your king? It's your head that I'm going to mess up!" Jack said.

"Just build that World Commerce Center and leave the building slots alone," John returned.

Jack ended the message and continued down the building list. At the bottom, a new wonder building was available.

*

World Commerce Center (Wonder Building)

Generates 50,000 gold coins/month for each friendly country, or 100,000 gold coins/month for each allied country.

Doubles the income from foreign trade routes.

Greatly increases the overall Economy of the country. The effect is doubled in the city this wonder is built.

Reduces 10% gold coin upkeep from all the buildings in the country. The effect is doubled in the city this wonder is built.

Construction cost: 70,000 gold coins, 20,000 mana, 4,000 lumbers, 8,000 minerals.

Construction time: 50 days.

Upkeep: 30,000 gold coins/month, 2,000 mana/month

Requirement: Can only be built in a megalopolis.

Chapter 1289: Exhausting the Ruling Powers

"You are right...", Jack muttered. "This will greatly alleviate our need for gold coins."

With the economic boost provided by this building, each settlement would generate more gold coins each month. The upkeep reduction also meant fewer coins were deducted each month so more for the kingdom to spend.

"This building is even more potent if we have more allies," Jack studied.

He opened the diplomacy screen on the other side to check. Out of the six countries, Themisphere was friendly to three countries. Verremor, Palgrost, and Sangrod. This alone generated a passive income of 150,000 gold coins each month. Additionally, all three already had trade routes established. With the trade routes' income doubled, that was another 300,000 gold coins per month. This was almost half a million gold coins of revenue, and this was not yet considering the normal income boosted by the improved economy.

Jack estimated with this building up and running, Themisphere could receive a total profit of more than 1,5 million gold coins after deducting expenses. This allowed them to continue their heavy expenditures of continual drafting and training of recruits every month, building new buildings all the time, and using the mass pay function to increase officers' loyalties. The kingdom coffer was getting thinner after three months of such heavy spending.

With the World Commerce Center, they could continue spending at such a rate while still having some coins to save in the preparation for a military campaign outside the country. Such a campaign also consumed large expenses.

Jack immediately started the building process. He placed the building in one of the empty districts adjacent to the business district. He spent 5 ruling powers and had this World Commerce Center completed.

Since the World Commerce Center was completed, there was one empty building slot. He thought for a while, grinned, and then went and built the theme park he saw earlier. The location of this theme park was right next to the World Commerce Center.

"John won't be happy about that," Peniel informed.

"That's the point," Jack said.

One last thing Jack did before he quit the monarch system, he refreshed the Impose Blockade on World Maker and World Ruler. With those two guilds banned, it would be more difficult if they wanted to cause instability inside Themisphere. He didn't want what happened to Hydrurond to happen in his country.

The Impose Blockade on two guilds cost 40 ruling powers. His stock of ruling powers was reduced to 47.

He closed the monarch system just as Thaergood returned. Jack spent the rest of the days with Thaergood and the other advisors who had prepared issues that needed his attention.

Jack originally planned to only spend one day in the palace and left for Joy's divine faction, which was also called the Council of Charites, as soon as possible. But he ended up spending two days because there were just too many things that needed his attention.

The war in Hydrurond had brought the threat right next door. A lot of nobles were on edge. A bunch of them had been waiting in the palace for Jack to return so they could talk to Jack about it. Jack entertained them as best and as patiently as he could. A few times he almost drew his Storm Breaker on these nagging nobles.

When he couldn't stand them anymore, he feigned an urgent matter happening somewhere else and had to leave. He told them to just put their thoughts into a written article and give it to Thaergood so he could read it later, which he would not.

The matters regarding the autonomous area for Queen Aldryth also required much of his attention as there were boundaries to be decided on how much freedom and how much area to be allocated for the Hydrurond refugees.

John arrived the next day and took over this matter happily, which Jack appreciated.

John also asked Jack to spend some ruling powers on some of the techs in the research overview, particularly the military paths. Now that John had knowledge that was almost on par with Peniel, he knew what the future techs were and could plan accordingly.

So, Jack activated the monarch system again and spent almost all of his ruling powers to get to where John wanted. The further down the line, the more days were needed for learning the techs, and thus, more ruling powers were needed.

Jack spent 41 ruling powers and learned seven techs in the military paths. Three of which were John's targets. They were basic military specialization, improved military specialization, and advanced military specialization.

Each of those techs allowed another 1% of the army to become special units outside of the ones provided by Wonder Buildings. So, a total of 13% of the entire army could now become either musketeers, illusionists, or paladins. With the other 1% ancient champion and 1% brave champions, the total of special units Themisphere could have was 15% of the total army.

"There are still techs that allow us to get a new special unit, or upgrade the ones we have," John informed. "But your ruling powers are not enough to get them. Hurry up and collect more so we can learn more techs to improve this kingdom!"

"Easy for you to say! You think getting these ruling powers is easy?" Jack complained. He had exhausted his ruling powers and only had 6 points left. "We should also save some in case Master attacked. We can't use them all for you to play with."

"Don't worry. He won't attack anytime soon," John said.

"Are you sure?" Jack asked.

"The matter of Aldryth taking away all remaining Hydrurond army and causing some Hydrurond settlements to not submit to Master's rule has caused delays in his plan," John said. "He doesn't have

enough troops for an aggressive expansion. Even with his zombie army and Aurebor, he would only have about the same number as us if he invaded. Unless he and Mistress cleaned out all the troops that were still in Liguritutum and Aurebor, leaving those two countries defenseless, they won't have enough for an effective invasion.

"Furthermore, the invasion into Hydrurond should have drained much of their resources. They couldn't afford a protracted war. They needed to recoup. My spies informed me that they were now busy subjugating Hydrurond rebel settlements to get the whole country under their rule.

"I also got the intel that the resources gained from Hydrurond were used by Master to draft and train more troops in Liguritutum. Since Master was the direct ruler of Liguritutum, it made sense that he prioritized building the army using the ethereal race. The army morale of Liguritutum troops was most likely higher than if they used Hydrurond troops during a campaign."

Chapter 1290: Becoming Praefectrus

"Then shouldn't we attack them now before they rebuild their troops?" Jack asked.

"No," John answered. "I said Master had roughly the same number of troops as us, didn't I? The defenders will have a better advantage in this case. Additionally, he didn't have to spend as many resources as we do if we are the ones invading. Also, don't forget his Necronomicon. In protracted warfare, that artifact will make it seem as if his troops never diminish. While ours will keep on shrinking bit by bit. Unless we have an ace in the hole, it is unwise to attack."

"So, all we can do is wait?"

"Not wait. Build," John uttered. "Although Master has extensive knowledge about this world, it has been proven he doesn't have the same advantage when it comes to the monarch system. This is one weakness we can exploit. We have Peniel and I who now know all there is about this monarch system. Our advancement will be faster than he who has to learn through trial and error. Due to this Monarch System, the situation has been reversed. Or more correctly, balanced. I believe as time passes, we will build a stronger force than he can."

"I hope so," Jack said.

"Hope is on our side! We are its sanctification!" John exclaimed.

"Yeah! You are right!" Jack joined the enthusiasm. "I will leave everything to you. Call me in case of an emergency."

"Are you leaving tomorrow?" John asked.

"The day after tomorrow," Jack answered. "I will spend tomorrow doing my league faction's trials. I think I can get to the next rank now."

"All right. If you can, go visit Queen Aldryth before you leave for the Council of Charites. They should be arriving at Fort Aldryth the day after tomorrow... Can't you give the fort a proper name? You are unbelievable."

*

The next day, Jack first made his round around Thereath's shops to buy equipment and blacksmith materials for fusing using his transformation prism. He also stocked up on potions and other necessities. He then went and collected the coins from Ellie Restaurant and Amy Bakery.

The profit minus the expense of his shopping was 105 gold coins. With this addition, he had 990 gold coins saved up in his inventory.

After brief conversations with Ellie and Samantha, Jack headed to the League of Champions' building. He went directly to the challenge arena and entered stage 80. Inside that stage, thirty-five werewolves consisted of one level 65 mythical, ten level 70 rare elites, and twenty-four level 75 special elites were waiting for him.

He activated his Storm Breaker's Overlimit and all his standard buff skills before unleashing the Lightning God Barrage and Judgement of Past Kings. The two attacks decimated all the special elites and wounded the rare elites. At his current level, his damage output easily overwhelmed those special elites.

The werewolf pack's coordination bonus was greatly diminished with the reduction of their number. Jack then activated the Strength of Hope for the first time. A pillar of light fell on Jack as he did, bathing his body with holy light. This light stayed on Jack even after the pillar of light was gone. The light enveloped Jack as if an extra layer of skin.

Jack felt an overwhelming sense of hope and optimism in his heart. He felt as if he could do anything!

The Strength of Hope gave him a boost that was similar to the Divine Might Potion. That potion allowed him to fight at an almost equal ground against level 80 mythical like Arther Pendrake. The level 65 mythical werewolf here was not his opponent under this condition.

Still, the werewolves were speedy creatures, so he took care of the ten rare elites before focusing his attention on the mythical werewolf.

When he came out from the stage, he was awarded 80 glory points and greeted by a notification that congratulated him on becoming a Praefectrus. His rank was now officially higher than Gruff's.

However, by now he understood that an outworlder's rank in a faction was more like a decoration or a badge of honor. Getting into this rank didn't mean that he could now boss everyone in this faction. He would need to go through a proper administration process if he wanted to become an official officer within this faction like Gruff.

Jack was already viable to become an executive of the faction once he passed stage 75. Gruff once offered him such a position but Jack declined. With that position came responsibilities. He would have to spend lots of time in the faction. He already had enough responsibility as a sovereign of a nation. For this faction, he was only here for the items on the exchange list.

Additionally, since he was already the top person in the country faction, he was never going to be able to become the top person in the other factions. Even if he beat stage 100 of this faction, he would never get the rank of Legatus. Peniel mentioned before that once one reached the highest rank in a faction, the position in the other factions would be locked out from him. If Jack insisted on becoming a Legatus, he would have to forfeit his King title. By doing so, he would earn the ire of Themisphere.

Peniel also reminded him that since he was both a member of the League of Champions and the Order of Magi, he needed to take care when he challenged stage 90. Once he passed that stage. He would get the second-best rank in the faction. He already had the top rank in the country faction, so for the second-top rank in the other factions, he would need to choose between the League of Champions or the Order of Magi. He could only either become a Laticlavian of the League of Champions or a Minister in the Order of Magi, not both.

He also got a reward after beating stage 80, something that Gruff had mentioned before. Aside from informing him that he became a Praefectrus, the notification also granted him a reward of 10,000 glory points.