

World 1381

Chapter 1381: Resurrecting the Fallen

Euphosine reeled back in pain. At this time, a huge earthquake shook the hall.

"No... No... NOO...!!!" Euphosine shouted frantically, more due to the earthquake than the pain caused by Jack's slash.

She understood what this earthquake was. Her eyes turned to where the divine heritage used to be.

The divine heritage was already inside Master's inventory. Master was floating in the sky and still had Grace pinned to the wall. He had been pondering whether he should use this chance to ambush and kill Jack while Jack was busy with Euphosine.

But after seeing Euphosine's eyes. He knew he would be the mad priestess' main target. It would be him who got ganged up on instead. So, he chose to retreat.

He sent a message to Motherboard.

This entire dimension was supported by the divine heritage. Even when sealed, it maintained its link to this dimension. Once the divine heritage entered Master's inventory, this link was cut. The dimension lost its power source, so it started to collapse. That was the cause of the huge earthquake.

At the moment, this mansion had returned to the normal game world. The dimension that held Euphosine's bizarre game was no more.

And so, Master could send messages again.

Soon, a text box with an offer appeared in front of him. He accepted the offer and disappeared from there just as Euphosine's ice sword flew past where he was a moment ago.

"NOOO...!!!" Euphosine screamed madly.

Jack understood how Master escape. The vanishing animation was from the activation of a Recall Plate. Master must have given one to his subordinates to use in an emergency, so he could flee even during combat.

Euphosine was still screaming madly. She couldn't accept the fact that the divine heritage was gone.

Jack saw this as best a time as any to go full offense. He summoned his spirit weapon. With Therras' earth core bomb and the spirit weapon's final mode, he performed another combination attack. He unleashed soul breath and Lightning God Barrage. After activating his Dragon Eye, he also cast Orb of Storm and Perpetual Lightning Judgement.

When Talia saw Jack's assault, she also acted. She had been weakened. But after Jack saved her, she had been gathering power. She now unleashed that power.

"Sister...!" She made one last call to Euphosine as her spell was cast. Dense flames swirled around Euphosine. It was her flame nova.

It looked much weaker compared to Euphosine's ice nova and Aglea's light nova, but all three were spells of the same power level. The difference was that Talia was in a weakened state and she also used mana manipulation to control the AOE of the spell so that it was concentrated and didn't hit Jack and the others inside this hall.

The six massive attacks of five elements landed on Euphosine's body. Her mind was still lamenting the loss of the divine heritage. She didn't do anything to defend herself.

The blast from the attack sent a shockwave throughout the hall. Everyone was sent crashing into the wall.

The first thing Jack did after regaining balance was look at his radar. There was no longer a red dot in the middle of the hall. The dissipating dust cloud from the explosion revealed Euphosine who was on the ground. She was not moving. Several items were beside her, while one small glowing orb floated toward Talia and entered her body.

"Yes...!!" Jack exclaimed. Floating beside him was his Runestone of Luck.

He wasn't confident his combined attack could take out Euphosine's remaining HP. Even combining his attacks with Master's spells only yielded them ten percent of Euphosine's HP. But when he saw Talia's flames, he knew the combination attack might be the killing blow, so he summoned his Runestone of Luck.

While Jack rejoiced at the triumph, Talia slumped on the ground. Tears rolled down her face. Despite the victory, she was now alone. Both her sisters were gone.

Jack realized her sadness and tried to tone down his joy in winning this battle.

He came to Talia and said, "I'm sorry for your loss."

Talia took a deep breath. "I lost her long ago... What we defeated just now is just a husk of her former self."

Jack didn't know what else to say so he moved away and headed to where Euphosine's body was to take a look at the loots, but then he saw Kramer's body not far away. It was badly burned but otherwise intact.

It was not yet one hour.

He turned to Talia and asked, "Talia, do you have the resurrection spell?"

Talia looked confused for a moment. She then answered, "Unfortunately, I'm not proficient in healing spells, but why do you want to resurrect Euphosine?"

"Not her," Jack said. He then took out his kingdom badge.

He had received several message notifications after the big earthquake. He knew then that they were back to the normal world. Jack interfaced with his kingdom badge and Laurent appeared in front of him.

"What can I help you with, Your Majesty?" Laurent asked. He didn't see any enemies around. There were signs of battle, though.

"Laurent, please tell me your Resurrection spell is not on cooldown...," Jack said with hopeful eyes.

"Uh... It is not," Laurent answered.

"Perfect! Quick, come! Please, resurrect this one!" Jack gestured for Laurent to follow while pointing at Kramer's body.

Even though he was confused, Laurent followed through with the request. He cast the spell once Kramer was within range. A soothing light fell above Kramer's body.

Jack watched with expectant eyes as the light dissipated. Kramer's eyes opened then.

"Yes...!!" Jack exclaimed.

"Your... Your Majesty...?" Kramer asked weakly. His mind was hazy. He couldn't remember much. He also felt pains all over his body.

"Don't move first, you are still hurt," Jack said. The resurrection brought Kramer back to life with only ten percent of HP. Many burned marks were still on his body.

Laurent cast a few more healing spells to bring Kramer's HP back up. Peniel also helped with the healing. The burned marks around Kramer's body soon vanished magically. Kramer now looked as good as new.

He remembered what had happened then.

"I... I thought I'd died...?" He asked.

"You did. He brought you back," Jack pointed at Laurent.

"Tha... Thank you...!" Kramer said to Laurent.

"Thank His Majesty, I only did as His Majesty commanded," Laurent replied.

"I'm just glad you are safe. Stay still and rest. We are safe now," Jack said to Kramer.

Grace came then. In her hands were a bunch of items. "You know, you shouldn't leave valuable loot like that. What if someone comes and snatches them?"

Chapter 1382: Cloak of the Elemental God

There was quite an assortment of items in Grace's hands, but Jack's eyes were fixed on one particular item because it was registered with purple color in his monocle. The item was a large piece of cloth.

"A legendary item!" Jack exclaimed and picked that cloth up. It turned out to be a cloak. This was even better. This was his first legendary equipment.

The cloak's color seemed to constantly change. Red, green, blue, yellow, purple, light, black, and then back to red again. The sight was mystifying.

"Yeah. Even without mana sense, anyone can see this is an exceptional cloak," Grace said.

Jack used his Inspect.

*

Cloak of the Elemental God (Legendary cloak)

Select one element among Fire, Ice, Wind, Earth, Lightning, Dark, or Light. Cooldown: 5 minutes.

+100 resistance to the selected element.

+500 to physical and magical defense.

All hostiles within a radius of 3 meters received 10% damage from the selected element each second.

Automatically parry incoming attacks, blocking 30,000 damage. Any excess damage will be reduced by 25%. The effect is doubled if the damage is from the selected element. Cooldown: 5 seconds.

Elemental God Barrier (Active skill): Form a protective shell within a radius of 5 meters for 5 seconds. Block 500,000 damage. Excess damage is reduced by 50%. The effect is doubled if the damage is from the selected element. Cooldown: 2 hours.

*

"This is very good defensive equipment!" Jack exclaimed after reading the description.

Without further ado, he immediately unequipped his Cloak of Shadow to put on this Cloak of the Elemental God. He had a slight sentimental feeling when he took off the Cloak of Shadow. This cloak had followed him for quite some time. Its shadow meld ability had saved him many times. But he had the invisibility spell now, he didn't need that ability anymore.

"What is the grade of your cloak?" Jack asked Grace.

"Unique grade. Why?" Grace asked back.

"Never mind," Jack said. He planned to give the Cloak of Shadow to Grace if she was still wearing a lower-grade cloak. He would just give it to the others in the guild later.

When Jack equipped the Cloak of the Elemental God, it asked him to choose an element. If he didn't respond within five seconds, a random element would be chosen. Jack chose the fire element.

Jack didn't worry that the choice was permanent because he saw a cooldown period in the description for the element selection.

After the fire element was chosen, the cloak behind him seemed to burst into flames. His friends even worry that he got burned, but he felt just fine. He didn't feel any heat. He even touched the fiery cloak and lifted it. It still felt like cloth. The fire was raging in his hand but it didn't burn him.

He looked at the cloak's cooldown timer, he could change the cloak into another element once the five-minute cooldown was completed. This meant he could adjust the element based on his opponent. This allowed for great flexibility. He liked this cloak very much.

"Grace, attack me with your mana bullet," Jack said.

"What? Why?" Grace asked.

"I want to test this cloak's ability," Jack answered.

"Don't you see my hands are full? Aren't you going to take these remaining items?" Grace asked.

Jack took all the goods and just shoved them into his inventory. He would browse through them later.

"Okay, hit me," Jack said.

Grace shook her head. She cast her mana bullet at Jack. Jack remained still with folded arms.

When the mana bullet almost hit Jack, his fiery cloak moved by itself and intercepted the attack. Jack didn't receive any damage.

"Cool!" Jack exclaimed. "The description says it can block damage up to 30,000 damage. That is more than half my HP. If it is an attack from the selected element, it can block twice the damage. This means at this moment it can block a fire attack that might have killed me in a single hit, and it can do that every five seconds."

"You will be harder to kill with that cloak," Grace said.

"Hehe," Jack grinned.

He was tempted to test the active skill of the cloak, the Elemental God Barrier, but this skill had a cooldown of two hours. It would be trouble if he suddenly needed this skill in the coming two hours.

Even so, two hours was a very short cooldown for such a powerful skill. The skill could block 500,000 or even 1,000,000 damage if it was the chosen element. That was almost half of Euphosine's total HP.

He figured if he used this skill, it might look similar to what Talia used to protect them when Aglea used her Light Nova. Especially since he was using the fire element at the moment.

"That is a very fine cloak," Talia said. She looked much better than before. She still seemed sad but there was also a relief in her expression.

"Are you okay?" Jack asked her.

Talia simply smiled in response.

"Let's go outside to the garden," she said. "Euphosine's dimension where her game took place had been destroyed. The past participants that are still in training within that dimension should be outside."

"What about the outworlders in the basement?" Jack asked.

"You know about them?" Talia asked.

Jack nodded. During the time he was freeing Talia, he sent one of his copies to check on Grace and the others who were fighting the happy dolls outside in the garden. After seeing that there was nothing to worry about, Jack sent that copy to roam around the mansion, especially the area where he had not gone to when he was in his incorporeal state.

He found stairs that led into the basement and under there, he saw lots of players in bound condition. All these players were level 1. They were all bound and had a large tube going into their mouth. Every few seconds, these players jerked and then something shiny flowed out of them through the tubes and

went somewhere else. The scene was extremely bizarre, like some sort of human factory from some sci-fi movies.

"They should be outside as well," Talia replied.

Chapter 1383: Already Taken

"There are players in the basement?" Grace asked while they were walking outside.

Jack told her about what he saw down there.

"I can't do anything since it is just my copy down there. I thought about changing places with that copy and tried to free the players, but I'm not sure if doing that will alert Euphosine. So, I decided to just leave them for later."

"If you tried freeing them, that will indeed alert Euphosine," Talia said.

"How do you know about them? I thought Euphosine kept you locked up," Jack asked.

"After Euphosine took away your spirit form ability, she started to tell me everything about her game," Talia answered. "Once she started talking, she couldn't stop. In her own way, she was truly proud of her game... I tried to talk some sense into her, but she was no longer the sister I knew. Those people in the basement were the outworlders who lost in the game."

"I thought they were brought to the nursery hall and were trained to rejoin the next game?" Grace asked.

"I see that you are familiar with Euphosine's game as well?" Talia asked back.

"We met a past participant who explained it to us," Grace answered.

"Then you should know there were some outworlders who decided they have had enough and refused to go with the program," Talia said.

"Do you mean..."

Talia nodded. "The ones in the basement were players who defied Euphosine and refused to participate in her game anymore. So, Euphosine made use of them in a different way... The dimension that Euphosine had created required tremendous energy. Euphosine had to constantly draw power from the divine heritage to sustain the dimension. Doing so endlessly is excruciatingly tiring. Hence, when the first few outworlders refused to follow her program, she took them away and started experimenting on them."

"That's awful..." Grace uttered.

"It was," Talia agreed. "With the power of a God in her hand, she finally devised a way to suck mana out of outworlders. Every time an outworlder dies and rebirths, mana converges around them to complete the process. This mana was what Euphosine took to help her ease the burden of her dimension by a little."

"You... You mean... The outworlders were constantly killed?" Grace asked in disbelief.

"Euphosine installed an enchantment so that they were rebirthed at the same place, so they would always be bound. So, they could be continuously killed and harvested for their energy."

"This might be the first time I didn't envy your kind's immortality," Laurent remarked. He was walking with them. They might still need his healing spells, so Jack let him hang around.

"Are you sure they are outside as well?" Jack asked. "Maybe they are still in the basement."

"Our mansion has no basement. The basement you saw is another of Euphosine's pocket worlds," Talia answered. "She just attached it to the nexus world for easy access to the produced energy. When her dimension was destroyed, they should be released like the others."

They were nearing the mansion's exit now. They heard murmurs. It sounded like a crowd was out there.

When they came out the main door into the garden, they saw that it was indeed a crowd.

"This... Are they all participants in Euphosine's game...? This is too many...," Grace said after seeing the scene. There were probably thousands of people out there.

Around them, outside the garden, were large trees. Jack and Grace remembered the landscape as one from the Shylvan region. Seeing those trees told them that they were back to the normal game world again.

"There are a lot of natives...," Jack said after using his Inspect on some. "They can't be the past participants... Natives die for real, and there is only one winner in each game."

"Thella!" Talia called when she saw one of the natives in the crowd.

Jack heard something different in her voice when she called the native. She sounded joyful.

The native woman, whom Talia called, looked over. Her voice turned bright upon seeing Talia. "My Lady...!" She called.

Not only her. A lot of the other natives came also. Most of them were women.

"Are they..."

"They are my faction members," Talia told Jack with a smile. It was a genuinely happy smile. Jack thought this was the first time he saw her this happy.

Talia went and embraced her people.

"Hey, you people survive!"

Jack and Grace turned to the voice and saw Winson and the others there.

"You chickenshit, you ran outside?" Jack said.

"Aren't you the one who asked us to find safety?" Saddle said.

"Yes, I'm just joking. I'm glad you didn't try going back in," Jack said.

"I can't believe it, kid... You truly kept your promise," Freddie said. "You free us from that awful place."

"Yeah, I've lost hope for so long... Thank you!" Saddle exclaimed.

"Hey...! Heyyy...!!"

They heard shouting. They turned and saw more familiar faces. Out of the crowd, Stefan, Naomi, Tom, Dina, and Richard came running to them. They had one similarity. All of them were level 1.

"You made it! You people truly won! Un-f*cking-believable," Stefan said as he approached.

"How did you manage to defeat that monster?" Naomi asked.

"Let's leave that tale for later," Jack said with a laugh. He asked, "Everyone all right?"

They nodded with wide smiles. Some of them had been locked up for some time. It felt truly good to finally be freed.

"My dear! Oh, how I miss you...!!" They heard another voice.

Grace facepalmed. She was relieved the guy was safe since he died protecting her, but she also felt nauseous once she heard his voice.

Out of the crowd, Evan came running to Grace and was met by Jack's fist.

"Chill it, dude. She is taken already. Go find another Goddess," Jack said to Evan, who was massaging his jaw. Jack then felt Grace's arms on his.

Grace was clasping his arm.

"That's right, I'm already taken," Grace said, seemingly to Evan, but her eyes were on Jack.

Jack was unsure how to respond. When he was still thinking the right words to say, Grace's face turned stern.

Jack was about to ask her what was wrong when she said in an urgent voice, "We need to leave!"

"What? Why?" Jack asked, confused.

"Master is on his way here," Grace answered. "With his army."

Chapter 1384: Moving the Base Away

"What? Army? Why? Are they coming to save us?" Stefan asked. He and the others didn't quite catch the situation. He still saw Master as a teammate from Euphosine's game.

"How do you know?" Jack asked Grace.

"Spring Crown told me," Grace answered.

"Spring Crown...? Hey, where is that guy?" Jack looked around. He just remembered there was still this enemy from Master's camp.

"He left when the forest reappeared," Freddie answered.

"Left? So, how do you..."

"He sent me a message," Grace answered before Jack completed his question.

"Sent a message? Do you mean..."

"Yes, he is on my friend list," Grace again answered before Jack finished his question. "I received a notification of a friend request from him right after that big earthquake. I accepted the request not long ago."

"Can he be trusted?" Jack asked.

"I think we can. I don't think he is a bad one," Grace replied.

"Hm... Well, I don't want to just take his words at face value, but I think it makes sense. Master must have prepared an army nearby to assault the Council of Charites. He hadn't begun the attack because none of his scouts came back with a report. Now that he returned with a clear knowledge that this faction is vulnerable, it's time to attack."

"Spring Crown just explained to me. It is roughly like what you said," Grace informed. "Master's scouts just happened to find out about this faction's location after conquering Hydrurond. Hence, Master took a portion of his army to raze this place. He has been keeping the army back until he has a clear picture of what awaits them. But... Why is he still coming here? He has already gotten the divine heritage."

"I am here," Jack said. "Plus... Talia and those other natives from her faction serve as a rich pool of exp points and loot. I don't think Master would let them go."

"What about us?" Stefan asked. "He was still bewildered but he roughly understood the situation after hearing the conversation."

"I don't think he cared about players, but it is still best to avoid his army. If any of you have Town Return Scroll, you better use it. How long do we have?" Jack asked Grace.

"I'll ask," Grace went silent for a while. She then said. "He said he isn't sure. He isn't with the army. He has used a Town Return Scroll. If the army was waiting in its previous position, then we should only have around two hours."

"I will go warn Talia," Jack said and ran to where Talia was.

Talia saw Jack running to him with a serious expression. She asked, "Something's the matter?"

"Yes," Jack said. "The outworlder who has stolen your faction's divine heritage. He is on his way here with an army. We must leave at once."

"Hasn't he already gotten what he came here for?" Talia asked the same question as Grace.

"He probably thinks there are more treasures here," Jack answered. He didn't feel that mentioning the exp points and loots to these natives was appropriate.

"We only have two hours at most. Are all of you good to move?" Jack asked the natives who were with Talia. These natives instead turned to Talia for a decision.

"We don't need to move," Talia said. She lifted her hand and a glowing orb appeared. Jack remembered this was the same orb that floated to her after Euphosine was defeated.

"This is our faction's legacy. Euphosine seized it when she came into power," Talia explained. "Now that all my sisters are gone, I'm the sole proprietor of it. Inside it is the control board for our base. Our base might be in ruin, but it still has enough power to teleport itself back to where it was originally located."

Jack didn't see anything that looked like a control board but Talia's hands were dancing in the air. This was probably only visible to the user, like the monarch system.

"All of you will be teleported following this base?" Jack asked.

"Everyone who is within the mansion and this garden will be teleported," Talia informed.

Hearing that, Jack said. "In that case, give me a moment before you start the teleportation process."

Jack cast the Soar spell and floated up so everyone could see him. He then used mana manipulation to enhance his voice. "Everyone, listen up...!"

Everyone turned to him upon his shout.

"I know all of you are still confused but know that your time in captivity is over. The host of the game you are forced to play is no more. You are free! However, you are not safe yet. At this moment, Liguritudum's army is heading here. They might leave you alone, they might not. If any of you want to leave, you have better do it now. In a few minutes, this base will be teleported somewhere else. I can see that most of you are ethereals, draconians, and elves. Your countries are close by. Once we teleported, you might find yourselves far away from home. So, leave now if you wish to do so. Use your Town Return Scroll or go out of the confine of this garden."

One of the players down there shouted back, "Who the hell are you? Why should we listen to you?"

Another loud voice that was also powered by mana manipulation, resounded in the air. "He is your savior, you ungrateful toad! He is the one who defeated the host of this game and free you from captivity!!"

Everyone turned to the voice and saw Freddie. A large portion of the players knew him. He was the reigning champion of the game so most have crossed paths with him during the battle royale match.

Upon the declaration, many now saw Jack with different eyes.

One of the players slapped the head of the one who had shouted back at Jack. "Don't you see his outfit? That is the Themisphere King, you dolt."

Seeing that everyone is more agreeable, Jack declared. "You have two minutes. Afterward, you will have to follow to wherever this place takes you."

Jack floated down back to Talia's side. "Give them two minutes," Jack said to her.

Chapter 1385: Refilled with Hope

Several players moved away. Most were from the three races whose countries were nearby, but a decent number stayed.

While waiting, Jack asked the natives who were Talia's faction members, "In Euphosine's dimension, I only see Aglea and her. Were you all imprisoned?"

The one whom Talia had called Thella answered, "In a way... Yes, we are imprisoned."

"They were the baby dolls we have been fighting," Freddie said. He and the others came to Jack's side.

Winson added, "We have run out to this garden after that crazy light explosion. After the big earthquake, those inert happy dolls crumbled by themselves. In their places, these natives appeared."

"Euphosine did that to punish us," Thella said. "We refused to participate in organizing her wicked game, so she trapped us inside her tethered puppet. We were forced to stay still and attack intruders if one ever appeared. We can't live, but we also can't die..."

"Euphosine even used our followers in such a cruel way..." Talia shook her head in sadness.

"Okay, two minutes are up. Do it, Talia," Jack said.

Talia nodded. Her hands again danced in the air. The air around them started to shimmer. The landscape outside the garden turned blurry. Some players thought it was their eyes. They scrubbed the eyes, but the scene remained.

Once the blurriness was gone, the landscape outside was completely different. The tall trees that were characteristic of the Shylvan region were gone. Around them was a hilly landscape with sparse trees. The sky was clear above.

"Where are we?" Jack asked Talia.

"We are in Palgrost, but we are deep in the wilderness. You have to be careful not to venture too far. The monsters around here are high in level, that's how we secluded ourselves," Talia answered, but he then added. "However, I think you will be fine against those monsters."

After defeating Euphosine, Jack's levels increased. Winson and the others had gone too far so they didn't receive the exp points. The exp points were divided only between Jack, Terras, and Grace.

Jack and Grace leveled up three times. Each of Jack's classes went up one level. Terras leveled up two times. All of Jack's classes were now level 74. Grace and Terras were level 75.

Jack also received a notification that his quest, Help Talia Escape, was completed. He received 8,000,000 exp, 100 gold coins, and 10,000 mana cores. He remembered the description said an additional reward was possible, but he received no other reward.

The exp points let his Time Sage level up another time. It was level 75 now.

Jack opened his map. They were indeed in Palgrost. He was in an area he hadn't visited before, so his map was mostly grey all around, but the description on his map indicated he was in the Republic of Palgrost.

He looked at the players who had decided to not leave and feel pity for them. They would have difficulty leaving this area considering their levels were still low. They were mostly players who were still halfway through the training in Euphosine's nursery hall.

"What are you going to do now?" Jack asked Talia. "Will you rebuild this base?"

Talia shook her head. "This place is already too damaged. We will move away and find someplace else to settle."

Talia might have said that, but from her sad expression, Jack understood the reason might probably be because the memory of this place was too painful. She lost both her sisters here, not in a peaceful way. She probably wanted to forget all of this and start fresh.

Jack empathized with her feeling, but he didn't know what to say to console her. He was just about to wish her luck when he thought of something.

"Talia, since you are looking for somewhere to settle. How about Themisphere?" Jack asked. "From my getup, I think you can guess I am that country's king. I can help you build a base for your faction in one of my cities."

"Themisphere...? I don't know. We aren't sure about the hustle and bustle of a city..." Talia said.

'Peniel, can a wonder be built in a village or town?' Jack asked via his mind. If it could, he would offer Talia to relocate to one of Themisphere's towns or villages instead. Those settlements would be less hectic.

'No. A settlement needs to be at least a metropolis to build a Wonder Building,' Peniel answered.

Since this option was out, he tried a different approach.

"I don't think it is safe for your faction to be out in the open," Jack said. "I believe you have lost quite many members since the incident with Euphosine started, am I right?"

Talia didn't deny that. Many members left the faction even before Euphosine found the Divine Heritage. Their faction was only a fraction of its former self.

"Some bad people might come to try to steal your faction's legacy. I believe you store lots of treasure in there." Jack was familiar with the faction's legacy because Paytowin also had one. "It will be safer if you stay inside one of my cities."

"How can we know if you are not the one coveting it?" One of the natives said. "You outworlders are all greedy lot."

"Stop it, Axxo! You are being impolite," Talia chided. "He saved my life during the battle with Euphosine. He had the chance to do what he came here for but he chose to let it go to save me instead. Other outworlders might be greedy but not him. I believe in him! I trust he harbors no thought about stealing our treasures."

Axxo lowered her head from the scolding.

"But what use is there to rebuild our faction?" Another native beside Talia, whose name was Carpi, said. "Before we were imprisoned inside those happy dolls, Lady Euphosine told us the Goddess Joy no longer exists. What is the use for our faction if we have no more Goddess to worship?"

"You shouldn't despair like that," Jack said. "Your Goddess might be gone for now, but she can return."

Talia and the other natives turned to Jack. "Mister Storm, please don't joke about this issue."

"I am not," Jack said, giving them a serious face. "That divine heritage. It is the essence of your Goddess. I believe you felt her presence when you are near it, didn't you?" Jack asked Talia.

Talia didn't deny the statement.

Jack continued. "Your Goddess' essence within the divine heritage will continue to grow as long as people are worshipping her. When her essence grows strong enough, she will return."

"Is that true?" Carpi asked. Hope was on her face.

"But... The divine heritage had been taken, right?" Axxo asked.

"Then we should get it back!" Thella exclaimed.

'Either that or after Master uses the divine heritage,' Jack thought. Once that happened, another divine heritage would reappear inside the altar of its corresponding divine faction, ready to grow through the worship of its followers again.

Before leaving for Themisphere, Jack had made a stop to visit the newly built Sanctuary for Courage in Therimdel. From inside the altar, Pallas and Mihos sensed the faint presence of their God. After Fear used the divine heritage to craft the Godkiller, the God of Courage's essence was freed. When Jack built the Sanctuary for Courage, it finally had a place to nest and thus formed another Divine Heritage within the altar.

This discovery had given Pallas and his brethren great elation. They were so happy that they seemed to forget about their hatred for the Council of Phobos. Their main objective was now keeping the divine heritage safe at any cost rather than seeking revenge.

Jack told Talia and the others about all this. After the story, Jack saw their eyes were filled with hope.

Chapter 1386: Joining the Army

Talia agreed with Jack's proposal to rebuild her faction inside one of the cities in Themisphere. She would move to Themisphere with her members while Jack started working on the construction of their new base. Jack promised that their base would be waiting for them once they arrived.

As Talia was still talking with Jack about the arrangement, a group of natives approached.

"Eyrene...", Talia called the leader of the group.

"Lady Talia. I'm sorry. We will be leaving the faction. I believe you understand why," Eyrene said with a deep bow.

"You are not at fault..."

"I am! We are!" Eyrene exclaimed. She then turned to Jack and said, "Mister Storm Wind, I am sorry for our outburst. Me and my sisters here, we are Euphosine's followers... Or at least used to be."

"Euphosine's followers? But... You were also imprisoned inside the happy dolls?" Jack asked.

"We are. When Euphosine promised us that she would bring glory back to our faction, we believed her. We followed her instructions. She asked us to go bring outsiders into our faction. We didn't know what her intention was, but we did what she asked because we believed in her."

"Then we saw her force these people to play her game," A woman beside Eyrene, whose name was Dicce, said. "Not the kind of game we usually play to honor our Goddess, but a twisted kind where people are sacrificed."

"She said they were sacrifices for our Goddess," Eyrene continued. "But we all know our Goddess will never want this kind of cruel game. So... we protested."

"... And she punished you for that," Jack said.

Eyrene and Dicce nodded.

"Talía is right. You are not at fault," Jack said to them. "You don't know what Euphosine was planning."

Eyrene shook her head. "We should have known ever since she asked us to go kidnap the first group of participants for her game. This is a shame we won't be able to undo for the rest of our lives. That's why we can no longer be part of the Council of Charites. Even if we manage to bring our Goddess back, we are too ashamed to kneel before her. That's why we have a favor to ask of you."

"A favor...?" Jack was unsure what he could help them with.

"Let us join the army of your kingdom," Eyrene said. "We might not be able to be a part of the Council of Charites anymore, but we can protect the country our faction is in. By keeping your country safe, we can keep our faction safe."

"Eyrene...", Talía uttered.

"Please, Mister Storm Wind, Your Majesty!" Eyrene declared. She knelt before Jack. Dicce and the others with Eyrene also followed her into kneeling.

"This...", Jack turned to Talía, unsure of what to do.

Talía sighed. She then said to Jack, "If you don't mind, please accept their wishes."

Of course, Jack didn't mind. The group that Eyrene brought were all elite ones. Most of them were rare elites with levels around 65 to 80. The weakest ones were special elites. While Eyrene and Dicce were the strongest of the bunch. Dicce was level 81 Mythical while Eyrene was level 84 mythical. Eyrene was almost as powerful as Talía. This group numbered roughly a thousand. If they joined his army, they would be one of the elites.

So, Jack said, "Of course, I won't mind. I will be relying on you all then."

"I don't want to burst your bubble, but you cannot just induct them all into your country's army," Peniel said.

"I can't?" Jack asked.

"The ones with the human race have no problem, but you can't accept other races into your formal army," Peniel replied.

"I can't? Isn't that racist?" Jack protested.

Peniel shrugged, "It's the world system rule."

"But.. Aren't there other races' outworlders who joined Themisphere's kingdom faction?" Grace asked.

"Outworlders aren't bound by this rule," Peniel answered. "you won't be able to do it with the natives from the other races."

"But, why?" Jack protested again.

Again, Peniel shrugged.

Eyrene and Dicce looked at one another. Eyrene was a human, so she had no problem joining Themisphere's army. But it was a different case for Dicce, she was an elf. Within the group led by the two, plenty were also non-humans. These non-human ones looked down with sad faces. They were too shameful to remain in their faction, now they also were not allowed to defend the country their faction was in.

Jack thought for a bit about the matter. He then said, "Aside from being the king of Themisphere, I'm also a leader of a guild in Themisphere. What if you whose races are not human join my guild? Are you interested?"

"We don't have a problem with that, right?" Jack asked Peniel. The Everlasting Heavenly Legends had hired plenty of natives as of now. Mostly those that helped with the auxiliary jobs, like Kirsí, who had been helping in the blacksmith workshop. However, all those hires were humans.

"Guild is okay. You can take in any race you want," Peniel said. "But they are not part of your guild army. So, don't expect to be able to summon them for war."

"Well, but you can help defend the guild and the nearby capital if the enemy comes attacking," Jack said to Dicce and the others. "So, what do you think?"

Dicce turned to her sisters. They didn't say anything but their eyes were in agreement. Dicce turned back to Jack and said, "We would be honored to join your guild."

"Perfect!" Jack exclaimed. "Then I guess everyone will be leaving for Themisphere. Do you need to pack before we start going?"

"Give us a few hours," Talia said. "Everyone has just recovered their forms. They may still have some possessions inside the manor."

"Take your time. We can stay one day here and depart tomorrow if you like," Jack said.

"That will not be necessary. We will only need a few hours," Talia replied.

Many of the natives then started going into the mansion to pack their things. When Eyrene was going to go as well, Jack called her.

"Yes, Your Majesty?" Eyrene asked.

"Say, are you interested in being my royal agent?" Jack asked.

Chapter 1387: Believe in Good

Jack and Grace were trapped inside Euphosine's dimensions for more than a week. During that time, Jack had no access to his Affairs Overview of his monarch system. Hence, several affairs had been neglected. Some were even the ones the investigative teams had investigated. They tried sending their findings to Jack but because Jack was trapped in another dimension, he couldn't receive their message. The deadline for those affairs arrived and they ended without a resolution.

However, during the two weeks Jack spent on the road on their way to the Council of Charites, he solved three affairs. The results of those three affairs were two perfect and one good, netting him 280,000 merits and 10 Ruling Powers.

When Euphosine's dimension was destroyed not long ago, there were three new affairs, but two were almost upon their deadline. It won't be enough time to send the investigator teams. So, he just randomly chose one answer from the multiple choices and ended up with one mediocre and one bad result. He earned 40,000 merits from the mediocre one and was deducted 30,000 merits from the bad one.

"Sh*t! A bad result can reduce my merit points?" Jack asked Peniel when that happened.

"Yeah. You make a bad judgment. you think people will thank you for that?" Peniel asked back.

Jack rubbed his forehead. In this case, probably it was best to not pick any of the choices if he was not sure. But after thinking about it, this might not be bad. He didn't think Master had the same system where he sent people to investigate these affairs. He bet Master relied on his own intellect to solve these affairs. If so, then Master's chance of scoring a bad result should be higher, which meant Master's rate at increasing the sovereign level should be slower than his.

For the last affair, Jack sent the information to the investigative teams.

The total 290,000 merit points he had received was able to push his sovereign level to level 12. He received another 10 Ruling Powers from that level-up. But most importantly, after reaching sovereign level 12, he could appoint his ninth royal agent. This was what he offered Eyrene.

Eyrene was puzzled by the offer. She didn't truly understand the concept. Jack and Peniel explained to her. After hearing this, she said, "It will be my honor. What better way to defend the country than by defending its sovereign?"

"Perfect!" Jack sent her the request then. She was not formally part of the kingdom faction yet, but apparently, as long as it was a human native and the person was within range, he could send the offer.

Eyrene accepted. Her data was now available on Jack's royal agent page. She turned out to be like Lindsey, a weapon user as well as a spell caster at the same time. She had both skill traits and spell traits.

She had seven skill traits. Spear, polearm, fist, dart, shield, form, and move. As for Spell traits, she had arcane, summon, enchant, offense, and boundary. Her affinities were ice, light, and wind.

She also had three talents. Ice Proficiency, Ice Domination, and Vigorous Body.

Ice Proficiency increased ice damage by 10%. It also improved her chance of learning ice spells and could learn ice spells with a requirement of twenty levels and above.

Ice Domination increased ice damage by another 10%. Aside from that, it increased the affected area of AOE ice spells by 20%. It also increased the range for ice spells by 30%, and her ice resistance was added by 50 points.

Vigorous Body added 10% to her HP, stamina, and mana. It also improved all her passive recoveries by 50%.

When Jack wanted to use the kingdom's coins to improve her gears, he saw that it was not needed. All her gears were unique grades.

As a level 84 mythical, she had many skills and spells. One of which attracted Jack's attention. She had Euphosine's ultimate spell, the Ice Nova.

'A top warrior from a divine faction was truly something else,' Jack stated in his mind. Eyrene was now the strongest among his royal agent. Stronger even than his companion, Arlcard.

As Jack was admiring Eyrene's stats, Kramer came to him. The native had heard Eyrene's request to join the Themisphere army. He was now kneeling before Jack and requested the same.

"Your Majesty, please let me join your army as well."

Jack turned to Kramer. He hesitated for a bit before asking, "Are you sure? It's not a safe life."

"I was an adventurer. I've no problem with risky life. All my comrades from my adventurer team are no more. I've no place to return to. If I can be of use to you, my benefactor. It will be my greatest honor."

Jack nodded. "All right. Go to Themisphere with Talia and the others then."

"Thank you, Your Majesty!" Jack said.

"But no more stunts like the one in the battle just now!" Jack warned. "You have to be more careful! Don't throw your life away like that!"

"I don't regret it, Your Majesty," Kramer replied. His expression was determined. "You are not only my savior. You have taught me a lot of things as well. Especially what you said about good will always win. I believe that as long as you are alive, you will win. Even against someone as powerful as Euphosine. That's why I'm willing to give my life to protect you, and I was right!"

Jack sighed. "Go report to Thereath after arriving. Find Commander Salem. I will put you under his wing."

"Yes, Your Majesty!" Kramer exclaimed.

Kramer was just a special elite. His survival chance wasn't that good if a war broke out. So, Jack sent a message to Jeanny telling her to prepare another Pill of Growth for Kramer.

"You truly believe that is true? That Good always wins?" Freddie asked. He had come to Jack's side.

"After being trapped for so long by that devil woman, my thought on that expression is that it's nothing but horseshit."

"Does it matter?" Jack replied. "I don't think it matters whether it's true or not. Our past world is filled with truth and untruth. No one even knows what is true anymore. The world is full of angry, bitter, and pessimistic people. Everyone just complains and throws negative comments without concern. Most speak their minds as if they are experts and simply want to feel superior. Most of the time without even caring whether their words hurt others.

"Fewer and fewer people believe in goodness. Fewer believe that good will win. That good can win. Many even glorify evil... Good will always win. It might be true. It might not. It doesn't matter. What matters is that I want to believe in goodness. I want to believe that it is true. I want to believe that good will always win.

"If it is not true, then I will fight to make it come true. That's the point. It's better than drowning myself in all those negative craps that filled so much of our old world. I believe if more people think positively rather than negatively, the better our world will be. We have been given a second chance in this new world. I want to fight so that this world is filled with more good than bad."

Freddie was silent after hearing Jack's speech. He let out a long sigh and said, "It seems like I have grown old. You have gone far from that little brat whom I sparred with. Let me know if you need aid in making that world come true. You have my fists."

Chapter 1388: Vegetative Players

"In that case, please come to our guild," Jack said to Freddie. "Even better, join our guild! I believe my grandfather will be happy to see you again. Uncle Jet is also there."

"Jet? That clown is still alive? Sigh... I don't like him. He always made fun of my height. Just because he has an abnormally tall frame, doesn't mean he can ridicule others who have normal height."

"I have a feeling you will have a good time when you see him," Jack said, smiling mischievously.

Freddie didn't understand Jack's smile. He said, "All right, I'll join your guild."

"Great!" Jack sent him the guild invitation.

Hearing about the guild, Stefan, Richard, and Naomi also came before him. They looked sheepish.

"Um... I know we have fallen to level 1. Is it still okay for us to join your guild?" Stefan asked.

Jack smiled. "Don't worry. We have something that will help you to level up to level 30 and get your elite class back in two days. But after that, you have to abide by guild requirements and do guild tasks."

"No problem!" The three exclaimed simultaneously.

So, Jack sent them guild invitations as well. Their guild almost had full members, but they usually left around ten to twenty empty spots just in case they met rare talents. Stefan and the others weren't rare talents but Jack rarely invite members so he figured he had the executive right to fill a few of these spots.

Jack then saw Dina pull Tom over.

"Can we join as well?" Dina asked. "We're originally in another guild, but we checked just now we are no longer part of that guild. I guess they kick us out because we have been out of contact for so long."

"You don't want to return to that guild?" Jack asked.

Dina shook her head. Tom was just silent.

"All right, but same arrangements. Once you get to level 30, you have to do guild tasks," Jack said.

Dina nodded. When Tom didn't respond, she forced him to nod as well.

"Do I also have to do guild tasks?" Freddie asked.

"You don't need to, Uncle Freddie," Jack answered. "I'll let everyone know you are a core member. You can just hang back at the headquarters with my gramps."

"Uh... Why does he not need to do guild tasks while we..."

"Because I say so. Got a problem with that?" Jack asked before Stefan finished his question.

"No problem. Everything's good, boss," Stefan answered.

"No problem with the guild tasks. We are already glad you can help us get back to the elite class in two days," Naomi stated. She then added, "Is that truly possible?"

"It is. You'll see once we are back in Themisphere. Hm... Speaking of which...", Jack muttered as he thought of something. He then called all the players who were still there.

"Everyone! Listen up...!"

After making sure he got everyone's attention, he said, "There is an organization that can help you level up fast to level 30, so you can get your elite class back in two days. Have anyone of you heard about the Growth aid agency?"

When everyone showed confused expressions, Jack said. "That's okay. The fact is they can help you get to level 30 fast. All they need is five gold coins for each person. If any of you is interested, go to Thereath. You can either look for this organization yourself or find the info from my guild, Everlasting Heavenly Legends."

When Jack expected their happy faces from hearing the news, the players instead looked at each other with blank faces. One of them finally said, "But... We don't have anything anymore. We lost everything when we were killed in the game and revert to level 1. It will take us quite some time to gather five gold coins."

"You didn't store anything in the banks in the cities?" Jack asked.

Most of them shook their heads.

"I will pay for their fees," Talia announced. "Their situation is my faction's fault. I will take responsibility. In addition, I will give everyone here a set of armor and weapon to get you back on your feet. Okay, everyone can start lining up now!"

Talia again summoned her faction legacy. From that orb, she conjured 10 gold coins and a Town Return Scroll. She then gave them to the nearest player. She then asked that player his preferred equipment. After getting an answer, she conjured a set of armor and weapon and gave them to that player.

Seeing that, the other players started lining up.

While the players were lining up, Jack saw a group of players who just stood there without responding. Jack came to them and was surprised to see they all had blank looks and empty eyes. It was as if they were sleep-standing. After seeing these players, he had an inkling as to who these players were.

Thella noticed Jack's attention. She told him, "They were the players from the basement."

"You know about them as well?" Jack asked.

Thella nodded. "Though we were imprisoned inside the happy dolls, our beings were tethered to Euphosine and her worlds. So, we could roughly sense what was going on. I guess their minds broke after the repeated process of having their rebirth energies taken."

"They have become vegetative...," Freddie remarked. He and the others had followed over. All of them were glad they didn't share these players' fate. Especially Saddle. She was about to give up if she had to go through another one of Euphosine's games. If she knew this was the fate that awaited her, she wouldn't dare do so.

Some could still react, but they talked incoherently, like people with brain damage.

"Can they recover...?" Grace asked.

Thella shook her head. "We don't know. We are not experts regarding outworlders."

"When you traveled to Themisphere, do you mind bringing them as well?" Jack asked Thella.

"We can do that," Thella answered.

"Do you know something that can help them?" Freddie asked.

"I don't know, but I know some people who might want to take care of these poor people. At least until they get better," Jack answered.

Jack was thinking about Florence and her Missing Outworlders Coordination Center. At this stage, fewer players were searching for their family members. Most could already travel to all seven countries and this ease of access allowed them to find the ones they were looking for.

Considering that, the members of that organization should have the time to take care of these poor players. Also considering Florence's personality, she wouldn't just leave these vegetative players on their own. If she needed funds to care for these people, Jack won't mind giving her the coins she needed.

Chapter 1389: Euphosine's Loot

Talia's people were ready to leave in less than one hour, but Talia was still distributing the coins and equipment to the players. There were hundreds of players so it took some time. Jack and the others

were still baffled that so many people were trapped inside Euphosine's dimension. Probably multiple games were carried out in a month instead of just one, with separate participants for each game.

While waiting, Jack checked the other loots from Euphosine.

He got the usual coins and mana cores. The coins were not much, but for mana cores, he received quite a sum. Euphosine dropped 4,500 mana cores. This was the highest amount of mana cores that dropped from a single individual.

Aside from coins and mana cores, several rare and super rare equipment also dropped. One of which was a unique-grade magic staff. He gave the staff to Freddie. The others eyed him with jealousy but otherwise said nothing.

The remaining loots were the most precious ones. Among which were two gemstones, a technique book, and two items that he had previously gotten in the past.

The two gemstones were a unique-grade Ember and a legendary-grade Emerald. He had no runestone with the earth element, so he stored the ember. As for the emerald, he took out his Runestone of Marching and feed the legendary-grade emerald into it

The runestone only needed 4,900 elemental energies to upgrade to the next rank. The legendary-grade Emerald supplied 30,000 elemental energies. The runestone of marching upgraded into the unique grade.

The runestone could now boost the marching speed to an additional 75%. If he focused on his willpower, he might even increase the boost to almost 100%. This effectively doubled the army's marching speed.

As for the technique book, it contained the Magic Clone spell. Peniel said it was a spell learnable by Archmage. When Jack asked what this spell did, Peniel asked him to imagine Assassin's Combat Clone, except for Archmage. Furthermore, while Combat Clone couldn't use skill, Magic clones could cast spells."

"So, I can have a copy that can fight and use skills?" Jack asked Peniel.

"The spell creates a clone that can do everything you do. In theory, it should be able to use your other classes' skills aside from your magic spells, but I can't say for sure. You will have to learn the spell and test it to be sure."

"I will let Jeanny copy it first before learning it," Jack said.

"After learning it, don't spend any skill points on it," Peniel informed.

"Why?" Jack asked.

"This is one of those spells that can be fused, and you've already got the spell it can pair with."

"Really? Which spell?"

"Body Double," Peniel answered.

"Oh? What spell does it become after it is fused? What does it do?"

"You will see when you fuse it," Peniel said.

"Come on. Tell me! Once the spells are fused, I lose Body Double, right? I like that spell. If I'm to lose it, I need to know what I get in return."

"Fine. The fused spell is called Double Clone. Magic Clone gives you one copy that can fight and use skills. Double Clone gives you two clones that can fight and use skills."

"Hm...," Jack gave the matter a thought.

"What are you considering? Having two clones that are as strong as you will give you a great edge in a battle. Your enemy already has a headache fighting one of you. They will be having a nightmare if they have to battle three of you."

"You got a point there, but Body Double is very effective for me if I want to scout," Jack said. "The copies from that spell are illusions, so the enemies won't be able to block them. The clones from the fused spells can be physically blocked."

"You got your incorporeal state for scouting. Why do you still have to rely on Body Double?" Peniel asked.

"I guess you are right. Okay, let's fuse the spell once Jeanny copies it," Jack said.

He then turned to the last two items. These two were items he had gotten before, but they were also the most valuable ones among the loot he had ever gotten. They were the Talent Pill and the Upgrade Cell.

He needed a private place to use these two things, so he stored them first for now.

"What do you plan to use the Upgrade Cell on?" Peniel asked.

"Do you have a suggestion?" Jack asked back.

"I do."

"What do you suggest? Don't make me think hard and then tell me to use it on something else like the last time," Jack said.

"That's because you didn't think properly. Okay, I'll tell you. Use it on your Container of Souls."

"That is also my choice," Jack said.

"Really?" Peniel asked.

"Well, you'll never really know now, won't you?" Jack replied with a grin. Peniel could only roll her eyes.

"Are you going to let Jeanny copy those Talent Pill and Upgrade Cell as well?" Peniel asked.

"How many mana cores do you think it will need?" Jack asked back.

"I think it will be almost the same as the Mana Gathering Stone," Peniel answered.

"100,000 mana cores?" Jack asked in surprise. "But that item is a legendary grade. These two are unique grades."

Peniel shrugged. "These two are items that are very hard to appear, especially the upgrade cell. The Talent Pill might cost fewer mana cores, but I don't reckon it will be very far."

"You also mentioned Talent Pill doesn't always work, right? If the user doesn't have any talent from the start, this pill is wasted."

"That's right," Peniel confirmed.

Jack sent a message to Jeanny, "Do you have 100,000 mana cores?"

"... I got a lot of them from my visit to the Council of Elpo but have not yet hit the 100,000 mark. Why do you ask? I have a lot of other things for other members to use these mana cores on. I can't just use them all for you unless you provide the mana cores yourself."

"Uh... Never mind then," Jack said and ended the message.

"Are you going to wait until Jeanny or you collected enough mana cores to copy those two items?" Peniel asked.

"It already takes me ages to get half that amount for my pendant summon, which was gone after the summon. I'm now crawling back to that amount again. I can't wait that long," Jack answered. "F*ck it. Once I find a quiet place, I will just use them."

After more than an hour, Talia finally finished distributing her gifts to the players.

Some of the players left using their newly-gained Town Return Scroll. They would later teleport to Thereath to look for the Growth Aid Agency. As for those who hadn't traveled to Themisphere before, opted to stay with Talia and the others and traveled together. With their current levels, they won't be able to make it alone to another country.

Talia came to Jack and said, "I haven't given you your additional reward."

"Oh? You got an additional reward for me?" Jack asked. He thought the additional reward mentioned by the quest description was the chance to build a divine faction in his country or integrate Eyrene's group into his army.

Maybe it's all of them.

"I can give you coins, mana cores, exp pills, Thousand Year Wines, or gemstones. Which one do you choose?" Talia asked.

"Choose? I can't have all of them?" Jack asked. He swung his head away as Peniel came slapping.

"Hehe, I know you will do that," Jack laughed at the fairy.

Talia chuckled. "I can only give you one of them," Talia said.

"May I know the quantity of each?" Jack asked.

"You may not," Talia answered.

"Ugh, fine. I choose mana cores then," Jack said. He was just lamenting about how slow it was to get mana cores just now.

Talia nodded. She again summoned her faction legacy and extracted mana cores from it.

As the mana cores flowed into Jack. He found that Talia had given him a total of 30,000 mana cores.

Chapter 1390: Rifts in Relationship

Jack now had 44,500 mana cores inside his inventory. This number was still far to be enough to copy the talent pill and Upgrade Cell, though. So, he stuck to his decision to not copy those two items.

These mana cores were prioritized for his pendant summon. A bit more and he could summon the Archdemon Lord again. The Archdemon Lord was his current ace-in-the-hole to get out of a tough situation. If he could summon it during the fight with Euphosine just now, the battle would have been much easier.

"We are ready to leave now. Will you be joining us?" Talia asked.

"No, I will use my Town Return Scroll and get back directly. Your new base will be waiting for you when you arrive," Jack answered.

"All right then. I hope I see you again," Talia said.

"You will," Jack replied.

As Talia bid Jack farewell, Jack received notification that his Influence skill had upgraded to Advanced Expert. Talia was now the leader of a divine faction. Being a friend to her helped boost Jack's standing.

Talia organized her people. The players who wanted to join them in traveling to Themisphere followed after their group. Talia lent all of them rare-grade steeds so that they could have decent traveling speed. Stefan, Richard, Dina, and Tom followed Talia's group since they had never visited Themisphere in the past. Freddie and Naomi had. The two used their Town Return Scroll to teleport to their hometown before teleporting to Themisphere. Jack informed them to look for Bowler once they arrived.

"I am going somewhere first, I will see you later," Grace said to Jack.

"Oh? Where are you going?"

"Greed's place is close to here. I promise him I will visit once in a while," Grace answered.

Hearing that, Jack pondered for a bit. He then said. "I'll follow you."

"Are you sure? I thought you need to go back to the palace after being absent for so long," Grace asked.

It was indeed so. Tomorrow would be the day when he could do another Mass Drill and Call to Arms, but he was also very eager to get the Gold Dragon Wing Peniel mentioned. He had seen Master with his demonic wings and Grace with her wings tool. They could fly anytime they wanted, while he was still limited by his beast form and Soar spell's duration.

He remembered inside Greed's sanctum, the aerial combat portal awarded him 390 draconic essences each round. He only needed another 3050 draconic essences to reach bloodline level 9. He only needed to do eight runs inside that portal, then he was good. Even if he could only do it once a day, this would only take eight days. If he went to the underworld, it would take him roughly ten days to get that

amount. Additionally, he couldn't go back to the spot he had visited before, so it might take even longer than that.

"The kingdom is in good hands, John should manage. I will inform him of my plan," Jack said.

John had been sending messages to Jack but Jack didn't find John's tone to be urgent, hence he hadn't contacted John back until now.

"Where have you been all this time? Are you all right?" John asked.

"I am touched by your concern," Jack replied.

"I actually hoped you are not all right, so I can promote myself to be the new king," John said. "Are you coming back today? I have something I want to discuss with you."

"What is it? Is it urgent?"

"It might. I can't be sure. There has been some unrest in some towns near our border with Verremor."

"What? What kind of unrest?"

"There have been reports of some of our citizens clashing with the orcs there, starting around a week ago. Not long after we lost contact with you."

"How? Haven't we already implemented regulations to bring the two races together? Like open border, trade exchanges, and dignitary visits, especially between the settlements at the border?"

"That's true. That's why I have increased the security at those settlements. I have a feeling this is not an accidental occurrence."

"You think it's intentional?" Jack asked.

"I can't say for sure. I will need more information," John replied.

"Send our investigative teams to those border towns. This incident takes priority. I don't have many affairs to be investigated at the moment, anyway."

"All right, I will organize them. So, you are not returning today?"

"No extremely urgent stuff, right? I want to go somewhere else first. I will return in eight days."

"Wow, that long? You should just give your crown to me," John said.

"Bye," Jack replied and ended the chat.

"Something happens?" Grace asked. She saw Jack's face turning tense for a bit while he was messaging.

Jack told her what John had told him.

"Shouldn't you return? You have done so much to bring peace between Themisphere and Verremor. It will be a pity if this peace is ruined."

"I can't do anything even if I return. I have to wait until our investigative teams get more information," Jack replied. "But I will check the situation on the other side."

Jack contacted Four Winds.

Four Winds confirmed there were disturbing reports on the border towns. Human nobles had been throwing complaints about illegal orc activities near the border but the orc chiefs assured that there was no such activity. The orc chiefs had instead grown irritated because they felt accused. The old enmity between the two races had started to resurface. Four Winds and Grand Chief Kabaka were trying their best to defuse the situation, but if the matter escalated, they were afraid things might go out of hand.

Jack told Four Winds to continue calming those chiefs. He told Four Winds he had sent some teams to investigate the truth of the incidents. He believed things should be brought to light soon.

"You sure you don't want to go back?" Grace asked.

Jack shook his head. "I can go back immediately if something bad happens," Jack replied. But then he added, "Wait, that Greed fellow won't lock me up again, will he?"

Grace smiled. "Don't worry. Let's go." She summoned her Unicorn.

Jack summoned Pandora.

Talia and the others had left. The mansion and the garden around it were now just a ruin. Probably the world system would have monsters spawn at this place and turn it into a new wilderness zone. Jack gave the place another look before he left with Grace.

In the Shylvan region where the mist that imprisoned people in Euphosine's dimension used to be located, an army had gathered. Master was leading the army. He found that there was nothing there. The mist was gone. There was no mansion. No base of the Council of Charites.

"How do they escape?" Motherboard, who was riding beside Master, asked. "There should be at least a building here, shouldn't it?"

"... It seems the power source of that faction's base is not yet depleted," Master answered, but he was no less surprised. Even if the power source was still available, he expected Jack or the natives who survived would at least stay for half a day before deciding to leave. He never expected them to leave this place so early.

"Never mind. Let's return," Master commanded. At the same time, he sent a message to Linda who was in Liguritudum palace.

"How is our preparation?"

"Our main troops still need around one week before we can begin our campaign. As for the distraction, I made the preparation a week ago. They are in hiding but will be good to go at any time, but we should wait until our army moves before using them."

"What about the negotiation with that person?"

"He had agreed. He will act as requested."

"Good. Then hasten the preparation so we can move earlier!"