

World 1441

Chapter 1441: The Quests to incite a Rebellion Within the Rebels

After getting Wilted's info from Jack, Corporate United members had an easier time progressing the kingdom faction quest. They compiled a list containing the high-ranking political leaders in Boron's camp and watched them in secret.

After determining the most likely targets, they put those under heavy surveillance. From the surveillance, they further homed in on the ones who seemed the most restless about the rebellion. They then started prying for more information from the people around the ones they targeted.

"Currently, we have four targets. Lumnil Nightaxe, Morgri Goldbuckle, Uvud Rodbringer, and Yonhilda Mountchest," Ironhand said to Grace and Paytowin. "They are all influential party leaders who commanded a portion of the troops from Boron's army. They seemed to be on board with the rebellion but from our probing, we know they are having second thoughts. After more snooping, we now have enough information about how to sway the four leaders' opinions."

"How?" Paytowin asked.

"In the case of Lumnil and Morgri, they are worried that Boron doesn't think they are important enough," Ironhand answered. "Boron had a habit of keeping a journal on his subjects who had wronged him and whom he considered deserving of reward. We need to steal this journal. If Lumnil and Morgri's names are on Boron's bad list, or not on the list at all which indicates that Boron doesn't think much of them, this can be used to persuade the two to switch sides."

"What about Uvud and Yonhilda?" David asked.

"Uvud and his wife are close friends to Boron. But recently, his wife spent a lot of time visiting Boron without him. When Uvud confronted her about her having an affair, she denied it. She said Boron was under heavy pressure due to the current ongoing rebellion. Boron is her childhood friend. She wanted to console him during this difficult time. That's why she often went to visit Boron. Uvud accepted the explanation but people who are close to him can see that he carries a little suspicion even if he doesn't want to admit it. If we can find proof and show that Boron is indeed having an affair with Uvud's wife. This can help end the two's partnership.

"As for Yonhilda, she supported Boron because Boron has his brother hostage. If we can free his brother, she will surely switch sides."

"I see," David said. "Out of the four, Yonhilda is the most certain in terms of outcome. Saving her brother will ensure she will no longer help Boron. But for the other three, even if we get the journal, if Lumnil and Morgri's names are inside Boron's good list, it won't help us. Uvud is the same. If we tail his wife and turns out there is indeed nothing going on between her and Boron, it would just be a waste of time."

"Then we should focus our effort on Yonhilda," Grace said.

David nodded.

"We have enough members to go after all of them," Ironhand said. "But if you three wanted to help on Yonhilda's case, that is up to you."

"I bring some of our members with me," David said. "They are masters at covert operations. I will lend them to you to deal with the journal and the affairs. As for I, I will go for Yonhilda's brother."

"Paytowin and I will join you," Grace said to David.

"Okay, I will have one of my guild members with the kingdom faction quest to lead you," Ironhand said. "According to our intel, Yonhilda's brother is held in one of Palgrost's forts. The fort used to be the base for Boron's private army. His army has left but the fort is not empty. Boron left some troops behind to guard the fort."

"Where is this fort?" David asked.

"It is in..."

Ironhand suddenly went quiet. His face became tense.

"What's wrong?" Grace asked.

"My party members. The ones who are posted outside... Their names are greyed," Ironhand answered.

The door to the room opened then. As it did, six round things came flying from the door. The door was closed again.

"Grenade!!" David shouted.

The VIP room was a closed space. Other than the door, there was no other exit. The VIP room itself was not that large. The blast from the grenade would cover the entire room. There was no escape. Even with the current players' high level, their HPs were not enough to survive the damage from six grenades.

Both Grace and Paytowin were on alert once they heard Ironhand's words. Grace was about to do something but Paytowin beat her to it. His body was covered by the metallic armor of his Brave Techno Suit.

"Everyone huddled to that corner!" Paytowin yelled while activating his suit's overdrive mode. He zoomed forward and caught all the grenades and then rushed toward the other end of the corner.

David and Grace reacted at once after hearing Paytowin. Ironhand was still confused. Grace grabbed the guy and forcefully pulled him.

The grenades exploded on Paytowin's chest point-blank. He might have survived with the Brave Techno Suit on, but he didn't want to take any chances. The grenades might have been from players who had fully leveled the skill. So, he activated Unyielding Hope and gained invulnerability for two seconds.

The grenades' AOE blast spread forward. A grenade hit a three-meter radius area. If they had detonated at the center of the room, the blast would've covered the entire room. But because Paytowin had brought the grenades to a corner, the opposite corner was spared from the blast. This corner was where Grace and the others were currently huddling in.

Grace would be fine since her armor had very high defense and she had also activated the Armor of Ego, but David and Ironhand would have been killed. Paytowin's fast reaction saved the two.

Once the explosion ended, the door opened again. Six players with face masks rushed in, no doubt thinking about finishing off anyone who survived the blast. They were shocked to find three players at the corner were still in full health. They then heard the door behind them was closed.

They turned around and saw someone who was fully covered in a metal suit blocking the door. Next to him was a large golden-colored techno golem.

"You morons are going to tell us why the hell you attacked us," Paytowin said.

Chapter 1442: A Series of Killing

The six were very surprised that they were surrounded by five full-health opponents. They thought after the ambush, they would find corpses or near-death players when they barged in. Even so, they were no amateurs who panicked at unexpected situations. They quickly put themselves back-to-back covering all angles and started shooting using their guns.

Unfortunately, their targets were not normal opponents.

Grace and the others had known the six were all gunners from the grenades they threw. Grace rushed forward. With her unique-grade armor and Armor of Ego in effect, she brushed off all the incoming bullets. Her mace split into two smaller versions and they struck as fast as an eagle and as agile as a snake.

Paytowin didn't stay idle. He and Brave King also rushed forward. He was confident of his brave techno suit's defense, and he chose melee engagement against these gunner players.

He was now level 71. He received another level when he reached level 70, a skill that provided him with a melee weapon. The skill was Brave Saber. The Brave Saber summoned a laser sword, which dealt 200% light damage. The saber ignored 30% defense and increased his attack speed by 100%. Each slash with the saber had a 10% chance of causing Burn effect. The skill's duration was ten minutes with a one-hour cooldown.

Paytowin held the Brave Saber in his right hand while his left hand used a unique-grade gun that was awarded by ghost Callan after completing several tasks. Brave King fought beside him.

David was also a gunner class, but he did not shy away from melee engagement as he had shown during the world tournament.

Ironhand was the only one who didn't rush forward. He was still confused about the situation and reacted late. He was an elite marksman and his bow was not an ideal weapon in this cramped room, but he did what he could.

None of them used any AOE skills. With how small the room was, those skills would just hit everyone.

The fight didn't last long. The six were above-average players and were no doubt someone who had experienced plenty of battle situations in the past, but those weren't enough to triumph over the

equipment and skill disparity from Grace and Paytowin. David also proved to be a better combatant than them.

Out of the six, three were killed and the other three were incapacitated. Grace, Paytowin, and David each used a runic rope to bind the three players who were still alive. This was a safe zone, killing the enemies only reduced their levels by one, which made them wonder why these people bothered to attack them in the first place.

After binding the three, they forcefully took off their face masks which were easily removable, unlike other equipment. They could inspect these players then.

All three were guild members of the State of Galhana.

'Have we been found out?' Paytowin sent a message to the others.

'The fact that they are here might point to that,' David replied. He then grabbed one of the captives and asked, "Why are you here? Who ordered you to attack us?"

The person was silent.

"I know you used to be a soldier from the way you fight. I am one too," David said. "One who is not foreign to interrogation techniques. We don't have much time so I will go right ahead to the painful one."

David pressed his thumb to the man's left eye. The man flinched but he couldn't escape. David started applying pressure.

"You won't receive damage since I'm not using any weapon," David said while increasing his pressure. "You also won't get permanently blinded since we are in a game world, but you will fully feel the pain. Now, how long you are willing to endure this is up to you."

The man started screaming.

"Good lord...," Ironhand uttered.

Grace turned away.

David started using two thumbs on both the man's eyes. The screams became louder. No one from the outside heard the screams. The VIP room was soundproof when its door was closed.

It went on for several minutes. Finally, the man succumbed. However, they didn't give much information. They just knew that they were ordered by the guild's upper echelon to target the Corporate United members within the city.

Ironhand confirmed this. He just received reports about multiple attacks aimed at their members. Some were killed inside the city. Some unfortunate ones were incapacitated by using runic ropes and dragged out of the city to be killed outside the safe zone.

Manager Steelhand who oversaw the operation in this city had issued an order for every member to stay in the public area. All the attacks were done covertly. The enemies didn't dare to do it out in the open.

"Let's take these three to the city guards," Grace said.

"What's the point? The ruler of this city is in league with their guild," Ironhand said.

"They are still bound by the game rules. The fact that they have to do it covertly means they will get captured if found by the guards," Grace replied.

"All right, let me deal with that," Ironhand said. He then continued by using messages. "Now that we know we are targeted, we need to move fast. You three go to Mirgrom. Yonhilda's brother was held in a fort called Khurn Valdur. Mirgrom is the closest town to that fort. Do you have the teleport access to that town?"

Grace, Paytowin, and David nodded.

"Good. Meet my guild mate there who goes by the name of Associate Clearsky. I've notified him. He has the kingdom faction quest. He will guide you to the fort."

The four split. Ironhand took the bound three players to a guard station. Grace was right. The city guards took the three into custody and put them in jail. Ironhand wasn't blamed despite being involved in killing the comrades of these captured players. This was because the other side attacked first. His act was considered as self-defense.

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At the city hall, Sizhad came to Boron.

"I have a few men in the city jail. I would like them released," he said.

Boron didn't turn to him. "I heard. I also heard they are part of a series of killings that have suddenly happened around this city. Is your guild doing something behind my back?"

"... All that we do, we do it for the good of our rebellion. These people whom my guild dealt with are outworlders who threaten our cause."

"I don't like you saying what we do is a rebellion," Boron said. "It is a revolution. One that aims to put this country on the right track. Whatever you are doing, stop it at once. This revolution needs the people's support. If I let senseless killings happen under my watch, what will the people think of me? Releasing the captured killers is even more out of the question. Your members should blame themselves for getting captured."

Sizhad scowled. Boron never turned to him throughout their conversations. The native didn't give him any face.

"I understand," Sizhad replied. He left the room without showing any discontent.

Boron looked at the outworlder leave. This should teach him his place, Boron thought.

Chapter 1443: Random Maze Dungeon

Jack and Arlcard came out from the house where Horatio teleported Jack after saving him from Emperor Marcus. Arlcard led the way. They were sneaking in the direction of the royal mausoleum. The two went on foot and via secluded alleys.

The capital had been put under curfew since the lockdown began. Very few civilians were wandering around. Most shops were closed and a lot of patrolling guards were on the street.

Jack was using a disguise and Arlcard could easily blend in as one of Sangrod's vampires, but they still took precautions and went through paths with the least number of people. Jack used his radar to avoid the patrolling guards.

Jack also used mana concealment in case there were unknown detection spells in effect. After he gained the Mana Affinity talent, his mana concealment also improved. He could now conceal his mana while moving. Mana concealment had been proven to be able to fool even the God-eye monocle's radar. So, he figured it should be able to fool detection spells as well.

After a couple of hours of sneaking around, they finally arrived at the city cemetery. It was quiet there. No one was around.

Jack continued following Arlcard into the cemetery. They came upon a huge structure surrounded by stone walls. The wall had only one gate and two vampire soldiers were guarding it. The soldiers were only level 60 elite grades, but Arlcard said that they had better not do anything to those guards.

The guards were replaced every few hours. If the replacement guards came and saw the two were gone, they would know something was up. He didn't believe whatever they needed to do down there could be settled in just a few hours.

Arlcard led Jack to the back and asked. "You have the teleportation spell, right?"

Jack nodded.

"Use it," Arlcard said. "Don't fly over the wall. There is a detection spell. If someone tried entering from above the wall, an alarm would sound. Teleportation is safe, though."

Finished talking, Arlcard cast a spell and he disappeared.

"He also has the teleportation spell. That guy has lots of skills and spells for a native," Jack remarked.

"That's a good thing, right?" Peniel said.

"I didn't say it's bad," Jack replied and started casting Teleportation.

He appeared past the wall behind the huge mausoleum structure. Arlcard was waiting for him there. The vampire gestured silently for Jack to follow.

They sneaked to the front of the structure. Arlcard opened the mausoleum's door slowly so as to not make any sound to alert the guards outside the wall. He held the door and gestured for Jack to enter.

Jack was still wondering where was the rune diagram that denied Arlcard entry. When he entered the mausoleum. He saw it then. There was a slanted door in the middle of the floor. A large rune diagram was on the floor surrounding that door.

Arlcard slowly closed the front door. Only after the door was closed that he spoke again. "That is the door to the mausoleum's basement. I need to get in there."

"You are still not telling me what you are after down there?" Jack asked, to which Arlcard replied with silence.

Jack didn't push the vampire for an answer. He was observing the rune diagram with both his eyes and mana sense.

"Doesn't seem too complicated," Jack said after a while. "Well, not for my current ability, of course. I say this sealing rune diagram is a bit simpler than the one that held Pandora. It should only take me a few minutes to unravel it."

Jack went to work then, sensing and moving the nodes to depower the rune diagram. Arlcard watched in silence while guarding the entrance.

It was as Jack expected. The rune diagram shimmered and disappeared after around fifteen minutes.

"Won't they get suspicious if they find the sealing rune diagram has gone?" Jack asked Arlcard.

"No one enters this mausoleum unless they suspected a forced entry. We have made sure we are undetected when we enter. We should be safe."

Arlcard went to the slanted door. Both he and Jack didn't sense anything from the door. He opened it then. Behind the opened door were staircases down to the basement.

"Let's go," Arlcard said and headed down.

"Okay, boss," Jack replied and followed in.

They came to a large square basement with nothing in it except for a door on one of the walls. The two went to that door. They sensed nothing so they opened it. Behind the door was nothing but void.

"A portal?" Jack asked.

Arlcard paused for a bit before he said, "Let's enter."

He went through the portal.

Peniel said, "I guess we met your rival in blindly going into uncharted places."

"This is his quest, he probably knows what is behind this portal," Jack said.

"His face doesn't show that he knows," Peniel replied.

"Well, let's not get left behind into the uncharted place then," Jack said and entered the portal.

Coming out on the other side, Jack found it to be the same large square hall. Except it was not the same. This hall had three doors. One from which they came from, another two on different walls.

"Which one?" Jack asked Arlcard who was standing there staring at the two doors.

It took him almost a minute before saying, "This one." He walked towards the door.

"He just randomly picks one, doesn't he?" Jack said to Peniel.

"As I said, your rival," Peniel replied.

They entered the next door and came to a similar hall again, except it was not empty this time. There were three skeleton warriors there. Jack used his Inspect and found that they were level 76 elite grades.

They were the same level as Arclard but since they were only elite grades and only three, they were not a menace. Jack summoned Terras so it could get the exp points as well. The three of them quickly destroyed those skeleton warriors. The monsters didn't drop anything when they died but they did give exp points and souls.

This time, all the walls had a door. A total of four doors including the one they had entered from.

"I think this is a procedurally generated maze dungeon," Jack said.

"What is that?" Peniel asked.

"A maze that is formed randomly. If we go back up to the mausoleum and enter again, I bet we will find these halls to have a different setup of doors."

"Like the Daedalus Labyrinth?" Peniel said.

"Yes. But this one is simpler. This place was composed of only square halls and doors," Jack answered. "Since it was that way, we won't know which one is the right door. We can only try our luck through these doors until we find whatever we are here to find."

"That's right. Let's continue," Arlcard said.

"Okay, boss," Jack repeated his remark.

Chapter 1444: Leading the Army Through the Jagara Region

While Jack was going through the procedurally generated maze dungeon under the royal mausoleum, John was leading the army through the mountainous terrains of the Jagara region.

When he was back in Thereath mapping the route for the army to take, he had mapped a second route for backup. He was now using this backup route.

The first route was a wide path with the least concentration of monsters. Hence, most natives who had ventured out into the wilderness should know this route as well. It was the most common route to take if one wanted to go through the Jagara region quickly. This also made the path the easiest to intercept if someone wanted to stop their advance.

He expected his mother to have prepared some kind of an obstacle for him on this path. He just didn't expect it to be a Sangrod army.

The alternate path he currently used was least known. It was because the army had to go through several narrow valleys as well as some areas where strong monsters were known to roam. He had no choice, though. It's either this or having a clash with the Sangrod army. Even if it was unavoidable, he mapped this path to make sure they went through as minimal of these problematic areas as possible.

The march using the first route would have taken them roughly four days to arrive in Palgrost. This alternate trek cost them around two extra days of travel. Aside from the longer travel time, the

alternate route also included the risk of losing some soldiers to the monsters. Low-level monsters ran once they saw the huge army. High-level monsters were more daring.

John picked high-level soldiers to form a battalion as the vanguard. Arther led this vanguard. John rode together with them to gain exp from the monsters that came to their path.

With Arther spearheading, the vanguard troops had no problem clearing the way. However, the monsters didn't only come from the front. The army was forced to form a very long line due to the narrow path. This caused the army to take a very long time before they vacated an area.

Sometimes the monsters weren't there when the vanguard troops passed. But after a while, they came when the army was halfway or nearly passed through. This caused the mid-section and the rear to receive assaults from the monsters.

With a large number of soldiers, these monsters were not their match, but the assault at the mid and rear sections resulted in casualties. John knew this couldn't be helped. He could only try to minimize the loss as much as possible.

John had the illusionists cast Illusion Copy at an interval. He then instructed these copies to form several regiments and had them run in different directions. He knew the Sangrod army wouldn't just give up and go home. That vampire army must be actively searching for them even now, hence the need to constantly create distractions to lead them on a wild goose chase.

These distractions had indeed cost Ezekiel many headaches. As he made his way to where the Jagara region bordered the Palgrost, he received reports several times of the human army sightings. When he got the first report, he led the main army to where the sighting was. Only to find no trace of any army passing through there. They ended up having to fight the monsters in the area.

He then received a second report where the sighting was at a completely different and faraway place, which meant it was not possible for this sighting to be the same army as the first sighting. He knew then that these sightings were mere copies created by the illusionists.

Since then, he only sent a regiment to check out the next sightings while his main army continued toward the border between the Jagara and Palgrost. He would lay a blockade there and wait for the Themisphere army.

John was aware of such a scenario. He knew the Sangrod army was sure to barricade the entry toward Palgrost. The problem was that the lands between Jagara and Palgrost were separated by a huge chasm. There were only a few spots where the chasm shrank and allowed the two lands to touch one another. These were mostly at untraversable places. The only decent land connection was at the end of the original first route, where a wide natural earth bridge covered the chasm.

This was the place Ezekiel was preparing his barricade.

With Ezekiel using the original route and John using the alternate route, it was not possible for John to beat the Sangrod army to that spot. If Themisphere army couldn't arrive at that place before the Sangrod army, then it didn't matter if they managed to elude capture from the Sangrod army. They would still get blocked before entering Palgrost, making their situation exactly the same as before.

John was aware of this fact. However, his destination was not that spot. His destination was some distance away from the natural earth bridge. At this destination, the chasm shrank to a gap of around twenty meters. There was a very old wooden bridge there, built by the ancient people.

Most everyone had forgotten about this bridge. Mostly because the area of this bridge was infested by many high-level monsters. John knew about it because he had Hope's knowledge.

The wooden bridge was small, though. The width only allowed four to five people to walk side-by-side. This meant it would take a huge army a long time to cross that small bridge.

Even so, this was their best option. Of course, John hoped that Jack could create a miracle and work everything out with the Sangrod Empire so they stop blocking their way. In this case, they could return to the first route and proceed normally. But relying on a miracle was not his style, that's why he proceeded with this backup plan.

The last communication John had with Jack was that he had established contact with one of Marcus' heirs. They were planning a rebellion against Marcus. Jack was staying there to help with the rebellion. He had struck a deal if Marcus was overthrown, the Sangrod Empire would back Themisphere in its war against Liguritutum.

If that truly happened, then everything would be for the best. But hoping for the best to get realized was similar to a miracle. They rarely or almost never happened. Yet, in some way, John still thought that might happen. This was because Jack had proven to create miracles on several occasions. He hoped that Jack didn't disappoint this time.

Chapter 1445: The Clash Between Guild Players

In the following days, Jeanny and the others continued to perform guerilla warfare on the Liguritutum army to halt their advance. The number of obstacles prepared along the Liguritutum army's route toward Balgadur was substantial. The three guilds who supplied the war tools had gone all out and the other guilds chipped in on the required materials.

Sadly, these war tools didn't put enough dent in the Liguritutum troops. They simply served to slow the march.

Jeanny and the others no longer waited until the Liguritutum army was stopped by the war tools before they sprang their ambush. They did it at different times as long as an opportunity arose. This was so the timing of their ambush was not too predictable.

The Liguritutum army didn't stop or divide their forces to deal with these players. Linda knew that doing so would just serve the enemy's purpose. These guild players could easily split up and run away in different directions. Maybe some would be killed, but a majority could easily escape using the Town Return Scroll once they were out of combat.

Doing this would just slow down their march, which was what the enemy wanted.

However, after using the same tactic a few times, the opponent naturally figured out a solution. Not to mention, Linda was not an average tactician.

On the fourth ambush, several regiments rushed back. The native army completely ignored Jeanny's ambush and continued onward without slowing their march. They only use defensive skills to reduce the damage they receive.

"That's all right. If they want to sacrifice a few regiments to keep up their marching speed, we will gladly take out these regiments," Jeanny said to the others. "Be ready for combat!"

When these regiments came over, Jeanny noticed that none of them were natives. They were all players. They were players from many different guilds.

Megan, who was beside Jeanny, recognized one of those players.

"Morius! So, now the Sand Family has switched sides to aid the invaders?" Megan called.

"Hah! Smart men know where the winds blow," Morius replied. "I don't care who Hydrurond's sovereign is. As long as they give me benefits, I don't mind working for them. I'm just confused why Brother Herald refuses to join."

"That means he is a better man than you," Megan said.

"I've had enough of your mouth, stupid wench. You act all high and mighty. I can't wait to see your face when I put you in your place."

On a different side, others were also conversing when they noticed familiar faces.

"Traitor!" One of the enemy players shouted. That person was Killingred. Next to her were Yellow Death, Green Death, Violent Death, Grimclaw, Queen Magenta, and Princess Purple.

"I should be the one who says that to you!" Blue Death shouted back. "How dare you betray our true leader!"

Red Death and Scarface were next to him. True Death Associates were among the guilds who joined Jeanny's ambushing team.

"I agree that the fake Death Associates is a nest for traitors," Silverwing uttered. His eyes were staring sharply at Grimclaw. He still hadn't paid that turncoat back for hitting him in the back and almost killing him the last time. Maybe today was his chance for payback.

"I agree," Jennifer said. Her eyes were on Queen Magenta.

"How dare you call us fake?" Yellow Death replied. "We formed the guild first. The first has the right to the name. Your guild naming yourself True Death Associates just shows that you are all a bunch of sore losers!"

"Who are the losers are not yet decided," Scarface returned.

"What are we talking for? Attack!!!" Red Death yelled and rushed forward.

These took the others aback. Jeanny who was the leader of these guild players hadn't yet issued the order to attack, but they couldn't just let Red Death fight alone. The other members of True Death Associates also charged forward.

Silverwing and Jennifer were slightly conflicted but they soon issued the order to attack.

Jeanny saw the other side start clashing. She was still wondering if it was the best move to engage these guild players. She decided she was just thinking too much.

"Forward...!!!" She gave the command.

Everyone charged.

Jeanny's player army was composed of the ten guilds that met inside Thereath palace, added by a few guilds from Palgrost. As for the enemy's side, they were composed of Death Associates, Liguritutum's six slave guilds, several guilds from Hydrurond's like the Sand Family, and a few Palgrost's guilds who had decided to take Boron's side.

Their number was almost even. Against an equal number of opponents, expertise became the deciding factor. In this case, the Everlasting Heavenly Legends' members stood out.

Other guilds at this stage had their members largely differed in level range. Only a small portion had levels around 70. Most others had died and some even had to start over. So, a majority were level 50 to 65. However, almost all of Everlasting Heavenly Legends' members were above level 65. Their core members were all level 70 or above.

This was possible thanks to the Resurrection Chapel.

Such a disparity of levels took the others aback. To add to their shock, almost all of Everlasting Heavenly Legends' members fought like expert martial artists. Especially the core members. One core member could easily take on several same-level opponents.

Additionally, Everlasting Heavenly Legends' core members' equipment were top-notch. Jack had occasionally fused equipment and then put them in the guild warehouse. Core members who had sufficient guild contribution points used those points to exchange for the equipment.

In just a short time, Everlasting Heavenly Legends' members bulldozed right through the enemy's ranks.

None of them could summon their guild armies, even the guilds from Palgrost and Liguritutum. Aside from during a guild war where a guild headquarters was invaded, the other time a guild army could be summoned was as reinforcements to the kingdom army of the country where their headquarters resided.

If the Liguritutum army had stayed, the Liguritutum guilds who had formally joined the war summon quest would be able to summon their guild armies. However, at this moment, the Liguritutum army was far away already.

Hence, this was purely the guild players' battle.

Jeanny was fighting with her companion. Garuda took to the sky with his trusty falcon. He swooped down on unsuspecting players every chance he got. Since the players had fewer HP than natives, he reaped more kills with each swoop compared to the previous ambushes against the native army.

Jeanny was still wondering if this was the enemy's tactic. Were they sacrificing these guild players just so that the Liguritutum army could march unhindered?

She then heard the sounds of marching from behind. She turned back and saw a new group of guild players charging at them. They were the World Maker and World Ruler players.

Chapter 1446: Clash Against the Strongest Guilds

Seeing these enemy reinforcements, Jeanny immediately warned the others.

"Should we retreat?" Megan asked.

If they wanted to retreat, they should do it now when those World Maker and World Ruler's guild players had not yet arrived. When those enemies did, they would be pinned from two sides. They would suffer more casualties if they retreated under that condition.

Jeanny paused for a second before replying, "No. We still have a trick up our sleeves. We will be the one who gives them a surprise."

Jeanny commanded the other guilds to continue the battle here. As for the Everlasting Heavenly Legends, Jeanny pulled them out and moved to the back to engage the incoming World Maker and World Ruler. The first group of the enemy guilds had been softened by the initial clash. Even if Everlasting Heavenly Legends pulled out, the others should still be able to deal with the enemy force.

The problem was the Everlasting Heavenly Legends would now have to deal with two of the most powerful guilds in this game world. Even if Everlasting Heavenly Legends was considered one of them, it was two against one.

Megan looked at Jeanny and the others who went to meet the enemies. Would they be okay? Should she aid them? But Jeanny had instructed the others to stay on the battlefield here. She decided to just trust Jeanny's judgment.

Lead Designer from the World Ruler looked at the incoming enemy with disdain. "They seemed to have become cockier. Maybe they have put up a good fight during the battle at Wicked Witches' headquarters, but going against us and World Maker at the same time? They just don't know their limit."

No one refuted Lead Designer's words. Both World Maker and World Ruler members had the entire special classes from their respective countries. Even if Everlasting Heavenly Legends also did, the combined number of their special class players was twice that guild.

Additionally, all their players had top-notch equipment. Maybe Everlasting Heavenly Legends' core members had equipment on par with them, but the regular members did not. That guild's regular members only had slightly above-average equipment compared to the regular players. It couldn't be compared with them.

Not to mention, they had more resources.

Several players from World Maker and World Ruler took out summoning crystals. Several monsters started appearing in their ranks, bolstering their number even more.

Everlasting Heavenly Legends also had some of these crystals but not as much. When their members started using these crystals, Lead Designer laughed at the attempt. The number that the enemy

summoned was not even one-fourth theirs, but his laughing froze when one of these summons came rushing at them.

"Sil... Silver Rhino Emperor...? That is a mythical grade summons. How did they get such a high-grade summoning crystal?" He stammered.

There was not just one Silver Rhino Emperor, but three. It was summoned by using the Horn of Silver Rhino Emperor which Jeanny had copied. These silver rhino emperors took the lead as they rammed into the World Maker and World Ruler's front-line players.

"Don't get discouraged. It is just three mythical-grade monsters. Nothing we haven't dealt with before," Mistress said. This time, she didn't just idle behind. She cast the level 70 spell from her special class, Envoy of Death.

The spell was called Soul Hounds. It was a summoning spell that conjured ten soul hounds. The same as her level 50 Death's Shade, these soul hounds were immune to physical attacks. These hounds' attacks dealt soul damage, and any damage they inflicted was transferred to refill the HP of nearby allies. These hounds lasted ten minutes at the spell's first level.

On the World Maker's side, they were led by the three heavenly enforcers. Spring Crown was in command. He sent commands to every player for their battle positions. Everyone followed his command except for his two heavenly enforcer comrades. He knew those two would never listen to him, so he didn't bother giving them any orders.

One of the two was currently rushing toward a nearby silver rhino emperor. Nine suns revolved around him as he rushed forward. Everyone was taken aback by the visual display. They were wondering what kind of high-level game skill was that.

The nine suns merged into one in front of Long's fist. This fist then punched into the side of the charging silver rhino emperor. The impact not only stopped the rhino's charge, it also caused the rhino to fly in the opposite direction from where the punch was coming from. Everyone was astonished that one punch could do that to the heavy-looking giant rhino.

The rhino continued to be pushed away as explosion over explosion ensued at the point where Long's fist connected. Each explosion resulted in damage numbers popping up over the rhino's head. Each one had higher damage than the one before. After nine such explosions, it finally stopped.

The rhino didn't immediately move after the explosions ended. The fact was it couldn't move. Long's Nine Yang Exploding Fist also had the victim momentarily stunned if it wasn't defeated.

That was not the only after-effect of the ancient art. The rhino's thick silver skin at the spot where Long had punched was full of cracks. Those who saw it did not doubt that the rhino's insane defense should now be immensely reduced.

These same players who saw it only gaped at the scene, which prompted a scolding from Long. "What are you all just standing there for? Attack that rhino...!"

"Nine Yang Exploding Fist. My grandson told me about this but it is completely different when one sees it with one's own eyes."

Long turned in the direction of the voice. Domon came jumping by stepping over several players' heads. Mohamed tried copying Domon's move and followed from behind, but even with his cat-like agility, he was having trouble. Domon was now right above Long.

"Receive my glaive!" Domon exclaimed. His glaive came slashing down accompanied by a blinding light.

Long didn't retreat. His hand formed a fist and punched upward.

The fist and the blade of the glaive collided. Both sides flew back from the force of the collision.

"Ah... The unreasonable strength and speed. This takes me back to when I fought my grandson. Come! Let me experience the thrill again," Domon said.

"Master Domon, your mana manipulation is truly the deepest I've ever encountered," Long returned with a grin. "But I will still beat you to the ground as I did to my master."

Chapter 1447: Disparity in Companions

All the guild players from Everlasting Heavenly Legends were now fully clashing with the World Maker and World Ruler. Everlasting Heavenly Legends were completely outnumbered.

As Lead Designer had mentioned, the equipment worn by the regular members of Everlasting Heavenly Legends was inferior compared to the average equipment worn by World Maker and World Ruler's members. The two combined guilds also had more players with special classes.

It was the same case for bloodlines. Everlasting Heavenly Legends' core members all had bloodlines thanks to Jeanny's hard work, but World Maker and World Ruler's core members also did.

The World Maker and World Ruler knew how to effectively get the bloodlines for their core members. If Jeanny didn't have the Book of Creation to help him copy the bloodlines, they would have lost in this field.

The Everlasting Heavenly Legends had one advantage, though. The space-time chamber and the abundance of martial arts mentors. This let everyone advance incredibly fast in terms of martial arts.

This martial expertise helped bridge the equipment inferiority from the regular members and even allowed them to hold their ground against enemies who outnumbered them.

Both World Maker and World Ruler's members expected they would be able to take care of Everlasting Heavenly Legends players in no time. But after the clash, they were no longer so sure.

They started to use their war tools. World Maker's members used paralyzing bombs. World Ruler's members used smoke bombs.

World Ruler's smoke bombs were completely useless. Almost everyone in the Everlasting Heavenly Legends had mana sense. They had no problem maneuvering and fighting despite the smokes.

World Maker's paralyzing bombs were more troublesome, but some Everlasting Heavenly Legends players with better martial arts were able to hit the bombs back to the thrower before they exploded. This in turn paralyzed the World Maker members instead.

Not many were such experts, though. So, a good number of the paralyzing bombs hit their intended targets. The Everlasting Heavenly Legends retaliated with their war tool, the exploding bottles. They were not as effective as the paralyzing bombs but were troublesome enough due to their burn effect. Players had fewer HP. If the burn effect was not treated, those players could die.

Due to this, the battle seemed to be even.

Jeanny sent a message to everyone. "Time to call them!"

She preferred to keep this secret weapon secret until the deciding battle, but if they could take out a majority of World Maker and World Ruler's players here, it could also be considered a major win. Upon receiving the order, many of the core members started taking out small items.

The World Maker and World Ruler members recognized those items as the companion tokens. They sneered. Many of them also have companions. Some had already called them. The others were calling them now after seeing the enemies' actions.

Many natives started appearing in the field. As they did, a disparity was immediately made clear.

Although many of World Maker and World Ruler's members also had companions, many were natives of the elites and special elites around the same level as them. But the ones Everlasting Heavenly Legends called are mostly rare elites with levels nearing 80, and almost all of them were women.

The most impressive was a level 81 mythical elf. This elf was Dicce, Euphosine's past follower. In fact, all the companions that had just been called by Everlasting Heavenly Legends players were ex-members of the Council of Charites. They were the ones who couldn't join Talia or the Themisphere army. These were the natives whom Jack proposed to join his guild.

After arriving in Heavenly Citadel, Jeanny thought about how to best use these warriors. Dicce and the others also seemed bored doing nothing but loitering around the place. By now, no guilds in Themisphere dared to attack Heavenly Citadel, so being a guard there was the most boring job in the world.

When Jeanny asked John for his opinion, he nonchalantly answered, "Just bind them to our members to be meat shields when needed."

Despite the offhand response, Jeanny considered the suggestion seriously. She called all these ex-Council of Charites warriors and asked their opinions. By becoming the companions to their core members, they would be able to fight for the guild and also the country. In addition, they also gained the ability to level up fast like outworlders.

It didn't take them long to decide. Normally, natives needed to judge the outworlders before they decided to be their companions. But they had decided to give their lives to Jack's guild when they agreed to come to Heavenly Citadel. Being the companions of the guild members served their purpose. So, they agreed.

They left the decision of pairing to Jeanny. Jeanny tried to make the best pairing for each. He only paired them with the core members she truly trusted and who was capable enough.

Dicce was Fierce Flame's companion. When she appeared, she immediately took to the sky. Lightning crackled around her as she cast a spell. When the spell was completed, innumerable lightning snakes were unleashed.

Jeanny and the others knew the spell very well because Jack also used it often. Dicce's spell was Perpetual Lightning Judgement.

The World Maker and World Ruler's players tried their best to use their defensive skills, but many still perished under the lightning calamity.

Dicce didn't stop. She was already casting another spell when her Perpetual Lightning Judgement was wreaking havoc. She cast Lightning Strike. Ten thick lightning came down from the sky and struck the players in the marked area. This showed that her lightning strike was already at full ten stars. Each star called an additional lightning down.

The other ex-members of the Council of Charites were not less impressive. Most of them were magic casters. They also had a degree of mana manipulation despite being rare elites, making their magic even more potent.

In a brief time since they were called, the balance in the battlefield abruptly tipped toward Everlasting Heavenly Legends' advantage.

Seeing such a drastic change, the two opposing guilds realized that they bit off more than they could chew.

Chapter 1448: Sounding the Retreat

Mistress was surprised by the sudden appearance of so many powerful natives on Everlasting Heavenly Legends' side, but she was most surprised when she laid eyes on two natives among those who appeared.

Lead Designer also had the same astonishment when he saw the two. "Satyr...? How can this be? Satyr is a minor race that only exists in the underworld. No way you can find one up here."

"... Yet we are indeed looking at two of them," Mistress said.

The two satyrs who had drawn Mistress and Lead Designer's attention were Yrin and Tenka. They were among the ones who were called by Everlasting Heavenly Legends' core members using companion tokens. They were the companions of Bowler and The Man.

After spending so much time inside the Space-time Chamber making friends with the satyrs, the two finally received the companion offer from them.

Bowler and The Man's purpose of spending so much time inside the chamber was actually to gain the nightmare's trust. They figured if they could influence the nightmares to like them from a young age, maybe the nightmares would be willing to be their steeds when they grew up. If they had the same kind of steed as Jack's, how cool would that be?

But instead of getting the steed's trust, they gained the custodians' trust instead. Even if this was not their intention, they welcomed the offer happily. Both Yrin and Tenka were high-level rare elites. Other players would be on cloud nine if they acquired such companions.

Tenka was level 70 when he migrated to the upworld. After becoming Bowler's companion, he had gone out and joined Bowler in doing monster-grind for exp points. He was now level 73.

Tenka charged into the enemy's midst with his large cleaver coated in dark flame. He fought like he didn't care about receiving damage. This was because a halo was above him. This halo healed his HP at intervals.

The halo was Bowler's Royal High Priest's level 70 spell, Heavenly Nuture. It was a single-target spell. Aside from healing the target by 5,000 HP every three seconds, it also gave the target a 25% damage reduction. If Tenka received a fatal attack during the spell's duration, he would escape death and his HP was brought back to 30% instead. The duration of Heavenly Nuture was five minutes long.

To aid his rampage, Tenka used Demonization. His body grew larger and he turned into one menacing winged demon. His strength and speed greatly increased. The enemy players were unable to stop his rampage.

Joining his rampage was The Man, who was now level 71. The Man also received a new skill when his Brave Rusher class passed level 70. His new skill was Fearless Rage. This skill was very much like Berserk only much better.

Upon activation, The Man's defenses increased by 100%. All the damage he received was reduced by 50%. All the damage he inflicted was increased by 30%. His attack speed and movement speed were doubled. He was also immune to movement restrictions and status effects as long as this skill was active. This skill duration was three minutes.

Supporting him from behind was his companion, Yrin, who was now level 75. Her shadow tentacles smacked anyone who tried to come close to her. She also cast a spell that conjured several shadow blades. These blades flew around following her will. She sent these blades ahead to slice at anyone who tried to gang up on The Man.

Mistress was hard at work using her soul orb to heal her members, but they were dying too fast. She was frustrated at the situation. She then received a message that frustrated her even more.

"This is not a good situation, I suggest we retreat," Spring Crown's message said.

"Don't be ridiculous! How can we disgrace ourselves with a retreat? We are supposed to get them pinned down!" Mistress replied.

"Well, the strategy isn't bad. It's just the enemy is way out of our expectations. There is no shame in a retreat."

"Speak for yourself!" Mistress exclaimed. How could retreat not be shameful?

"As you wish. I will sound the retreat for myself," Spring Crown replied.

Mistress was fuming. That was not what she meant. She saw the World Maker's side started to disengage. That annoying gamer wasn't joking. She didn't understand why Master picked him to be in charge of the guild players in this battle.

While she was still unwilling to call for a retreat, she saw several giant ice lotuses blooming amid their force. She had seen those ice lotuses before. They were the spells from mega spells, Absolute Zero Lotus.

After calling the Council of Charites warriors, Everlasting Heavenly Legends' members had more leeway. The magic classes that possessed the mega spell were able to gather together and do their cooperative casting.

Seeing the situation, Mistress greeted her teeth and instructed Lead Designer to issue the order for a retreat.

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On the other side, Domon had exchanged dozens of moves with Long. Both were very skilled. No winner could be determined.

Their duel didn't last long, though. This was a battle. It was not a place where two people could fight in peace. Others butted in soon enough.

World Maker players came and joined Long in attacking Domon. Long didn't mind. He was never one who bothered about fairness. Domon could only defend while retreating.

Luckily, his reinforcements came soon. Jet and Freddie came with kicks and punches. The regular players were unable to cope with their master-level martial arts. The three martial arts started to beat back the opponents who outnumbered them.

The only one who could fight back was Long. His palms multiplied as eighteen eastern dragons rushed out from him. Each palm carried immense force. Domon and the others had to use their full strength to defend against the ancient art.

"Damn it! It truly is as powerful as the legend says," Jet remarked.

The situation on the battlefield suddenly changed. The enemies started distancing themselves.

"They are retreating?" Freddie asked after seeing it.

The players who supported Long also moved away. Long was slightly unwilling to retreat because of the excitement he felt fighting against three masters. This caused a pause in his movement.

As the enemy retreated, other players from the Everlasting Heavenly Legends came. Long decided he would be in danger if he stayed, but that brief pause let Domon and the others react first. The three and the other players who just arrived surrounded Long.

"You are not going anyway, brat," Jet said.

Long didn't seem to panic. He instead pressed his palms together. As he did, the air around his palms started to shimmer. Domon, Jet, and Freddie felt the abrupt rise in mana intensity around Long.

Chapter 1449: Cat-and-Mouse Chase

"Back away!!" Domon shouted.

Jet and Freddie followed the command. They were aware of what was going on. The other players were not so swift.

The air around Long's palms suddenly burst into flames. As it did, Long made a circular motion. The image of a giant flaming blade appeared following his hands' movement. The red scorching blade revolved around Long at high speed, cutting all those who surrounded him.

The energy of the slash radiated outward.

Domon focused his mana onto his glaive and slashed forward. His glaive collided with the incoming energy. The collision resulted in a fiery explosion and he was thrown further back.

Jet and Freddie also used their martial arts to block the searing energy and were met with the same result.

The regular players were not so lucky. They were hit directly by the flaming blade. The blade cut through their armor and depleted their HP instantly. Only one sentinel who happened to activate his strongest defensive skill managed to survive, but his HP was critical then.

The worst thing was, the ones whose HP was depleted had the animation where their bodies were split into two and their body parts burned as they fell to the ground. The one surviving sentinel shivered from the scene.

"Haha! It has been fun sparring with you, old people. Let's continue another time." Long jumped and turned away. With his speed, it was unlikely for Domon and the others to chase after him.

"Crazy-ass punkster... I've never seen a youngster as skillful as him," Jet uttered.

"He is indeed unusual," Domon said. "But this confirms the fact that he does not possess only one of the nine yang arts."

"That one just now is the Nine Yang Scorching Blade?" Freddie asked.

Domon nodded. "It is safe to assume so, it fits the description recorded in the ancient texts," Domon said. "We have to assume he has the last art of the Nine Yang Scripture as well."

"We will be in a whole lot of trouble if he does," Jet said. "But I didn't see him use it just now."

"That last art is supposed to be the most difficult to learn, isn't it? Maybe he has not yet managed to learn it," Freddie speculated.

"Let's hope it stays that way," Domon said.

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As the enemies retreated, Jeanny issued the order to chase. The more players they killed here, the more they weakened the enemies for the next confrontation. They might have deviated from their original objective of slowing down the Liguritudum army, but they could continue that later.

Spring Crown was kind enough to inform their allied guilds who were fighting on the other side that they were retreating, so those guilds were aware of it. Otherwise, those guilds would be sitting ducks when the Everlasting Heavenly Legends returned. Those guilds also started retreating.

Those guilds weren't exactly having a good time. Many of them were defeated during the initial clash. When Everlasting Heavenly Legends disengaged to go meet the World Maker and World Ruler, they were already in a disadvantageous position. They hoped that the World Maker and World Ruler could quickly vanquish Everlasting Heavenly Legends so the two guilds could come to their aid.

Imagine their shock when they received Spring Crown's message about retreating. Each one of them just turned and ran, trying not to be the last.

Megan who replaced Jeanny in commanding this side also issued the order to chase. She had the same mindset of taking out as many enemy players as possible.

In the battle between Death Associates and True Death Associates, Killingred was killed by Red Death. Killingred was never Red's opponent. What's more with Red Death's special class, unique-grade equipment, and bloodline, the fight was just too one-sided.

Red Death held her own against her previous comrades, Yellow Death, Green Death, and Violent Death. Even with Queen Magenta and Princess Purple supporting them, they were still having trouble surviving against Red Death's rampage.

They had always known that Red Death was the best fighter among them, but they couldn't understand how the gap could increase this large. Then their shock was further amplified when Red Death conjured twenty large ice balls.

Seeing those twenty ice balls reminded them of a certain someone with unreasonable power. They immediately scattered. The ice balls shot forward and resulted in icy explosions. The ones who were caught in this explosion were immediately frozen in place. Even if they didn't die outright, they were vulnerable to the following assaults.

Green Death and Queen Magenta were caught in one of these icy blasts.

The call for a retreat came then. Everyone turned without hesitation, even Princess Purple. She knew that her mother wore an amulet of rebirth.

The battle turned into a cat-and-mouse game. The fleeing ones scattered in all directions. Each one hoped that the pursuers would choose the other person to chase. If they could run and hide long enough to disengage from combat, they could use the town return scroll to flee.

On the World Maker and World Ruler's side, they were cruel enough to order a portion of their regular members to hold the enemies down as they made their escape. This allowed the guilds' more valuable members a guarantee of escaping. These regular members had no choice. They knew if they disobeyed, being kicked out of the guild would be the lightest punishment.

As a result, even though World Maker and World Ruler could save most of their valuable members, they lost a large number of their regular members.

After a few hours of chasing around, the battle ended. The corpses vanished, except for the native companions who died.

The guilds reconvened. Though they had won, they were not without losses. They came back to pick up the equipment of their fallen members as well as pick up the loot from fallen enemies. These loots were gathered and divided among the guilds equally. This had been agreed before their working together. John prepared some rules of conduct for this alliance of guilds to reduce possible clashes as much as possible. He understood even small matters could be the spark for disagreement and disharmony when several parties worked together. Hence, a common agreement needed to be discussed and settled beforehand.

"Should we get back to chasing the Liguritutum army?" Megan asked Jeanny.

"They are nearing the Num Maldur Pass. There is no blockage slowing them down until the fort guarding that pass. I don't think they will attack that fort. They will most likely turn and take a roundabout way. They should be away already if we head in the direction of that pass. We will go in the direction of the roundabout way and catch them midway. We will resume our harassment there."

The others agreed with Jeanny's decision. Even if the Liguritutum army chose to attack the Num Maldur fort, which would be a stupid thing to do, it would take them some time to bring down the fort. They could easily change course and hit the Liguritutum army from the back if that happened.

With that agreement, the guild players moved again.

Chapter 1450: Infiltrating a Fort

Khurn Valdur was a medium-sized fort that was located in a barren wasteland within Palgrost. The terrain was mostly rocky desert with barely a tree in sight. There was a stream going through this desert, though. This stream went directly underneath the fort and provided the fort with a water supply.

The stream was only around knee high, so it was not possible to swim inside it, but one can crawl inside it.

This was what Grace, Paytowin, David, and Associate Clearsky were doing at the moment. They were crawling inside the moving stream.

Despite being shallow, the speeding water obscured what was underneath it. If one didn't pay attention, one wouldn't notice the four people crawling underneath the water. Additionally, this was nighttime, so it was even harder for someone to spot them. The fort was also currently only being manned by a minimum number of soldiers, so the chance of them being spotted was low.

The four met in Mirgrom as advised by Ironhand. There, Clearsky filled Grace and the others in on what he had learned so far.

Yonhilda's brother, who went by Dograr Mountchest, was confirmed to be held inside the Khurn Valdur fort. Clearsky knew this from bribing a native who did regular supply shipments to the fort. From the

native, Clearsky also learned the general layout of the fort. This was how he knew there was an opening at the base of the fort where the occupants took water from the stream.

Learning this, David proposed the infiltration via this stream. The rocky desert had few areas for people to hide in. There were some rocky hills in the landscape, but nearing the fort, it was mostly flat land. The fort was probably intentionally positioned that way so intruders could be easily spotted.

Magical spotlights went around the fort to spot intruders, but with so few soldiers paying attention to the surroundings, the spotlights were useless even when they happened to shine upon someone who was approaching the fort. Even so, the four still use the stream to reduce the chance of being discovered.

They crawled for hundreds of meters along the stream. In the past world, they would need snorkels for this stunt. In this game world, they had no problem staying underwater indefinitely.

After almost an hour of crawling, they finally entered the small hole where the stream went into the fort. They continued following the stream until they came out to a fountain in the middle of the fort's courtyard.

Paytowin looked at the radar from his God-eye monocle to make sure no one was directly beside the fountain. He then gave David the sign that the outside was clear.

David had his head slowly come out of the water's surface. He stopped when the water was just below his eye level. Despite Paytowin's info, he still chose to be careful. He surveyed the surroundings, making sure that it was truly safe.

From the native whom Clearsky had bribed, they understood the fort should have no more than a hundred soldiers. Under normal situation, this fort usually housed 100,000 soldiers. Almost all followed Boron to Doghbarum. If they didn't have a prisoner here, this fort was probably completely deserted.

Unfortunately, the native didn't know the overall power level of the soldiers in this place. The strongest soldier the native met when he brought supplies here was a level 60 elite grade. If this was true, even if there were a hundred soldiers here, they could just force in using brute force. But they didn't know, hence they chose the covert option.

Additionally, a frontal assault might risk the soldiers taking Dograr away via some hidden exit. Or worse, execute him rather than letting him get taken away. Boron could then create a story that Thelgrun's spy sneaked in and killed Dograr.

If that happened, Yonhilda might believe him, or she might not. She might choose to stop supporting his rebellion, but she also wouldn't support Thelgrun. The best way to persuade Yonhilda to switch sides was by bringing Dograr to her, alive.

Another unfortunate thing was the native also didn't know where Dograr was being detained. The safe assumption would be the dungeon underneath the fort.

David saw several guards on the upper wall. They were looking outside, though. He saw no one in the courtyard. Some of the keep's windows had light coming out of them, indicating some soldiers were still awake inside.

David gave the three, who were underwater, a signal. He then climbed out of the fountain. The others followed. They did it slowly so no splashing sound was heard.

Once everyone was out, they went to the keep. David led them by taking cover over a wagon and some scattered boxes inside the courtyard, all the while paying attention to the guards on the wall.

They arrived at the keep without any incident. The first floor of the keep had no window for them to sneak in. There was only one door into the fort. From Paytowin's radar, there was a white dot right behind that door.

They didn't know if that dot indicated someone on this floor, the upper floor, or even underground. Paytowin's God-eye monacle was the standard one the same as Jack's. It was two dimensions. He couldn't change elevation to know the dots were above or below like the one Master wore.

They didn't want to take the chance, so they acted with the assumption the white dot on Paytowin's radar was on this floor. They avoided the front entrance.

It's a good thing they had Grace. David gave her a common rope. Grace then used her Wing tool and flew to one of the third-floor windows which were dark. She didn't go to the second-floor ones because all of them had light coming out of them. She looked inside to make sure no one was around. Even though the inside was dark, her mana perception talent could quickly identify if someone was inside.

After making sure it was safe, she flew in. She then threw the rope David had given her out the window. She held one end of the rope. The others used the rope to climb up. With Grace's strength, she had no trouble holding the weight of three grown men.

Once the four entered through the window, they looked for the stairs. After finding the stairs, they decided to split up. Dograr might be held in the underground dungeon, but there was also a chance he was being held on the highest floor. If prisoners were held at the top, they would have to go through countless floors filled with soldiers to escape. Unless, of course, they could fly. That's why they thought it was a possibility.

They discussed using messages and kept the discussion short. After the brief discussion, Grace and Paytowin did a fist bump before the two split. Grace and David went up the stairs while Paytowin and Clearsky went downstairs.