

World 1511

Chapter 1511: Anti-demon Special Unit

John wanted to chase the fleeing Liguritutum army but the zombie army was very determined to stop them. He decided to let go of the Liguritutum army and focused on this zombie army. Otherwise, his army would suffer unnecessary casualties.

After making sure the new force was targeting the Liguritutum army, John adjusted his army to work together with this new force.

On the field, the right-wing army that Arther commanded was the closest to this new force. As usual, Arther dove right into the enemies. He acted like a one-man army, disrupting the enemies from the inside as his troops tried to catch up with him.

His body was shielded by the Sphere of Aegis while his greatsword was shrouded by Ki Weapon's aura. He slashed left and right as he zoomed around amid the zombie soldiers. As he headed deeper, he found the area around him covered in mists.

He sensed the unusual mana in these mists. These were not natural mists. He saw shadows within the mists. He was ready.

"No need to worry about us, lord marshall. We are not your enemies," A woman's voice echoed.

Two shadows swooped by and snatched the two zombie soldiers who were about to lunge at Arther.

"This voice... Vanessa?" Arther asked.

A woman materialized from inside the mists. It was a tall and beautiful woman with clear pale skin. Her lips were blood red. She wore light armor that fit her body perfectly, accentuating her sensual shape. In her hand was a crimson thorn whip.

"I am flattered you remember my name, Young Arther," The woman called Vanessa replied.

"I am not young anymore," Arther said.

Vanessa chuckled. "In my eyes, you will always be young. How long has it been? When we last met, you were still a Knight Captain. Look at you now, you certainly have gone up in the world."

"... that was thirty years ago," Arther answered.

"So long already? Well, then I'm even more flattered that you remember my voice even after so long."

The reason Arther still remembered was that Vanessa was the most beautiful woman he had ever laid eyes on. He was a bright soldier who had just joined the military. Vanessa could be said as his first crush. That was until he found out she was a vampire who was almost four hundred years old.

"What is a Sangrod's relic marshall doing here?" Arther asked.

"Haven't you heard? Our two countries are now allies," Vanessa answered. "We have been instructed by our new emperor to ride at our fastest speed to support you. We have a main army on their way here, but they still take a few days to arrive. We are the vanguard troops that were tasked to come here at

our fastest speed. I must say, it feels weird. Our old emperor didn't even ask us to hurry for our empire's sake."

"If you are here to help, then help. We still have a great deal of enemies around us," Arther said.

"So stiff. To think I ever thought of you as cute," Vanessa chuckled. "All right. Business first then, we will leave the pleasure for later."

Arther didn't understand what she meant by pleasure. He couldn't deny that the old infatuation he had for her was gnawing at him now that he saw her again. He banished that thought. He used Charge and went in a direction away from her. He didn't think he would be able to concentrate if she was nearby.

Vanessa just looked at Arther with a smile.

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Master instructed the zombie army to focus on the Themisphere army. Hence, they completely ignored the demon horde hitting their backs. These zombies threw themselves onto the Themisphere soldiers without a care for their well-being. Master had them inflict as many casualties on the Themisphere army as possible.

As a result, although they did reap many kills, they also died at a faster rate than they had to. In just an hour after the Liguritutum army retreated, the zombie soldiers were almost annihilated.

Without the zombie soldiers acting as a wall, the demon horde now pounced at the Themisphere army. John was prepared. He didn't relax even if the zombie army was almost routed.

He glanced at the Liguritutum army. They were almost out of his projection screen. He decided to forget about them, liberating Balgudur was the priority. After chasing away the invaders, all they needed to do now was to survive this disaster item that they unleashed themselves.

Still, he had a few scouts tail after the Liguritutum army, just to make sure that the army didn't turn around and hit them when they least expected it.

Now that Themisphere army had to bear the brunt of the demon horde, John felt the pressure. The average levels of the demon horde were higher than the bulk of his army, after all.

Thankfully, the ones with high grades weren't too many. The Themisphere army had a better proportion of high-level and high-grade soldiers compared to the demon horde. Additionally, the demon horde attacked without any thought. They just acted on instinct. Against an army with a proper formation controlled by a seasoned tactician, the demons were at a disadvantage.

As the battle went on, John noticed one side was doing significantly better than the others. He looked over that side and found out that the side was where a large group of Ancient Champions was fighting.

The Ancient Champions were proficient demon-hunting warriors. They received less damage and delivered extra damage when fighting demons. They also had an Anti-demon Aura which put all the demons in their vicinities into a weakened state.

Every Ancient Champion had a standard skill called Demon Banishment, which was the same as Exorcism but the instant death effect was doubled when the target was a demon. Even if the instant death failed to trigger, the targeted demon would still suffer immense damage.

Some Ancient Champions who had trained longer could learn more skills to fight demons. Among these learnable skills was Demon Control, which took control of a demon for a duration. There was also the Purifying Light Wave. This skill produced a wave that covered a large area. Enemies who were washed by this wave received light-elemental damage while allies received a small amount of healing. If the wave hit demons, the damage was doubled.

When fighting demons, these ancient champions were even much more effective compared to the two special classes from the divine factions.

Seeing this, John reorganized the ancient champions and spread them out among the army. With their Anti-demon Aura covering much of the battlefield, the battle became more manageable.

Chapter 1512: Hope's Light

Jack and Jeanny received the good news from John that the Liguritutum army had retreated. The invasion had been repelled, but they didn't have the time to rejoice. They were not out of the woods yet, they still had to survive the demon horde brought out by their disaster item.

The two with the support from Jack's clones, Terras, Grace, and Paytowin had been battling the demon lord boss while everyone else kept the other demons at bay. Jeanny was fighting the demon lord in the air using a wings tool. It was another thing she had acquired from the Council of Elpo.

The demons had managed to push deeper into the palace courtyard. The defenders tried to maintain their formation, but none of them was a tactician at John's level. As the battle progressed, the situation became very chaotic and it was pretty much a free-for-all state.

The only spot that was still coherent in terms of formations was where the demon lord boss was. Everyone knew the boss had to be taken down due to the danger it possessed, so they maintained their positions and halted the demon horde so Jack and the others could focus on the boss.

It had already passed five hours since the disaster item was activated. Demons had stopped spouting from the gate an hour ago, but they still had another hour before these demons were recalled.

Before, Jack didn't call his royal agents because they were needed in the battle outside. After receiving John's news, he asked if it was okay for him to call them over.

John told him to go ahead. With the ancient champions debuffing the demons out there, John wasn't having a difficult time. Too bad he couldn't send some of these ancient champions to the palace.

Jack disengaged from the boss before he used his king badge to summon his royal agents. Nine new combatants appeared. Jack gave them a brief instruction before he returned to engage the boss.

He told all his royal agents to keep the demon horde at bay except for Howard and Laurent. These two would be helping him with the boss.

His royal agents spread out. Eyrene flew to the gate. She had the Fly spell but she cast a spell that gave her a better flying speed. The spell gave her two icy wings on her back. With her naginata, she smacked any demons that tried to bar her way.

After arriving near the gate, she cast one AOE spell after another. The gate was a chokepoint. Casting AOE spells there ensured she hit the most concentration of demons. It also slowed down the waves of new demons coming into the palace courtyard. This reduced the pressure on her allies.

While everyone was doing their parts, Jack, Jeanny, Grace, and Paytowin resumed fighting the demon lord. With Laurent in charge of keeping them alive, the other healers could focus on healing those who kept the demons at bay.

Howard became their artillery who bombarded the demon lord with continuous damage as Jack and the others kept the demon lord busy. Howard used his Lightning Destroying Arrows. His firing speed increased. He didn't even need to pull an arrow from his quiver. He directly pulled his bowstrings once an arrow was launched. Another arrow made of pure lightning was created when he did that. This increased his firing speed even further.

The lightning arrows were very fast and they hit with deadly accuracy. The demon lord was helpless as the arrows kept on landing on its body. The damage was mitigated though, it had cast a spell where a bone suit covered its body.

Howard also learned another skill, Soul Penetrating Arrow. It was a single-target skill that dealt high soul damage. The cooldown of this highly damaging skill was only two minutes. This helped him deliver the highest DPS on the boss.

The demon lord was enraged. It tried to send ranged attacks or get to Howard but Jack and the others prevented it from doing that.

The bottled rage forced the demon lord to unleash a powerful attack. The revolving ring of black flame behind him turned at high speed before exploding. The explosion sent a shockwave that pushed Jack and the others away. The revolving flaming ring behind the demon lord was gone after that.

Its hand lifted and it drew the black flame from its crown this time. The black flame formed into a long javelin. He threw this javelin at Howard.

Paytowin, who was near Howard after getting pushed by the shockwave, flew directly into the javelin's flight path. He activated Unyielding Hope before the black javelin struck.

The javelin broke when it touched Paytowin's body. The invulnerability from Unyielding Hope negated any damage from the Javelin.

"Huh? Do you feel that?" Jack asked.

"Yeah... There is a light on you," Jeanny replied. There was white light shining on Jack's chest.

The two of them had already used Hope's sanctification for a while. Jack was using the Strength of Hope and Jeanny was using the Beacon of Hope. The thirty-minute duration of the two skills was coming to an end soon.

"You also have the light," Jack said.

"Paytowin too..." Jeanny pointed at Paytowin a distance away.

Jack had a brief thought before he called Jeanny to follow him.

"Mihos, Garuda, help cover this boss for a while," Jack called. Those two were among the ones halting the demon horde from interfering with the boss fight.

The two companions looked over. 'Who the hell are you?' Their faces said. He was not their companion, why did he give them command as if he were the boss? But they still carried out the request. Mihos flew to meet the demon lord using a wings tool. Something he had acquired from Ghost Callan. The two engaged the demon lord joining Jack's clones and Therras. Paytowin instructed Brave King to help them.

Jack brought Jeanny and approached Paytowin, who was still confused when his chest started glowing. The glow on their chests turned brighter when the three got together.

"Do you feel that?" Jack asked.

"Yeah, I think we can..."

"Wait, let's go to Grace first," Jack cut Paytowin's words. The three went to Grace.

Grace was just about to fly back to face the demon lord. She was wondering why the three came to her, but she was more puzzled by the glow on their chests. "Why are the three of you shining?" She asked.

"I have a theory. Use your Generosity of Hope," Jack said.

"Why? None of you are near death. It will be a waste to use it now," Grace replied.

"Trust me on this," Jack said.

Grace looked at Jeanny and Paytowin who nodded. She used her Hope's sanctification then.

The Generosity of Hope covered everyone in the vicinity, including Mihos and the others who were fighting the demon lord. At the same time, Grace also started glowing. The glow on the four turned even brighter than before.

"This...", Grace felt it then. The link between the four of them. She felt as if their mana was pulling them to come together.

"Put your hands on me!" Jack commanded.

Jeanny, Grace, and Paytowin did so. They laid their hands on Jack's shoulders. Their lights fused into Jack then.

"Holy...!" Jack felt the rush within him. It was as if limitless energy was coursing through him.

He pointed his hand at the demon lord above.

"Take this, sucker! Hope's light, fireee...!!!"

Chapter 1513: Divine Dragon Spear

When Jack yelled, "fire!" Nothing was shooting out of him. The bright glow that had accumulated in his body simply faded away. He couldn't feel the overflowing mana anymore. Additionally, his Strength of Hope ended even when it should still have a few minutes left.

Hope's sanctification on Grace, Jeanny, and Paytowin also ended.

"Hey, dude. Did you f*ck this up?" Paytowin asked in bewilderment.

Jack was also confused. The accumulated mana within him felt like it could be directed at something, but why did nothing come out when he triggered the energy release?

While he was still confused, he heard an inhuman scream from above. He looked up and saw the demon lord was the one who screamed. It had stopped moving even when Mihos, Garuda, and Howard's arrows were striking his body. It was as if something was causing it more pain than those hits.

A glow was seen coming out of the demon lord's body. This glow expanded. As it grew, everyone could see it was a ball of light that continued to grow bigger. The ball of light grew until it covered the entire demon lord's body. The dense light prevented everyone from seeing the demon lord inside, but they could still hear its scream.

The giant ball of light hung in the air for a few seconds before it abruptly shrunk. Rather than shrinking, it was more correct to say it was imploding. The demon lord's body contorted as the ball of light imploded. It then lost its flight ability and fell to the ground.

Its HP was only ten percent left.

Before the ball of light, the demon lord's HP was still around three-quarters. Despite receiving many hits, the demon lord also had many defensive spells. One of which was the bone suit which absorbed much of the damage. The bulk of the damage done to the demon lord was when Jack used the Nine Yin Phantom Sword and created a hole in the bone suit, allowing the others to deal normal damage. But the bone suit regrew soon after, giving the demon lord a defensive boost again.

At this moment, that bone suit was gone.

The ball of light not only stripped the demon lord of all its protective enchantment but also depleted its HP by sixty-five percent. The demon lord had an HP bar of 2,300,000. This meant the ball of light dealt damage amounting to almost one and a half million!

The massive damage and the defensive stripping were not the only effects of the ball of light. At this moment, the demon lord was lying on the ground with an expression filled with agony. It couldn't move.

"Attack!!" Jack exclaimed. Everyone was stunned by the effect of the ball of light that they had all stopped attacking. Only after Jack yelled that they resume their attacks.

"Cover me!" Jeanny said.

Jack looked at her and saw multiple small runes forming around her body.

"Rune technique?" Jack asked.

"She got it when we visited the Council of Elpo," Paytowin said.

"Why did she get so much stuff while you get none?" Jack ridiculed.

Paytowin rolled his eyes at the comment. "Not talking to you," he said. He and Brave King put his body in front of Jeanny. "Don't worry, sister Jeanny, we will protect you."

"No need to protect, I will help you complete that rune technique in an instant," Jack uttered. He cast Superior Acceleration on both himself and Jeanny. He then used his rune technique as well.

The speed of the runes forming around Jeanny sped up significantly.

Jack's rune technique was completed first. He cast teleportation. He teleported above the demon lord. The demon lord was aware of the incoming danger but it couldn't do anything. Jack's Infernal Cleansing Flame slammed into the demon lord's body.

White flame burst from its body. Its agonizing scream echoed through the hall again.

The other demons turned into a frenzy after hearing their leader's scream twice. They tried to break through and reached the demon lord. Mihos, Garuda, and the others had to stop attacking the demon lord and back to helping the others halt these demons.

Jack turned to Jeanny. 'She was still forming her runes?' He thought.

Jeanny hadn't gotten used to her rune technique as well as Jack, but the other reason was also that her rune technique was one class higher than Jack's infernal cleansing flame. Her rune technique required forty runes to activate.

Due to Jack's acceleration, it was still completed pretty fast. A long eastern dragon of golden scales came out of the ground and flew around Jeanny. Jeanny pointed her spear toward the demon lord and the golden dragon rushed forward.

The demon lord still couldn't get up but it could move a bit already. It swung its arm when Jack was still admiring Jeanny's rune technique. Jack blocked the attack at the last moment thanks to his mana sense, but he was flung away.

White flames still raging on the demon lord's body and eating its HP. It stretched its hand as the golden dragon approached. A black shield materialized in front of its hand.

The golden dragon banged into that shield. As it did, it grabbed the shield with its two foreclaws and bit down on it. The shield cracked from the pressure and was soon shattered. The golden dragon resumed its advance.

The demon lord had formed a black javelin from its flaming crown while the golden dragon was halted by the black shield. It wanted to stab the dragon, but a giant energy drill rushed forward and knocked its arm away. The drill was Jeanny's Heavenly Spear Drill.

With no more obstacles, the golden dragon coiled its body around the demon lord before biting the demon lord's head. It then dissolved into the demon lord's body. Soon after, multiple golden spears stabbed out of the demon's body.

The demon lord's scream intensified. Not only was it burnt by Jack's white flame, but its inside was also endlessly ravaged by the golden spears.

Jeanny's rune technique was called Divine Dragon Spear. On the surface, the skill looked similar to Claudius' ultimate skill, Heavenly Dragon Spear. But in truth, the Divine Dragon Spear was the real deal. Claudius once witnessed this rune technique being performed. From that display, Claudius created a skill that imitated the rune technique.

Unlike Claudius' Heavenly Dragon Spear, Jeanny didn't have to stay still to control the golden dragon. She could attack together with the golden dragon once she completed all forty runes of the rune technique. Additionally, the damage it caused was astronomically higher than Claudius' imitation skill.

Between the white flames and the golden spears, the demon lord's HP was depleted in a short time.

Chapter 1514: Demon Lord Summoning Crystal

Once the demon lord was gone, the battle became easier. The demon lord had an aura that boosted the demons under its command. Without that boost, the demons were slowly beaten back.

John and the Themisphere army had also routed the demon horde outside. They entered the capital to give the people in the palace a hand, but before they even reached halfway, the remaining demons were recalled back to the underworld.

Because they had slain the boss, they were considered as successfully beaten the disaster item. A notification was heard congratulating all the players who had participated, telling them that they got bonus exp points.

As for Jack, he heard another notification, congratulating him for successfully aiding a friendly country in repelling the disaster item. He was granted some more exp points and 500,000 merit points.

The previous three kingdom affairs had also been completed, with one perfect and two good results, netting him 230,000 merit points and 5 ruling powers.

Before these merit points rewards, his sovereign level was already very close to level 13. These combined merit points pushed his sovereign level directly to level 14, earning him 20 ruling powers. At sovereign level 14, he could recruit his tenth royal agent. He would wait until he performed the next Call to Arms to see what recruit he received first before sending an invitation.

To get to sovereign level 15, the required merit points increased again. It now needed 700,000 merit points.

Four new affairs popped up. He sent the details to the investigative teams and let them do the work.

The slain demon lord provided a large sum of exp, but the exp points were shared with allied players in the vicinity. But since Jack also received exp points from the demons slain by those allied players, it sort of evened out.

The highest amount of exp points Jack received was during the battle on the first day they arrived here. Jack was fighting with his army then. After that, he mostly went lone wolf.

As a result, even though he received many exp points in this war, it wasn't as many as he hoped for. Even so, it was still much more than the average players. He leveled up a total of six times. All his classes

leveled up twice. His Brave Swordsmaster and Time Sage were now level 79, while his Beast Monarch was level 78.

Therras didn't receive the bonus exp from enemies killed by Jack's soldiers. The enemies it killed only gave enough exp points to level up Therras twice to level 78.

For the other players who didn't die, they leveled up an average of three times from this war. Most of these top players were now around level 73 to 75.

When the demon lord fell, it dropped some loot. Jack had used his Runestone of Luck then. He left most of the loot except for some which Jack's God-eye monocle marked with silver color. He snatched those loots without checking them and went back to fighting.

Now that the battle was over, he was looking at these loots in his inventory.

The battlefield was also full of other loot. He left those to the players here. The loot would be gathered and divided equally among the guilds. He didn't see any silver or purple color loot in the pile anyway. He looked around, no one seemed to come to him asking about the loot he had taken. Maybe because no one had been paying attention or they didn't dare to come to ask.

Three items of unique grade were the ones he had picked up.

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Demon Lord Summoning Crystal (Unique consumable, for guild purposes only)

Summon a level 86 mythical Demon Lord in a guild war.

Duration: 3 hours

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Soul Seed (Unique consumable)

Evolve a skill

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Upgrade Cell: Equipment (Unique Consumable)

Upgrade a piece of equipment to the next grade

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"Oh? Another Upgrade Cell. Talk about lucky," Jack remarked. "But this one has a different description. I suppose this one will only work on equipment?"

"Yeah. Let me tell you first that it won't work on legacy equipment, so you won't be able to use it on your regal outfit," Peniel informed.

"That's okay, I've another equipment in mind," Jack said.

"Do you want to use it on a longsword and feed it to Storm Breaker?" Peniel asked. Jack did have a unique-grade longsword in his inventory. If he did as Peniel said, he would be able to upgrade his Storm Breaker into legendary grade.

"Let's deal with it later," Jack said. Thelgrun had invited Jeanny and him to the palace. They wanted John to join as well so they were waiting for John before going into the palace. The others were cleaning up the mess in the meantime.

Jack was about to give the Demon Lord Summoning Crystal to Jeanny, but he noticed the girl was side by side with David. The guy had one arm around her. Jack pointed at the two while gaping at Paytown, who shrugged in response.

David finally moved away. Jack came to Jeanny with a playful grin.

"What are you grinning about?" Jeanny asked, confused.

Jack decided to not tease her. He gave her the Demon Lord Summoning Crystal. She could copy it and use it when they got into a guild conflict or to supplement their guild army during country wars. He also lent the Soul Seed and Upgrade Cell for Jeanny to check how many mana cores were needed to copy. Peniel said this upgrade cell that could only upgrade equipment should require fewer mana cores than the previous version.

But when she used her divine skill to scan the Soul Seed and the Upgrade Cell, she was still surprised.

"The Soul Seed needs 50,000 mana cores and this Upgrade Cell needs 80,000 mana cores," Jeanny said. "This is crazy, other evolve seeds only required around 500 to 3,000 mana cores. Why does this one require so many?"

"Soul and Chaos are the two most powerful elements. Evolve seeds that grant skills with those elements are also much rarer and exceptional. Maybe that's why it consumes much more mana cores than other seeds," Peniel gave her opinion.

"Do you want to keep these items to copy them later after you have enough mana cores?" Jack asked.

After giving the matter a brief thought, Jeanny gave the Soul Seed and Upgrade Cell back to Jack. "I will have to stop copying items for other members for a very long time. I think I should focus on copying cheaper things that could strengthen as many core members as possible. You should use these items rather than have them gather dust for I don't know how long."

Jack didn't object. He was glad instead. This meant he could use these items immediately.

Chapter 1515: Won

Jack didn't use those items right that moment. Instead, he dealt with his free attribute and free skill points first. He had 24 free attribute points, 9 free skill points for Brave Swordmaster and Time Sage, and 6 free skill points for Beast Monarch.

He also checked his Container of Souls. The container had 6,900,000 souls inside. These were the souls gained not only from the recent battle but also from the maze under Sangrod royal mausoleum and the souls from Emperor Marcus' death.

He spent all 24 free attribute points on his Endurance, increasing this attribute to 2,420 points.

He then spent Brave Swordsmaster's 9 free skill points and 100,000 souls on Ghost Sword. This skill was fully maxed to level 20. The skill now lasted a half minute.

He still had the Field of Swords at level 1 but he decided to leave that skill for now.

For his Time Sage's 9 free skill points, he spent 7 of them to max the Invisibility spell. This spell's duration was now fifty minutes.

He didn't have any other spells that needed leveling up, so he stored the Time Sage's 2 free skill points for later use.

He spent Beast Monarch's 6 free skill points on Beast Tantrum. The skill became level 16 and it lasted 12.5 minutes.

Many of his skills and spells had also gained some star upgrades. Two among them had their first stars, Time Realm and Gigantify Pet. Each star of Time Realm slowed hostiles within its AOE by an additional 2%. For Gigantify Pet, one star increased its damage boost by 1% and damage reduction by 2%.

Jack used 6,600,000 souls to further upgrade 22 stars on various skills and spells.

His first choice was Reset. 1,800,000 souls were used to upgrade the spell by six times to a full ten stars. Reset's cooldown was now four hours. When he upgraded Reset's tenth star, he expected to hear a notification. He received a title for being the first player to fully level a skill. Upgrading a skill's star was much harder. It made sense that it should have a reward as well. He didn't believe someone else had maxed a skill's stars faster than him, not even Master.

He was not disappointed. He heard a notification. He was not granted a title, though. It was something better.

"Congratulations, for being the first to fully upgrade your skill to its tenth star. You have gained a talent, Fast Learner."

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Fast Learner (Talent)

Increase the amount of exp received by 10%.

Increase the amount of skill proficiency received by 50%

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"I thought you said talent can't be acquired if it is not already present within?" Jack asked Peniel.

"... That's right."

"But I just got this one. Doesn't this imply that someone other than me can also get this talent if he fully upgrades his skills first?"

"... Maybe it's because you do have this talent and this achievement simply pull it out to the surface. Maybe if you don't have it within you, you will get a title instead. I don't know! I said before that I don't know what accomplishment gives reward and what reward you get from that accomplishment, don't I?"

"Okay, okay," Jack said. He wasn't going to fuss about the reason. He was glad enough that he got one.

This talent was similar to his title, Hard-working Achiever, but that title needed to be equipped before he could enjoy its effect. This newly gained talent was passive. Its effect would always benefit him from now on.

The exp boost of Fast Learner talent was slightly less than the Hard-working Achiever, but the skill proficiency gain was much better. With this talent, he practically only needed half the time the other players needed.

Between this talent and his Container of Souls, even if he couldn't match Master in terms of skill quantity, he could excel in skill quality.

He chose Beast Form and Dances of the Brave for the next skills to be star-upgraded.

1,800,000 souls were given to Beast Form. At ten stars, this skill gave Jack an additional 200% HP when he transformed. This meant in Supreme Dragon form, Jack had triple HP. This skill also recovered his HP by 105 points every second.

Dances of the Brave didn't have a star yet. Jack spent 3,000,000 souls to bring it directly to the tenth star. Each star of Dances of the Brave increased its duration by 6 seconds. At ten stars, this skill lasted two minutes.

He had 200,000 souls remaining in his Container of Souls. He left them for later.

After finishing his skill management, he was just about to use the soul seed when John finally showed up. He didn't come alone. He was with Duchess Isabelle and a woman that Jack had never seen before.

When Jack used his Inspect on this woman, he learned that her name was Vanessa Armand. She was a level 85 mythical vampire. Jack had never seen her but he had heard her name. She was one of Sangrod's three Relic Marshalls.

Jack had learned from the guild chat about the reinforcement from Sangrod. By sending one of the relic marshalls here, Jack could tell that Horatio was genuine about their alliance.

This was good. He was originally still unsure about the new vampire emperor. He didn't know Horatio very well, after all. He knew Horatio was a cunning one, but cunning didn't necessarily mean untrustworthy. He had one example here right next to him.

"Hm? Why look at me like that?" John asked when he saw Jack's gaze.

"I was just thinking about how to thank you for your hard work without your head getting any bigger than it already is," Jack answered.

"Then don't. I'm already too smart. If my brain grows any bigger, I'm afraid even I can't handle my smartness."

"If you people are just going to exchange nonsense, let's just head in and see Thelgrun," Jeanny said. "He is waiting for us."

"Before that, let me thank Madam Vanessa here," Jack said as he nodded to Vanessa. "I represent Themisphere to thank you for your timely arrival. Your assistance was heaven-sent."

Vanessa chuckled. "From what I saw, your army could have won the day even without our help."

"That is not wrong, good madam Vanessa," John butted in. "However, your arrival was the additional push that caused the enemy to finally decide to retreat. Otherwise, we would have lost more troops than we have to."

"Have they truly retreated?" Jack asked. "I understand they still have the bulk of Liguritutum troops when they retreated."

"I've sent spies to follow them. If they turn back at some point, we will know," Isabelle said.

"Although the Liguritutum army is still sizable, they have lost their entire zombie army," John said. "Furthermore, Master couldn't stay on this battlefield to use his Necronomicon. He will have to get into another battle first before he can get another zombie army. I say we have crippled our opponent fairly satisfactorily."

Jack nodded. He supposed they truly had won this time.

Chapter 1516: What Time Is It?

Jack, Jeanny, John, Isabelle, and Vanessa went into the palace. At the entrance, a dwarven soldier had been waiting for them. This soldier ushered them to the throne room. On their way, they saw a dwarven noble walking past them while massaging his butt. He was giving Jack a strange look. Jack didn't understand, so he just ignored the dwarf.

Inside the throne room, Thelgrun was seen discussing with several people. Considering the struggle their country had just experienced, they had a lot to talk about.

When Thelgrun saw Jack enter the room, he told everyone to move aside. He went down from his throne and walked to Jack.

"My friend!" He called heartily.

"Mister President," Jack greeted back.

"Don't you mister president me! Come, give me a hug!" Thelgrun exclaimed.

There was no wooden stand like the last time, so Jack awkwardly lowered himself to hug Thelgrun.

After what Jack thought to be uncomfortably long, Thelgrun finally let go of the hug. He clasped Jack's shoulder and said, "Now, this is what it means to be a good friend! To come during our hour of need. For that, you earn my country's gratitude and friendship. From now on, Themisphere will be known as Palgrost's ally for as long as you sit on Themisphere's throne."

"Do you mean it?" Jack asked expectantly.

"Hah! After what we went through, I am an a*shole if I don't. As a matter of fact, the first order of business I did when I entered this throne room was sending an alliance request to your kingdom. When you return to your palace, you can accept that request. We will formally be allies then."

"That's great! I thought at first you would need to discuss this alliance with your senate," Jack said. He understood Palgrost's government was the closest to the democracy of their past world.

"Oh, one of them tried to advise me not to be so hasty. I fired that dwarf on the spot," Thelgrun said.

"Oh..."

"Another one told me it is not wise to let you and your friends into the throne room, considering you are outworlders. I kicked his butt and chased him away."

"Ah...", Jack remembered the dwarven noble who was massaging his butt.

"Well, I guess I need to be firm from time to time. Otherwise, people will think me soft," Thelgrun said as he gave the other dwarves in the room a hard stare. They all lowered their heads from the stare.

Thelgrun's face then turned sad. "I guess this is why my brother rebelled... Because I am not resolute enough."

After the battle ended, the soldiers spread out to clean the rubble, help the wounded, and search for survivors. Boron's body was found. Despite his brother's atrocity, Thelgrun didn't wish for his brother's demise. He planned to apprehend Boron and see if they could reconcile. It was no longer possible now.

"I'm sorry, Mister President. I don't think you are the problem. It's your brother who was too ambitious," Jack consoled. It was the pre-planned scenario, after all. If there was anyone to blame, it was Wilted's story design team.

"Sigh... Such a mess. My country will take a long time to recover from this," Thelgrun lamented. "The enemy even used a disaster item inside the capital. They not only wanted to steal my throne but also didn't hesitate to cause all this destruction inside a settlement. Such evil."

Jack froze upon hearing it. He turned to John and Jeanny who were also looking at him. Jeanny's face seemed to be in a struggle with whether they should tell the truth. John had been sending messages to them repeatedly telling them to shut their mouths.

Jack decided that even if he didn't want to lie, he also didn't have to say anything about the subject. Hence, he changed the subject, "Mister President. Now that we are allies, we should talk about our next step in how to deal with Liguritutum."

One of Thelgrun's advisors interfered, "King Storm Wind. We lost a great deal of our army. I think it is not the time to..."

He stopped after noticing Thelgrun's stare which looked as if it could burn a hole in his body.

Thelgrun then said to Jack, "Well, as much as I want to honor our alliance and pay those Liguritutum scums back for what they did to my country, my army has indeed taken a serious hit. I only have around one million troops left, but don't worry. When you go on your offensive campaign, I will follow. I will not be able to bring many troops, though. Probably only five or six hundred thousand. I still need to leave

some troops behind to ensure stability in this country. With how the situation is, I'm sure you understand."

"I understand," Jack said. He was glad already if Thelgrun could send a support army. This country had indeed lost a lot.

"But I've to make sure that no one comes in from the back door when we go for those Liguritutum scums," Thelgrun turned to Vanessa. "Can I trust Sangrod to not use this chance to its advantage?"

"I can't promise you anything, Mister President," Vanessa replied. "I'm just an attack dog. I go where my emperor points. That being said, our empire is now a formal ally of Themisphere and my emperor has promised the Themisphere king to follow him on his offensive campaign. So, I think it is safe to say that we won't use this chance to do anything to your country."

"Hm... Your new emperor, it's Horatio Maxius, ain't it? I've met him on several occasions," Thelgrun said. "I like him more than I like your previous emperor, but I can't truly tell what is going on in his head."

"In that case, let us set up a meeting," John suggested. "A meeting between our three countries. We need to agree on our advancing strategies if we are to mount an effective assault."

"Four countries," Isabelle interjected. "I've received a transmission from Thaergood. Verremor had just sent us a formal alliance request."

"That's great news!" Jack exclaimed.

"Now, the force of this world has divided into a clear two camps," John said. "Since it is so, do you know what time is it?"

"Uh... It's time for breakfast?" Jack asked. It was morning by now.

John rolled his eyes. "We can finally retaliate now. It's time for a final showdown with our enemies."

"You are right," Jack agreed. "In this case, I will invite the leaders of the three countries to Themisphere one week from now!"

Chapter 1517: Using the Call to Arms Last

Jack chose one week out of thoughtful consideration for his new allies. Thelgrun had much to deal with after the destruction caused by this war. They also had to chase out the retreating Liguritutum army to make sure that the enemy truly left Palgrost.

Horatio had just come into power. He also needed time to secure his hold on the empire.

As for Verremor, he had contacted Four Winds. Four Winds confirmed the alliance. Thanks to Jack's tips about the kingdom toppling quests and the information gained from interrogating the captured Raretooth and Angryfeet tribes, they managed to root out the plans before it was carried out. Two tribes were banished due to that. The Angryfeet tribe and another tribe called Toughhead.

They were found to be colluding with the World Maker to disrupt and ultimately disband the current Council of Ten in Verremor. Uncovering that the World Maker had a hand in this also gave Grand Chief

Kabaka and Four Winds the justifications to persuade the others into allying with Themisphere, who had been advocating Liguritutum's menace to all the countries in this world. The remaining six tribes within the council finally agreed to Kabaka and Four Winds.

As for the two empty seats on the council, Verremor would be hosting another election tourney. The tourney would be carried out within this week, so it could be settled before they came to Themisphere for the leaders' meeting.

Jack and John teleported back to Thereath to settle the arrangement of this meeting. Jeanny stayed behind and coordinated with the Themisphere army to chase out the retreating Liguritutum army from Palgrost.

On the way, John gave Jack a summary of the battle result.

Out of the 1,500,000 troops they brought to Palgrost, they lost one-third. The final all-out battle had taken quite a toll. They had also lost several ranked officers which Jack would have to replace using the monarch system. Jack sighed upon hearing the reports.

John told Jack that the enemy had it worse. He didn't have an exact number, but he estimated that the Liguritutum army retreated with a bit over one million troops. Rendezvousing with the troops they left behind to guard their supply line, the enemy retreated with around one and a half million troops.

The biggest loss the enemy suffered was their zombie army. The entire zombie army was completely eradicated. Master wouldn't be able to create another one any time soon without a major battle going on.

John said he would need to compile information on the army from their allied countries and gain as much intel as possible about the enemy's army. He would need all this before he could work out a strategy for their offensive campaign. An offensive campaign took many more resources than a defensive one. There was no do-over if they failed. That's why they would need to have the highest success chance before carrying them out. He would use this one week for the planning.

With John, Jack went to his throne and accepted all the alliance requests. Aside from Liguritutum, Aurebor, and Hydrurond, all other countries were now his allies. He also had embassies built in all those allied countries, so he could send messages fast.

He sent the formal invitation to have the country leaders come to Thereath one week from now. He also sent the message to Queen Aldryth in their temporary city, Alselg. He bet Aldryth would very much like to be a part of the offensive push.

Today was also the day when Jack received his monthly ruling powers. He received 140 ruling powers from his sovereign level 14. He also collected 25 ruling powers from the Boundless Cache. He had 208 ruling powers to spend.

He left the Call to Arms and Mass Drill for the last. He did manual drafts and training on each settlement first. With three countries in allied status, the World Commerce Center gave him an extra 300,000 gold coins every month. The trade routes and economy in every settlement also flourished due to that Wonder Building. This allowed Jack to continue the heavy expenditure on all that drafting and training.

There was no new Wonder Building to build, so he left the building arrangement to John. He did ask if John had anything to use his ruling powers on. John pointed him to several buildings and research to hasten. Jack spent 36 ruling powers on all those things.

One of the research gave them the portable teleportation rune diagram like the one Linda had used. He had experienced the effectiveness of this diagram firsthand, so he approved of John's choice.

There was no special research popping up anymore. John suggested they also arranged for their armies to do joint drills with their new allies. A portion of Themisphere and Sangrod armies were already in Palgrost at this time, so they should take advantage to do these joint drills. Maybe there would be special research that appeared again after the drills.

Jack agreed. He informed Thaergood to send the transmission to Arther who was still in Palgrost. He also sent another message to Verremor and Sangrod to request these joint drills.

Jack then used the Officer Overview to appoint capable soldiers who had been meritorious in the Palgrost war into the blank portraits, refilling all the ranks. Kramer and Ana had been doing quite well in the war, so Jack promoted the two to Knight Lieutenants. He was happy for the two's growth, but he was happier that the two survived the war.

Afterward, he used 10 ruling powers to increase the population in Theneward. With the effect of Serenity's Blessing and the effects of various Wonder Buildings, Theneward's population had increased to eight million. Still far away from a megalopolis but it was getting there.

He then spent 60 ruling powers on Impose Blockade. The blockade was on three guilds this time. World Maker, World Ruler, and State of Galhana. The State of Galhana was filled with mercenaries that were on par with Dogs of War and Jackal Crew. They could create trouble if they were allowed free rein.

After making sure there were no other things to do in the monarch system, he spent 80 ruling powers for Call to Arms and Mass Drill. With the manual draft from earlier, he recruited 478,000 new soldiers, almost replenishing the troops they lost in Palgrost. He only had 22 ruling powers left after that.

Jack summoned his legendary-grade Runestone of Luck when he used the Call to Arms. He also pumped that runestone with as much willpower as he could exert.

Afterward, he expectantly opened the list of recruits. With all the boosts, he hoped they got more mythical recruits this time. John also looked expectantly from the side. After scrolling the list, the two's eyes were glued on the recruit at the top.

They didn't get any mythical grade, but on top of the list was a name, Elayne. She was an eternal-grade human.

Chapter 1518: Eternal-grade Royal Agent

"Is it your insane luck, or the effect from the World Game Stadium?" John asked.

"I think it's both," Peniel remarked.

"Well, whatever the case, she has to be my royal agent! I'm sending her an invite right away!" Jack exclaimed.

"Have to be? If she refuses, what will you do then? Drag her here and threaten her?" John asked.

Jack gave John an annoyed glance. He received a reply from Elayne not long after. She accepted.

"Hah! Ye of little faith," Jack laughed at John.

Now that Elayne was his royal agent, he could check her details.

She was another one who had both skill and spell traits. Her skill traits were sound, shield, move, fist, and dart. Her spell traits were restore, curse, enchant, manipulate, and boundary. Her elemental affinities were light, wind, and soul.

She had four talents! Her first talent was Perfect Pitch, which increased the stats of any musical instrument she used by 10% and doubled all the effects of the sound-based skills she performed.

Her second talent was Low-Frequency Sound, which tripled the range of all sound-based skills. Bard's standard skill, Play Music, had the AOE with a radius of one hundred meters. This meant if Elayne was the one using the skill, she could affect everyone within a radius of three hundred meters.

Her third talent was Heaven-Blessed. This talent gave her a 15% increase in the exp points she received and a 50% increase in the probability of learning skills or spells. If she was hit by skills that cause negative status effects, status effects that should have been successfully triggered had a 20% chance of failing.

Jack was surprised when he saw her fourth talent because it was the same one as what he possessed. Her fourth talent was Mana Affinity. This talent meant that she would be one of those natives who were able to learn how to manipulate mana by themselves. But if she was mentored, her mana improvement should be more rapid.

As impressive as she was, she needed to improve her level first before everything else. She was only a level 30 since she was newly recruited. Jack messaged Jeanny to arrange another team to power-level Elayne. A few guild members had returned after the Liguritutum army retreated. Jeanny told Jack she would arrange for these members to help Elayne level up.

Jack also used the kingdom funds to equip Elayne with a full set of super-rare-grade equipment. As a recruit, her standard equipment was common grades except for her musical instrument, which was a zither. That instrument was a unique grade.

Elayne didn't have many skills despite being an eternal grade. This was because of her low level. Peniel assured Jack that after she leveled up, her innate skills or spells would be top-notch. Even without her Heaven-Blessed talent, she would have a better success chance of learning skills due to her eternal grade. With enough time, she would grow to have more skills and spells compared to Jack's other royal agents.

At her current level, she only had three skills and one spell available. The skills were all from Bard's class. These skills were Play Music, Sonic Darts, and Heavenly Sound. Her one spell was Dreadful Curse.

Peniel explained the Dreadful Curse was a Witch's standard spell. Witch was a special class from the Archmage class. This spell inflicted a target with the curse effect plus three other random negative status effects.

Jack used the monarch system and installed one skill and one spell that were available from the kingdom library for Elayne. He gave her Sound Shield, which provided the user with a protective shield. If the person using the skill was playing music at the time, the sound shield would be twice as strong. For the installed spell, she chose Chained Healing, which was the same spell he installed on Laurent.

After finishing the arrangements, Jack sent an instruction to Elayne to meet with the team Jeanny had organized. If possible, Jack wanted to power-level Elayne directly, but he still had many matters to deal with. Once he had free time, he would do that.

Jack also took the chance to check the levels of his other royal agents. They had developed steadily and they all fought during the war in Palgrost.

Eyrene was now level 85. Though she killed many opponents in the war, her high level needed lots of exp points to advance and the enemies she defeated were mostly much lower levels than her. Hence, she only increased by one level.

Duke Alfredo and Robinson were the second rank in terms of level. They were both level 79, the same as Jack. Laurent was close. He was level 78. Jonathan was level 73. Lindsey improved the most due to her Fast Growth talent. She was now level 71, catching up to the veterans.

Howard, the recruit who had a higher level than Lindsey before Palgrost's war, was now at the same level as her, at level 71. For the remaining recruits, Amy was level 66 and Nerd Bungie was level 62.

He was glad of their improvements. But most of all, he was glad that they came out alive from the war. The after-war report told him that Lindsey was killed during the battle, but luckily Laurent was nearby when it happened. She was resurrected by him.

Jack knew war could be unpredictable. Anyone could fall on the battlefield. Unlike his guild members, these royal agents weren't protected by the Resurrection Chapel. The Amulet of Rebirth also didn't work on natives.

Thinking about this, he asked Peniel, "Other than the resurrection spell, are there items that can bring natives back to life? Something similar to what the Amulet of Rebirth does to players."

"Hm... There are resurrection potions, but these potions are very rare. You can buy them at the Church of Creation if you are a faction member, but they cost lots of faction points to exchange. If you have a recipe and your alchemist level is high enough, you can brew one, but the recipe is even much rarer than the potion itself. I doubt anyone has it yet."

"Does this resurrection potion function like the spell? The target cannot be dead for longer than one hour?" Jack asked.

"Yes," Peniel answered.

This meant even if he had the potions, the royal agents had to always work in pairs. This could be a solution. He knew Bowler had a rather high rank in the Church of Creation.

Jack was just about to send a message to Bowler when Peniel said, "There is also a Wonder Building that can protect the lives of some selected natives."

"Wonder buildings? Do you know how to get them?" Jack asked.

"Yeah, but I'm not sure if it is possible for you," Peniel answered. "This country needs to receive the blessing from either one of these two factions, the Church of Creation or the Healers Society."

Jack's eyes lit up upon hearing Peniel's words. He might not be familiar with the Church of Creation, but he was on good terms with the Healers Society.

Chapter 1519: A Promise

Jack once crossed paths with the Healers Society during a kingdom faction quest where he had to deliver packages to different settlements all over the country. He helped Prince Alonzo gain this faction's support afterward. His guild also received regular quests from this faction.

After he became the king, he repaid the faction by giving them donations and also supported their work. During the regular meeting with Thaergood, one of the issues he dealt with was the cooperation between the kingdom and the league factions. Among them was the Healers Society.

The Healers Society had done a great deal of good in the slum district. Jack also made improving the slum one of the kingdom's priorities. Today, the slum was a much better place compared to when he first entered Thereath.

The Healers Society was very happy with the cooperation. They also received the support to expand their factions to almost every settlement in the kingdom. Andrea, the grand healer from the Healers Society in Thereath, often visited Jack during the monthly noble visits.

Tomorrow would be the day for that monthly noble gathering. Jack would take the chance to ask her about this blessing.

Jack spent the rest of the day having a meeting with Thaergood and the other advisors. During the meeting, Jack asked Thaergood about the names of those who would be attending tomorrow's gathering. If Andrea's name was not there, he would have to invite her formally. Luckily, her name was on the list.

At night, Jack was ready to return to his chamber. When he passed by a hallway with a balcony to the outside, he saw Darnos out there. The old draconian was just leaning on the balustrade with a distant look on his face. Jack never saw Darnos like that. The normal scene was Darnos getting chased by the palace inhabitants because he played pranks on them.

Jack came over to him.

"Yo, old mighty one. What are you doing out here in the cold of the night? And why that long face? Your uncle died or something?" Jack joked.

Darnos glanced at Jack. His expression was flat, but Jack saw the sadness in his eyes. Darnos looked away again.

"... Not uncle. Nephew," Darnos said.

"Huh?" Jack was lost. He didn't expect that.

"You should know. I heard you are involved in the battle in Palgrost," Darnos said.

"In Palgrost... Wait, do you mean your nephew is..."

"Was...", Darmos corrected. "Yes, Uddroth was my nephew. Well, there are only so many of us, true dragons. Each of us is related to another one. In a sense, all of them are my descendants."

"Oh... I'm sorry. I didn't know. I'm truly sorry," Jack said sincerely.

Darmos sighed. "I remember when he was still a hatchling... I thought I would be the first to go among the true dragons who are still alive. I wish that is the case... Having the young one go before I do is truly not a good feeling."

"Don't say that. I believe you still have years to live," Jack consoled.

Darmos looked at Jack weirdly. He said, "Centuries, to be exact. You will be bones in the ground before I even feel death knocking on my door."

"Oh..." Jack didn't know what to say to that.

"Do me a favor, will you?" Darmos said.

"As long as it is in my power, just say it," Jack replied.

"The next time that nemesis of you called Suzaki, you call me over," Darmos said. "I've been too soft on her in our last battle. I will teach her the consequences of killing a true dragon. The next time we meet will be the time I end her immortality."

"I... I promise," Jack said.

Jack heard the sound of rocks breaking. He looked down and saw the balustrade had been crushed by Darmos' hands. Darmos transformed into Broidrireg and flew away.

Jack watched the blue dragon disappear into the night sky. He had never seen Darmos as mad as that. He remembered again when Broidrireg first sensed Syndrillis' bloodline within him. It was as if the dragon was about to tear him apart. It was clear that Broidrireg cared about all the other true dragons who were still alive.

Jack sighed. There was nothing he could do for the dragon. He could just honor Darmos' wish and summon him when he next encountered Suzaki.

"You think he can do what he said he is going to do? End Suzaki's immortality?" Jack asked Peniel.

"I don't know. Suzaki's immortality is a legend, I don't think she can die even if she wants to," Peniel answered.

Jack didn't linger long on that balcony. He resumed going to his chamber. Entering his chamber, he took out the Soul Seed and the Upgrade Cell: Equipment.

"Have you decided what to use those two on?" Peniel asked.

"I took them out, didn't I?" Jack returned, which caused Peniel to pout.

He picked up the Soul Seed and interfaced with it. After choosing a viable skill, the seed vanished.

"Asura?" Peniel remarked.

The skill changed its name to Soul Asura. Jack used the skill. Four arms sprouted from him. The swords that were held in those arms were still copies of Storm Breaker. But instead of being black like the original Storm Breaker, these copies were silver in color. They also had some sort of translucent aura enveloping them, making them appear longer than the actual sword.

The Soul Asura turned all damage that was inflicted by these copy swords into soul damage. It also had the additional effect of ignoring 25% of the enemy's defensive stats. Normal Asura boosted Jack's various offensive capabilities. Soul Asura was the same but added a 20% reduction to all damage received during the Asura state. Also, its duration was doubled.

Jack could now maintain the Asura state for ten minutes.

Jack canceled the skill and picked up the Upgrade Cell: Equipment. He already decided what equipment to use this item on the second he laid eyes on the description. A legendary-grade weapon might sound enticing, but he already had another option for getting such a weapon. So, he was going to use this item on one piece of equipment that he didn't want to change even if he got a better one.

Chapter 1520: An Issue Troubling the League Factions

That equipment was his Amulet of Summoning. The amulet gave him the ability to summon an eternal grade helper, albeit by sacrificing mana cores. That ability was priceless. He didn't want to throw that ability away.

If he could transform that amulet into a legendary grade, then that would have been for the best. Without further ado, he activated the Upgrade Cell: Equipment and had it interfaced with his Amulet of Summoning.

After a brief process, he received a notification that his amulet had been upgraded.

*

Superior Amulet of Summoning (Legendary necklace).

All elemental resistances +40.

All status effect resistances +20%.

Extends the duration of all other summoned creatures to twice their original duration.

Calming wave (Active effect): All monsters of rare elite grade and below, and a maximum of ten levels above the user, will not turn hostile, Duration: 10 minutes, Cooldown: 6 hours.

Summon archdemon lord (Eternal monster), Cost: 50,000 mana cores, Duration: 3 hours, Cooldown: 6 hours

*

The elemental resistances and status effect resistances were doubled from their previous stats. Its two original abilities, the calming wave and the summoning ability had their durations extended. Previously, the calming wave's duration was five minutes. The summoning ability was one hour.

The summoning ability's duration was extended three times the original. Jack was very happy with this upgrade. If the archdemon lord could stay that long during a war, it would have more influence on the war's outcome.

He still had to collect the mana cores, though. He was still short more than 20,000 mana cores to summon another Archdemon Lord.

As for the calming wave, aside from its duration getting extended, it could now also affect the rare-elite-grade monsters. Previously the highest grade affected was special elites.

The amulet also received an additional passive ability. Jack decided to test this ability to have a better understanding. He flew out from his balcony onto the side of Mount Thenias which was uninhabited. He started using his skills there.

His primary summons, the golden wolves and spirit weapon now last longer. Therras didn't have a duration so this ability did not affect it. Aside from those, Iron Mammoth Stampede, Mirage Beast, and Myriad Venomous Vipers were also affected. Phantom Blade and Dances of the Braves which summoned additional weapons weren't affected. They were not considered proper summons.

After having a better understanding of his new legendary amulet, Jack returned to his chamber to rest.

*

The next morning, he attended the monthly noble gathering. Grace joined him for this gathering. She returned from Palgrost last night.

The others were mostly still in Palgrost. The Liguritutum army was retreating but they were still on Palgrost's soil so the country was still considered at war. The teleportation between countries was still close. If they all teleported back and the Liguritutum army changed their minds and resumed their invasion, it would take some time before they could get back to the battlefield.

Jack told Grace about his intention. In the gathering, Grace took care of most of the nobles who came to talk to Jack. Jack then slipped away and approached Andrea.

But before he could do that, he was approached by Thaergood who brought a couple. The couple were both players. their levels were very low. Jack was confused at first as to why unknown low-level players were allowed access to this gathering. He then saw a small baby held by the two.

"Is that...," Jack had his guess but he still used his Inspect.

*

Lloyd (level: 1)

HP: 100/100

*

"This is the first outworlder baby to be born," Thaergood informed. He quickly added, "In this kingdom at least. I don't know about the other countries."

"He doesn't have a class," Jack stated.

"Of course, he doesn't. He is a baby," Peniel uttered. "Do you expect him to make a choice when he can't even think properly yet? He will only be offered a class when he comes of age."

"When is that?" Jack asked.

"When he is fifteen years old," Peniel answered.

"So cute! May I...?" Grace came over after seeing the baby.

"It is an honor, my lady," The father said. The mother seemed reluctant to let go of her baby at first but after the urging from her husband's eyes, she relented.

Grace cradled the baby in her arms. "He is very cute, isn't he?"

"Yes, he is," Jack replied.

"Makes you want to have one as well, don't you?" Grace said again.

"Hm... Never thought about that. Raising a baby is a hass—Ouch! What is that for?!" Jack complained to Peniel who slapped his head just now.

Peniel rolled her eyes. This brute was truly hopeless.

"I think this calls for a celebration," Thaergood said. "I bring them here to request permission to hold a festival in the business district."

"That's fine, go ahead. Use the kingdom fund to hold the festival as you see fit," Jack said to Thaergood. He then took out 300 gold coins and gave them to the couple. "This is for you. I hope he grows into a strong man. If you need anything, just come here. As the first outworlder born in this world, your boy is going to be famous!"

"Thank you, Your Majesty," The couple said. 300 gold coins were a lot for them. They weren't adventurers who hunted monsters in the wilderness. They worked normal jobs inside Thereath, hence their low levels.

After chatting with the couple for a little while, Thaergood called one of the officers to bring the couple and organize the festival in the business district. Jack and Grace said goodbye to them. Grace went back to entertain the nobles while Jack went to meet Andrea.

Andrea was sitting in a corner. She was not a sociable type. She only came out of respect because the kingdom had supported their faction. She was currently chatting with four people in the corner. These people were so absorbed in their discussion that they weren't distracted by the news about the first outworlder baby.

As Jack approached, Jack found two out of the four were people he was familiar with. One of whom was Haestus, the grandmaster blacksmith in charge of the Blacksmith Circle stationed on the other side of Mount Thenias.

Aside from Healers Society, Blacksmith Circle was another league faction that had grown in relationship with the kingdom after Jack became the king. The kingdom commissioned a lot of orders to this faction to keep the soldier's equipment in tip-top shape.

The other person was Gruff, which puzzled Jack. Despite the League of Champions also being tight with the kingdom since its sovereign was one of its members, Gruff never attended this gathering. Jack was wondering why this old warrior was present today.

The other two people were Willem from the Trade Association and Ducasse from the House of Culinary. These two factions were also on good terms with the kingdom. Another faction that was usually present in this gathering was the Order of Magi. Young Janus normally roamed this hall while socializing with the nobles. Jack didn't see him this time.

"Your Majesty," Andrea and the others stood and greeted when they saw Jack approaching.

"Thank you for coming here," Jack greeted back. "I'm going to cut to the chase. I have a matter to discuss with you."

"Me?" Andrea asked.

"Yes. I would like your faction's blessing to build the Revival Pool," Jack said. The revival pool was the name of the wonder building that could protect the lives of some selected natives. He had heard this name from Peniel yesterday.

"Your Majesty is quite knowledgeable. Unfortunately, only our leader can bestow that blessing," Andrea replied.

"I believe your leader's name is Panacea? Can you arrange for me to meet her?" Jack asked.

"If it is any other time, I would love to... But currently, there is an issue that is keeping my leader from exposing herself to the public."

"What issue?" Jack asked.

"It is something that I talked about with sister Andrea just now," Haestus said.

"As do I," Gruff added. Willem and Ducasse echoed his words.

Jack was intrigued. What issue could cause these prominent people from different league factions to gather and talk about?

"This place is where I can meet other league factions' higher-ups without having to arrange a formal meeting," Gruff said. "I want to confirm some rumors that have been circling our community."

"What rumors?" Jack asked.

"After our talk just now, I'm afraid it is no longer a rumor," Haestus said.

"What is it?" Jack was getting irritated by the suspense.

"Someone has been targeting the leaders of various league factions," Andrea said.

"Targeting? But these leaders are usually high-level and high-grade individuals themselves, aren't they? They are not easy targets. Can these just be baseless rumors?" Jack asked.

"It is not a rumor," Willem from the Trade Association said. "Our leader had been assassinated last week."

"So was ours," Ducasse chimed in. "Ours happened just two days ago."