

World 1541

Chapter 1541: A Little Bit of Trust

Kabaka, Thelgrun, Aldryth, and Horatio looked at one another.

Horatio was the first to answer, "I don't see any benefit of telling them. It will just cause instability. I will tell this secret to my inner circle, but that's it."

"Even if we keep it a secret, everybody has heard what the Liguritutum ruler announced last night," Aldryth said.

"Doesn't mean we have to confirm it," Horatio returned. "I don't think people believe his words. The Liguritutum ruler might be sovereign but he is still a mortal. If the one making the announcement is a God, then that's another matter. Some people might come and ask us about it. We can just deny we know anything about the truth."

"I like him," John said to Jack and Jeanny, who rolled their eyes in response.

"I will follow King Storm Wind's lead," Kabaka said.

"Huh? Me?" Jack was confused hearing Kabaka's words.

"King Storm Wind had known this truth for a long time, yet he didn't tell his subjects. I will do the same."

"Oh...," Jack scratched his head. He didn't think this was an honorable thing to be an example of, but he guessed it wasn't the time to condemn himself.

"I will do the same. For all I know, this is all just bullshit!" Thelgrun exclaimed. "I don't have to tell anyone anything, because I am not sure about it myself."

"... I will also tell this only to my closest people," Aldryth said.

"One thing I have been wondering, though," Horatio said. "Let's say if what you told us is the truth, that it was truly the Liguritutum ruler who had transformed your world into our world. Do you know if he can do what he claimed last night? I assume what he meant about bringing the outworlders back to where you came from means turning this world back into your world."

"I suppose so, but he won't do it," Jack said.

"Why are you so certain?" Horatio asked.

"Because it will just put him back to where he started. He will lose everything he had worked for all this time. He wants to become a God, and he can only achieve that in this world."

"In any case, he has the means to transform this world back?"

Jack looked at John and Jeanny who returned his gaze with a shrug.

"We don't know," Jack answered. "That's the truth. What we know is that he used some sort of machine to transform the world. We don't know if he still has this machine or if this machine can still function."

"What happens to us if the world is transformed back?" Kabaka asked.

"I... I think you will all cease to exist," Jack answered.

"Well, we will just have to assume that the Liguritutum ruler can still do that," Horatio uttered.

"And... What does that imply...?" Jack asked.

"This means it is of utmost importance for us to take him down and prevent him from transforming this world back," Horatio answered. "If his machine is still around, it must be inside Liguritutum. We have to defeat him and scour that country to find the machine, and destroy it!"

Hearing Horatio's words, Thelgrun, Aldryth, and Kabaka nodded. "I agree!" Thelgrun announced.

"I originally am just joining your campaign against Liguritutum to honor our alliance. But now, I will send the full force of my army. This campaign concerns the future of my empire too, and our world," Horatio said.

"I didn't think about that," Kabaka said. "I'm also only joining to honor my friendship with the Themisphere king and to punish Liguritutum for interfering with my country's internal affairs. Now, I will also commit to defeating Liguritutum."

"Well, I already plan to go all out since the start," Thelgrun said. "... with the small army I have left, that is."

"My desire is only to claim my country back," Aldryth joined in. "Now, I have to defeat Liguritutum as well. Not for revenge but to make sure my country can continue to exist."

Jeanny nudged John. "See? A little bit of trust goes a long way," she whispered.

"We are just lucky," John waved her off.

"You're welcome," Jack said to John.

"Well, now that we agree, let us go to the war room and discuss how we shall defeat Liguritutum to make sure that Master didn't do anything to this world," John said to everyone.

The seven returned to the war room where everyone was waiting. Duchess Isabelle was there. She had used the zone portal to return. John called her back because he wanted her to aid Emris in leading the second army from Themisphere while Arther and Meryl led the army that stayed in Palgrost.

John went to the central platform and activated the projection that showed the map of the world.

"Now, before we begin. Let us hear how many troops everyone has and can spare for this campaign," John said. "I will start with Themisphere. We have 1,000,000 troops in Palgrost and 2,148,000 in Themisphere."

Even though they didn't show it, the four allied country leaders were rather surprised to hear this information. They understood that Themisphere had around three million troops before the outworlders arrived. After that, Themisphere underwent multiple wars, domestic and abroad. This came with no small loss of soldiers.

How did they manage to keep their army count the same as before all those wars?

They didn't know that the monarch system gave a clear advantage to outworlders who became sovereigns, especially when it came to ruling powers. Jack received so many ruling powers from multiple sources that were not available to native sovereigns. He had used these ruling powers to speed up multiple developments and constantly doing mass draftings every month. The speed of Themisphere recruiting soldiers couldn't be compared to the other countries that were still ruled by native sovereigns.

"However, almost half of the troops that are in Themisphere are rookies, especially the ones we have just recruited this month," John continued. He wasn't aware of the secret turmoil within the native sovereigns' minds. "After reviewing carefully, the ones we can mobilize for our campaign is 2,500,000 troops. So, Themisphere will move out with 1,000,000 troops from Palgrost and 1,500,000 troops from Themisphere."

Chapter 1542: Number of Troops that Can be Mobilized

"Where will the Themisphere army move out to?" Aldryth asked.

"Before that. Let us hear how many troops everyone can mobilize," John said.

"I only have the 500,000 soldiers that follow me out from Hydrurond," Aldryth said. "I'm not in a position to recruit any additional troops in my current situation. Some deserters and adventurers from Hydrurond joined my force but they were not many."

"I thought I would have the fewest troops. I can spare 600,000 troops for the campaign," Thelgrun said with a wide grin.

Aldryth gave the dwarf a side-eye. This was not a competition.

"Let it be known. If I move my troops, it will be into Hyrdurond," Aldryth stated. "I won't move my troops anywhere else while my country is still under conquest."

"We respect that," Jack said.

John gave Jack a gaze that said, 'Are you the strategist or me?'

He waved for Jack to move back while he addressed Thelgrun, "It's okay that you only supply 600,000 troops, but we will need your siege weapons. I believe you still have mana cannons stashed somewhere, don't you?"

"I can round up my siege weapons from my other settlements. I can probably get ten of them moving with my troops," Thelgrun answered.

John nodded. He then said, "And your ships as well. I believe they are all still intact."

The border region between Palgrost and Liguritutum was the marsh region of Daflue. In between the Daflue region and Liguritutum was an inland sea. If one wanted to take a direct route between Palgrost and Liguritutum, one had to go through this inland sea.

This was also the route that the Liguritutum army used for their invasion. They had an armada that carried their massive army into the Daflue region. From there, they went on foot before entering Palgrost.

"Do you want to invade Liguritutum via the inland sea?" Thelgrun asked.

"It's not a good idea," Kabaka said. "Liguritutum has a strong armada. This armada is mainly for defensive purposes. Neither the Civil War nor the wars in Aurebor, Hydrurond, and Palgrost involved this armada, so they are still at their full force."

"That's right," Thelgrun added. "My ships might be more advanced, but Liguritutum has more ships and better sailors."

"I've heard that Verremor's armada is also formidable," John said to Kabaka.

"We are," Kabaka said proudly. "Unfortunately, Liguritutum is too far. It will take us too long to get there. Not to mention we have to brave the outer sea which is very dangerous."

"Let us deal with the issues one by one," John said. "Suffice to say, I will require Palgrost's and Verremor's armadas. What about the force you can spare, grand chief? How many troops can you send?"

"We have lost quite a number when we invaded Themisphere," Kabaka said. "We have been trying to rebuild our forces, but the process is slow... Except the province led by Cipher Flight."

Kabaka was looking at Four Winds as he spoke. Verremor was a nation controlled by ten different tribes. Each tribe leader had access to a partial monarch system and had the autonomy to build their forces. As the grand chief, Kabaka's access to the monarch system allowed him to monitor all ten tribes' forces.

He was glad that under Four Winds' guidance, the army in that province increased at a remarkable pace. Now, after learning about Themisphere's army growth and the truth of the world, he wondered if outworlders held an unfair advantage when it came to ruling a country.

The fact was indeed so. Four Winds received tips about the monarch system from Jack. Even though he couldn't use all the monarch system's functions, the ones available to him were utilized to the fullest. He was also very good at managing his guild members, who helped him deal with the affairs. He didn't have a sovereign level, but he had a governor level, which was the same except it came with half the benefit.

"Out of the troops we have, we can spare 1,400,000 troops for this campaign," Kabaka announced. "I have to keep the remaining 500,000 troops for our nation's security. Several transfers of power have happened to our council within this short year, I'm afraid those ousted tribes might cause trouble if we send too many troops out of our nation."

"I understand," Jack responded, which awarded him another glare from John.

"What about the Sangrod Empire?" John turned to Horatio. "Aside from the brief siege on Vacharest when you overthrew your father, Sangrod is the most peaceful country among all the seven main countries these last two years. Your army is the most unharmed compared to the others."

Horatio chuckled. "In terms of army count, our country has always had the fewest troops compared to other countries. It all comes down to two reasons. Firstly, vampires have a low birth rate, or maybe it is

more correct to say turn rate as we are not born the way other races are. We are turned. In return, we have a longer life span and due to that, our soldiers have higher average levels. Secondly, we have the Eternal Night country enchantment in place. As everyone knows, we vampires possess higher attributes during nighttime. It is not advantageous for outside forces to invade us. Thus, there is no need for Sangrod to maintain a high army count."

"Are you preparing excuses to justify sending a small army for this campaign?" Kabaka teased.

Horatio chuckled. "I'm simply stating the fact," he responded. "Anyway, the number I can mobilize is 1,600,000 troops."

"Does this number include the vanguard troops led by Vanessa in Palgrost," John asked.

"Yes," Horatio answered.

"I thought we were going all out to stop the Liguritutum ruler," Kabaka said. "My intel mentioned that Sangrod has around 2,600,000 troops. Even if my intel isn't accurate, it shouldn't be that far from that number. Are you keeping away a million soldiers?"

"Before our talk this morning, I only plan to send out 700,000 soldiers at most," Horatio replied. "To be frank with you all, my country is not peaceful at the moment. I might have seized the throne, but there is a faction in my country that doesn't consider me a suitable emperor. This faction is comprised of clans who are loyal to my father. They aren't many, but they have a troublesome figurehead."

"Who?" Kabaka asked.

"Archibald Silas, one of my father's trusted followers," Horatio answered. "He is also the strongest out of the three relic marshalls of my country."

Chapter 1543: The Figurehead of the Alliance

Jack remembered Archibald Silas. He was a level 90 mythical-grade vampire who blocked his way when he was trapped inside Marcus' throne room. If Archibald was present when he challenged Marcus, the difficulty would have increased to a whole new level. Jack learned later that Archibald was with the blood army at the capital wall defending against the rebels' siege.

"Is he planning to rebel?" Jack asked.

"Not yet," Horatio answered. "He handed in his resignation when I became the emperor. Several influential officers followed his example. He is still hiding his intentions but my spies informed me that he has been meeting several clans that are known to be loyal to my father. It is easy to understand what they are planning to do."

Jack thought back to the time when Arther planned his revolt. He guessed there would always be disgruntled followers when an organization changed its leadership.

"When they left, they brought away their private armies around 300,000 strong," Horatio continued.

"So, you should understand why I need to keep sufficient force just in case Archibald comes out into the open to contest my throne. For that reason, Ezekiel will stay with me in Sangrod. Vanessa will be the only relic marshall who goes with the campaign against Liguritutum."

Everyone thought this was a pity, but they couldn't deny Horatio's reasoning made sense.

"Don't worry. I'm truly committed to this alliance," Horatio said. "I have a plan in motion to deal with Archibald. If everything goes smoothly, I should be able to take him down without us going into an open battle. Once my plan succeeds, I will send an additional army as reinforcement."

"Well, this is an uncoerced alliance. Everyone sends their troops based on what they can afford," John said. "Now, from what I've recorded from everyone, I can say that we have a total of 6,600,000 troops."

Paytowin whistled after hearing the number of troops, which caused everyone to turn to him. Getting uncomfortable from the stares, he slowly moved and hid behind Jeanny.

"This is an impressive number. But we are an alliance of five countries, I don't think such a massive army had ever been gathered before in this world," John remarked. "And now, we will review our opponent's number."

John had been inserting the data into the projection. Triangles indicating the troops were placed around the map. He was now inputting the data into the Liguritudum's region.

"We don't have intel of their actual number, of course. What we have is an assumption based on old intel," John explained. "Liguritudum retreated from Palgrost with 1,500,000 troops. They also have 500,000 defending troops in their country, so their total army numbers 2,500,000 troops. Aurebor has 1,500,000 troops stationed in Hydrurond and 1,000,000 troops defending their own country. On paper, they appear to have 4,500,000 troops."

"But...?" Kabaka asked.

"But I suspect they have recruited more troops out of the three countries they are controlling," John answered. "However, even if we consider they have enough resources and unusual recruiting speed, I'd say their total number is no more than 5,200,000 troops."

"They can recruit so many soldiers in such a short time?" Thelgrun asked.

Kabaka and Horatio were silent. They suspected the monarch system gave extra advantages in the hands of outworlders. Thelgrun was a bit slower in catching that notion.

"We still have more numbers than them," Jack said.

"Yes. For once, I'm glad that I don't have to go against enemies who outnumber us," John said. "That being said, we will now come to the most important part of this alliance."

"Which is?" Thelgrun asked.

"The chain of command," John replied. "An army is only effective if they can act as one. If one side does things that have no benefit to the other side, we will end up with a splintered force. That will make it easy for our enemies to pick on us. We have to move with a clear chain of command! Each army from the different countries has to move following the commands from one source!"

"And I suppose this command will come from..."

"Me, of course!" John declared.

Jack and Jeanny facepalmed. This guy truly had no tact.

Kabaka and the others looked at one another. They were all the top leaders of their countries. They were used to having the most authority without having to answer to anyone. Hence, the request to have their armies submit to the commands of another person was not something they were comfortable with.

"I think this is not a bad idea."

Everyone turned to the voice. Grace had come out and stood before the four country leaders.

"Grand Chief Kabaka, Emperor Horatio, President Thelgrun, and Queen Aldryth. All four of you are remarkable leaders who are no less than any other person, but all of you come here because of one person," Grace said.

The four understood whom Grace meant. They involuntarily turned to Jack. Jack felt awkward due to the stares.

"Each of you is here because you are allied to King Storm Wind. He is the connection between the four of you. Without him, I believe you won't be so willing to work with one another."

The four now looked at each other. They realized the truth in Grace's words. Under normal circumstances, they wouldn't be standing here next to each other. They all came here due to their friendship and alliance with the King of Themisphere.

"Since that is the case, why not have King Storm Wind as the figurehead of this alliance?" Grace continued. "Every organization needs a leader. Even a temporary one. This alliance is forged for the sake of defeating Liguritutum. It is not permanent. You are not required to follow King Storm Wind's command once the objective of this alliance is achieved. But while this alliance exists, we need a leader. Are any of you willing to listen to the command of someone other than King Storm Wind?"

After several seconds of silence, Thelgrun announced, "If it is King Storm Wind, I'm willing to listen to his words."

Chapter 1544: Everyone's Assignment

Kabaka, Aldryth, and Horatio again looked at one another after Thelgrun's declaration.

Aldryth was the next to speak, "My people and I owe the Themisphere King a great deal. We would have perished if not for him. I don't mind heeding his words for this campaign, but I have to make it clear another time. I will not have my army move anywhere else until we regain Hydrurond."

"That is natural. That will also be our priority," Grace replied.

John turned to Jack who just shrugged. If John had not made a strategy that prioritized retaking Hydrurond, he would have to do that now.

"Well, I consider King Storm Wind a friend and someone I can trust," Kabaka spoke. "If it is him, I can rest assured that he will not send my troops for a selfish reason. I trust him more than anyone else in this room. I agree to have him as our alliance's leader."

Horatio smiled. "Well, then. Since everyone has agreed, it will make me look bad if I am the only one not agreeing. That doesn't mean I don't agree, of course. I assume my interaction with King Storm Wind is the shortest, but I am confident in my ability to judge a character. I too believe that King Storm Wind is a fair friend who will not misuse our army to further his agenda. All right, I agree."

John clapped his hands. "Now, since everyone has agreed..."

"We agree that it will be King Storm Wind who relays the orders," Horatio interrupted John's speech. "All commands will come through him."

"That is a waste of time. It will be more effective if I..."

"We understand you are King Storm Wind's chief strategist," Horatio again interjected. "We have also heard reports of your... hard-heartedness. We will feel more comfortable if King Storm Wind has reviewed your orders before sending them to our armies."

"Sigh... fine," John said. "I will send our guild members to follow each of your army leaders..."

"We have outworlders who we trust," Horatio cut John's words again. "We brought them with us here. King Storm Winds can enter them into his friend list. Commands will be relayed to them before they are given to our armies. They will make sure that it is truly King Storm Wind who gives the commands."

"Ugh... You are truly cautious," John remarked. Jack and Jeanny were stifling their laughter at the back.

Jack proceeded to send friend invitations to Jonathan and Viking. Four Winds and Arthur were already on his friend list. At the same time, he sent a message to John. "I don't have the time to review your every command. I will relay them the way you send them to me, so don't do anything fancy like sacrificing our allies for our benefit. Don't lose my reputation, okay? We are not winning this war just to make new enemies."

"Don't worry, I understand," John replied.

Horatio also knew that it was not practical to have every order reviewed during wartime. The point of having a single chain of command was to expedite decision-making and have the troops on the field carry out those decisions straightaway. Having those decisions reviewed would just counteract the benefit of this chain of command in the first place. The reason he asked for Jack to be the go-to person was so that there was a sense of accountability.

If the strategy ended up causing an unfair loss to one side, it would be Jack who had to answer for it. In turn, it was Jack whom John had to answer to. With this arrangement, Horatio believed John would be more restrained to avoid Jack's wrath.

This just showed the vampire prince didn't understand John well enough.

"All right. Now that we have a picture of what we have, what the opponents are likely to have, and who will be the one barking the orders. You will now receive your army assignments," John announced.

"Palgrost army will, as mentioned, prepare their ships and sail to the inland sea between the Daflue region and the Liguritutum Realm. You will stay on the side of the Daflue region. Don't go engaging the enemy's armada until your next command."

"What if the Liguritutum armada comes to us?" Thelgrun asked.

"Then move away," John answered.

"..." Thelgrun didn't know what to say. Why bother sailing there in the first place?

"Will the one million Themisphere troops in Palgrost sail with us on our ships?" He asked instead.

"No, they have different assignments," John replied without explaining any further. He went to Aldryth next.

"Following your demand, you will invade Hydru..."

"Return!" Aldryth corrected.

John took a deep breath. He was starting to get exasperated by these constant interruptions. Jack and Jeanny were giggling in silence at the back seeing this annoying man getting annoyed.

"... you will return and retake Hydrurond, aided by the Sangrod's army," John said as he turned to Horatio. In case this vampire emperor had something to say again. Horatio simply nodded at the instruction.

John continued, "As for Verremor's force, you will go through the Dorwin region and invade Aurebor."

"Mm..." Kabaka grunted. His army would love to crush those pointed ears. Before their falling out with the humans, the elves were the race they had the most conflict with.

"Those are your assignments," John said. "We will make adjustments based on the enemy's movements and react accordingly."

"I have three questions," Horatio uttered.

"Go ahead," John replied.

"First question. Why not just focus our army and take our enemies down one by one?"

"Fair question," John replied. "To answer that question. A larger army is good, but passing a certain threshold, an army can't fight as effectively anymore. Having too many soldiers fighting on the same battlefield will just have a large portion of them sitting at the back doing nothing. It is more effective to split them into smaller more manageable forces and strike simultaneously."

"What if it is the enemy who consolidates all their force in one place?" Thelgrun asked.

"Then it's all the better for us," John replied. "We are the invaders this time. They are the defenders. If they put all their forces in one country. The one that meets this force can simply play defense, or even retreat if they have to. At the same time, our other forces can take out the other two countries which should be vulnerable since they have no force. Losing a country means they lose the resources to recruit more forces. In the long run, they will be weakened. Once we are done with those two countries, we can regroup at the enemy's last country for a final battle."

Horatio nodded. "Second question. What will the Themisphere army do while we advance following your assignments?"

"The Themisphere army will move based on the enemy's movements and react accordingly," John answered. "Either go to where the enemy has more troops or where the enemy is vulnerable. That will all depend on the enemy's movement first. You don't need to worry about our army. Know that everything is fine with my arrangement."

Jack had the urge to go and knock John on the head.

Horatio didn't mind the treatment. He asked his third question. "Let's say we happen to defeat the country we are sent to. Who gets the throne?"

"No one! Hydrurond's throne belongs to the draconians!" Aldryth exclaimed.

"Well, in that case, I'm interested in the answer to that question," Kabaka said. He was tasked to invade Aurebor. Unlike Hydrurond, no one here had a claim over Aurebor's throne.

Chapter 1545: The Plan for the Offense

"Everyone! If I may," Jeanny spoke up.

Everybody turned to her.

"This world has a well-defined division between each country," Jeanny said. "Each of the seven main countries is governed by different main races. I don't think any country should become anyone's puppet country. If we defeat Aurebor, the throne should be given to someone from the elven race."

"Hmph," Kabaka grunted. Here he was hoping to get something out of this campaign.

"Do you have an elf in mind whom you want to entrust the Aurebor's throne to?" Horatio asked.

A middle-aged but beautiful elven woman walked out. "I will take up that responsibility."

This elven woman was Nova, Jeanny's mother. She was among the various guilds that Jeanny had invited to join this meeting.

Jeanny didn't cover the fact that she was related to Nova.

"She is my mother," Jeanny informed everyone. "I chose her not because she is my mother. It's because I trust her to steer Aurebor into being our ally. If anyone here has a better candidate from the elven race, you are open to nominating them. We can do an election to decide who is the best nominee."

"Which will take time," John added. "So, in the meantime, Nova will take the throne as a temporary sovereign when we take down Aurebor. We can decide on a more permanent solution once Liguritum is defeated."

"If I take the throne, I will give each of you 5% of Aurebor's resources for the first five years," Nova announced. She had dealt with many guild leaders in the past. She understood that incentives always help when you try to get people on your side.

"What about Ligiritudum?" Horatio asked.

"If we defeat that country, we will be celebrating. We can then slowly argue between ourselves during the celebration," John said sarcastically. "When Aurebor is defeated, Nova will take temporary charge and help use Aurebor's army and resources to help us continue our campaign. After we defeat Liguritutum, we can convene and decide the best move for those two countries. It's just a waste of time to talk about them now."

"I think we should decide everything so that we don't have disputes in the future, but all right, let's prioritize defeating our enemies first," Horatio said. He then asked, "Are you truly not going to share with us where you will send the Themisphere army?"

"The Themisphere army will be the hammer of our alliance. We have to first see how the enemies react," John answered. "Whether the enemies focus their forces in one place or spread them out, the Themisphere army will adjust accordingly. If they decide to concentrate their forces and sacrifice one of their territories to defeat the army we send to where their force is concentrated, the Themisphere army will be a counter to that. We will go to where they are most concentrated and keep them at bay until reinforcements can arrive!"

Horatio nodded.

"Now, on the next important matter. How soon can everyone start moving your army?" John asked.

"I can move right away," Aldryth proclaimed. Her soldiers were eager to go back to their home country. They could pack up and leave at a moment's notice.

"Me too," Thelgrun said. His army was already gathered due to the war that had just ended. They were still hanging near the border after chasing the Liguritutum army out.

"I have already sent out the call for my army to gather," Kabaka said. "But as mentioned, before this morning, I didn't plan to mobilize as many troops as I have declared. So, I will need some time to assemble more troops. I believe I should be able to have all 1,400,000 troops at the border of the Dorwin region in five days."

"My situation is the same," Horatio said. "I can have my 1,600,000 troops start crossing the Jagara region in one week."

"Hm... Not optimal, but okay," John said. "Have your gathered troops start moving toward the target I have assigned earlier. But once you cross the border, do not engage until you receive our command. Timing will be essential. We want to hit them at the same time so the enemies have difficulty adapting. My estimate will have us entering the enemy's territories around two weeks from now. The one who will need more time to arrive will be Verremor. The Dorwin region has the largest area size."

"That's right," Kabaka agreed. "I think my army will need ten days to pass through that region."

"Will you be leading your army?" John asked.

"I will," Kabaka replied. "This old bone has stayed behind for far too long. It's time to experience the thrill of war again."

"That's good," John responded. He turned to Horatio, "What about you?"

"I've already told everyone about the situation involving Archibald. Ezekiel and I need to stay in Sangrod to resolve the matter," Horatio answered.

"A pity," John said. This meant that they only had two country guardians at play. The Themisphere and Verremor's one. Palgrost had already lost theirs. Aldryth was not a proper sovereign. The last time, Eoranth came because of his own volition, not because Aldryth called him. John had a feeling the lord of dragons wouldn't do that again this time.

On the enemy side, only the Ligiritudum had a country guardian, so they should still be at an advantage. However, he couldn't be certain. Mistress should have the same knowledge as Master. If Master could gain a country guardian, she might as well. Aurebor had been quiet during the war in Palgrost. They could be focusing their attention on getting a country guardian.

"One more thing before we wrap this meeting up," John said. "Everyone should activate your war summon quest. Outworlders will play a heavier role in this coming war. We will want every outworlder in your country to join your march."

"What about that convention the Ligiritudum ruler announced last night?" Aldryth asked. "Won't the outworlders support him if he convinces them he can give them back their past lives?"

"Don't worry about that convention," John said. "We will deal with that."

Chapter 1546: Servants

In the Shylvan region, the border region between Ligiritudum and Aurebor, Master was riding alone on his Qilin. He just left a border town where he met Mistress and discussed their next course of action. Aside from preparation for the coming war, the World Maker and the World Ruler also worked together to prepare for the convention one week from now.

As he traveled the wooded land, he suddenly found a shadow covering him. He looked up and saw the silhouette of a large dragon blocking the sun.

"I have been looking for an opportunity like this," a raspy sound was heard from the silhouette. "An opportunity where you are alone!"

This silhouette took a deep dive, directly at Master. Master unsummoned his Qilin and cast a spell. He teleported away just as the gargantuan creature slammed into the ground where he used to stand. He appeared a distance away and had a good look at his attacker. It was a dragon that seemed to be made of wood.

"Eurdrasill...," Master muttered.

"Didn't I tell you to watch your back?" Eurdrasill uttered. "I lost my chance the last time when you disappeared into that strange mist in this region with your small band of bodyguards. I took too long to decide whether I should attack. I don't make that mistake now. It's time I avenge Ashala!"

Eurdrasill was about to unleash his divine wind breath after his declaration, but he stopped when he noticed Master's expression.

The ethereal was smiling.

"You natives are so gullible," Master mocked. "I've never been alone all this time. Now that I do, don't you think it's strange?"

Eurdrasill's eyes narrowed. He uttered a low growl. "Quit your taunt, outworlder. I've surveyed the surrounding land. You have no one in the vicinity. Not even an invisible one!"

Master's smile didn't falter. Something appeared in his hand and it glowed.

"Dra... Draconic Suppression Crystal...?!" Eurdrasill exclaimed in surprise when he identified the thing in Master's hand.

This was the Draconic Suppression Crystal Wong and Ronald had received in exchange for the first-rank prize during the Outworlder World Tournament. Master didn't have a chance to use this item because the elite force from the Council of Virtus arrived in Liguritutum to aid the rightful ruler. Syndrillis went into recuperation because of the elite force's presence, only to come out when the Aurebor army joined the war. By then, there was no need for Master to use this item to gain an advantage. Thus, he had been keeping this crystal in his inventory all this time, until now.

Eurdrasill felt his strength weakening. His grade was reduced to one grade lower. He was now a level 90 mythical grade.

"GRAAGHHH...!!!" Eurdrasill roared with fury.

He slammed his massive feet into the ground, causing multiple cracks.

"You despicable outworlder! Even if I've been reduced to a mythical grade, I can still tear you to pieces!" He exclaimed. The divine wind breath burst out from his mouth.

The divine wind breath engulfed Master. The breath continued to pour out. Eurdrasill didn't stop because he didn't sense Master's life diminished. Instead, he sensed the outworlder was pushing forward.

A gigantic fist made of stone punched out of the wind streams. This fist struck Eurdrasill's head and forced him to stop his breath. He reeled backward from the punch.

Master was in his titan suit. The suit was full of cracks due to Eurdrasill divine wind breath. Even so, Eurdrasill couldn't believe that Master could resist the pushing force of his breath and advanced instead.

Master was elated. Before, he was blasted away from a single contact with the breath. Now, he was able to resist it. Even though Eurdrasill had been reduced by one grade, this was still an impressive feat.

Eurdrasill was extremely furious about the exchange. He had to put this outworlder down to erase such a humiliation. He lunged forward. Master didn't back down.

Master, who was not used to melee fights, was now having a physical bout with the wooden dragon. In between his punches, he still cast spells and reduced Eurdrasill's HP bit by bit. He also used Wing God Blades and Wind God Rage, but Eurdrasill had extremely high wind resistance. The dragon was hurt but not as much as those skills normally did.

In the end, Eurdrasill still excelled in the melee department. Master's titan suit crumbled after repeated punishments.

However, it was not an ethereal who was revealed after the Titan Suit was destroyed. It was a demon.

"Demonization?!" Eurdrasill uttered.

The Demonization was the fourth skill from Master's Satanic Devil Bloodline. With this transformation, he had no problem even if the enemy caught him in the melee range.

"Hah! I admit you surprise me, outworlder," Eurdrasill said. "But the result will still be the same. The Draconic Suppression Crystal lasts only three hours. You will only survive for as long as that item's duration!"

"Haha. Foolish dragon, you've misunderstood," Master laughed. "I fought you simply to test my improvement. I lure you out here on purpose. I can take you down anytime I want."

"Don't think you can unrattled me with your taunt, outworlder," Eurdrasill growled.

"Is that so?" Master grinned.

Eurdrasill sensed something approaching from above. He looked up and saw a huge red-scaled dragon diving straight at him.

He dodged at the last instant when this dragon slammed into where he used to be. After the dust settled, he had a good look at this dragon.

"Ud... Uddroth...?" Eurdrasill uttered after recognizing the dragon in front of him. "No... You are not Uddroth... I sense no life from you..."

The red dragon in front of him was indeed Uddroth, the ex-country guardian of Palgrost, or at least what was left of him. Master revived him using the Necronomicon after he was killed by Suzaki. He had been keeping the zombie dragon a secret. When Themisphere army arrived, he sent Uddroth away because he didn't want Jack to be permitted to summon Broidrireg.

"You might have surveyed the surrounding land, but you forgot to watch the sky above you," Master said.

Eurdrasill watched zombie Uddroth with wariness. Uddroth was a level 90 eternal grade. Zombie Uddroth should be weaker than when he was alive for not being able to use mana manipulation, but Eurdrasill was also in a weakened state. The situation was not advantageous.

Eurdrasill flapped his wings and attempted to fly away, but a large dome of black fire suddenly formed around him.

Master's Prime Demonologist had reached level 80. This was the new spell he received from leveling up, Hell Prison.

Eurdrasill banged on the dome, but it was very sturdy. It would take some time to break through using his mythical-grade strength.

Master used his companion token and king badge. Urxor, his level 79 mythical-grade companion, and seven royal agents of rare elite grades appeared around him.

"Hehe. Soon, I will have two level 90 eternal grades as my servants!" Master exclaimed. He sent the command for everyone to attack the trapped dragon.

Chapter 1547: A Development in the League Faction Quest

The meeting in Thereath Palace's war room continued for the entire day. The meeting with the country leaders had concluded but John resumed with a meeting with their allied guild leaders. The meeting was so everyone could organize their forces to synchronize with the native forces.

They also discussed about Master's convention for outworlders one week from now. This would be the largest gathering for outworlders. Considering the venue, only high-level outworlders could make the journey. This was probably Master's way of saying that only the capable had the right to voice their thoughts. The weak would just have to accept the decision made by those high-level players attending the convention.

Jack already tuned out after the meeting went on for some time. Most of the main points had been laid out and they were currently just discussing the details. He was not into all those details, but he had to stay in the room out of duty. He felt bored and wanted to go out and do other things.

He ended up chatting with Four Winds on occasion. Four Winds took the chance to thank Jack for allowing him and his guild members to use the Space-time Chamber. They had used it for a few days but had to go back to handle the election tourney and prepare for this meeting. They would resume training again after they settle everything they discussed in this meeting.

Jack also took the chance to ask if he could go to the island inhabited by the Volatile Firefly Ants near Cipher Flight's guild headquarters. Those monsters were good targets to expressly level up someone to the mid-level range.

Four Winds told him to go ahead. No one went to that island to farm exp points anyway. Those monsters were too dangerous for low-level players. He did ask why Jack wanted to farm there. The Volatile Firefly Ants had an average level of 60. They wouldn't provide Jack with sufficient exp points. Jack's level was too high already.

Jack said he wanted to use that island to power-level someone.

Their chatting earned a sharp glare from John. Jack went back to sitting nicely like a puppet doll, bored to his bones.

As he was lamenting this boring situation, he received messages from the investigative team he had sent to Palgrost. This team was tasked to investigate the attack on the Blacksmith Circle's faction leader.

Unfortunately, it was not good news.

"We've been ambushed," the leader of the investigative team, Daichi, reported.

"Ambushed? By who?"

"We don't know. We couldn't get a clear look at the assailant. It was blurry. Its body was covered by dark smoke. What we can be sure of is that the assailant was one individual and used spells when attacking."

'Blurry individual. It fits the description of the one who attacked the faction leaders,' Jack thought.

"Where were you attacked?" Jack asked.

"At the crime scene where the Blacksmith Circle's leader was assaulted," Daichi answered. "It was as if this assailant was waiting for us. Several rune diagram traps were there. We are incapacitated. The players who escorted us as our bodyguards were killed without being able to retaliate. All of us are now back to level 1 because the rune diagram also caused us to return to life there and were killed again."

The investigative team's prowess was not their fighting capability, so it was not a big loss. It was still a loss, though, especially for the bodyguard players. The guild would have to compensate and help these players regain their levels. Jack would let Jeanny deal with this. He was more concerned about the fact that the investigative team was ambushed.

"Did anyone from your team tell someone about what you are doing and where you are going after receiving my instruction?" Jack asked.

"No. We came straight to Palgrost after receiving your request. We only learned about the exact spot of the crime scene after talking with the Blacksmith Circle's people. That was earlier today. We went to the spot immediately after that."

"I see... We will send more players to protect you when you go back to the crime scene."

"I doubt we can learn anything by going back there," Daichi informed.

"Why?"

"Before we were attacked, I had a quick look at the crime scene. It was an old warehouse owned by the Blacksmith Circle. They assured me that nothing had been touched since the attack on their faction leader. I've gathered the accounts of their confrontation. From what I saw before we were attacked, the crime scene had been tampered with. It was too clean to be a place where a battle had broken out."

"I see..."

"I can still go back if you wish, but the chances of finding anything are small. The perpetrator was expecting us. He surely covered his tracks after the deed."

"He might still miss something. Please go to the crime scene again. I will talk with Jeanny to provide stronger bodyguards."

"All right," Daichi replied.

Jack told Jeanny about what had happened. He also asked everyone to excuse him. With this new development, he didn't want to just sit here. John continued the meeting with the guild leaders after he left.

He used Pandora to move around the capital quickly. He first visited the League of Champions. Gruff was in the building so he met Jack. Jack asked if anything happened to the leader of the League of Champions yet.

"Boy, do you want something to happen to our leader?" Gruff asked.

"No, but I might have found something related to the case," Jack answered.

"Really? That is good to know. I received news that another victim had fallen. The leader of the Cartographer Society."

"Sigh... If only they allow me to check these fallen leaders' bodies," Jack lamented. He had gone to the league factions whose leaders had confirmed to be assassinated and asked if he was allowed to investigate the corpses. He was denied. Like Willem and Ducasse, they considered their leaders' remains sacred.

"Do you think you can find anything if you check their bodies?" Gruff asked.

"I don't know, but those bodies were one of the possible places to get clues," Jack answered. "Anyway, as I said. I found something, but I might need your leader's help for the next step."

Chapter 1548: Planning a Trap

"What do you need?" Gruff asked.

"Firstly, do you have any idea of an isolated place where your leader used to go by himself?" Jack asked in return.

Gruff gave the matter a thought. He then informed Jack of a place in Hydrurond. The League of Champions' headquarters was in Hydrurond, so their leader tended to stay in that country.

After listening to Gruff's info, Jack told Gruff his plan.

"Are you sure about this?" Gruff asked. He was skeptical about what Jack told him.

"I don't. That's why we need to do this to make sure," Jack answered.

"Mm... Well, our leader is indisposed at the moment. He has some issues that need dealing with but I'm sure he is willing to go along with this plan. Let's set the plan to five days from now. He should be free by then."

"He won't be alone within these five days, will he?"

Gruff chuckled. "Don't worry. He is with the mightiest warriors our faction has to offer during this time. No one will trouble him."

Jack nodded. He left the building and headed to the Order of Magi next.

"Mister Storm Wind! Always a pleasure with your presence," Janus greeted.

"Is your true self available?" Jack asked. "I truly need to talk to him."

"I'm sorry, Mister Storm Wind. Our leader is still unavailable," Janus replied with a smile.

Jack was depressed hearing that.

Seeing Jack's expression, Janus asked, "Is this regarding the case where league faction leaders are attacked?"

"Yes," Jack answered. "We are planning a trap for this assailant. The leader of the League of Champions is part of this plan. I am hoping your true self can join. With two of the most powerful league factions' leaders working together, I'm sure we can easily defeat this assailant, whoever the person is."

"Master Ragorth? I'm intrigued," Janus said. Ragorth was the name of the League of Champions' leader. "If you are willing to tell me, I can relay it to my true self. If he can, I'm sure he will join."

"All right. I have intel that the next target will be Master Ragorth. That's why he is willing to be part of this plan."

"You do? How do you know?" Janus asked.

"Suffice to say, I get it from a reliable source," Jack answered. "Since we know the target, it is easy to place the trap. Master Ragorth will be the bait. Do you know the Eltis Shrine?"

"I do. It is a ruin of an old shrine at Hydrurond," Janus replied. "It used to be an important shrine to a religious sect in the past."

"Master Ragorth visits the place regularly to pay respect to his ancestor, who used to be one of the members of a religious sect in that shrine."

"He does?" Janus asked.

Jack nodded. "I'm sure the assassin should know about this as well. We have arranged for Master Ragorth to visit the Eltis Shrine five days from now. We will circulate Master Ragorth's plan to visit this shrine to the public. Subtly, of course. If it is too obvious, the assassin might get suspicious. Anyway, we will prepare a trap at this shrine. When the assassin comes, we will bag the person!"

"Neat. Master Ragorth is willing to take the risk?" Janus asked.

"Gruff thinks he will, but we will use a decoy, of course. His life is too important, after all. My guild has a consumable item to put someone into disguise. We will disguise someone else as Master Ragorth. The real master Ragorth will be some distance away. Once the trap is sprung, he will join the fray."

"I see you people have everything thought out," Janus said. "Will you be joining the operation?"

"I can't," Jack answered. "Hydrurond is under control by Liguritutum. That country is in a hostile state with Themisphere. Humans will be captured if they are found roaming there. I just help them plan this operation."

"I see...," Janus uttered.

"If your true self is willing to join, he can wait together at the hiding place with Master Ragorth," Jack said. "There is an abandoned hut South of the Eltis Shrine. It is not too far. You should be able to find it. Master Ragorth will be on standby there while our decoy lures the assassin."

"Now that I hear everything, I'm pretty certain my true self wants to participate," Janus said. "Okay. He will be there. Five days from now, is it?"

"That's correct," Jack confirmed.

"I hope everything will go smoothly as you plan it," Janus said. "Do you want to attempt the challenges again today?"

"It's late already. I have had a long day. I'll do it another time," Jack replied. The sun had set when he arrived at the Order of Magi's hut. The meeting, which might still be ongoing, had taken the entire day.

"As you wish, Mister Storm Wind," Janus replied.

When Jack returned to the palace, everyone had left except for John, Jeanny, Grace, and Paytowin. He told them about his quest.

"Five days from now? Cutting it a bit close, aren't you? We have the convention to attend, remember?" John said.

"If everything goes as planned, I should settle that quest on that day," Jack replied.

"When does everything go as planned?" Peniel remarked.

"Can you please not jinx it?" Jack admonished her. He then said to the others, "After I'm done with the quest, I will join you all. With Pandora, I should be able to reach the venue even if I leave one day before the convention."

"In that case, we can't provide you any help," Jeanny said. "We have to leave early to get there in time. It will be a big crowd, so I will have to stay with them along the way to make sure everything is fine."

"I understand. Don't worry about me," Jack said.

"Maybe I should come with you," Grace offered.

"No, this is my quest. I will settle it myself," Jack replied. "The convention is more important. We need to thwart Master's plan to gain players' support. The four of you should be there to make sure that he doesn't get what he wants. I will also be there. If it is needed, I will let go of my quest."

The five said goodbye to each other. Everyone had their things to deal with. John would be organizing the country's army with Grace's help. Jeanny and Paytowin would be organizing the player community to go to the convention.

As for him, he needed to increase his available battle power.

Chapter 1549: The Melody of Death

Early the next morning, Jack transformed into Iamanorc. His orc disguise is still registered as a member of the Cipher Flight, so he could use Guild Return Scroll to teleport directly to Wind Island, Cipher Flight's headquarters. He returned to his true self after arriving. He then rode Pandora to head to the island that had the Volatile Firefly Ants.

He landed at a spot without any monsters and used his king badge to summon Elayne.

A graceful woman wearing a lavish pink dress appeared. A large zither was slung to her back. This was the first time Jack laid eyes on Elayne. His first impression was, 'Can she fight?'

The girl looked very fragile. She was also very gentle and polite. She bowed and greeted Jack when she appeared. She was very well-mannered. From her gestures, Jack got the feeling she came from a noble house.

Eight days passed since she was recruited. Since then, she had been with the power-leveling group Jeanny arranged for her. Her levels had increased rapidly since players could tackle higher-level monsters at this stage. She was level 36.

Jack informed her about their purpose on this island. She nodded obediently as Jack explained to her what she should do and what she should not do.

Jack didn't summon the other royal agents because Jack wanted Elayne to receive as many exp points as possible. Having others present would just divide the exp points.

After making sure that she understood everything, Jack summoned Spark. Therras would absorb the exp points while Spark didn't, so Spark was more ideal in this situation. Jack instructed Spark to protect Elayne in case Elayne drew the aggro from the monsters.

Jack then cast Double Clone. Three Jacks went to different hills while Elayne and Spark stayed on the spot. Each Jack attacked the hill and drew uncountable Volatile Firefly Ants. They then ran back until they were within Elayne's range for receiving exp points.

The real Jack cast his AOE spells. Judgment of Past Kings, Perpetual Lightning Judgement, Lightning God Barrage, and so on. The massive flock of the Volatile Firefly Ants was culled at an unbelievable rate.

In the meantime, Jack's two clones went away and disturbed the Volatile Firefly Ants from other hills. By the time the two clones herded two fresh flocks to join the previous batch, that previous batch was almost decimated.

Running out of AOE skills, Jack resorted to the trick he used the last time. He let the monsters touch him before smacking them away just as they exploded. Since he was much higher in level now, he was also faster. The exercise was much easier than the last time.

Two Jacks stayed and performed this endeavor, while the third Jack went and drew another pack of Volatile Firefly Ants.

The cycle repeated. The third clone continued to draw Volatile Firefly Ants from the hills while the two Jacks slaughtered the ants non-stop. This method allowed the gathered exp points to be easily four to five times than when Jack last farmed exp points here.

Elayne didn't just stay idle. She unslung her zither and started playing music the second Jack started engaging the Volatile Firefly Ants. The effect of her music covered a very large area due to her Low-Frequency Sound talent.

The music she played was still the most basic one which increased Jack's stats. But Peniel said as an eternal-grade talent with Play Music skills, Elayne should receive more powerful music as her level increased. It would also be easier for her to learn new music that was available to be taught at the fighting schools or at league factions that catered to the bard class.

This happened soon.

Within the half-hour duration of the double clone spell, Elayne increased a level. He received a new music, along with one new skill and one new spell. Her new music was Melody of Death.

When she learned this music, she immediately put it into play. The music carried a heart-thumping sound that fired up the allies. At the same time, it dealt magical damage to all enemies that heard this music.

Peniel informed Jack that music that dealt damage was extremely rare because that would be like a non-stop AOE spell. All enemies near the bard would constantly receive damage for as long as the music kept playing. In Elayne's case, her AOE was absurdly large.

The damage inflicted by Elayne was tiny, though. It was not strange considering her low level. But still, the constant build-up of damage inadvertently became high enough that she started drawing aggro from the Volatile Firefly Ants that were not directly engaging Jack.

These ants started to crawl toward Elayne.

"Elayne, stop playing that music...!" Jack yelled.

Elayne followed the command. She had been excited to test her new music. She didn't realize it would end up drawing the enemies to her.

Spark reacted when it saw the approaching ants. The wing-like blades on its back detached and shot forward, piercing the incoming ants. Spark also advanced toward the first ant that arrived. Its two blades danced with blinding speed and expert precision, cutting these ants to pieces.

However, Spark didn't have any large AOE skills except for its finishing mode. The ants ended up running past it. Jack summoned Terras and his ten golden wolves to rush over to protect Elayne, but a few ants managed to reach her first.

Elayne cast her new spell then, Fly. Her body floated upward, but the Volatile Firefly Ants could fly too. They followed her into the air. When they were about to touch her body, she suddenly zipped away.

This was her new skill. A movement skill, Air Skate. It was similar to Jack's Flash Step except it left no mirage but covered a longer distance. It could also be used in the air. The cooldown of this Air Skate was short like Flash Step, only ten seconds.

She never quit playing her music through all this. Not the Melody of Death anymore, but the standard one that increased stats. While playing the music, she used her other skills. Sonic Darts and Heavenly Sounds.

The damage wasn't much but the force the attacks generated hindered the ants from reaching her. The Heavenly Sounds even put those ants into dizzy and confused states.

She didn't panic despite being targeted by these monsters that were much higher level than her. Jack knew then that she had picked the right follower.

Chapter 1550: Entering the Ancient Battleground Again

Therras went into the air to aid Elayne. The golden wolves pounced at the ants that were still on the ground and prevented them from flying up.

Spark sent its flying blades into the sky to strike the ants that were closest to Elayne. At the same time, its body left the ground and headed to where Elayne was.

"Huh? Spark can fly?" Jack said in surprise when he saw it from the distance.

Jack's third clone had just returned from drawing another batch. The clone was using the Magi Wing Tool. Blue translucent wings flapped behind the clone as the clone flew.

This third clone joined the second clone and drew the aggro from the crowded ants while his true body activated Lightning God Incarnation. The powerful explosion from his transformation somehow triggered the kamikaze detonation of the Volatile Firefly Ants, clearing the area around him.

Jack then used Wind Jet to put a distance before turning into lightning and appearing right next to Elayne. Lightning streaked from his hands and blasted the ants around Elayne.

Between Jack, Therras, Spark, and the golden wolves, the Volatile Firefly Ants that pursued Elayne were successfully routed. Elayne was no longer playing the Melody of Death so the rest of the ants remained fighting Jack's clones.

Lightning Jack returned to the fray and sent one of his clones out to draw another batch of Volatile Firefly Ants. When his divine skill was coming to an end, Jack let it happen naturally. He didn't focus the gathered energy into a single point. The gathered energy detonated with a loud bang. Violent lightning blast expanded outward. None of the ants hit by this blast survived because this blast also triggered the ants' kamikaze detonation. A huge portion of the ants was obliterated in this manner.

Jack's Double Clone ended soon. When it happened, he cast Reset and repeated what he had done previously.

When the Double Clone ended again, he had Therras stay with Elayne and Spark went to lure the next batch of Volatile Firefly Ants. Without the clones, the speed they accumulated the exp points was reduced. Not to mention, Therras was also there to share the exp points.

Once the two-and-a-half-hour cooldown of Double Clone was completed, Jack unsummoned Therras and recast the spell. Spark returned to guarding Elayne while one of Jack's clones went and lured additional Volatile Firefly Ants.

The farming cycle repeated for the whole day. At one point, clone Jack or Spark had to lure the Volatile Firefly Ants from the hills that were situated by the edge of the island. They were running out of ants to farm.

Luckily, it didn't take long for the ants to respawn. Around one hour after sunset, the first three hills that Jack annihilated reappeared. So, Jack resumed this farming activity until late at night.

They then rested and camped at the spot where they had just cleaned. Gauging from the time it took the hills to respawn, this area would still be devoid of monsters when they woke up.

The next day, they continued the same activity.

By the end of that second day, Elayne had already shot up to level 48. Her level increased a whopping twelve levels in just two days. Considering she was higher than level 30, this speed was probably the same as those training under the Valley of Tempus.

The pace was much faster this time because aside from Jack's faster speed in slaying the Volatile Firefly Ants, Elayne also had the Heaven Blessed talent, which increased the exp she received by 15%.

Once she reached level 50, she would be eligible to join the war.

Jack told Elayne to rest on the morning of the third day. This was because he had to return to Heavenly Citadel. Today was the day when the hard difficulty of the Ancient Battleground Legacy Dungeon was out of cooldown. The others had gathered at the headquarters and had been sending him messages asking if he was going to join.

Jack told Elayne that he would return and continue this exp farming later today. He was about to send her back to where he summoned her from but Elayne told Jack that she preferred to stay here while waiting.

Jack was hesitant about the request but ultimately decided to trust her. He told her to stay away from the hills which were the Volatile Firefly Ants' lairs. As long as she didn't come close to the hills, the ants wouldn't go after her.

There was another type of monster in the area, Sabretooth Walrus. If she was only fighting against one or two of these walruses, there shouldn't be a problem. Jack told her about this monster. About their attack patterns and what she had to look out for in case she came into contact with them.

After leaving the instruction, Jack used the guild return scroll and teleported to Heavenly Citadel.

The nine others were already waiting for Jack in front of the legacy dungeon's portal entrance.

"We are just about to ditch you and enter without you," John said.

"Yeah, right. Like you can get far without me," Jack returned.

"Afei... When pride appears, disgrace accompanies it, but humility is present with wisdom," Domon said.

"Where the hell did you learn that phrase?" Jack asked.

"From a very wise book," Domon replied.

"Okay, everyone!" John called. "Now that everyone is here, let's talk about our general strategy. We have all experienced battling this herald, so we have an idea of how he fights. Please take note that we are not here to defeat him. I don't think that is possible with our current level and equipment. Our priority is to gain scores. That means everyone will have to land at least one hit on the Herald. So, this is what we are going to do..."

John laid out the plans. They talked for a bit about it. After everyone was clear on what they were going to do, they entered the portal.

The first half of the dungeon was as before. Jack went and caused havoc on the army of black soldiers while the others stayed behind with the defending soldiers. They were saving their big skills for later.

Jack didn't use his divine skills in this first half but he still managed to slaughter a great number of enemies.