

World 1651

Chapter 1651: Eleventh Royal Agent

Jack stopped using his remaining ruling powers after the Mass Drill. In the past, he couldn't utilize his sovereign powers that assisted wartime. Now that he had this remote monarch system, he could. Two powers were useful to have during wars. These powers were War Rally and War March.

War Rally increased all soldiers' attributes for one day, while War March increased all soldiers' marching speed for three days. War Rally cost 20 ruling powers and War March cost 10 ruling powers.

He saved the remaining 35 ruling powers for these two sovereign powers.

Finally done with the task, Jack went to check the recruits.

"Moment of truth," John stated.

"Do you think there is another eternal-grade recruit again?" Jack asked. He had summoned his Runestone of Luck when he used the Call to Arms.

"You are one click away from finding out, aren't you?" John returned.

"That's right. Why do I ask you? Of course, there is!" Jack exclaimed with confidence. He opened the recruit list and scrolled to the top. Up there, he found... no eternal-grade recruit.

"Well, that's a letdown," John said.

"Do you people think the eternal grade is so easy to pop out?" Peniel chided. "Even with all the boosts you have, you just happened to be extremely lucky for getting Elayne the last time. Don't expect to get another eternal grade anytime soon. In fact, don't expect to get another one, ever! If somehow it happens again, consider it a miracle."

"Wow, that is such a demoralizing speech, lady," Jack said.

"Hmph. I'm just stating the fact," Peniel harrumphed.

"You got two mythical grades, though," John said.

"Yeah, better than nothing," Jack said.

Peniel felt like slapping Jack. Other countries would have jumped for joy for getting even one mythical-grade recruit. This buffoon said it like he had just lost a gamble.

"Hm... Let's see which one I should recruit for my eleventh royal agent," Jack said while comparing the stats of the two mythical-grade recruits.

"Neither," John said. "I didn't mention this because I thought you would be getting another eternal-grade recruit. Since you don't, you can leave those two recruits to train normally with the other soldiers. I have a better candidate for your new royal agent."

"You have?" Jack turned to John with surprise.

John called one of the soldiers guarding outside. "Go and call Hatori," he said to that guard.

"Hatori?" Jack asked.

"Remember Hashi?" John asked in return.

"The top assassin from the Assassins Guild?"

John nodded. "He was looking for you the next day after he and the others gave you their factions' blessings. He didn't know you left for another country immediately after their blessings."

"Why is he looking for me?"

"He wanted to ask Themisphere to accept one of his faction members into our army," John said. "Well, ex-faction member, to be precise."

"I assume this is that Hatori guy," Jack said. "Why?"

"Hashi's story is that Hatori had made a mistake and offended the faction. Sort of like what Oswald did. In his case, he went to assassinate someone the faction had warned him not to touch. Apparently, Hatori had bad blood with this person for hurting someone dear to him. The faction was supposed to punish Hatori for his transgression with something they called an endless assassination punishment."

"What the heck kind of punishment is that?" Jack asked.

"It's as the name suggests. They put a price on his head and every assassin in the faction will go for his life."

"Damn, isn't that a death sentence? Hey... why does that sentence sound very much like that old movie?"

"What movie?" John asked.

"That movie. The one that has your name in its title," Jack laughed.

"You and your movie reference," John shook his head. "Anyway, Hatori happened to be someone close to Hashi. Hashi even called Hatori a brother, which I know is not literal because the two of them is of different race. Hashi managed to persuade his elders to let Hatori go. Because the elders didn't want to offend Hashi, they yielded to his demand. Hatori was pardoned but he was chased out of the faction."

"Then it's a happy ending. Why does Hashi come to ask us to accept Hatori into Themisphere's service?" Jack asked.

"Because Hashi didn't believe the elders would just let this matter go. They might have yielded on the surface, but Hashi worried they might still do something behind the curtain. If Hatori joined another powerful faction, that might discourage the elders from taking action for fear of offending that faction."

"I see," Jack said.

"Hashi happened to get to know you after that incident with Janus, and Hatori is a human. Hence, he saw Themisphere kingdom as the right place to shelter Hatori."

"Is he strong?" Jack asked.

"He is a level 83 mythical grade," John answered. "Hashi stated that Hatori was the second-best assassin in his faction."

"I see." Jack understood now why John told him to not choose between the two recruits. It would take time to develop them. It was better to choose a high-level mythical-grade combatant if one was available."

"I must warn you, though," John said. "The guy is less... manageable. I placed him as the lowest rank after accepting him into our army, and he didn't mask his dissatisfaction to me."

"It's better that than he hides his dissatisfaction and stabs you in your back," Jack remarked.

"Hm... Well, then I can't see him as a good assassin because of that," John said.

"You want him to stab you in your back?" Jack asked.

The conversation was cut when the door was opened and someone with a body-tight black suit walked in. Each of this person's steps or movements didn't produce any sound in the slightest.

'Wow, classic ninja attire. He just lacks a ninja mask,' Jack said in his mind.

Hatori appeared to be in his thirties. He had a serious face that expressed a no-nonsense attitude. He knew he was in the presence of the king. He gave Jack a bow.

"Hatori, is it?" Jack started the conversation. "I will cut to the chase. I heard that you are strong and you don't like your current station. I need a royal agent. Are you willing to be one?"

It took Hatori a few seconds before he replied. "I heard from Hashi that Your Majesty can do a perfect mana concealment?"

"I can," Jack didn't try to be humble.

"Show me," Hatori said.

Chapter 1652: Silent Assassin

Any other monarch would have been offended by Hatori, but Jack was never someone guided by pride. He simply smiled at Hatori's request. He stood up and approached Hatori.

"To find out, you will need to be able to sense mana," Jack said. "Can you?"

"I can," Hatori answered.

"Good! Can you sense me now?" Jack asked after he came beside Hatori.

"Yes," Hatori replied.

"Hehe." Jack cast a spell. Soon, twenty of his copies appeared around the room.

Hatori looked around. He sensed Jack's mana signature in each of these copies. He couldn't tell which one was Jack.

"I requested a demonstration on mana concealment, not confusing me with a trick," Hatori said. His tone didn't mask his dissatisfaction.

Just as he finished his sentence, he found the blade of a glowing sword right next to his neck.

He turned back to the owner of the sword. It was Jack. Hatori didn't say anything but his expression told everyone of his surprise. He couldn't detect Jack who was behind him.

"Is that demonstration enough?" Jack asked while sheathing his sword. The Hundred Mirages he had cast earlier was ended.

Hatori was silent with contemplation.

"If you want, I can teach you," Jack said to Hatori. "I can sense that you can do mana concealment as well. You do it even now. It is quite good, but not as good as Hashi's."

"You will teach me...?" Hatori asked.

"If you are willing to learn," Jack answered.

"What if I refuse to be your royal agent?" Hatori asked again.

"You will still be a soldier in my army, won't you? If so, then I don't mind teaching you. It will still strengthen my force," Jack replied.

"... Then I accept. I will be your royal agent," Hatori said.

"Great!" Jack exclaimed. He accessed the monarch system and sent Hatori an invitation.

Once Hatori accepted, Jack was able to see his information.

His skill traits were dagger, sword, fist, move, dart, and sound. He could also cast spells. His spell traits were offense, summon, curse, enchant, and manipulate. His affinities were dark, earth, and wind.

He had two talents.

The first was called Sound Muffler. This talent eliminated all the sounds created by his movements and attacks. Jack understood now how Hatori's movements had been so silent. The talent indicated that his attacks also produced no sound. Intrigued, Jack asked Hatori to give a demonstration.

Hatori threw a flying knife to the side wall. The knife hit and sank into the wall. But even as the metal blade hit the hard wall, there was no sound whatsoever. An assassin could get no more silent than this. No wonder Hashi called Hatori the second-best assassin in the Assassins Guild.

Hatori's second talent was named Uncanny Speed. This talent gave him +30% to his dexterity stat and his projectile speed was also increased by 50%.

As a high-level veteran from a renowned faction, Hatori possessed many skills and a sufficient number of spells. He possessed all the elite skills of the Hidden Weapon Specialist. He also had some melee skills that Jack was familiar with. Among them were Phantom Blade, Ghost Sword, and Asura.

Most of his spells were dark-based. He also had Ghost Form and Invisibility.

Jack accessed the monarch system and checked what skills and spells he could install for Hatori's free skill slots. After some browsing, he installed Shooting Dash and Dark Ailment. Dark Ailment was a curse spell that decreased the target's speed by 20% and inflicted three random status ailments.

Jack couldn't improve Hatori's equipment via the monarch system because all of his equipment was already unique grades.

Jack finished with the monarch system after that, but he didn't close it. He gave it to John because John still wanted to make some arrangements. Jack returned what John said to him before, to not abuse the monarch system by having it operational all the time. John simply grunted for a response.

Jack went out and looked at the mobile fortress from the outside. There was a translucent curtain covering the place where the legs were. It was the same process as when he upgraded Ellie's Restaurant and Amy's Bakery. Once the upgrade was completed, this curtain would be removed. The mobile fortress was unable to move anywhere in the meantime.

The troops rested and healed for two days. John and Armstrong organized them on the third day to prepare them for departure. The mobile fortress was also resupplied. The Hydrurond couldn't help in providing supplies. They had difficulty supporting themselves due to their crumbling economy. Luckily, John had tasked a small unit to make a supply line from Themisphere. Supply carts came and they filled the mobile fortress. John had this unit continue building the supply line toward Liguritutum.

As promised, Jack trained Hatori in mana concealment. He also did exp grinding nearby Messephyria in his free time.

Aldryth focused on rebuilding her broken country. She started by rebuilding Messephyria. It would take a long time but she didn't give up. The 100,000 surviving troops she entrusted to Jack. She just left a small garrison to defend Messephyria. In their state, they couldn't defend if the enemy attacked, anyway. She thought it was better if Jack could eliminate the threat soon rather than keeping the army that gave only illusory security. She told Arthur to go with Jack. Arthur and Dytess would command the draconian army that followed Jack.

Within these three days, Aldryth also decided Guzrim's fate. She decided to not show mercy. She held a public execution inside Messephyria City Square. Almost every surviving inhabitant of the capital came to see the traitor's execution.

Guzrim himself seemed resigned to his fate. He didn't struggle or plead for his life. He did regret his cowardice, though. If he had rejected Master's offer, he would have died a hero. Because of fear, he still died, but he would be remembered by the next generations as a traitor.

The fleeing Liguritutum army finally left Hydrurond's territory on the third day just before Jack's army moved out. It seemed they had been forced to flee without any rest by the pursuing players that they could reach the border in such a record time.

When that happened, Jack received a system notification that congratulated him for winning the war in Hydrurond. He received 500,000 merit points. These merit points pushed his sovereign level to level 17, earning him 10 ruling powers.

Chapter 1653: Verremor's March

When the Liguritudum army was sieging Messephyria, the Verremor army was marching through the Dorwin region. They had been trekking through this region for some time and they were about to enter Aurebor's border.

Grand Chief Kabaka and Four Winds led the march. They were composed of 1,400,000 native troops and around 800,000 outworlders. They also carried several siege weapons with them. These siege weapons were the cause for the delay in their march.

"Let's make haste!" Kabaka shouted to his troops. He had heard about how Jack was facing a siege from the enemy's overwhelming force. The chance of them winning was small. If his army could take down Aurebor swiftly, then perhaps he could go over and lend a hand.

"How is that guy doing?" Violent Blizzard, who was riding beside Four Winds, asked.

"I don't know. My last contact with him was yesterday. He said he won't be able to send messages for some time," Four Winds replied. "He must still be fighting."

"How many did he say the enemy's number again?"

"Probably ten million," Four Winds answered. "And that is only the zombie army."

"... Is he sure? How can the enemy gather so many?"

Four Winds shrugged. "There is nothing we can do for them. Hopefully, they can last long enough. We will do our part by winning the war on this side."

"Well, at least we can be sure we only have Aurebor army to worry about on this side," Violent Blizzard said.

After a few more hours of riding, they finally reached the border. Both the Dorwin region and the Aurebor Dynasty had wooded landscapes. While the jungles in the Dorwin region appeared wild and disordered, the forests in Aurebor appeared serene and orderly. It was as if every tree had been arranged with a purpose.

"Hold...!!" Four Winds suddenly called for everyone to stop once they crossed the border.

"What's wrong?" Kabaka asked.

"The guild members I sent to scout ahead have fallen," Four Winds answered.

"Which direction is the one that fell?"

"All of them," Four Winds answered. "Wait, I will ask the one who has revived."

Those who didn't wear the Amulet of Rebirth had to wait half an hour before they got revived, but those who wore the Amulet didn't have such a waiting time. Some of the fallen scouts wore the amulet.

Four Winds frowned upon receiving the reports from those scouts.

"Grand Chief, prepare for battle. I think the enemy army is ahead of us," Four Winds told Kabaka.

Unlike the other places where they had done battle, these wooded landscapes obscured their view. The enemy could be right ahead of them for all they knew. The scouts that Four Winds asked couldn't say clearly what had happened. All they knew was that they were suddenly bombarded by a hail of arrows. They didn't even see the attackers.

Kabaka gave the order for everyone to be on alert. They came down from their steed and advanced with caution. Before the enmity with the humans, orcs hated elves the most. This was the reason. These elves were always so sneaky and hid behind their trees. It was the opposite of the orcs who preferred an open and exposed confrontation.

"Filthy cowards," One of the orc soldiers cursed.

"Yeah. I heard they didn't even respond to the war declaration our grand chief had sent before us marching out of Verremor," Another added.

"If I see one of those pointed ears, I will cleave their pretty f*cking fa—"

The orc failed to complete his word when an arrow struck his head. He fell backward with a cry of pain. He should be grateful this was a game world. Otherwise, he wouldn't even have the chance to utter that cry if an arrow struck his head in the real world.

Before they knew it, uncountable arrows flew out from behind the trees. Those who had shields immediately used them to block these arrows.

"Cowards! If you are not willing to honor this battle by giving us a war declaration, then so be it. I, Kabaka Proudusk, Grand Chief of Verremor, swear that Aurebor will fall before we return to Verremor. My warriors, chargeeee...!!!"

With that battle cry, the orc troops let go of their defensive stance and charged forward like they were possessed. The orcs were always battle-lust creatures. Now that their chief had permitted them to charge, they were more than happy to oblige.

Kabaka lifted a banner. If Jack saw it, he would recognize it. It was Verremor's national treasure, the Totem Banner. It shone with a reddish aura, granting every ally in its AOE with buffs that increased stats by 30%, movement speed by 50%, damage and damage received reduction by 10%. It also granted healing to every ally based on how close they were. The attribute buff could increase even more depending on how angry the affected soldiers were.

The banner didn't have a duration. As long as the bearer of the banner was alive, the buff would be in play. It also covered a very large area of 1-kilometer radius. The banner could also produce ten war banners. These war banners gave the same buff and had the same AOE. Kabaka gave these war banners to his officers and spread them out so the whole army could benefit from the buff. Even if they split into smaller armies, these armies could still receive the buff as long as one of them carried the war banner.

Yet, even as they charged forward, they still couldn't see the enemies. The arrows continued to assail them while the ones who sent these arrows were unseen. These frustrated the orcs a great deal.

When the front line was busy chasing their illusory assailants, they heard cries from their backs. They turned around and saw that an elven army had flanked their rear.

"Damned ambushing vermins!" Kabaka cursed.

Next to him was one of the lord chiefs, Kima Mountking. She was in charge of the war table. She set the war table and started it up. When the projection image appeared, they saw a large number of enemies represented by red triangles hit their backs from both the left and right sides.

The projection only showed the enemies who engaged their rear. The projection didn't show the enemies from the front since no one had laid eyes on these enemies. All they saw were arrows coming out of the trees. Whether there were more concealed enemies out there, they couldn't tell.

The enemy had perfectly utilized the terrain and put them at a disadvantage.

Chapter 1654: Forest Troops

In a clearing not far away from where the Verremor army was being ambushed, Mistress was sitting on her luxurious lounge chair while enjoying her tea. In front of her was her unique-grade telescopic device that projected the image of a nearby place. The image displayed the clash between her army and the Verremor orcs.

"Hmph. Such an ugly race," Mistress harrumphed. "How dare they come into my land. Make sure to teach them a lesson."

"Hehe, as you wish, my queen," Lead Designer said. He was operating the war table next to Mistress. "They are like headless chickens. They don't even know what has happened. This is too easy. They fall into our trap just like that. Haha!"

"Don't let it get to your head. It's not you who think of this trap," Mistress poured cold water on him.

"I... I know," Lead Designer uttered.

The one who formulated the plan was Linda. Linda knew the way her son thought. She knew John would choose to divide his force and did a simultaneous attack on all fronts. If she knew an attack was coming, it was easy to plan for it.

Like the time when John brought the army crossing through the Jagara region, there was also one most obvious path to be taken in the Dorwin region if one traveled in large numbers from Verremor to Aurebor. This path had fewer obstacles and was infested by less powerful monsters. Hence, Linda knew the most likely spot where the Verremor army would enter Aurebor from. Since she knew the spot, it was a simple task of setting up an ambush.

They chose to wait until Verremor's army entered Aurebor for two reasons. Firstly, a native army that fought in its homeland received a bonus to their morale. Secondly, Aurebor had a country enchantment that gave its soldiers some buffs when fighting within its territory.

With these two bonuses and the ambush that threw the enemy into disarray, they negated the advantage the Verremor army got from their Totem Banner. Additionally, they had a few more advantages on their side.

One of these advantages was their special units. They were tailored to work best in wooded regions.

The units who had been harassing the Verremor army's front line were one of these special units. They were called Wood Hunters. These wood hunters were ranged units specialized in using bows. They gained camouflage ability when they were inside a forest. Enemies would have trouble sighting them even when these wood hunters were already in their line of sight. Additionally, the wood hunters' attack range and speed were increased when inside a forest.

The second special unit of Aurebor was Jungle Specter. These were melee units that gained invisibility when inside a forest. This invisibility was a skill though, not a spell. Their invisibility had no duration. They would remain invisible until they performed an attack or if somehow hit by stray attacks.

They were the ones who spearheaded the ambush on the rear of the Verremor army.

The third special unit was Gamekeeper. These were magical units with healing spells. They could also call animals to help them in combat. Normally, their call animal skill summoned one random beast to their aid. But if the gamekeepers were in a forest, this skill summoned two beasts instead of one.

The gamekeepers' summoned beasts were considered pets. The gamekeepers also had several Beastmaster skills they used in conjunction with these summoned beasts.

These three special units were like fish in the water. They were in their natural terrain. Against the confused orcs. They made short works on them.

Even though the regular soldiers of Aurebor didn't have any tangible bonus fighting in forests like their special units, they were still more experienced in jungle warfare compared to the Verremor army. They expertly utilized the trees around them, using them to their advantage.

Battle in a forest had a short line of sight. An ambush could happen right next to anyone. It's also difficult to know what happened to one's comrades even when they were not that far away. The constant fear that came with jungle warfare was not easy to overcome if one was not accustomed to it.

The Aurebor troops had a far better experience in this department.

Orc officers who could fly did so to escape the confines of the forest, but they met flying opponents that numbered more than them.

The Aurebor army's other advantage was that they outnumbered the Verremor army. The 1,500,000 troops that were originally stationed in Hydrurond had been pulled back without anyone knowing. Linda made sure to keep any of the enemy scouts from sighting these troops' movements. With the ten million zombie army Master had raised, they did not need to keep this army in Hydrurond. It was better to utilize this army as a trap in dealing with the enemy that was coming for Aurebor.

These troops joined the ones that stayed in Aurebor, which had already increased to 1,400,000 troops. With almost three million troops, even their native force already outnumbered Verremor's force. Not to mention Aurebor also had the outworlder force, but this outworlder force was not as many as the outworlders on Verremor's side. Aurebor's outworlders force numbered 300,000. This included the World Ruler members.

"Call the guild armies," Mistress ordered. "I want this to end as quickly as possible."

Mistress heard about Master sieging Messephyria and the battle was still raging after one day of battle. Despite everyone considering she was Master's follower, she didn't have the same opinion. She considered Master as a partner. One who she didn't want to lose to. She wanted to show Master that she could settle the war on her side faster than him.

"Yes, my queen," Lead Designer responded. He turned to one of the guild members standing nearby. "Hey, you! You heard our queen's order. Why are you still dallying about?"

"Ye—Yes, sir!" The World Ruler member, Lead Designer yelled to, snap to attention. He immediately summoned the guild army control platform.

White Death who was there was more responsive. He had his platform at the ready the second Mistress stopped speaking. Mistress originally didn't consider him anyone special. But after Death Associates moved their base into Aurebor, White Death helped her settle many of the issues inside this country.

His guild had even helped defeat three guilds with headquarters and replaced them with guilds that submitted to her rule. Hence, at this moment, she had five guilds with headquarters on her side.

The representatives of these five guilds all summoned their guild armies upon Mistress' order. Their armies bolstered Aurebor's already greater number. Mistress' intention to end this war quickly was not a joke.

Chapter 1655: Quetzalcoatl

"Blizzard, your six!!" Four Winds yelled.

Violent Blizzard spun at Four Winds' warning. Her greatsword swung back with expert handling. It struck a Jungle Spectre and sent him flying.

The strike was done using Holy Avenger's level 70 skill, Punishing Smite. This skill required at least one avenging orb to execute. Upon execution, all avenging orbs were consumed. Each avenging orb dealt 200% physical damage. The skill also stunned the opponent for 2 seconds. Each avenging orb had a 10% chance of causing a random status ailment on the struck target.

"I sensed him," Violent Blizzard said to Four Winds.

"Heh," Four Winds chuckled. He then sensed something invisible moved past him and headed to Kima who was behind the war table. "Look out!" He yelled.

Someone came before Kima. With one punch, he forced a jungle specter to appear. It was followed by a series of punches that sent the jungle specter tumbling back.

"Thank you," Kima said to Umeza.

"Focus on controlling our army. I will protect you," Umeza said. His giant three-headed wolf stood guard behind Kima while he took position at the front.

"Our members reported that the enemies have called their guild armies. We should do the same!" Purple Mist said to Four Winds.

"The enemy has us at a surprise, we are in a bad position. We have to secure a solid defensive perimeter around us first. Otherwise, if the controllers of the platforms get killed, all those guild armies will be unsummoned."

"I will take their attention. You, people, secure our position!" One of the war chiefs, Makubwa Mountking, exclaimed.

He used his wings tool and flew ahead of everyone. His two-handed club grew to a gigantic proportion as he advanced. He smashed his enlarged weapon upon the ground far ahead. The ground caved in and several trees were uprooted. A clearing was created. The wood hunters and jungle specters hiding in those trees were exposed. The frontline orc soldiers immediately rushed over. They had been fed up with these hidden enemies.

A large arrow the size of a spear whizzed through the air in Makubwa's direction. The giant orc saw the incoming attack and had his oversized club block the arrow.

"You filthy orcs will pay for damaging our forest," An elven woman stood atop the branch of a tree a distance away. She was holding a giant golden bow.

This elven woman was Ashira Sharpshot. She was the only one out of the three Lord Protectors who stayed after Mistress took over the throne.

"Then come and get me!" Makubwa exclaimed.

He flew forward, but Ashira jumped away before he arrived. She nimbly moved from one tree to another. If Makubwa got close, she used Air Skate. Her body zoomed abruptly at high speed, increasing the distance between them again.

She didn't just dodge. All the time she was moving away from Makubwa, she never stopped firing her arrows. Additionally, she was using a skill, Wind Destroying Arrows. The skill was similar to Howard's Lightning Destroying Arrows except hers dealt wind damage. With this skill, her firing rate increased. She kited Makubwa while dealing unceasing damage to him without the war chief even catching her shadow. She also lured her to where a large portion of her soldiers were located.

This pissed the war chief a great deal. He roared in frustration and unleashed his AOE attacks. He used Hurricane Calamity, causing violent winds all around him. He also used Earthquake Slam, creating a small earthquake that unbalanced and damaged everyone nearby. If he couldn't get to Ashira, then these elven soldiers were the ones to bear his wrath.

Ashira wasn't concerned about those soldiers. They served as another obstacle to hold the war chief down. She continued shooting her arrows, chipping Makubwa's HP bit by bit.

While she was gleefully firing her wind arrows, she sensed an attack from underneath her. She jumped away just in time when a large creeping plant crept up the tree and was about to catch her.

As she did, several shadowy animals came at her from multiple sides. She spun at high speed and multiple arrows came out of her rapidly. The arrows struck the animals and forced them back. What she used was Frenzy Arrows. This skill was similar to the Gunner's Bulletstorm but was executed using a bow or crossbow instead of a gun.

Her sharp eyes quickly located the one who had sent these shadow animals at her. The one responsible was Samuhn Spiritcrier, Verremor's Shaman King.

"Don't let her play you, war chief. Cool your head. I will assist you," Samuhn said to Makubwa.

"Heh. Two against one is dishonorable, but I guess there is no need to be honorable with these elves," Makubwa said.

The Aurebor's army might held a better advantage compared to Verremor's army, but Verremor's army had more high-level mythical officers. Verremor brought all their three war chiefs. With the shaman king, Verremor had four powerful combatants, while Aurebor only had one Lord Protector.

Mistress had recently changed her companion because she found one that was better. Without any sentiment, she chased her old companion away. Her new companion was a level 80 mythical-grade spear-wielding elven warrior, Lancel Sunpiercer.

She sent her companion to fight against the second Verremor's war chief. For the third one, she had several high-level rare elites ganged up on the war chief. In this way, she kept her army's disadvantage in terms of high-level combatant to a minimum while exploiting their advantages in army number, terrains, and positioning.

Kabaka saw that the battle was not in their favor. He took out his Grand Chief Badge. "We need your help, our protector," he said and activated his badge.

The clouds suddenly became dark. Thunders were heard as lightning started coursing through the dark sky. The lightning became more frequent as a humongous figure descended. It was a long serpent with only two hind legs and a pair of feathery wings. It had the head of a dragon.

This dragon was Quetzalcoatl, Verremor's country guardian.

Chapter 1656: Aurebor's Country Guardian

Quetzalcoatl looked down at the battlefield below. He could see his side was in trouble. He made his introduction by letting out an ear-splitting roar. At the same time, hundreds of lightning rained from the clouds, striking the elven soldiers below.

The orcish soldiers hollered with excitement when they saw their country guardian. Their bellows rivaled even the thunders caused by Quetzalcoatl's entrance.

"Ma'am...?" Lead Designer turned to Mistress.

"Hmph. We are ready for you," Mistress uttered. She stood from her chair and held up his queen badge. The badge shone brightly.

Quetzalcoatl was on his way down to dish out more punishments on Aurebor's army, but he stopped midway when he sensed something. He turned to the distance where some sort of a giant portal had appeared in the air.

His eyes narrowed when he saw the being that came out of the portal. It was a giant orb of flesh with a large eye at its center. Below this enormous eye was an equally enormous mouth filled with sharp teeth. All around the being's body were tentacles that ended with eyeballs.

Those who were fighting in the air and happened to be close to the gigantic newcomer used their Inspect. The creature was a level 95 eternal grade. It was classified as a darkness-type creature and its name was Eldritch Beholder.

Some of his hundred eyes turned to those who looked at it. Those people immediately felt a chill down their spines. Whether they were orcs or elves, they hastily put some distance away from this Eldritch Beholder before resuming their battle.

"I didn't expect to see you in this plane again. How do you escape your seal?" Quetzalcoatl asked the eldritch beholder. Thunders followed when he spoke.

The beholder just stared at Quetzalcoatl with its ominous eyes. The others down there might not be aware, but the beholder was also speaking, except it was directly into Quetzalcoatl's mind.

"You dare mention my seal...?" The beholder's eerie voice reverberated inside Quetzalcoatl's mind. "You and your kind, acting so high and noble, but you lot are nothing but a jealous bunch. You can't stand another being challenging your apex position and so you wiped out my offsprings and sealed me away."

"Jealous? You and your broods were mad creatures who enslaved an entire country and tried to conquer the continent. If we didn't put your kind down, the Gods would. You should count yourself lucky it was us. Otherwise, you would have ceased to exist."

"Make excuses all you like. I don't care. All I want is to get back on your kind. Oh, you don't know how much I dreamt of it. Now, I will have the chance."

"Hmph!" Quetzalcoatl harrumphed and glanced down at Mistress. "I guess it was that elven queen who broke you out of your prison. So, you are willing to lower yourself to someone's lapdog for your freedom?"

"Hahaha. It is rich hearing you say that. Aren't you also the orcs' lapdog?"

"How dare you!" Quetzalcoatl roared. "I came into a pact out of mutual respect. Do not assume I am the same as you who are forced into servitude!"

All the people down there heard was Quetzalcoatl shouting at the ball with the giant eye. The eye just stared back without any response. They wondered whether that eye could turn even a true dragon insane.

"Serfdom is serfdom, no matter how you dressed it up," the eldritch Beholder replied. "In my case, I don't mind becoming someone's slave as long as I get a chance at revenge on you, despicable dragons."

"Heh," Quetzalcoatl chuckled. "You might be formidable, but I was still young when you were sealed. Do not assume I am still the young dragon from before."

"We will see, dragon," the eldritch Beholder returned. After she finished speaking, her multitude of small eyes all turned toward Quetzalcoatl. Green rays of light shot out from those eyes.

Quetzalcoatl flapped his wings and he turned into a bolt of lightning. In an instant, he moved away from those green rays' trajectory. He stopped when he was facing the beholder's side. It opened its mouth and a great torrent of blue lightning poured out.

The beholder turned to face Quetzalcoatl. The giant eye on her body blinked. As it did, a green translucent triangle appeared before him. Quetzalcoatl's blue lightning slammed into this triangular wall. The powerful lightning was unable to pierce through the wall. The wall didn't even tremble. The lightning just appeared to vanish once it touched the wall.

"Anti-magic planar wall...", Quetzalcoatl muttered.

Quetzalcoatl remembered the eldritch beholder's ability. That anti-magic planar wall was able to nullify all magic and elemental attacks, no matter how strong they were. In the past, this ability was what had caused the then lord of the dragons, Broidrireg, difficulties in taking down the eldritch beholder. It was only with the combined might of all the true dragons that they had successfully slayed most of the beholder race and sealed their great brood mother.

"You might have grown from the last time I saw you, but you are alone," the Eldritch Beholder said.

"I alone am enough. Do not think you can underestimate me, abomination!" Quetzalcoatl flapped his two wings. He shot forward while a spell formation formed.

The eldritch beholder also cast a spell.

Quetzalcoatl's spell was completed first. Tens of lightning spears appeared around him. They then shot forward and made repeated turns at unpredictable timing. These lightning spears came at the beholder from multiple angles.

Before they hit, the same translucent green wall appeared again. But this time, instead of a triangle wall, four walls were formed all around the eldritch beholder. These four triangles touched one another at their sides and formed a triangular pyramid, enclosing the eldritch beholder within.

No matter where the lightning spears attacked from, they were blocked by the triangular pyramid.

The eldritch beholder's spell formation was completed. From above, a giant well of black swirling smoke appeared. Out of this smoke, hundreds of black hands reached out. They tried to grab Quetzalcoatl. Quetzalcoatl again turned into a ray of lightning to move away.

Quetzalcoatl moved at lightning speed but when he stopped, he found he wasn't that far away from where he was before. The black hands were still approaching. The giant well above possessed a magical force that stopped him from moving away.

"You think you can keep me here?!" Quetzalcoatl bellowed. His two wings flapped left and right. Every time he did, lightning blades were produced. These lightning blades cut the black hands that tried to grab him.

When Quetzalcoatl was busy with the black hands, the eldritch beholder teleported behind him. She then cast another spell. A pitch-black cone was formed. This cone elongated and spun, turning into a drill that shot forward.

Quetzalcoatl sensed the attack. He wanted to dodge but the black hands around him limited his movements. The black cone ended up nicking the dragon's body near its wings. Quetzalcoatl roared in pain.

The damage he received from the black drill didn't endanger his life since his HP was still full, but a cut was visible where the black drill had hit. The spell left a wound on Quetzalcoatl and the pain was not going anytime soon. Quetzalcoatl also received damage over time from the black drill.

The eldritch beholder's large mouth went up in a sinister grin upon seeing the wound.

"You think this is painful? I will let you taste what pain is!!" Quetzalcoatl roared. His body erupted with massive electrical currents. He then charged toward the eldritch beholder.

Chapter 1657: The Clash Between Two Orcs from Different Worlds

While the two country guardians were tussling high up in the sky, the two armies below continued their battle. Hours went by. Mistress thought they could get a quick win due to their initial ambush and their bigger number, but the Verremor army continued to persevere.

The orcs were fearless fighters. As long as the order was not given, they would never back down, even when the situation was bad. Hence, the psychological weakness from their lack of experience in fighting inside a forest was somewhat mitigated.

They showed no fear to the elven soldiers who seemed to be able to strike from unknown directions. Instead, they became more and more enraged due to the opponents' fighting style which they deemed dishonorable. The angrier they got, the stronger they became. This was another effect of the Totem Banner.

The enemies continued to concentrate at the place where Verremor was forced to set up their command base. These were where the war table and most of Verremor's leaders were located. Another reason why the Verremor army was still holding was because of the war table. Fighting inside a terrain where line of sight was limited, one side of the army didn't know what the others were doing. It was easy for a more experienced opponent to isolate the army into smaller and more manageable groups.

The war table was able to eliminate these threats. Kima was no exceptional strategist, but she was adept enough to operate the war table and send directions for the troops that were about to be led too far away from the main battlefield. In this way, the Verremor army could somewhat maintain their formation and give the enemies ample resistance.

This pissed Mistress off. Thus, she ordered everyone to target the war table.

Kabaka and his royal agents, Umeza and his clan, Four Winds and his guild members. They all placed themselves around Kima and the war table to protect her. That position was not yet stable so the Verremor guilds had not yet summoned their guild armies. Otherwise, those guild armies might get unsummoned as soon as they were called.

Four Winds was using his bloodline skill, Titan Strength. His body grew to an unnatural size due to this skill. With his oversized body, he covered more ground and had longer reach. None of the enemies were

able to get past him as he used his signature martial art, starlight field. Those who tried to approach had their weapons repelled and received counterattacks at the same time.

After spending time training inside Everlasting Heavenly Legends' Space-time Chamber, he also learned mana manipulation. His starlight field was even more potent. Even a strong skill sent by the enemy was unable to break this martial art.

He also had new weapons. They were twin axes that were also a set weapon. Despite having identical shapes, the two axes had different colors. One was red, the other blue. This was because the weapons had ingrained elemental power inside them, one that corresponded to their names, Fire and Ice.

The twin axes were able to cause Burn and Freeze status depending on the elements that struck the opponent. This set weapon's ability caused the enemies struck by these axes to receive additional damage if they were afflicted by either burn or freeze. Double if they were afflicted by both.

He was also using his Barbarian King's level 70 skill, Kingly Presence. This skill projected an aura to everyone near him. Allies received an increase in their stats and speed by 50%. Enemies received a reduction in their stats and speed by 10%. Berserker-class allies and enemies received double the skill's effect. The duration of this skill at its first level was ten minutes.

Suddenly, a large figure with a large flaming axe came barging at him. Four Winds sensed the incoming attack had mana manipulation empowering it. This attack was not to be scoffed at. He ended his starlight field and placed his two axes across him. The three axes collided. Despite Four Winds' increased strength from the giant strength, he was still forced back several steps.

"You?" Four Winds had a good look at his assailant. It was not an elf. It was an orc. One that he recognized.

"Traitor!!!" Kabaka yelled when he saw the one fighting Four Winds.

The enemy orc was Abasi Raretooh. Behind him, more orcs from the Raretooh clan appeared and helped the Aurebor soldiers. Master sent this orc clan to help Mistress defend Aurebor because he thought his ten million zombie army was enough to defend Hydrurond.

"You don't have the right to call me that," Abasi returned. "You are the traitor for allying with the human. They are our sworn enemy! I will defeat you and return Verremor to its right path."

"What's the point of talking? Let us settle our differences with our axes," Four Winds said while lunging back. Crimson tattoos covered his body.

"Agreed!" Abasi returned. He also used Enhanced Berserk which invoked the crimson tattoos. He swung his giant axe forward and conjured several giant flaming axe images that headed to Four Winds.

Four Winds used Flaming Cyclone. His huge body spun at a high rate while creating a hurricane of flames. All the flying axes from Abasi were shattered upon touching this cyclone.

"Hah! I can also use that move!" Abasi exclaimed. His body also spun and produced a flaming hurricane.

Two twisters filled with flames clashed against each other. One big and one small. Neither was willing to lose. Abasi was level 80 now. He was two levels higher than Four Winds, but Four Winds was enhanced by the giant strength. Hence, the two hurricanes were somewhat equal.

Abasi used his new skill then, Gigantify. His hurricane which was smaller than Four Winds suddenly grew to a size that dwarfed Four Winds'. With that added power, Four Winds could no longer contest with Abasi's strength. His flaming cyclone was defeated and he was sent flying back with a damage number.

He did a back somersault and landed on his feet. A healing light fell on him. It was from Purple Mist.

Without even a pause, he used Charge and ran back towards Abasi. On his way, he used Ancestral Possession. The spirit of a demon ogre appeared above him.

Abasi also advanced. His body, which was even bigger than Four Winds under Gigantify, made swings that caused the air to burst into flames. The two exchanged dozens of moves. Their axes never ceased clashing. Even when one of them received a slash, they didn't retreat. Both were equally stubborn and unwilling to lose.

Four Winds had better martial arts. Hence, Abasi received more hits. Even so, Abasi was a native. His HP pool was higher. As time passed, even though Abasi received more damage, it was Four Winds whose life was nearing the danger limit.

Abasi redoubled his effort because of this, but he was puzzled when he saw Four Winds grinning.

"Hehe. They have arrived," Four Winds uttered.

Chapter 1658: A Third Party

Abasi was baffled by Four Winds' remark, but he didn't let this disturb his focus. He was not an amateur who was rattled simply by the opponent's words. His assaults remained strong and fierce, but then he heard a commotion from the Southern part of the forest. At the same time, another healing light fell on Four Winds. The two things finally caused his concentration to falter. His movements paused.

Four Winds didn't waste the chance. He capitalized on the opportunity by activating Royal Barbarian Blood. His blood veins bulged as all his attributes increased. His Power Strike blew Abasi back. He then followed up by using Titan Blow.

Abasi had no choice but to defend when the illusory fist slammed into him. He was thrown further back.

Four Winds didn't charge over. He stayed in his position and issued orders for everyone to solidify their barricade around the war table. Now that a third party had shown up and taken the Aurebor army's attention, they had more latitude in working their formation.

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This third party was none other than Themisphere's second army that departed from Themisphere. While everyone thought this army followed John into Hydrurond, John sent them elsewhere instead. John only marched with the Outworlder army and the mobile fortress.

Just like how Linda predicted John's strategy, John also somewhat predicted her mother's attempt at countering him. He knew Linda would be preparing a trap to deal with the Verremor army coming into Aurebor. What it was, he didn't know. Hence, he sent this second Themisphere army to meet up with the Verremor force as reinforcement.

They didn't expect Verremor's army to be attacked the moment they entered Aurebor's border. Luckily, the second Themisphere army wasn't far off. This army departed earlier than John and his outworlder army. When John was still installing siege weapons onto the mobile fortress, this army had set out. Hence, they arrived in Aurebor which was further than Hydrurond the same day that John's force reached Messephyria.

Fierce Flame and Life Runner followed this second army. They were the ones communicating with Four Winds. From their messaging, this second army knew about the Verremor army's position and situation.

This second Themisphere army numbered 1,500,000 troops. With such a number, the Aurebor army couldn't just brush this force off.

Mistress had been yelling non-stop in her command base, expressing her dissatisfaction on how her army couldn't take down the Verremor force even after so long. Lead Designer was also astonished by the orcs' persistence even when Verremor was losing. Now, a disadvantageous factor had presented itself and he was even more at a loss for what he should do. Mistress was also stunned speechless when she saw so many enemy forces suddenly appear at their flanks.

The Aurebor army was still more advantageous in terms of terrain, but they didn't hold the number advantage anymore. The morale of the Verremor force also improved once they learned that their allies had arrived. Additionally, there was also the secret tech that had been learned from research, Coordinated Strike: Verremor, rank: 1.

This tech put a debuff on the Aurebor army because they were facing both Themisphere and Verremor's armies. The elven soldiers suddenly found themselves slightly weaker.

Another important point from the reinforcement was the addition of two high-level mythical-grade officers, Emris and Duchess Isabelle. Both were veteran magic-class combatants who possessed many AOE offensive spells. While the human army hit the unsuspecting Aurebor soldiers in their flanks, the two rained spells down on the enemies.

The battle continued. An hour after the Themisphere army showed themselves, Four Winds and the others finally managed to secure a better barricade around the war table. They lost some siege weapons. The ones they could save were brought to this secure position.

Four Winds gave the signal and the guild players used their Guild Army Summoning Crystals. Soon, even more reinforcements appeared and the battle further tipped to Verremor's side.

All eleven Verremor guilds with headquarters joined this war, but only ten of them summoned their guild armies. The one that didn't summon their guild army was Cipher Flight. Four Winds didn't explain but the other guild players didn't ask. They all knew Cipher Flight's prowess. If the guild didn't call their guild army, that meant more war contribution points for them. They didn't complain.

Emris, who was casting his spells to aid his army below, had his attention taken by the two figures that battled high up in the sky. Duchess Isabelle, who saw Emris stop attacking, came to his side.

"What's wrong?" She asked.

"That is the Eldritch Beholder," Emris answered.

"The great brood mother of the Beholders?" Isabelle said with a surprise. "I thought that creature was just a myth."

"That creature deserves its mythic legend. The eldritch beholder was a monster that could fight on equal ground with the strongest of the true dragons. The myth even said that it took the combined might of all the true dragons to take her down when she still had her broods with her."

"What's the creature from that myth doing here?" Isabelle asked.

"From the look of things, that Eldritch Beholder is Aurebor's country guardian."

"What...?!" Isabelle found it hard to believe. The last intel was that Aurebor had lost its country guardian after Mistress ascended. "Can Quetzalcoatl win?" She asked.

"They appeared evenly matched for now, but I predict Quetzalcoatl will be in trouble as time passes. If Quetzalcoatl lost, the Eldritch Beholder can turn the tide in the battle down here."

"Can we do something?" Isabelle asked.

"We will have little impact dealing with that creature. Its anti-magic ability is the bane of us magic class, but someone might be able to keep the stalemate between those two behemoths long enough until we defeat the Aurebor's army."

"Who?" Isabelle asked.

Emris signaled for Isabelle to follow him.

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In the battle near Verremor's command base, Makubwa was still trying to chase Ashira, Aurebor's lord protector. He had little success in the endeavor. This frustrated him greatly. He released his frustration on the nearby elven soldiers every time Ashira escaped his assault.

Ashira also couldn't deal much damage to Makubwa despite her constant kiting. Samuhn continued to cause interference that caused Ashira to be unable to focus her attacks on Makubwa.

When Makubwa was about to make another charge at Ashira, he saw a giant ice coffin that suddenly encapsulated Ashira's body. Ashira was greatly surprised by this ambush but she was responsive enough to use Vanish. She escaped before the ice coffin trapped her.

Makubwa recognized this spell. He was the target of this spell in the past. He looked up and saw the one who had cast the spell.

"Greetings, friend," Emris greeted as he floated down to where Makubwa was.

Chapter 1659: Facing the Eldritch Beholder

"Since when are we friends?" Makubwa replied curtly.

"Allies, then," Emris said. He wasn't offended by Makubwa's coldness. They did try to murder one another in the past.

"What do you want here? I don't need your help. Go and assist somewhere else," Makubwa uttered.

"I beg to differ, good war chief," Samuhn came and mediated. "It's better if we work together to defeat the enemy faster."

Isabelle had taken the role of keeping Ashira busy while the three chatted. She cast her spells and kept the lord protector away.

"I agree with the shaman king, but I don't come here to offer aid. I am here to ask for one," Emris said.

"What do you mean?" Makubwa asked.

Emris pointed up at the sky. "Do you know about that creature that is fighting your country's guardian?" He asked.

"The eldritch beholder...", Samuhn answered.

Makubwa didn't answer but from his expression, he was also aware of the eldritch beholder.

"I can tell you that Quetzalcoatl will be in trouble if the situation continues as it is," Emris told the two.

"Your country guardian's main strength is in his lightning element and spell castings. He is at a disadvantage against a creature like the eldritch beholder. Not to mention his level was also lower."

"What do you suggest?" Samuhn asked.

"I won't do much good against the eldritch beholder because I specialize in magic. It has to be you," Emris said to Makubwa.

"Are you crazy? That thing is way over my league," Makubwa uttered. He might be prideful and fearless, but he still knew his limit.

"Don't worry. You just need to keep the beholder distracted," Emris said. "As long as you aren't careless and get caught by the beholder's big spells, you should be all right. You just need to assist Quetzalcoatl long enough until we defeat the Aurebor army, or until the country guardian's summoning time limit ends. I think the time limit should be another half day by now, isn't it?"

Makubwa looked up at the two titans in the sky. He couldn't deny that his heart was slightly shivering from the thought of joining the battle there. Whether from fear or excitement, he couldn't tell.

"I can help by casting some enchantment to power you up. That should help you in your initial fight to get used to the battle. Isabelle will join you up there. She has more enchantment spells than me. She should be able to keep you buffed up."

"The myth said that the eldritch beholder has Greater Dispel," Samuhn said. "All your buffs are useless when she used that spell."

"She already used it," Emris said. "I have been watching the fight between Quetzalcoatl and her since I arrived. Quetzalcoatl knew his offensive spells couldn't harm the beholder so he used his buff spells, but the beholder used Greater Dispel to strip those buffs. Greater Dispel has a cooldown of six hours. She won't be able to use that spell anytime soon. She also has Cancel Magic but the buffs I'll give you are seven-rune spells. Her cancel magic won't work."

Makubwa took a deep breath. He then bellowed, "Rarrggh...! Hit me with your spells! If I die up there, I will haunt you in my death!!"

Emris chuckled. "I still wish for our rematch, so I will pray that you don't die yet," he said while casting.

Emris cast two spells on Makubwa.

The first spell was called Blurry Image. It was a spell from the Illusionist class. Makubwa's body became blurry. Similar to Mirror Image, this spell caused visual distortion and thus difficulty for the opponents to land a melee attack. But Emris cast the spell for its second function, which was reducing all magic damage received by the spell's target by 50%.

Emris' second spell was Astral Replacement. A copy of Makubwa appeared a distance away. A thread of light linked Makubwa with this copy. If Makubwa was killed when this spell was active, he would be resurrected at the copy's location with 50% HP. The copy had an HP bar. It could be attacked and destroyed, but it couldn't attack enemies.

"I will help you too," Samuhn said. He cast a spell and a vine armor covered Makubwa's body.

"Go!" Emris said to Makubwa.

"Defeat the Aurebor army as fast as possible!" Makubwa talked back.

"You can count on us," Emris said.

Makubwa used his wings tool and shot upward. After he left, Emris said to Samuhn, "You help our troops defeat the enemies. I will take care of that lord protector."

Emris flew to where Isabelle was. He cast multiple spells rapidly. His spells conjured a lightning dragon, an ice tiger, and a firebird. All rushed to Ashira who was battling Isabelle.

Ashira was forced back even further. She had to unleash a couple of powerful skills from her bow. The explosions resulted from her arrows and Emris' spells caused damage to the troops that were fighting nearby.

Isabelle left once Emris took over. She flew up chasing after Makubwa. When she got near, she cast a spell.

Makubwa watched his club change color. Its color was originally ivory. After Isabelle's spell, it turned into pure white. Makubwa sensed the change in his weapon was not only its color. He could feel its structure inside become denser.

Isabelle's spell was Harden Weapon. The spell made the target's weapon indestructible. Its base damage was increased. Successfully parrying using the enchanted weapon had a high chance of nullifying damage or reducing more damage than normal parry did.

She also cast Speed Up on Makubwa. The spell increased Makubwa's overall speed. Not as extreme as Jack's acceleration spell, but its effect lasted much longer.

With all these buffs, Makubwa's confidence was roused. With the increased speed, he flew in from the opposite direction from Quetzalcoatl. He used his Enlarge weapon skill which had finished its cooldown. His hardened club grew to a gigantic proportion.

Backstabbing a beholder was a folly act. Even without relying on mana sense, she still had hundreds of eyes that watched her surroundings. Half of these eyes saw Makubwa approaching. These eyes glowed and shot green rays at Makubwa.

Makubwa dodged to the side, but the rays were just too many. When he prepared to block these rays using his club, Isabelle's spell fell on him. He suddenly found himself teleported right next to the beholder's titanic body.

Both he and the beholder were surprised by this, but Makubwa didn't freeze from it. He swung his gigantic club. The giant club went past the green triangular pyramid protecting the beholder and smashed into the beholder's body.

Chapter 1660: Holding the Eldritch Beholder Back

Despite all the buffs, the damage caused by Makubwa was minuscule. Yet, his attack still caused the eldritch beholder to stop her offensive against Quetzalcoatl.

The dragon didn't waste the opening. He turned into a lightning bolt and rushed forward. He arrived before the beholder in an instant with his two hind legs ready to claw at the beholder's giant eyeball.

The beholder acted fast. She cast Magic Wall that blocked Quetzalcoatl's claws before they arrived. Quetzalcoatl's battle style relied more on spells, but that didn't mean he couldn't fight in melee. He was a true dragon, after all. Even untrained, his physical strength dwarfed most creatures of the same level.

The magic wall cracked after getting hit by Quetzalcoatl's claws. Quetzalcoatl followed up with a swing using his wing. The magic wall was shattered then. Quetzalcoatl's head dove down toward the beholder. His jaws were opened wide, ready to take a bite, but the beholder used the Teleportation spell again and moved away.

The beholder's large eye was staring at Makubwa after she teleported.

Makubwa felt a chilling cold in his body upon the stare. A deafening voice rang inside his head. "You, insignificant insect! How dare you interfere?!"

"Urgh...!" Makubwa held his head. His vision was spinning.

Something like a shining light bulb covered Makubwa's head. As it did, he felt the throb in his head greatly lessened. That light bulb was Isabelle's spell that protected Makubwa's mind. This mind barrier barely resisted the beholder's mental attack as cracks already appeared on it in such a short instant.

"More pesky ants!" The beholder cast a spell that conjured crimson chains with living balls at their ends. These balls had large mouths filled with sharp metal teeth. These crimson chains rushed at Makubwa and Isabelle. The mouths in their heads made loud clanking sounds as they kept on chomping.

Isabelle summoned her living weapons which were composed of light. These living melee weapons clashed with the crimson chains as she flew back. Makubwa refused to retreat. His giant club spun as he used Hurricane Punishing Cyclone.

However, even when the crimson chains appeared fragile, they were not. Isabelle's living weapons were crushed when the living balls chomped on them. Luckily, she had retreated. She cast Wind Jet when one of these living balls almost bit her.

Makubwa was shoved back each time his hurricane made an impact with the crimson chains. The chains were more powerful, but they couldn't get to him as long as his hurricane skill was still ongoing.

"Pick someone your own size, fiend!" Quetzalcoatl yelled as he flapped his wings. Several lightning blades slashed out. These lightning blades cut the crimson chains and the chains crumbled to dust. His spells might be useless to harm the eldritch beholder but they were still potent enough to break the beholder's spells.

After saving the two, Quetzalcoatl flew toward the beholder again, intending to get her into a melee fight.

The beholder continued casting spells to keep Quetzalcoatl away. Makubwa flew to a different angle and tried striking from there. When the beholder cast a spell to target Makubwa, Isabelle cast a spell to either redirect the beholder's spell or pull Makubwa to safety. Makubwa couldn't be saved every time. Luckily, at the unfortunate times when he was hit, the buffs from Emris and Samuhn reduced the damage he received.

Makubwa and Isabelle didn't truly present much threat to the beholder, but their interference was still disturbing enough. Quetzalcoatl's HP was close to 60% before the two came, while the beholder still had 90% HP. With the two's aid, the rate by which Quetzalcoatl received damage was greatly reduced. Instead, it was the beholder who had to keep running away from Quetzalcoatl's forceful charge. This caused her to spend less time casting offensive spells.

With this pace, it was unlikely the eldritch beholder could defeat Quetzalcoatl before her summon time ran out.

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Mistress was cursing non-stop when she saw the situation. Her cold and collected persona was gone. She had no choice but to go to the front line and help her soldiers, but the tide had slowly changed ever since the Themisphere army showed up.

With more troops and more high-level mythical-grade combatants, Aurebor troops were slowly pushed back even with their advantage in terrains. Lead Designer was also not a good tactician. He moved the troops in the most obvious ways without any well-thought consideration.

Kima was average in terms of tactical movements, but she had a better understanding of Verremor troops compared to Lead Designer with Aurebor troops. Lead Designer might know all the soldiers' specs, but knowing their data was not good enough. Kima understood her troops' behavior. How they cooperate and what stimulated their fighting spirit. This gave her a better edge in controlling the troops compared to Lead Designer.

The Themisphere army didn't have anyone controlling them. Themisphere's war table was inside the mobile fortress in Hydrurond. Even so, this army could still move with some tactical benefits. This was because John had made the army perform many war drills. Every unit always moved with a conscious effort to stay in formation.

Many of the officers had also received direct tutelage from John. This allowed them to make tactical decisions based on the situation. As a large-scale army, they might not cooperate as well as an army controlled by a war table, but they functioned efficiently in smaller-scale divisions. This gave them the awareness to always cover their nearby comrades and prevented the Aurebor troops from successfully isolating them

Additionally, after researching the martial arts drills, the rate by which the native soldiers learned martial arts had improved by leaps and bounds. The Themisphere soldiers had no problem even when the Aurebor soldiers successfully isolated them and hit them with a bigger number. They were able to fight back or hold their ground until their comrades arrived.

Lead Designer watched anxiously at the indication of their troops' number on the war table's projection. They kept on falling, while the enemies didn't lose as many. At this rate, they would be vanquished.

He looked up in the sky at the combat between the country guardians. Although the beholder was winning, Quetzalcoatl was nowhere near defeated. It was almost one day since these country guardians were summoned. They couldn't rely on the beholder to turn the situation anymore.

Reluctantly, he sent his review of the situation to Mistress who was fighting in the front line. He was ready for a scolding.

Instead, he received a weak, defeated answer. "Sound the retreat," Mistress ordered.