

World 451

Chapter 451: Elite Classes' Skills

"Okay, I'm heading out. By the way, this is Domon, a martial arts instructor... this is John, an annoying dude," Jack introduced Domon who stood behind him to John. Domon only nodded silently at John, to which John returned in kind.

"Let's go," Jack said to Domon, but then he stopped when he saw Domon was staying still.

"I'm not going," Domon told Jack.

"Why?" Jack asked.

"You should have known about my belief in martial arts. Using it for self-defense or a duel is all right, but it is not something to be used for war or deliberately attacking other human beings with the intention to kill. Doing those will just corrupt our arts. Martial arts is about the enlightenment of our bodies and minds. Unless absolutely necessary, we should maintain its purity.."

"The people out there won't truly die if you kill them, you know?"

"It's not about the result. It's about the intention. If I said it's ok now, what prevents me from doing it again when they will truly die?"

"Where did you pick up this traditionalist geezer?" John asked.

"Hey, show some respect! This traditionalist geezer is my grandfather," Jack said.

"Really?" John's eyes were wide with surprise.

"Afei, you go do what you must. I will stay here," Domon said.

"Afei?" John asked.

"That's his name, Jack Fei, no?"

"Jack Fei? Hehe, I see," John grinned.

"Hey, in this world, I'm called Storm Wind!" Jack declared.

"Don't be absurd, I'm not calling you by that ridiculous name," Domon talked back.

"That's right, Jack Fei. You should listen to your gramps," John said with a snicker.

'Ugh, I can see this guy ridiculing my name for indefinite future already,' Jack lamented, he then said to Domon. "Fine! In that case, you stay here and protect this place. See that large stele there?"

Jack was pointing at their Guild Core. Domon turned to look at the one Jack was indicating.

"In case our enemies managed to intrude here, please make sure that no one damage that stele. This should be in line with your self-defense belief, right?" Jack asked.

"All right, I can do that," Domon replied.

"While for this guy," Jack pointed at John. "You can let him get smacked one bit or two, but don't let him die."

After leaving his messages, Jack left the hall with Peniel floating beside him.

John turned to Domon and said, "I apologize for my rudeness before. I see you are also an elite class already, I'm impressed. Was the trial difficult?"

"It's easy, nothing to write home about," Domon answered.

"I can see now where Jack's tendency in playing down important matters comes from," John commented.

Instead of running outside, Jack first went to the room that housed the Power Crystal. He was not that careless as to just barge out there without preparation. He paid contribution points to get the active buff from the crystal. He then ate a Sweet Dumpling and applied Poison Salve on both his Storm Breaker and Whirlwind Falchion.

While he was eating the dumpling, he said to Peniel, "tell me about the three elite classes I will be dealing with at the outside. What inherent skills do they get after becoming elite classes? Also, the first standard skill and the exclusive skill they got for clearing the trial on the first try."

"I will go with Assassin first then," Peniel said. "After becoming an assassin, his or her Critical chance when using short weapons such as daggers or fist weapons will be increased by 10%. They also get dual-wield expertise same as you, so they won't suffer any penalty using their off-hand weapons. Every successful dodge will increase their next damage by 10% and attack speed by 20%, it is not stackable though. An assassin will be able to jump a height of 300% compared to normal."

"Three times normal?" Jack commented. He only ever saw a native make such a superhuman jump. For players, even with stats as high as him, he could only manage to jump around one meter high only. That meant Red Death could now jump around three meters in height.

Peniel nodded, "yes. As for skills, if they pass on the first try, they will receive Phase Strike skill. at its first level, it allows the user to teleport directly to the target, dealing 150% physical damage and 20% added critical chance. If they hit the target's back, the hit will be guaranteed to be critical. This skill has a range of 3 meters and cooldown of 2 minutes."

"For standard skill after becoming an Assassin, they get Poison Mastery. It adds 30% earth damage to each attack and a 10% chance to inflict poison on each strike. This skill is stackable with poison tools, such as your Poison Salve. Its duration is 3 minutes, cooldown at 10 minutes."

"For Elementalist, their mana pool is increased by 20%. Critical chance of all elemental damages have an added 10%. Any magical weapons or tools that inflict elemental damage is increased further by 10%. An Elementalist receives an innate 10% on all elemental resistances.

"For the exclusive skill on passing the trial on the first try, the reward is Flame Shield spell. It creates a fiery aura with a radius of 1.5 meters around the caster, their defense is increased by 30% and fire resistance by 50%. Anyone other than the caster within the area of effect receives 10% fire damage each second. The duration is 1 minute and cooldown is 5 minutes."

"Every Elementalist also receives Fireball spell. I guess you are familiar with this spell already. The created fireball deals 350% fire damage and has a 10% chance to inflict Burn. The spell range is 50 meters. Cooldown at 1 minute."

"As for Berserker, this class increases all damages inflicted by axe-type weapons by 10% and ignores 10% of opponent's defense if using axe-type weapons. This class also receives dual-wield expertise. If this class' HP dip below 50%, its damage is increased by 2% for each 1% HP below the 50% threshold.

"Exclusive skill for passing berserker trial on the first try is Heavy Cleave. It deals 300% physical damage and reduces target defense by 50% for 10 seconds. Cooldown is 1 minute."

"This class' standard skill is Berserk. It's a buff that increases all physical damage by 30%, attack speed by 100%, movement speed by 50%, and an additional 20HP to body recovery skill during combat. But this skill also decreases the user's defense by 30%. The buff's duration is 3 minutes. Cooldown is 20 minutes."

Jack tried to memorize all the info. Of course, he could not remember all the details, but he roughly grasp the skills' essences. He had also completed his preparation by then.

He stored the Whirlwind Falchion and equipped his Rapid Dazing Staff before running towards the headquarter's exit.

Outside, the battle continued to rage on. Because of the terrain, there were several chokepoints John had used to halt the coalition's advance. Everlasting Heavenly Legends' guild members were spread amongst these chokepoints. With the help of the native soldiers, they barely could hold on.

The coalition was unable to utilize its full forces due to these chokepoints. However, the situation was not looking good for Everlasting Heavenly Legends. The coalition was pushing forward little by little. They could alternate between players who had been wounded with those who still had full health, while the defending players continued to build on fatigue.

"Hold on! Don't let any of them through!" Bowler shouted as he healed the players on the front line.

"Easy for you to say! You only stand there casting spells," The Man complained as his two-handed axe clashed with the heavy mace of Goliath from the Warriors of Solidarity.

"Do you believe me if I say I will stop healing you if you keep on complaining?" Bowler threatened.

"Dude, didn't peg you to be such a moody person," The Man retorted.

"You guys are noisy," Goliath uttered as he used Power Strike and sent The Man reeling back.

Goliath was about to rush into the gap created from The Man's absence before a whistling sound was heard. A speeding arrow that left a shining light on its tail, as if a comet, flew directly at Goliath. Goliath only had the time to lift his mace for a parry when the arrow struck with a loud bang. Despite his large frame, he was still pushed back many steps from the impact.

Some of his underlings went forward to replace Goliath in crossing the gap but a green shadow rushed at them. They received damage when the shadow passed. One of them ignored the damage and continued to run forward, only to feel biting pain on his neck. A large green fur wolf with silver lines was

clamping on his neck. It caused critical damage. The others who wanted to come to help were bombarded by successive arrow shots.

The one who had made the shot was Fierce Flame. The green wolf was her Savage Wind Wolf. The shot she had used to beat Goliath back was Power Shot, the standard skill he received after becoming Elite Marksman. It caused high damage in addition to strong pushback force, similar to Fighter's Power Strike. The skill also ignored defense by 30%.

Flame's arrow and Savage Wind Wolf had managed to buy time for one of the squire soldiers to cover the open gap. These trained soldiers had been the reason they had managed to hold down such large forces all this time. If it was only the players, they would have been run over a long time ago. However, many of the trained soldiers had also died due to the repeated usage of high-level spells from the enemy's magic scrolls.

The Man soon returned to defend his previous post.

As the battle raged on, Bowler received a message from John. "Say what?" He asked with a surprised tone. "You want us to let them through?"

Chapter 452: Carpet Bombing

Bowler read John's message again, making sure he didn't read wrong. He then replied, "dude. This is not the time to be joking around. If we let them through, it will be like a broken dam. We won't be able to halt their tide anymore."

"Are you the strategist or I am? Just shut up and do as you are instructed!" John said.

Bowler was fuming. Could this guy be any more abhorrent?

Before he could send any retort, Jeanny joined the chatroom, "it's ok, Bowler. Just do as he asked."

"But... that will give the enemies a straight path to the wall entrance," Bowler still protested.

"He must have his reason. It's not just your checkpoints. He also asked for a few others as well," Jeanny said.

"Please note that you need to open them at the same time when I say so, is that clear?" John added.

It took a few seconds before Bowler replied, "fine! Give me some time to relay this command first."

"Make it quick," John simply said.

'This guy really knows no courtesy,' Bowler complained in his mind. He still proceeded to relay the instruction to the others. As expected, The Man had a thousand questions regarding the validity of this command. Bowler simply told The Man what John had said to him, shut up and do as was instructed.

"Okay, now!" John sent the command to several selected checkpoints. The native soldiers moved back first as they were directly controlled by John. The others followed suit despite uneasiness in their heart.

As the members of Everlasting Heavenly Legends retreated from a few chokepoints, the members of the coalition were left puzzling. A clear path was suddenly left in front of them. They could even see the Guild Headquarter's wall entrance from afar.

One of the leaders of the teams in these chokepoints, Health Holder, looked at the clear path with a frown. He was the branch leader of Six Rings of Prosperity in Themetus who had led his team to journey all the way here to aid his guild members in Thereath. They were intent on claiming Everlasting Heavenly Legends' Guild Headquarters. He was a Knight at level 31.

Beside him was Luck Holder, who was killed by Jack during the battle of Crestfall Plain. He was behind the others at level 27. He was now wearing an Amulet of Rebirth on his neck. In fact, most of the others also wore one. They had learned a painful lesson of arrogance from the previous battle. Now they always wore one during high-risk operations.

"What do you think?" Luck Holder asked. No one had moved to cross over the chokepoints because of the sudden retreat of the enemies. It was too deliberate that anyone will suspect that there was a trap.

Health Holder thought for a moment before saying, "what's there to think? Let's charge!"

"But... Aren't you afraid there is a trap?"

"What trap can there be? If they have trump cards, they would have used them already. Why wait until now? They are clearly just copying the empty fort strategy from Kong Ming. Do they think they can fool us like that? They think none of us ever heard of the story?"

He then lifted his sword high and shouted, "Brothers and sisters! The path is clear. It is time we claim this headquarters for our own. Don't get left behind by the other guilds!"

With that declaration, they charged. The others at the opened chokepoints after seeing the Six Rings of Prosperity people charging out, couldn't afford to be left behind. So they charge as well.

As they were running to the headquarter main gate entrance. They saw that not all chokepoints were opened. Only the one that brought them into a straight path to the main gate. If they turned to the side and hit the ones that were still holding the chokepoints, they could decimate the enemies and allow more of their allies to enter. But why would they do that? Only one guild who dealt the most damage to the guild core would gain ownership of this headquarters after the core was destroyed, so why did they want to share this gain with the others?

They continued to run with fervor towards the gate entrance, trying to compete with the teams from other guilds who had also been let through.

When they almost reached the gate, they saw a lone figure charging out of the gate entrance.

'What can one man do?' Health Holder laughed inside seeing the scene.

"It's him!" exclaimed Luck Holder who was running behind him.

"Who?" Health Holder asked.

"The demon!" Luck Holder answered.

"What demon. It is just one person. Let's just trample him and charge inside!" Health Holder yelled with a gusto. He even increased his running pace, wanted to show his valor to inspire his comrades. But he couldn't help but slow down when he saw numerous large balls crackling with electricity appear around the lone figure that was charging at them.

"What the..." Luck Holder only uttered those two words before he was stifled when he saw those innumerable crackling balls suddenly shot at them with high speed. The last thing he remembered before he was engulfed by pure whiteness was the feeling that all his hair stood on ends and the tingling sensation all over his body.

What was witnessed by the people outside though, was the lightning balls spread out as they detonated one by one around the crowd that had been rushing forward. Everyone else in the vicinity stopped their fighting as they watched the phenomenon.

Jack had spread all his lightning balls in a wide area. Previously he had always focused all his twenty balls on a single target to maximize the damage because the ones he was fighting were natives with high HP pool. His targets this time though, were players whose even for the highest HP amongst them, the level 31 Knights, were 1500. The Lightning God Barrage that Jack shot out with his current level 40 Storm Breaker and a few basic buffs, produced damage around 1800 each ball.

Each lightning ball caused an explosion of electricity in a five-meter radius area. So Jack spaced them out at five meters between each other along the road where the charging mob was traveling. The visual effect ended as if the entire mob was getting carpet-bombed by lightning bombs.

By the end of the explosion, the whole area was quiet. The one still standing after being caught within this carpet bombing was only one person, Health Holder. The others had their bodies lying on the ground unmoving, carpeting the path towards the gate entrance.

The battlefield turned still for a few moments. Even the sole survivor, Health holder, looked around him in disbelief. He was one of the knights with the highest HP. He only managed to survive because he had activated a rare skill he had gotten from a quest, Enduring Toughness. The skill granted him an increase of defense by 100% for 30 seconds and the next one attack received had its damage reduced by 30%. The increase of defense didn't do much as Jack's attack was elemental damage but the reduction of one attack had allowed Health Holder to just barely survive with a sliver of health.

While Health Holder was still standing there, stunned by the sudden turns of event, he heard a voice by his side. "It was amazing that you have managed to survive that attack."

The voice snapped him out of his daze. He turned around with his weapon swinging. However, while he was turning intending to strike at the source of the voice, he felt cold pain in his belly. It was only an instant where he caught the glimpse of the demon who had just sliced his stomach using a long black sword. His vision turned grey as he fell and then he saw nothing but darkness.

While the battlefield paused, John sent messages to the guild members to leave behind the chokepoints and regroup at the gate entrance. They were to concentrate their remaining forces to defend this last chokepoint.

As the others started moving, Jack turned around and looked in direction of the empty gate entrance. He stared at it for a while.

"What is it?" Peniel asked.

"You are not sensing it?" Jack asked back.

"sense what?"

"Hm, no wonder you almost made me fail in unraveling the rune diagram that kept Pandora prisoner. Your mana sensing is rather bad."

"I never say I am good at mana sensing!" Peniel defended herself. She then looked at the place Jack had been looking at. Did he sense something there? His improvement was unbelievable if he was able to sense something from this far away. "Is it something there?" She asked.

Instead of answering, Jack turned back to face the coalition army. "Never mind. It is just one. Gramps will take care of it," he said.

Chapter 453: Irksome Nemesis

Jack's guild members gathered and formed a defensive formation behind him, defending the gate entrance. Amongst them, Silverwing ran past him and nodded at him. Jack nodded back. He also saw quite a number of orcs. He saw Life Runner amongst them, who was running close to him. Jack called after him.

"You brought quite some orcs into our guild, that was amazing," Jack commented as he came over.

"They didn't at first, but when I tell them there is a guild war coming, that lot became very interested. They had a pretty boring life in Verremor after all. They are the kind that is very into this kind of guild war things in past games."

"Wow, they must click pretty well with The Man's group then."

"Actually, they had already signed up to become part of Man of Solidarity gang," Life Runner said.

"Hehe, it's good that everyone gets along. Okay, head back there. Leave everything to me," Jack said.

Life Runner was about to say 'are you sure?' but decided against it. He had seen how Jack fought with the Outlaws at the hideout and how he decimated the crowd of players just now, so he just ran to where everyone had gathered.

John sent a message in the guild chat. "okay, everyone. Your job now is just to play total defense at one spot. Leave all the offense to Jack."

Everyone had the same questioning thought, 'who the hell is Jack?'

'I know that guy will spread my real name sooner or later,' Jack thought. Apparently, it was sooner.

But he didn't really care. In past games, it was indeed important to hide one's real identity. Because you never knew if you offended someone petty in the games and the fellow tried to take revenge on you in real life.

In this game world, however, there was no real or secret identity. You lived your character here. So the current you were the real identity. Storm Wind or Jack, made no difference if others found out.

As his friends and guildmates formed a barricade around the gate entrance behind him, Jack walked over to the coalition forces who were also coming after no longer barred at the chokepoints.

"Don't advance too far. If things go out of hand, you can still retreat to where the archers and mages can support you with range attacks," he received John's message. He stopped going forward after receiving that message. All the trained Bandit archers took position above the wall to gain the high ground. The ranged players soon follow suit. Leaving only the melee to guard the doorless entrance.

The coalition force was approaching but didn't rush over. After witnessing Lightning God Barrage, none of them dared to be careless and rushed forward.

The three coalition leaders, Scarface, Manager Steelhand, and Queen Magenta were walking together.

"Any of you still have high-level magic scrolls?" Scarface asked.

"No. We have used them all on those NPC soldiers they trained," Manager Steelhand answered.

"Us too. The price of that magic scrolls is too expensive now. We can't afford too many of them," Queen Magenta said.

When they reached earshot, Jack greeted them. "I see you people had wisened up and wore Amulet of Rebirth."

Scarface replied, "and I see that you are still as self-assured as before, you are not wearing one."

"I did win the last time, didn't I?"

"Such arrogance! We will make you eat those words!" Queen Magenta hissed.

"You know, if this keeps going on. Most of your members will soon find the Amulet of Rebirth to be too expensive to buy," Jack continued to taunt.

"What were those lightning balls just now? Were they from a magic scroll?" Scarface asked.

"No, they are from a skill," Jack answered.

"What's the cooldown?"

"One minute."

Queen Magenta immediately spat, "you think us children? If that really is a skill, no way that it only has a one-minute cooldown!"

"Then you shouldn't have asked the question. You are currently my enemies. Do you suppose I will tell you everything?"

"My bad, then," Scarface said.

"If you still treat the confrontation this time as the same as last time, you will be sorely..." Manager Steelhand didn't finish his sentence as at this time, Jack had already made a move. Jack shot Mana Bullet at him and then cast Magic Bolts.

Manager Steelhand was vexed. Jack was the one that had initiated the conversation, yet he had also so rudely attacked first when the conversation was not yet over.

Jack rushed over as his magic staff formed a spell formation, four runes at the same time. The speed by which Jack cast his spells was outlandish as he did it by forming all the runes at the same time. Every spell was thrown out in succession one after another. Myriad Ensnaring Chains, Arcane Turbulence, Magic Bind. The last was Barrier before he stored his magic staff and replaced it with Whirlwind Falchion.

The three coalition leaders moved back as their subordinates went up to meet Jack. Scarface shouted out his command, "There is no need to focus on him, just keep him busy. Prioritize breaking into the headquarters! Our objective remains the same."

The coalition force advanced from Jack's two sides. No way Jack alone could halt the tide of so many people advancing at the same time. But his guildmates were already ready by the gate entrance. The range classes sent their attacks from up the wall while the melee formed several rows of barricades to stop the coalition's advance. The trained Squires formed the bulk of the meatshield.

Before this, John didn't focus all the defense in one place because this gate entrance was the last line of defense. If the enemy managed to break through, there was no more way to hold the tide. If the enemy had an organized offense, sooner or later they would be worn down. He had chosen to use multiple chokepoints to break the enemies up and prevent them from having a centralized offensive movement.

Now, he had proceeded with the last phase of his defensive plan ahead of time because he no longer worried about the enemy's organized offense. With Jack in the middle of the enemy's formation, they won't be able to get organized. Hence, he could focus his force to form an impenetrable defense while the enemy was stricken by the urgency to break through since they didn't want to spend too long a time dealing with Jack.

The advancing team that was sent to hold Jack down consisted of all melees, Warriors and Knights. The Knights put their shields up and rushed up at him, while the Warriors followed closely behind, planning to pin Jack down once the Knights made contact.

Jack met them head-on. He crossed his two arms in front of him. When the knights were closed enough, both his arms slashed diagonally away from each other. Thick sword-light was formed from the slash of each sword, creating a glaring X-pattern. These sword lights engulfed the group of Knights, causing damage around 1600 to each of them.

Jack's level 4 Cross Slash delivered even slightly higher damage than the single ball of Lightning God Barrage, at a 310% damage boost. But because his attack was considered physical, the Knight's defense was more effective against this Cross Slash than the lightning attack. Still, 1600 damage was already above the threshold that these Knights' HP could endure. The front row of the knights all dropped dead on the ground with this first contact, leaving the Warriors behind with flabbergasted expressions.

"F*ck me! Why the hell is he becoming even more unreasonable than before? Did he level up all his weapons and equipment to the limit? How does he even get the resources to do that?" Manager Steelhand uttered after seeing the scene. Even he as the acting leader of the guild could only afford to upgrade all his equipment to level 33 at this time. He still has to share the ores for upgrading the other upper echelons' equipment, after all.

What Manager Steelhand didn't expect was apart from Jack having upgraded all his equipment to his current limit, Jack also had several Super Rare equipment on him. With Jack's dual-class attribute already outclassing them, his superiority in equipment tipped the scale even further.

"He is an elite class already," Scarface said with a grim expression.

"Elite class? Which one?" Manager Steelhand asked.

"Blade Dancer," it was someone from behind them who answered. They turned back and saw Warpath. "That just now was the first skill from Blade Dancer class," he added.

Warpath was a dual sword wielder after all. The coalition had gathered substantial information on the Elite classes from the Library. Warpath had studied the information and he himself also had the target of becoming a Blade Dancer. In fact, if this battle to claim Everlasting Heavenly Legends' guild headquarters had not happened, he would have gone to take the Blade Dancer trial today, since he had just reached level 30 last night. But his duty to the guild compelled him to join this battle and to put that elite class trial on hold.

Seeing his nemesis had become the class that he had targeted, irked him to no end. "I will deal with him," Warpath exclaimed as he rushed towards Jack, two longswords on both his hands.

Chapter 454: Sword Style Of Slaughter

By the time Warpath arrived at where Jack was, most of the Warriors had already fallen. Despite the hatred and anger in his heart, he still gulped. He couldn't deny that the pressure exuded by Jack did intimidate him as well. He steeled his heart as he forced his anger to take over. Without any words, he gripped his twin swords, a set of rare weapons, and lunged forward.

"You...," Jack said when he saw Warpath arriving before him.

"Taste my Shadowless Slash!" Warpath exclaimed.

This was Warpath's trademark martial arts. In his past clash with Jack, he couldn't execute this martial art because he did not have sufficient strength and speed. Just as what Jack's grandfather always said to him, without sufficient strength and speed, any technique was useless. Now that he had reached level 30, he had the required attributes to perform the art.

Each slash of his sword produced five sword lights that carried equal power. He slashed six times in rapid succession, creating thirty sword lights. They were pure martial arts, not game skills. The others who witnessed the display couldn't help but admit that the fame earned by Warpath in the past games was justified.

Jack, upon seeing an expert display his martial skill, decided to respond in kind. To test the extent of his martial skill, who else but a martial expert to be the most suitable opponent? He unleashed the burst attack of his Formless Flowing Sword style. Twenty-four slashes clashed with Warpath's thirty sword lights. Numerous loud clashing sounds were heard.

Though the number of Jack's slashes was less, the power was more. Each of his slashes could nullify two to three of Warpath's slashes. Warpath stumbled back from the exchange, unable to believe the outcome. He had always believed his loss the last time was due to Jack's superiority in attributes and collection of skills, and he was not wrong.

He believed that if they were to compete with pure martial arts, he would defeat Jack without a sweat. Yet, he knew for a fact the move Jack executed just now was a martial art as well. Although the reason he had lost the exchange was indeed due to Jack's attributes surpassing him, he could also see that the martial move Jack had performed was not shallow.

Warpath gritted his teeth. He would have preferred it if he had been defeated by one of Jack's unfair game skills. That way, at least he would have retained his dignity. He shouted a loud yell as he lunged back. Delivering continuous Shadowless Slash one after another. Jack responded in kind. The two twin swords clashed repeatedly. The others had trouble seeing the movements of their swords. All they saw was swords lights flashing continuously in between the two as loud clangs of metal against metal continued to resound. None of the others dared to approach such an intense display of sword fight.

Jack could have defeated Warpath if he wanted to. His strength and speed trumped his opponent by a great deal after all, but he held himself back. Exchanging move with Warpath gave him the same feeling as when he was going against the two mannequins warriors during the Blade Dancer class trial. He felt that his sword art would improve further if he could continue to spar like this.

But of course, it was not possible that his opponents just stood there watching. He could feel mana build up underneath his feet. He quickly made a downward slash as he forcefully nullified Warpath's attack. He then agilely climbed over his opponent's body before giving Warpath's head a strong kick. Warpath was pushed down as Jack jumped higher into the sky.

At this time, the ground underneath them flared brightly. Torrents of energies shot up and swirled around. Warpath was completely engulfed by it. The torrents, however, didn't reach high enough to where Jack was. It was the Arcane Turbulence spell, cast by a band of Mages, spread out in layers to cover a huge area. It was too late for Jack to disengage when he had felt the mana disturbance, that's why he escaped upward.

Scarface frowned heavily seeing what had happened. He was the one that had organized the mages to cast the spell, hoping to catch Jack off-guard while he was still engaging Warpath. He couldn't think of a reason why Jack had jumped up even before the spells took effect. It was as if he predicted it?

Before Jack's body fell down to the ongoing spell under there, he took out a magic scroll, Wind Jet, and activated it. It shot his body far away to the backline where the mages and Healers were located.

When Jack landed. It was as if a wolf had jumped into a cage full of chickens. The chickens looked at the wolf with terrified expressions, before they ran haphazardly, destroying any semblance of formation that was in place.

Jack did not waste any time, the twin swords on his hands danced around. Jack only needed two normal slashes to kill each of these mages and healers. And since he was now using two swords on each hand, he only needed one swing to make the two slashes and claim their lives.

Each time he hit them, a tiny shining orb swirled around his blade. As time passed, the number of these orbs increased. This was his inherent Blade Dancer ability that increased his damage as long as his attacks continued uninterrupted. By the end of the successful twenty slashes, he only needed one normal attack to kill the mages and healers.

He continued to move as his two swords spun around unceasingly. Those that knew no better would have thought he was dancing. The Formless Flowing Sword style was perfectly complimenting the Blade Dancer name. Everywhere he passed, a mage or a healer fell.

The number of casualties was already uncountable as the coalition experts tried to get to him. The order that they should prioritize on breaching the headquarters' defense and only sparing some troops to hold Jack down was no longer in everyone's mind. The ones that were closest to Jack were doing their best to run away, while those that were far away were trying to chase after him to provide help to their guildmates.

"I didn't personally see your fight in Crestfall plain, but I can say now that you are truly gifted in creating chaos, friend," Jack heard John's words as he continued to weave through the enemies.

But sooner or later, he would run into an expert. Jack felt hot mana accumulating where he was about to head into. He stopped himself just before the ground flared up and torrents of fire swirled around in front of him.

Jack recognized the spell to be Arcane Turbulence, but one that had a fire element variety. Probably a spell that was evolved by a Fire Seed. Jack turned to look at the source and saw Selena. She was wearing a different garb now, distinct from the other mages. Jack did not doubt that they should be at least a collection of Rare grade equipment.

Jack remembered John told him that Selena was one of the few that had become an elite class, but that didn't deter him. He dashed forward to where she was standing, just as a very fast spell formation was formed. A familiar Fireball spell was unleashed from her staff.

Jack grinned, 'let's see if your spell is stronger than my slash,' Jack exclaimed in his mind as he used Cross Slash for the second time, just as the fireball was about to hit him. The enormous X-shaped sword light devoured the flaming ball as Jack continued to run through them. There was no damage on him. His physical slash was stronger than Selena's Fireball.

He could see the surprise in Selena's eyes. Perhaps the Elementalist had not expected Jack to use such brute force to get to her. But she was not a rookie who easily panic upon an unexpected situation. She rapidly cast another spell. Flame erupted around her just as Jack was about to arrive. Jack could feel the blistering heat. If he forced himself to get into melee with Selena, he would get burnt.

That was the Flame Shield that Selena had gotten upon successfully passing the Elementalist trial on the first try. Selena didn't just rely on the Flame Shield. It increased her defense but the spell did not exactly block any attack. She erected a Magic Shield as extra protection just in case Jack intended to ignore the fire damage and still forcefully get into melee with her.

Jack was indeed planning that, He didn't think the fire damage from that Flame Shield would be too dangerous for his high HP pool. But as he was about to advance more, he felt pressure coming at him from above. He quickly moved out of the way just as a large two-handed axe cleaved at where he was a moment ago. The axe caused the ground underneath to crack.

Jack recognized the wielder to be Supervisor Killmonger, another one that had become an elite class, a Berserker. However, his appearance was slightly strange. His exposed body, face and some parts of his arms, were covered by black tattoos. He remembered seeing similar tattoo ability from the Outlaws that used to occupy the bandit outpost here before it was turned into their Guild Headquarters.

'Is that the Berserk skill of the Berserker?' Jack asked Peniel telepathically. She had gone back to her usual habit of hiding within her hidden dimension once this battle started.

'Yes,' he heard Peniel's reply.

Supervisor Killmonger was then enveloped by a soft light. Jack turned and saw Princess Purple not far away. She had cast Protect on Killmonger, a standard spell received by Healer after level 25. It provided an extra defense to the target. The spell had effectively eliminated the only drawback of Berserk skill which reduced defense.

At that time, Jack also saw many other experts he had clashed with in the past. Assistant Manager Ironhand, Goliath, Grimclaw, Stonecleave, Slim Blade, Prideful Josh, Lustful Elly, Fat Gregory, Beauty Beholder.

Seeing all these experts were surrounding him, Jack couldn't help but wonder, 'where is Red Death?'

Chapter 455: Past Pupil

As the battle outside continued to rage on. John and Domon were inside the Guild Hall, staring at the projection of the ongoing battle outside.

"You are really fine just standing here while your grandson risks his life out there?" John asked Domon, but his hands never stopped tweaking the control on the trained soldiers.

"His life is not really in danger. Didn't he say in this world, anyone will come back to life if they die, no?" Domon replied.

"Only the players. I mean, the ones that have come from our world," John said. "But he will lose everything he had gotten till now and will be back to level 1. In case you don't know what that means, he will be very, very weak."

"But he will still live, no? Everything is not lost as long as one still has one's life. We can work back everything we have lost.."

"Very good philosophy. Very stupid, but also very good, nevertheless," John commented.

"Jack mentioned you are a martial arts instructor? How good are you?" John asked another question.

"The best there is," Domon answered. "You are not distracted working that weird device while talking with me?"

"Gramps, I can do this with my eyes closed."

"Impressive. I would like to see that."

"... I'm just saying," John said. "I see you have Instructor and Builder talents. I can understand the Instructor talent since you are a martial arts instructor in real life. What about Builder? Are you good at building things?"

When he didn't hear any reply from Domon, John turned to him. Domon was looking in another direction. John was just about to ask what he was looking at before the old man suddenly dashed off in high speed. John recognized the high-speed move as the Charge skill from Warrior class.

John was puzzled, 'what's the old man doing? Have an exercise?'

The direction that Domon was rushing to was where the guild core was. His arm suddenly shot out. In that instance, another figure came into view.

John was startled when the figure appeared. He was then feeling disconcerted when he found out that he knew this figure that had just appeared out of thin air. The figure was a beautiful woman with flowing red hair and cold eyes. She was Red Death from Death Associates.

Red Death was equally in consternation when this man suddenly came to her and caught her arm just as she was about to hit the Guild Core. She even wondered if she had wrongly calculated the time limit of the invisibility spell she used from a magic scroll.

This invisibility scroll was acquired by her guild from a dungeon boss drop. Scarface had given it to her for her current mission, she was to infiltrate this Guild Headquarters when she saw the chance. She saw such a chance when John opened some of the chokepoints. Once she became invisible, she moved in a distance from the advancing mob, so that no one would accidentally touch her and cause her invisibility to be dispelled.

Traveling a distance from the main group had also saved her life. She was spared from getting blasted by Jack's Lightning carpet bombing. She was still taken aback though by such a terrifying assault. When she watched Jack from the back, she had thought of sneaking up to him and backstabbing him. She had acquired a set of daggers and the Phase Strike skill which guaranteed her a critical hit if she hit someone from behind. Even if she couldn't kill Jack in one hit, it should still take a large chunk of his life. It shouldn't be difficult to finish him then.

But as she was about to head over to carry out the strike, Jack looked back at her. She was startled at the time, she even looked down at herself to make sure that she was still invisible. When she found out that she was, she looked at Jack who was still staring at where she was standing.

'Is it just a coincidence?' She thought. 'Is he just looking at the town gate to make sure that he doesn't miss any enemy?' But that incident had caused her to cancel her intention of sneaking on Jack. She returned to her initial plan of infiltrating the Guild Headquarters.

Back to the current, Domon was holding Red Death's arm with one hand. She immediately twisted her arm as she used her other free hand to stab him. Her arms movements were fluid and fast, but Domon made one twist and stopped her assault with the same one hand. Red Death did not stop, her hands

continue to move rapidly, but Domon's hand also continued to stop her just as she was about to make her strike, nullifying her momentum.

As she increased her pace, Domon's hand appeared to break into eight palms. Red Death thought at first that there was a problem with her eyes, but the eight palms rushed forward and consecutively slapped at her rapidly stabbing hands before the eighth palm slammed her abdomen.

She was sent skidding back a few meters as a damage number appeared above her head.

John was astonished when he saw the damage number. Everyone knew the game system didn't count a hit or kick from players as a valid attack. No damage ever occurred from such an attack. He had learned though from Peniel during their discussion about Elite classes, that there was one elite class that received the ability to have all his or her body parts being considered as valid weapons. This class was the Battle Monk class.

Yet, John knew for a fact that Domon was not a Battle Monk. He was a Weapon Master. Did Peniel forget to share the info that Weapon Master also received the same feat?

Red Death was equally shocked. Although she also wondered about the damage number, there was another thing that had shocked her.

"Eight gates Illusory Palm?" She uttered as she took a better look at Domon. Domon was wearing full armor after Jack's insistence. And his Golden Knight Helmet covered a large part of his face, so Red Death did not see his feature clearly before.

"You recognized the move? You are quite knowledgeable," Domon praised.

Red Death did not comment on the praise, she instead asked, "Master Domon?"

"Hm?" Domon was surprised when his opponent called out his name. "Do I know you, child?"

"It is I, Cleo Lee," Red Death said.

"Cleo...? Oh... That little brat! How you have grown!" Domon uttered.

'Brat?' John had a problem accepting someone calling Red Death a brat, but when he looked at the woman's expression, she didn't seem to mind.

"The last time I saw you, you are only seven. I heard after you move out of the country, you study under another martial art teacher," Domon said.

"Yes, I studied under master Wong," Red Death replied.

"Wong? Hm... That guy is not bad. His character is a bit questionable though," Domon commented.

"Master Domon, I respect you, but I can't let you slander my master."

"Hahaha, you are always a serious kid."

"What are you doing here anyway? Why do you join this guild?" Red Death asked. She had used Inspect on Domon and found that he was officially a member of Everlasting Heavenly Legends. "If you want, you

are very welcome to join our guild. We are more professional and have much better resources and contacts."

"Hey, hey, hey! Lady, are you trying to poach my member in front of me?" John protested.

"Cleo, I have no interest in whatever guild you are talking about. I never care about power play, in the previous world or in this one. I only care about reaching the highest state of martial arts," Domon said.

"Then, why are you helping them defend the Guild Core?" Red Death asked.

"Because my grandson asked me to," Domon answered.

"Jack is here?" Red Death asked, a clear hint of surprise in her tone. John raised his eyebrows hearing her.

"Yes. I see you still remember him. Well, it is natural. You two always spar with each other when you still study under me. You know, it was really a pity when you left."

"You flatter me. I know for a fact you have had many talented students over the years. I'm just amongst the few that worth mentioning."

"Well, you are indeed talented, but that is not the reason I said it was a pity. What I meant was that you and Jack had always motivated each other, even though if the two of you didn't realize it. You always tried to beat him, while he always tried his best not to be beaten by you. If only you did not leave, perhaps his interest in martial arts would not have waned."

When Red Death wanted to say something in response, she heard a burst of long laughter from John.

"Ahaha... ahaha... I can't believe it, ahahaha..." John was laughing uncontrollably.

Chapter 456: Companion Token

"What are you laughing at?" Red Death said with annoyance, this guy was so rude interrupting her conversation with her past master.

"hahaha..." John was still laughing. He tried to control himself with little success.

"I just can't find myself to believe after hearing your story," John said, some chuckles still escaping him as he spoke. "It was like watching a cheap drama with cliché story of two lovebirds who were separated when they were kids, only to meet each other when they were adults but didn't recognize one another. They instead fought each other until they realized their past relationship and then fell in love with each other again and finally lived happily ever after. Oh, how sweet..."

"What the hell are you talking about?" Red Death said, utter annoyance in her tone.

"Oh, so you didn't realize it?" John replied with a sneer. "This Jack that you tried to beat when you are a child. You are still trying to beat him now, without success."

Red Death was confused at first before she caught the meaning of John's words. "Are you saying..."

"Yes, yes. It was a good thing that he ended up sparing your life the last time you two had a duel. Oh, how could he forgive himself if he finds out later that he had killed his own childhood lover? Oh, the

heartbroken one man can feel from such an act, he will not be able to live with—" John didn't finish his words as he hastily summoned a Magic Shield to block a dagger that was thrown his way.

After a loud clang with the magic shield, the dagger materialized back in Red Death's hand.

"Hey! You are really rude! I'm still in the middle of a speech!" John protested.

"If you keep on talking, I will gut you!" Red Death hissed.

"Such a violent woman. Well, you suited Jack just fine that way. Unfortunately, with master Domon here, you won't be able to do anything," John said with a sneer.

"Actually, if you want to beat him a bit or two, it's okay. Jack only told me to interfere once his life is in danger," Domon said to Red Death.

John was speechless. Did that old geezer just take his grandson's joke literally? But then again, he could never tell when Jack was joking or being serious.

Red Death displayed a rather complex expression. The usual cold and indifferent countenance that she used to wear on her face were not noticeable. It seemed that the revelation had rippled her rather considerably. She looked at the Guild Core, then at Domon. Without a word, she turned away and retreated expeditiously.

Domon did not call out to her.

"Sigh... the matter of the hearts of young folks are truly complicated," Domon heard John say from the side. Domon looked at him and thought, what his grandson said was right, this dude was truly annoying.

At the outside, Jack had been contending with the experts that surrounded him. Unlike the previous time, he didn't run from these experts at the first opportunity. Although he still believed that when fighting against a large group, it was best to avoid the strong opponents and pick on the weaker ones first. If he insisted on fighting the strong one, he would waste much time and ended up open for an ambush, just like what had happened when he was comparing sword skills with Warpath just now.

Yet, at this time, he actively stayed and clashed with them. The reason was he himself was keen on knowing how much he had improved. His Formless Flowing Sword style flashed and struck any attack coming his way.

The experts were baffled, especially the ones that had crossed swords directly with him in the past. They knew that although Jack did know martial arts, his expertise was not that which put him at the top. But at this moment, each of Jack's slashes was profound and accurate. His movement seemed to flow from one strike to the next, not losing any momentum. Amplified with his already overpowered attributes, he manage to contend with them even when heavily outnumbered.

Jack himself was ecstatic by this. He never really put much interest in martial arts as it took a too long time to learn. But experiencing its effect now, he couldn't help but admit having good martial expertise did feel good. Relying on his battle skills and combat instinct were all good, but having a good martial art turned even his basic attacks into deadly moves.

Assistant Manager Ironhand had been looking for an opportunity from a distance. He circled around to Jack's blind spot before he released his arrow. His Precise Shot skill caused the arrow to fly at high speed, rushing at Jack's back. As the arrow was about to hit, Jack moved to the side.

'What the... So unlucky! He moved away at such coincidence,' Ironhand said in his mind. He was not discouraged because of it. He nocked another arrow onto his bow. After a brief moment looking for an opportunity for a clear shot, he fired again.

This time, Jack ducked away.

Assistant Manager Ironhand froze, his arm was still at the pose when he released the arrow. 'No, no, not possible. It is just a coincidence,' he said in his mind.

This time, he was not courteous anymore. He activated Rapid Shot, an archer exclusive advanced skill that he had gotten from a quest. At its first level, it fired three arrows consecutively. The arrow magically appeared once his bowstring was pulled, so he did not need to manually nock the arrow, hence allowing the rapid process of shooting. He had leveled up this skill to level 5, which added another arrow, allowing him to fire four arrows consecutively.

The four arrows rushed at Jack from the back. Jack lowered his body, evading two arrows, while his one arm swung back and hit the other two. All was done without looking.

"Not a coincidence..." Assistant Manager Ironhand finally couldn't deny it anymore. 'How the hell did he do it? Does he have an eye on his back?'

Ironhand then remembered Scarface informing the coalition about Jack having some kind of tool to detect the presence of others in his surroundings. Did that tool receive an upgrade? Could it be now it also provided him with a clear 360-degree view of his surrounding? Such a thought unsettled him. This would mean that this guy would be impossible to be ambushed from now on.

Jack continued to battle the experts. Although the experts failed to defeat him, it was also difficult for him to defeat them. The experts covered each other when Jack found an opportunity. Those that were wounded retreated back to safety as another took over. Not to mention there were also Princess Purple and the other Healers healing them when they were wounded. He was also wary of the skills and spells unleashed by Supervisor Killmonger and Selena who had become elite classes, the damage they could inflict on him was different than the others.

Jack had tested his ability enough. Continuing to stay around would just give the coalition the time to reorganize their formation to mount an effective assault on his guildmates. 'Time to pick on the weaklings again,' Jack said in his mind. He used Shooting Dash to move away. Yet, he did not plan to just simply run away. His Shooting Dash's direction brought him towards Princess Purple. He plan to at least take down this healer first, her HP was not large and her healing was rather troublesome.

As he arrived in front of Princess Purple, her bodyguard female knight came forward as expected. Jack used Blitz Slash, his body turned into a shadow as it rushed past the two. When he passed through them, the two felt three instant slashes. Each slash caused almost 400 damage to the female Knight while Princess Purple received around 500 damage each slash.

The female knight was down to almost a third of her HP. Jack turned back, expecting to see Princess Purple's fallen body, but she was still standing, albeit with 1 HP.

'She must also have that Sacrificial Dummy. Shit! Isn't that thing supposed to be rare?' Jack complained in his mind. But his hand didn't stop. He fired his Sword of Light.

The female Knight came forward without hesitation. The Sword of Light crashed into her and she fell lifelessly.

"Such a devoted follower," Jack commented as he lunged forward. "You have no more bodyguard now!"

Princess Purple had been casting Heal on her to bring her HP back up. Seeing her bodyguard had fallen, she took out something that looked like a medallion.

'It's a Companion Token!' Jack heard Peniel's surprised voice.

Before Jack had the chance to ask what was a Companion Token. A large man in full armor suddenly appeared in front of him, carrying a large shield and an equally large broadsword.

Jack used Cross Slash at the man, who blocked it with his shield. 'No use, any player will still die even if they block this move using their shield,' Jack exclaimed in his mind, but when the sword light dispersed, the man with the shield was still standing in front. He swung his broadsword, to which Jack parried. He felt a tremendous force from the blow and was forced back several steps.

Jack stared at the man in armor in consternation as he used Inspect.

Abelard (Elite Human, Mercenary), level 40

HP: 56,520/58,000

"A native?" Jack exclaimed.

Chapter 457: Retreat?

'It was a native summoned by using a Companion Token,' Peniel explained to Jack. 'It was a very rare item at this stage. I am surprised she managed to get one. One needs a long process to gain the trust and respect of a native adventurer before one is presented with his or her Companion Token. Once one did, he or she could summon that native to aid them in time of need.'

'As expected of a top guild, they also have their trump cards,' Jack commented.

The native in front of him was only a level 35 elite grade. But still, such a native possessed a ton of HP compared to players. He would not have the time to hack the native to death before he got surrounded again by the other experts.

The native was advancing at him, but Jack retreated instead.

"Hey, where are you going?" Princess Purple called out..

"Not playing with you anymore. See you!" Jack replied.

"Hey, come back here!" Princess Purple uttered in frustration, stomping her foot. She had always thought that her combination with Knight class was perfect. The knight protected her while she healed the knight, keeping him alive. But now she realized the weakness of such a combination. Both were slow-moving classes. If an opponent wanted to flee, they could do nothing but watch.

The only ones that could chase after Jack were the Rogues, spearheaded by Lustful Elly and Slim Blade, the Archers following behind closely.

Jack threw several Disruptive Bombs at them as he retreated. He no longer bought more Disruptive Bombs when he went to the Magic Associations shop but he still had some leftover stock. After the inflation, the cost-performance ratio of this tool was no longer beneficial. In addition, with players leveled up higher, the damage caused by this Disruptive Bomb was not anything to write about. Its only saving grace was its stopping ability, which was what Jack relied upon to stop these advancing experts.

He then used Charge to put more distance as he dived into the enemy formations and culled the weak.

Scarface, Manager Steelhand, and Queen Magenta looked from afar with grim faces. This was like the repeat of the Battle of Crestfall Plain. They then looked at the wall which they had been trying to breach. Although they had thrown everything without reserve, the defense was still standing. They continued to suffer casualties as the Bandit Archers and ranged players bombarded them from above while the Squires and melee players hold the line below.

If they were allowed the peace to organize a siege, things might have been different. But with Jack creating havoc inside their formation, they felt like they were the ones getting besieged from two sides.

"This can't go on," Manager Steelhand said.

"Wait, I still have something that might tip the scale," Scarface told him.

"What do you have in plan? Are you doing something behind our backs?" Queen Magenta asked.

"I had one of my best infiltrated inside," Scarface said. "She will let me know when..."

Scarface went quiet.

"When what?" Queen Magenta said with impatience.

"The infiltration failed," Scarface said.

"Failed?"

"A strong expert is guarding their Guild Core inside," Scarface explained. "Unless we go in with an army. It's unlikely we can destroy the Guild Core."

The three went silent for some time, contemplating the situation. They were unwilling. The defeat last time at Crestfall Plain had already hurt their reputation and cost them difficulty in recruiting new members. If they failed again this time, their influence in Thereath would truly go down the drain.

Although they had made contact with the other cities and joined back with many of their past members, they also found that this capital provided more facilities and services. So the capital remained the most

lucrative place to develop. If they were forced to retreat to backwater cities to develop, people would look down upon them.

Yet, looking at the situation, a victory was rather unlikely.

"I want to use that item," Manager Steelhand suddenly uttered.

Scarface and Queen Magenta turned to him. Their faces showed confusion at first, but then a realization dawned. The two of them knew what item Manager Steelhand was referring to.

"If you use that, nobody will get this Guild Headquarters," Scarface said.

"Better than leaving it to them," Manager Steelhand replied.

"I agree. I would prefer this place get razed to the ground instead of letting these country bumpkins think that they are better than us," Queen Magenta said.

Scarface thought for a bit before saying, "okay. It is your item after all. If you want to use it, so be it. Let's make the preparation."

The three then started sending messages to the other coalition leaders in their Party system. Who then gave their command in their respective guild chats. The ones that received the message were confused at first. They tried to read the message again to make sure that they did not read wrong.

Not long after, the coalition army started to disengage from the wall and started retreating. The Knights used their shield to provide cover to the others when retreating.

The Man with his human and new orc underlings chased after the retreating force. Jeanny sent messages multiple times without success for him to not chase the fleeing enemies. She had to head over directly and knock the guy on the head before he listened.

Jack, who was in a frenzy of slaughtering the enemy ranks, found that their numbers thinning. It was a while before he realized they were retreating. The top experts he was evading, now placed themselves in between Jack and the retreating army.

"They are retreating?" Jack asked in bafflement.

The others also state their skepticism in the guild chat.

"Doesn't make sense, they still have many members."

"Be careful. They might only feint a retreat while readying themselves for a sudden attack."

"Do we have scouts outside? We should find out what they are up to. Maybe they are sending teams to attack from different sides."

John, who was watching the hologram on the Guild Hall's platform, said in guild chat, "they do not send teams anywhere. They are truly retreating."

The hologram on the platform was one of the perks for the defending guild, it allowed the planner in the hall to see the whole situation from a bird-eye view.

"But I too feel that their retreat is too premature," John added. "Maintain vigilance. I will monitor their movements. Stay in your position and be prepared for instruction at a moment's notice."

"How about I go and disturb their retreat?" Jack offered.

"Stay in your position and be prepared for instruction at a moment's notice!!!" John repeated, adding the exclamation marks.

Apart from monitoring the coalition, John was also watching Red Death. She was no longer using the Invisibility scroll, so he could see her clearly in the hologram image. He couldn't have her stabbed their defense from the back while she made her escape, so he had instructed four Squires and Pointy Tip to engage.

But when she came into their view, she disappeared again.

"Did she use Invisibility scroll again?" John asked Pointy Tip.

"I didn't see her take out any scroll," Tip reported.

"Probably a rare skill then, stay alert. Don't let her backstab you," John said as he controlled the four Squires to surround Pointy Tip, protecting him. But even after a while, nothing happened.

In the end, John surmised she had made her escape as well following her guild. Scarface must have contacted her and let her know that everyone was leaving.

As John continued to monitor the coalition's retreat via the hologram image, he saw one red-marked figure separated itself from the retreating army. The figure came back in the direction towards their Guild Headquarters.

"Be careful. One person is coming over," John warned the others.

"One?" Jack said disappointingly.

"They must be planning something, stay on your guard!" John advised.

"I will go meet the guy," Jack said.

John was about to ask him not to, but then decided against it. If that one person had something up his sleeve, Jack should still be the most likely person to survive against it. It was better than having the entire group at the wall face the same risk. He looked at the hologram. The rest of the coalition army was still retreating.

Jack ran ahead. He could also see the one red dot coming their way. He then saw the person. It was a man in light armor, probably a ranger or rogue.

The man stopped when he saw Jack. He appeared surprised. Jack also stopped. The two stared at each other from a distance. Jack used Inspect and found out he was a member of Corporate United.

"It really is just one person. He stopped after seeing me. What should I do?" Jack asked in the chat.

"He is probably asking for instruction from his leader. He might have planned to get closer to us but your presence has deterred him," John replied. "Go at him. Finish him before he does anything!"

Upon the command, Jack rushed forward. Seeing Jack's approach, the guy panicked. He lifted his hand high. Only then that Jack realized the guy was holding something. Peniel suddenly came out of her hidden dimension and flew forward to where the person was.

Jack saw the person's hand flared with black light. The guy acted as if the item he was holding had turned into a lump of hot coal, he dropped the thing he was holding. The thing on the ground was still exuding black light which increased in intensity, then black fogs started to come out of it. The person then turned around and... ran?

'Huh?' Jack was puzzled. Then he realized Peniel was flying back to him in haste. Her face was panicking.

"Run!" She shouted.

Jack stopped advancing after her warning.

"Run!" Peniel repeated. "It is a disaster item!"

Chapter 458: The Might Of A Disaster Item

'Disaster item? It sounds familiar,' Jack thought. A memory of Peniel explaining about this item soon came back to him.

"Why are you still standing here?!" Peniel exclaimed as she urged him to move.

Jack turned around and ran. He still looked back as he ran and saw the black fog was getting thicker and larger. It started swirling as if a hurricane was forming.

"What is it?" John asked. He saw the person from the coalition and Jack was now running away from each other.

"It's a weapon of mass destruction!" Jack replied.

"A what?"

"It's a nuke! A bloody nuke!"

Jack was sending the message in the guild chat so everyone read it. Everyone started panicking and went into hiding behind the guild wall.

"What are you doing hiding behind the wall? It will only be blasted to oblivion. Let's escape back into the headquarters!"

Many started running towards the building.

"Hey! Why is everyone running into the building? You should stay at the wall and defend as you did. Your best chance is still using this main chokepoint for defense," Peniel said loudly.

Jack had already arrived back to the main group, so Peniel's words were heard by everyone there. Jeanny asked, "isn't that a nuke?"

"What's a nuke?" Peniel asked.

"Uh... It's a thing that goes kaboom and levels everything around it?" Bowler said.

"Who said it's that kind of a thing?"

Everyone turned to Jack, who became uncomfortable with all the stares. He said to Peniel, "Uh, um... Didn't you once say that a disaster item is a weapon of mass destruction? Something that will destroy everything around it?"

"I said it is a disaster item, and yes, it aimed for indiscriminate destruction to everything around it, but I never said it will go kaboom. Look over there!" Peniel pointed at the black fog that had grown exponentially. They could see moving shadows inside. Not long after, countless figures emerged from the fog. All the players recognized those figures because those were the very first opponents they had encountered. Zombies.

"Bloody hell! You should really choose your words better when you communicate," John complained to Jack, then to the rest, "everyone, return to your post on the wall! Assume defensive positions!"

"It's just zombies, nothing to worry about," The Man uttered.

"Did you hear when I mentioned the word disaster?" Peniel said with exasperation.

"Their number is worrying," Jeanny commented as he saw more and more zombies come out of the black fog.

"This is just the start," Peniel said.

As they watched, they noticed that the horde of zombies did not just come to their side. They poured out of the fog and spread out in all directions. Now everyone understood why the coalition members were retreating. These zombies didn't seem to target a particular foe.

From the platform inside Guild Hall, John could see the coalition continued to retreat again after the zombies appeared. They probably thought their current distance was still not enough. The poor guy who was sent to activate the Disaster Item was already drowned by the sea of zombies.

Everyone from Everlasting Heavenly Legends and White Scarfs was now back into position. Jack took on the frontline where the Squires formed a wall. The other melee players stood behind as backup. Everyone had drunk recovery potions to refill their HP, stamina, and mana.

"Hold..." Jeanny gave the command for the Bandit Archers and the range players above. Almost everyone used Inspect on the zombies once they were close enough. Jack did the same.

Zombie (Basic monster, undead), level 30

HP: 12,000

"Hah! Only Basic monster. Nothing to be scared about. Let's waste them, lad!" The Man declared with vigor.

"Oorah...!!" His underlings cried in approval. The orcs' battle cries were especially loud.

"Hey, it is not just zombie..." Bowler pointed out.

They could see now that there were other monsters in the mix amongst the zombies. There were Skeleton Thug and Skeleton Captain. The Skeleton Captain was a level 32 Elite.

"Don't be discouraged! They are not something we can't handle!" Jeanny called out, giving motivation to the others. As the first wave of zombies came into range. She gave the command for the troops above the wall to fire. Spells and arrows bombarded the undead army.

John controlled the Squire to block the advancing tide. He opened small gaps at an interval, allowing a small number of zombies to pass through, only for the players behind to hack them to death.

Jack was as before, he dived into the zombies and reaped as much of the undead's lives as possible. Different from the previous fight with the coalition, this time the players gained exp point from this undead. Jack hurriedly set his exp setting so all the exp received went to Blade Dancer class. He didn't want to level up his Mage class until he upgraded it into Archmage class.

Despite the undead army providing exp points, they gave no loots though.

As he weaved through the undead ranks, Jack suddenly felt a heavy pressure. He turned in time to see a large monstrosity towering over him. It was a bizarre creature that seemed like several zombies and skeletons were pasted together into one. It was lifting its mangle-looking but massive arm high before it was brought down heavily with an open palm. It wanted to slap Jack into a paste.

Jack evaded its attack easily by relying on his mana-sensing ability. He inspected the monster while using Cross Slash.

Skeletal abomination (Special Elite monster, undead), level 35

HP: 89,000

Jack's Cross Slash resulted in 1800 damage. This Skeletal Abomination's defense was much lacking compared to players, but its HP more than made up for its lack of defense.

Not fazed by Jack's attack just now, the Skeletal Abomination sent an attack with his other arm as if nothing had happened. Jack used his footwork to evade without moving away from the abomination. He then sent Flame strike at the abomination's knee, which forced him to kneel.

Jack then used the pause to deliver the burst attack of his Formless Flowing Sword Style. Twenty-four slashes landed on the monster at almost the same time. After his last usage of this burst style, he noticed that the damage increase started after the tenth hit. Each rapid combo after the tenth produced more damage. It was much easier scoring this combo multiplier on a monster compared to a skilled player who could actively block and evade.

His normal slash scored more than 500 damage on the abomination. After his rapid twenty-four combo slashes, the abomination lost around 15,000 HP. He had taken almost a quarter of the monster's life with this single move, but he felt very tired afterward. He just realized that he had not rested since last night. He figured he couldn't abuse this martial art move too much.

He didn't use the burst style anymore as he was afraid this battle would last quite long, but he continued to use the Formless Flowing Sword style as he danced around the Skeletal Abomination. He didn't get

the combo but he did his best to not break his attack chain, fully utilizing the Blade Orbs buff which at maximum granted him 20% increased damage as long as his slash continued to land on target.

It took him some time, but at last, he took down the Skeletal Abomination. His guildmates who saw his feat all cheered and had their morales boosted.

When the Skeletal Abomination fell, it released a cloud of smoke. Jack received damage from the smoke and was afflicted by Poison status. Jack used his Golden Noble Headband's ability to cleanse the poison.

As he heaves a relieved sigh, his vision caught several large figures coming out of the black fog which was still expanding. Some twenty Skeletal Abominations were coming their way.

Jack stared at those monsters speechlessly. His guildmates defending the wall who had their morales lifted just a while ago, felt it plummet down again mercilessly.

Peniel who sensed his uneasiness, said, "I told you it is a disaster item already. Do you think this is a simple monster attack? This is just the beginning, there will be more."

"How much more?"

"A lot more. Their levels are tied to the one using the item, though. The person who activated that disaster item just now must be level 30. That's why the zombies are all level 30. That disaster item is called Undead Horde Curse. It will last for five hours. At the end of its effect, you will face a level 55 rare elite boss."

"Le... Level 55 rare elite...?" Jack found the thought suffocating. He looked around. The number of skeleton thugs and skeleton captains had increased. The last batch of the zombies coming out from the fog was also level 31 and 32, they had increased in level.

'Five hours...' Jack thought in dismay. They most probably won't even last half that long.

"Peniel, what will happen if it were monsters that destroyed our guild core?" Jack asked.

"The headquarters will disappear, as if never existed in the first place," Peniel answered.

Chapter 459: A Way Out

"Shit! Damn those coalition f*ckers...!" Jack cursed in frustration. Are they to lose their hard-earned Guild Headquarters to this swarm of monsters?"

'Wait... A swarm of monsters...?' The words brought back a memory. Perhaps there was still a way out. He turned and dashed with speed back to the wall.

"Move aside! Move aside!" He called out.

His guildmates were taken aback by his sudden return but they still opened a path for him.

"Where are you going?" Jeanny called out to him.

"I have a way that might save us, but you have to hold out until my return!" Jack shouted back without stopping his run.

"What do you mean?" Jeanny asked..

"Hey, bro! We won't hold out without you!" Bowler called out.

"Just hold out until my return! Do not give up! I will be back!" Jack yelled at them without explaining more. He continued to run into the Guild Headquarters.

"Expert, what is your plan?" John sent him a message.

"No time to explain. Just do your best to hold out until I'm back!" Jack replied.

John didn't ask further, but he continued to look at Jack's position in the hologram projection while controlling the soldier units in defending the wall. Jack's figure in the hologram continued to travel inside the headquarters ' building. He entered the teleportation chamber. Before long, his figure disappeared.

"Shit! Is he fleeing?" John couldn't help but ask.

"Don't be absurd, my grandson is not a coward," Domon who stood beside him commented.

John looked at him, then said, "old man, as you can see, we are in a bind. How about you lend us a hand? You are a member of this guild, for crying out loud. Try to defend it, will you? The enemies now are monsters, so it shouldn't go against that outdated philosophy of yours now, should it?"

"Although I don't like the way you talk to me, okay, I will do what I can, for my grandson," Domon said and walked towards the exit.

John looked at him in exasperation, he just couldn't hold it inside him to say, "Old man, can you please walk faster?"

Jack appeared at the zone portal inside Thereath, he quickly ran outside. Once he arrived on the road. He said to Peniel, "You said before I can't ride a steed inside the city unless I'm a noble, right?"

"Yes, but..."

Jack took out his red whistle and blew, Pandora burst out in a rage of flame. The players and natives around jumped back in consternation. Jack jumped onto Pandora and urged her forward. She huffed in displeasure but still follow the command.

"Sorry, mam! I'm in an emergency," Jack still made the time to apologize to the Nightmare.

Pandora shot forward in a blitz. Jack gave him the general direction to the Noble District. Despite her extreme speed, she still managed to weave through the crowd on the street and avoid crushing anyone. The fire she left on her trail though, caused the pedestrians to unable to cross the street. They had to wait a while before the mystical flame died out before they resumed their walks.

When Pandora came near the gate to the noble district, the guards were taken aback by the Nightmare who was rushing towards them. They put themselves at the gate opening and barred the way.

'Shit! I have to waste time to explain,' Jack said in his mind, but suddenly he felt his body becoming light, and the guards became smaller.

"Holy..."

Pandora had made a high jump and he directly jumped through both the gate and the guards, who could only stare at them with wide eyes. She landed on the other side of the gate and continued running.

Jack was in a daze until Peniel shouted at him. "She asked which way!"

"Uh, that way!" Jack pointed and the Nightmare adjusted her direction.

Not long after, they arrived before Commander Quintus' tower. Jack jumped down as the Nightmare was unsummoned. He quickly ran inside the tower and towards the second floor. Commander Quintus was still not there, but the usual officer was.

He wondered if the commander was actually there on his first day because the Royal Advisor asked the commander to process him? Because he saw him behind that desk only on that day. He figured that should be the case, it would be weird if a high-rank commander had to take care of these menial tasks.

The officer looked at Jack in bewilderment, this was the first time he saw someone come to him in such haste.

Jack tried to catch his breath for a bit before exclaiming, "I want to exchange my merit points!"

The officer didn't bother to ask, he simply opened the exchange list for Jack. Jack quickly interacted with the list and opened the guild page.

"Luckily I have enough point," Jack uttered as he clicked on the list.

Imperial Rescue (cooldown: 4 weeks) = request kingdom army's protection for the Guild Headquarters for the next 6 hours

Cost: 1400 merit

Jack had 1490 merit points, just enough for this Imperial Rescue. He used his points without hesitation and activated the service.

Only after he made the request did he think of something and ask the officer, "uh, how long does it take for this imperial rescue to arrive at my Guild Headquarters?"

"Roughly half to one hour," the officer answered.

Jack gave a relieved sigh, "if it was too long, their headquarters might have been razed to the ground before the reinforcement arrived. But one hour was still risky, they had to hold out that long. He hoped it was half an hour. He had to go back immediately and help with the defense until the imperial army arrived.

"The rescue army knew where to go, right?" He asked the officer again.

"Yes, your Guild Headquarters' location is registered in our archive," the officer replied.

After making sure everything was in order, Jack ran down the tower. Once he arrived outside, two soldiers halted him.

"Were you the one riding your steed irresponsibly through the streets?" One of them asked.

"I was about to tell you before," Peniel said. "You can ride your steed as a noble, but you can't run with full speed in a street full of pedestrians. You will get a fine if you do so."

"Oh... How much is the fine?" Jack asked the soldiers.

"Ten gold coins," the soldier answered.

Jack took out some coins and handed them to him. He then used his whistle to summon Pandora again. As he climbed the steed, the soldier called out, "hey! You paid more than necessary, there are twenty gold coins here."

"I know, it is to pay for my next fine as well," Jack replied and rode Pandora at high speed towards the zone portal.

Outside Heavenly Citadel, the battle still raged on. There were already some casualties, both from the trained native units and players. For the players, most of them also wore Amulet of Rebirth. And the good thing about being the defending side was that they would revive back inside their Guild Headquarters' teleportation chamber instead of Thereath city's zone portal. So they could immediately rush outside to fight again.

However, one could only carry one Amulet of Rebirth at one time, so if they wanted to wear it again, they had to teleport to the capital to get a new one. Which took a long time as the process of getting the amulet itself required a lengthy ceremony.

Many had left the guild before the battle with the coalition started. The ones that stayed with the guild at this time were those that were loyal. So they rushed back out again despite knowing that if they died again, they would lose everything.

Everyone fought fiercely outside, as the undead hordes continued to come relentlessly.

As they were fighting, a man in armor carrying a long glaive walked out to the front line. The ones that caught the sight of the bearded face behind the helmet, wondered in their minds, "what's that old geezer doing out here? Is he trying to get killed?"

As they were wondering, this old geezer arrived at the front line. Hordes of level 32 zombies were rushing at him. The old man lifted his glaive. The weapon was suddenly enveloped by a blazing white aura. He took a pose as the incoming hordes reached him.

He uttered softly, "Death Carrying Cyclone." His body then spun around at high speed. The blazing glaive turned into a rotating comet that created a whirlwind that crashed all the zombies around. By the time his spinning stop, all the zombies around had turned to ash.

Chapter 460: Mana Manipulation

"Wh... Who is that old man?" Someone asked.

"His name is Domon Fei, anyone knows him?"

"I don't. I think his name just comes up under the guild member list not long ago. He is a new recruit."

"We still get a new recruit during our conflict with the coalition? I thought everyone was scared off already.."

"Look at him, do you think that's the kind of guy who gets afraid?"

Domon stood in the same place after decimating the zombies. This undead had no fear nor care for their fallen comrades, though. More continued to pour forward. Domon continued to plow them down with his cyclone move.

"Damn! He can take care of those zombies all by himself."

As they said those words, a large figure stormed out of the sea of zombies. It was another Skeletal Abomination, a level 37 special elite. As waves after waves continued, the undead appearing from the black fog also increased in level.

The Skeletal Abomination made a slap at Domon, to which Domon used his glaive to redirect the monster's assault. Its massive hand smashed into the zombies next to it instead, crushing them with one slap.

Domon used the chance when the monster was unbalanced to spin around and use the rear end of his glaive to whack the abomination's head, causing it to lose more balance.

As it stumbled, Domon lowered his stance in a striking pose. The white aura on his weapon blazed even more. This white aura was from the Weapon Master's standard skill, Ki Weapon. This skill infused a melee weapon with mana. At skill level 1, it caused the weapon's damage to increase by 20%, its melee reach by 0.5 meters, while the weapon's durability would not go down during the time Ki Weapon was active. The duration of this skill was 1 minute, and its cooldown was 20 minutes.

On the day that Jack met his grandfather, he had thought him about skills. At that time, he had expected that his grandfather had not allocated any of his battle skills, and he was right. After he thought his grandfather about the allocation process, he also gave him pointers as to which skills to add the skill points to.

His grandfather only added the points to a few selected skills that Jack proposed. Parry, Natural Body Recovery, and Superior Body Recovery. Jack proposed passive skills to be leveled up because he knew his grandfather would not be depending on active battle skills much.

But since his grandfather had such a large reserve of skills that he hadn't allocated, Jack proposed for him to keep 20 free points. So he could immediately level up his Elite skill to the max once he became an elite class.

When Domon became a Weapon Master, he had acquired two skills. One was a standard Weapon Master's skill after becoming one, while the other was for passing the trial on the first try.

The bonus skill for passing the trial on the first try was Ki Strike. This skill unleashed a blast of energy directly forward, dealing 300% physical damage in a small cone with a two-meters range. The skill also ignored 30% of its target defense.

The other skill, which was the standard Weapon Master's skill, was the Ki Weapon that Domon was using at the moment. Although it was also an active skill, it was only activated once and then it acted as

more of a passive skill which boosted his normal attacks. Hence, Domon who preferred to use martial arts instead of battle skills, chose to use his saved up twenty skill points to level up this skill to the max.

Each level of the skill increased its duration. At max level, this Ki Weapon could last 5 minutes. Peniel had explained to Domon that if he used this skill often and upgraded its star, each of its stars would increase both the skill's damage and range by an additional 1%.

However, at the moment when Domon readied his attack pose. The white aura flared intensively, the reach which was originally 0.5 meters, increased to almost double despite it being still without any star upgrade.

If Peniel and Jack were here, they would understand how Domon had achieved such a feat. It was the same principle as to how Domon had managed to cause damage to Red Death without using a weapon.

During their training under the Valley of Tempus, there was more than one occasion where during Domon's fight with the Living Shadows, he struck at the Living Shadows using his punches and kicks. The Living Shadows were damaged from those unarmed strikes. Peniel and Jack were shocked by what they saw at the time.

Once the Living Shadows were routed, the two bombarded Domon with questions about it. Domon was confused as to how to explain at first, since he only fought as he always did. After some discussion, Peniel drew a conclusion. Domon possessed a highly advanced technique that was called mana manipulation, or in Domon's words, chi application. Peniel informed them usually only Special class adventurers displayed such a technique.

The mana manipulation allowed its user to control the mana in its surroundings and used it following his will. That's how Domon's unarmed strike using mana manipulation produced an effect as if it was done by a weapon. Such a technique also allowed its user to manipulate the existing skill, which was what Domon was now doing with his Ki Weapon skill. He accumulated the mana to enhance this skill, empowering them, turning it more deadly.

The accumulation only took a breath, the abomination was still off-balance in front of him. He uttered a few soft words as he readied his attack, "One-word slash."

The other players who were watching him, did not feel that his arm movement was fast. However, despite the feeling that Domon was moving slowly, they could not catch the swing of his glaive. At one moment the sharp end of the glaive was still positioned at Domon's back in his ready stance. In the next, the blade was already on the other side, at the ending of its swing motion.

The energy light from the Ki Weapon skill accompanying the swing, formed a straight line across the Skeletal Abomination's body. Time seemed to stop for a moment, before the Skeletal Abomination's body slowly split apart in two, and turned to ash.

"Holy f*ck...! Did I see an illusion? Anyone saw that as well?" One of the players who watched the scene exclaimed.

"Hot damn... Even Storm needed some time to take one of those down. This old man did it with just one slash."

"Where the hell did that geezer come from?"

Jeanny, who had received a message from John about Domon, went up to greet him. "That was incredible, master Domon. With you here, we might still win through this."

Domon was silent as he looked at his arm which was gripping the shaft of his glaive. It was slightly trembling.

"If you expect me to do the move just now again, I'm sorry I have to disappoint you. I probably can't do it a second time for quite some time," Domon said. "The chi in this world is very dense, so it allowed me to manipulate it much more easily compared to our original world. But at the same time, my body can't bear such a huge burden. I will collapse if I try that move again. I can only fight conventionally for the rest of this battle."

Domon thought back to what he had always taught, without sufficient strength and speed, all techniques were useless. 'Probably if my body becomes stronger, I should be able to control the chi of this world more conveniently.' He never put much importance on leveling up like what his grandson motivated him to. But after experiencing the limit that his body held, he had that small flame building up inside him, urging him to become stronger by leveling up.

Domon grinned. 'Hmph... Perhaps this feeling in gaming is what enthalls my grandson so,' he thought.

Jeanny, who had heard Domon's words, had a grim face. She was looking at the swarm. There were another thirty of those Skeletal Abominations coming out of the black fog. Even the weakest zombies were now level 33. Even with help of the native soldiers trained from the barrack, she doubted they would last much longer. Some of those soldiers had already fallen, including their guild members.

Jeanny couldn't help but look back in direction of the Guild Headquarters. 'How long are you going to make us wait, Storm?'

At the same time as Jeanny was asking the question, she received a message in the guild chat from the man, "I'm back!"

Those that read the message looked back in the direction of Heavenly Citadel. When they expected a man running out brandishing two swords, instead they saw a man rushing out on top of a horse on fire. The horse was so fast that by the time the scene registered in their mind and they were about to give way to the flaming horse in a panic, it had already jumped high into the air, bypassing both the Guild Wall and their defensive formation.