

## World 461

### Chapter 461: The Hour Of Struggle

On top of Pandora which was still in the air, Jack lifted his Storm Breaker high which was in its Overlimit form. He had also activated the two other buffs that boosted his damage, Life Burning Art and Adrenaline Rush, while the previous buffs of Sweet Dumpling and Poison Salve were still active. Jack had used the Reset Potion which he still had one bottle in his bag, resetting the cooldown of Lightning God Barrage.

Twenty large balls crackling with electricity came out all around him. From his high elevation, he shot the ball out in different directions. Performing another carpet bombing. Each of the balls exploded in a large explosion that dealt over 5000 damage.

The zombies that were already wounded by the defending force's range attacks were mostly obliterated by this lightning explosion. Those that still had full health, lost almost half their lives. Jack didn't place his carpet bombing as spread out as when he did against the players. Some still had intersecting areas, so some zombies received explosions from two lightning balls. The ones that did were either burnt to ash or had their HP at critical. Many of the ones that did not die were inflicted by Paralyze, halting their advance..

If Jack had concentrated the lightning balls onto one opponent, it would have suffered more than 100,000 damages! He could also kill the Skeletal Abomination with one hit in this manner. Several even, if the monsters were dumb enough to stick together.

But his current objective was to thin the herd, allowing his guildmates some breathing room. Their defensive formation was about to be swarmed over already just now.

Pandora landed at the front line, next to Domon and Jeanny. Jack was still sitting on top of the Nightmare.

"F\*cking hell, boss! You are damn cool!" The Man shouted out.

"What kind of steed is that? Is that a monster or a horse?" Someone else said.

Pandora turned to the person who had just uttered the sentence, the person soon had a recollection of his worst nightmare played out in his mind. He wailed as he dropped to his knees.

"Mam, please don't do that. We need every single able body!" Jack uttered, to which Pandora replied with an indifference huff.

Jack initially thought to use Pandora's fear aura to hinder the undead's approach, but he saw that the undead who survived his Lightning God Barrage still came towards him without slowing down. He guessed it's because the undead lack the feeling that gave them fear.

He hurriedly climbed down from the Nightmare and unsummoned her before she incapacitated another person who said wrong things about her.

His Stormbreaker was still in its Overlimit state. His left hand held his magic staff. He cast Barrier on himself. He then addressed the others, "everyone! Try to hold for one hour at most. Help is coming!"

'Help? From who?' Everyone had the thought. But most of them who had traveled with Jack trusted him. Even if he was reckless sometimes, he still got things done. They uttered a motivating battle cry, which then inspired the others as well. Everyone's battle spirit had been reignited again.

"Just one hour, we can do this!" Bowler exclaimed.

"Oorah!" The Man and his subordinates cried.

Jack used his magic staff to cast all available spells in his arsenal, before he replaced it with his Whirlwind Falchion.

He had cast the Myriad Ensnaring Chains at the spot where there were three Skeletal Abominations close by, immobilizing all three. He then went and picked off the others while the three bound abominations were bombarded by arrows from Bandit Archers and Fierce Flame. After she became an elite class, the range of her arrow almost rivaled the Bandit Archer's range.

Jack's Lightning God Barrage had cleared out a large area that the Squire soldiers and melee players could re-organize their formation again. They had lost half of the Squire, there were less than fifty Squire units. While the Bandit Archers were still intact since they attacked from range. Some of the Knights with the highest defense like Giant Steve had to come forward to cover the gaps left by the fallen Squires.

Jack continued to dance around with his two swords, utilizing the Formless Flowing Sword style to cut down as much as the undead before they reached the defensive formation at the wall. His Overlimit was still active so his damage was massive. Domon did the same on the other side.

As everyone continued to persevere, another large figure emerged from the black fog. It stood more than two-meter tall with full armors all over its body. The armor had a dark blue hue with many hints of rust and decay on its metallic surface. The face inside the helmet was a skeletal one. Two red orbs filled the two black holes that were its eyes. This armored skeleton carried with him a very large broad sword.

Jack used inspect on it.

Skeleton Knight (Special Elite monster, undead), level 40

HP: 175,000

"Uh, already a level 40?" Jack mumbled. Peniel said that a level 55 rare elite will emerge by the end of the five hours. It was not yet two hours since the disaster item was activated, but the level of the emerged monsters was already almost halfway. He hoped the imperial troops did not take their sweet time coming here. Otherwise, he would have lost both the Guild Headquarters and the Merit points.

Jack left the small fries to his guildmates as he put himself before the Skeleton Knight's path. His Overlimit was already off when the Skeleton Knight emerge, as with his other buffs except for Life Burning Art. He could keep this skill until its full duration now due to his Superior Body Recovery. The Skeleton Knight stopped when he noticed someone was before him. Its skeletal face was rigid, but Jack could have sworn that he saw an evil grin there.

The Skeleton Knight's right arm which was holding the broadsword moved with surprising speed. Its shoulder rotated inhumanly as it brought its large broadsword swinging down. Jack had almost missed

dodging the downward slash as he stepped sideways. Its attack speed was not reflecting its bulky frame and weapon.

While Jack was about to counterattack, its right arm swung forward, revealing another sword. Jack barely made it in time to put his two swords across his front to parry the blow. He was thrown back from the impact. Parrying with two swords had effectively negated the damage, unlike the last time when he was still using one. He did a backflip to neutralize the pushing force.

When he landed on his two feet, Jack was startled by the Skeleton Knight who had rushed forward after him. Its two arms were rotating unnaturally. Its arm hinges were like machines that could rotate three hundred and sixty degrees.

Jack evaded the ones he could while parrying the ones he couldn't. The attack angles were all weird that Jack had trouble adjusting to the attacks. He got annoyed because he kept being forced to retreat. He used Cross Slash to break through its defense. The undead's two massive swords were being smacked aside due to the skill. But just as Jack was about to land a hit, its two arms rotated again swiftly and smashed his sword down. The situation had reversed, he was the one being open now.

The Skeleton Knight's arms rotated again and were about to slash at Jack's head when a glaive covered by white aura struck the two swords and deflected their trajectories. Jack quickly jumped back after the save.

"You get too hung up by its strange movements," Domon said as he continued to deflect each of the Skeleton Knight's slashes. He didn't parry the slash, but he hit it at the right moment to make it swerve. "Calm your mind and sense the chi accompanying each strike. You should be able to sense its weak spots and weak moments that way."

Jack admitted his mind was in turmoil just now. He steadied himself and took the starting stance of the Formless Flowing Sword style. He then advanced and joined Domon. The two took turns attacking and defending, their coordination was as if choreographed. If anyone really paid attention, it was actually Domon who was adjusting to his grandson's move. He covered for Jack when there were flaws in his move, and he attacked aggressively when Jack was taking a breather. Since he was the one that thought Jack the sword style, it was easy for him to coordinate.

As Jack got more accustomed to the Formless Flowing Sword style, he started to incorporate in-game battle skills with the style. When he saw a clean opportunity where his slash would hit, he added the slash with Flame Strike or Swing. When his opponents managed to evade, he added Sword of Light or Shredding Fangs to cover the distance.

As Jack and Domon continued to wear down the Skeleton Knight, its HP continued to drop. When it was down to its last thread of life, Jack used Blitz Slash to finish it.

The Skeleton Knight fell down into loose armor parts before those too turned to dust. As Jack was catching his breath, another five Skeleton Knights emerged from the black fog.

"Motherf\*cker..." Jack cursed.

## **Chapter 462: Imperial Rescue**

Jack and Domon separated as they dealt with a Skeleton Knight each. The other three headed to the defensive wall. Nothing Jack could do now. He just hope everyone could hold out as long as possible.

Things continued to get heated up. John had to really concentrate on controlling the Squires with a complex maneuver to have them cope with the Skeleton Knights. Not to mention lots of other undead swarming them as well. He could just leave them to automated combat on their own, but by controlling them directly via the platform, he could maximize their coordination.

Bowler's spell of Brilliant Radiance was especially useful here as it had a greater effect on undead-type creatures in addition to damaging them. This time, he remembered to warn everyone before he tossed the spell, so the others were not blinded.

Jeanny, Flame, Trinity Dawn, Giant Steven, and most of the other core members still managed to survive without dying all this time, especially the ones that had gone with Jack in the expedition. Probably because their levels were higher and also had better equipment due to the expedition profits.. But they were also very struggling to maintain the defensive wall.

With difficulty, Jack's guildmates managed to hold the Skeleton Knights as long as possible, they even took down two in the process. But another ten Skeleton Knights appeared. As everyone felt that all hope was lost, another larger figure came out of the fog. It was a level 45 Dread Knight, a rare elite. At that moment, they know that all hope was truly lost.

In their moment of despair, a loud horn was heard from a distance. The sound cut off all the noise of battle as if a ray of sunlight pierced through a shroud of darkness. They soon heard rumblings that were getting closer and closer.

John had a better view from his platform. At this time, he saw large numbers of green marked figures, which meant allies, were moving very fast towards them.

"I will be damned," John murmured softly.

Both the coalition and the defensive players heard the rumbling and saw the dust cloud. This dust cloud, however, was not a trick like last time. As they could see a large number of armored troops riding on steed at the head of this dust cloud.

"They arrived," Jack said with a sigh of relief. He didn't think it was possible for them to hold off much longer.

The Themisphere army that arrived had a number rivaling the undead horde. They separated into several squads to engage as much of the undead. Their steeds were unsummoned once they were close to the horde. They crushed into the undead without hesitation.

Most of the soldiers were level 40 basic human. Some of the elite squad were level 45 to 50 basic human. With all squad leaders being Elite Human at level 45 to 50. A company came upon the Everlasting Heavenly Legends' defensive wall where Jack and the others were holding. They took over in routing the undead as the players disengaged and took a breather.

Jack stepped back as well, using his Formless Flowing Sword style caused him much fatigue compared to his normal fighting using battle skills. He heard a voice addressing him, "It's you again!"

He turned to the source of the voice and saw a familiar face. It was Diego, the Knight Captain who had helped them conquer the Bandit Outpost in the past.

"Sir Diego! It seemed that our fate is tied. You are always there in our time of need. We are very much in your debt," Jack called out with a most friendly tone.

Diego spat, "fate my ass! It's always trouble with you every time we meet." He didn't stay and chat. He rushed towards the Dread Knight. The Dread Knight was a higher grade than him, but another Special Elite knight captain joined him in contending with the undead knight.

Jack looked around. No Matias. He preferred that friendly Knight-Captain compared to this grumpy one.

Everyone stayed back near the wall and drank restorative potions. The Healers also helped with their spells. They were now leaning on the wall relaxingly as they watched the fight between the Themisphere army and the undead horde. It was as if the fight had nothing to do with them anymore.

The players looked at each other.

"You rested enough?" One asked.

"Yeah. You?" The other answered.

"My HP is full again."

"..."

"Wanna go over there?"

"Hell, yeah!"

The hot-headed ones ran forward and rejoined the fight. Some others were sparked by their excitement and followed. The others who still had some lingering trauma of hopelessness not long ago chose to stay back and just watch.

John ignored those reckless groups. He controlled the Squire soldiers to stay back. They had lost so much. Only eighteen Squires were left, while the Bandit Archers left forty-two. Some Bandit Archers lost their lives after bow-wielding skeletons started appearing amongst the horde, allowing range attacks as well. John wanted to keep these remaining numbers intact. They still needed these few to defend the headquarters later while they trained more to replenish the ranks.

Jeanny in the meantime, kept on sending orders so that those joining the fight to stay safely at the backline, to prioritize safety.

Jack was, of course, among the hot-headed one rejoining the battle. In fact, he had been the one that yelled, "Hell, yeah!" even when the question was not directed at him. The Man had followed behind him when he rushed forward. The Men of Solidarity trailing right behind their two bosses.

Domon, who at first did not see any meaning in battle other than for self-defense, also joined in. Perhaps he was urged by that desire to make his body stronger to allow him more freedom in using his martial art techniques, or perhaps he had simply felt the thrill of battle. This kind of battle where he did not need to worry about murdering a fellow human was not something that he could get in real life.

Heck, these monsters were not even living, they were undead. He was free to exercise all his martial arts here.

As time passed, more and more joined in to assist the Themisphere army in routing the undead. Even the range players came down from the safety of the wall and advance forward to join the fight. The overwhelmingly desperate battle an hour ago had turned into exciting combat where they grind for exp points.

Not far away from there, the coalition was watching the event without a sound.

"How... How did they get the army to help them...?" Someone finally break the silence.

Although some amongst the coalition had managed to join the Themisphere kingdom faction, none of them had yet to become Viscount, so none of them knew about the benefit of merit points for a guild.

"They are not out of the woods yet," Manager Steelhand said. "A disaster item is not that simple."

"It seemed that you have made quite a research on that item," Scarface commented.

"When we acquired that item. We immediately send all our library team to search for information about it. It is a unique item, after all, and its description was rather cryptic, so we tried to understand the item first before any attempt in using it. From our research, we know that the power of the item was closely related to the user. The disaster created will have its starting power around the user level. But the ending power, on the other hand, is way more powerful. From an estimation of what we have learned. At the end of the disaster item's effect, we should have a rare elite boss around level 50 or more, with numerous adjutants that were not much weaker. Even the army would have difficulty going against such a force."

"Hopefully they ended up destroying each other while leaving the headquarters intact," Queen Magenta said with a grin. The others looked at her. "Then we can scoop up the headquarters and still complete our objective."

"Hm... That's not out of the realm of possibility. If that truly happens, then we must really thank that Themisphere army for interfering."

Outside the Everlasting Heavenly Legends' defensive wall, the battle was still raging. The Themisphere army looked to be on the winning side, but more and more undead continued to pour out of the black fog. As the fifth hour neared its end, the black fog turned thinner.

As it dispersed, everyone saw ten large figures surrounding a smaller humanoid figure. The remaining fog appeared as if they swirled and entered into the humanoid figure standing at the center. The fog then stayed around the figure and shrouded it as if it was a coat.

Jack, who had joined the Themisphere army and infiltrated the undead horde until close enough to the black fog, was in range to use his Inspect skill.

Crypt Ogre (Rare Elite monster, undead), level 50

HP: 550,000

High Lich (Rare Elite monster, undead), level 55

HP: 560,000

### **Chapter 463: Garland Thunderhand**

Jack looked at the eleven monsters in dismay. Was this imperial rescue still not enough? There were still many Dread Knights around the horde, which were occupying most of the high-level officers of the army. Who would deal with these eleven Rare Elites?

The High Lich's HP was not that much higher than the Crypt Ogre despite five levels higher, but Jack figured that was due to it being a magical class. The understanding that it was a magical class worried Jack. Magical classes were the ones most likely to possess AOE spells, which meant against low-level players, numbers were not a factor.

The Crypt Ogre looked much like the one-horned ogre Jack had fought before, except this one was without a horn and its skin had all kinds of disgusting blisters and decays. The ogre here was also three times the size of the Horned Ogre from before, which meant it was freaking huge, although not as gargantuan as the Grim Sand Drake.

Jack hurriedly pulled out from the fight and ran back towards Heavenly Citadel's defensive wall again. At the same time, he sent a message telling everyone to retreat. Assisting the army against those eleven would simply be suicide.

The others quickly retreated.. If anyone else asked them to retreat, probably not all of them would listen. But if even one such as Jack was scared enough to retreat, then they should be terrified.

Jack's premonition was proven. As he ran away. The High Lich cast a spell with a six-runes spell formation. Pillars of black fog started falling from the sky. When the pillars touched the ground, the fog spread out. All the soldiers touched by this fog had their HP dropped rapidly. Their armors were rapidly decaying. Some with lighter armor even had the armor completely dissolved into nothing. The undead, though, was completely fine amongst the fog. It appeared that this fog only affected the livings.

That one spell had killed many of the Themisphere soldiers. While the ones with higher levels and HP hurriedly scurried to escape the fog. Those that escaped the fog no longer had their HP decreased.

The High Lich flew up. It was carrying a skull-head staff. It lifted its staff and another six-runes spell formation started to form again.

'Shit! The army won't last long if this continues,' Jack said in his mind. He had run out of ideas. What more could he do to save the headquarters?

As the sixth rune was about to form, a thick pillar of lightning shot down from the sky. The High Lich canceled its spell and use its staff to block the lightning. A transparent bubble stopped the lightning from touching the Lich's body.

"Hahaha! I thought there is no worthy opponent, guess me coming here is not a waste. I can stretch my muscle a bit," a thunderous voice was heard.

A bearded large man who was slightly obese was seen walking in the air. Every step of his feet crackled with electricity as if his every step was supported by electric platforms. His steps were slow, but in just a few breaths, he already covered a large distance and arrived in front of the High Lich.

Jack didn't know what was the level of this heavy-looking man, he was too far away from him to use Inspect. Jack was not crazy enough to approach just to satisfy his curiosity. However, from the man's demeanor, he should not be any less powerful than the High Lich.

While the High Lich and the obese man were having a staring contest, the ten Crypt Ogres started to move. Their heavy bodies created slight tremors with each step. With ten of them marching, they created a small earthquake. Jack looked grimly and knew that these ten alone would create much havoc to the army.

However, before the ten Crypt Ogres could travel far, the obese man spread his two arms. "Stay," he whispered, and yet, Jack and the others could hear his whisper clearly.

Columns of lightning came down from the sky, creating a fence all around him. Both he, the High Lich, and the ten Crypt Ogres were confined within this lightning fence. One of the Crypt Ogre tried slamming the fence, but the impact created a repulsion force that threw its heavy mass tens of meters back.

The fat man on the air threw a yellow orb down. When the orb touched the ground, it exploded with blinding light. When the light subsided, everyone saw a giant humanoid shape with a body as if made of yellow lightning. Its size was a little bigger than the ten Crypt Ogres around it, its skin was slightly transparent as it continued to crackle with electricity.

'It's a Lightning Golem,' Peniel told Jack from her hidden dimension. 'A very high-level one at that. The guy on the air is very powerful.'

The ten Crypt Ogres inside the lightning cage were not intimidated by the Lightning Golem. Undead had no concept of fear. Also, the Crypt Ogres themselves were rather intimidating, there were ten of them some more, so who was at a disadvantage was not yet established.

The closest Crypt Ogre lunged at the golem. It crashed its heavy body and brought the golem skidding several distances back. But at the same time, Jack could see electricity continued to bombard the Crypt Ogre. Jack had taken the risk to return to get a better look, but not too close so he was still outside the spell range of the High Lich.

From the exchange, Jack surmised the Lightning Golem dealt lightning damage to anything that came into melee contact with it. The Crypt Ogre was still clutching the golem, it couldn't feel any pain, but Jack could see it spasming as it maintain its pose. It had been paralyzed.

The Lightning Golem lifted both its arms high. Its two fists got together as they were brought down like a sledgehammer. This make-shift sledgehammer slammed onto the back of the Crypt Ogre that was still clutching at its waist. An electric shockwave radiated out upon the impact, the Crypt Ogre was smashed deep into the earth. Jack saw the ground caved in where the ogre sunk into.

The other Crypt Ogres were halted a step by the electric shockwave created by the impact just now, but they continued their advance again as if nothing had happened. The fight soon turned into a punching brawl between the ten, the one on the ground was not getting up.

'Did it get KO'ed by just one punch?' Jack thought. He saw red numbers appearing upon the impact but he couldn't see the number clearly as he was not close enough.

Jack heard some explosion sounds, he then redirect his gaze up to the two floating figures. Numerous colorful explosions were filling the sky. Black, yellow, and blue. The black was mainly the High Lich's spells, while the yellow and blue were the obese man's. The obese man's spells were all lightning types. Jack noticed the blue lightning was seemingly more powerful than the yellow version.

Before long, Jack could see that the obese man was at an advantage. The High Lich kept getting pushed back until he was at the edge of the lightning fence. It was forced until its back touched the fence, a strong repulsion force struck it. It was not thrown away as the Crypt Ogre did. Yet, it was still heavily paralyzed by it.

Seeing the chance, the obese man didn't relent. He made a grip with its hand as numerous runes appeared. An extremely thick blue-colored lightning shot down from the sky, smashing at where the High Lich was at. The High Lich was completely engulfed by the blue lightning as the lightning continued to snake down to the ground. When it hit the ground, a large explosion occurred.

Jack thought for sure that everyone around the place died when the blinding explosion occurred, including him. But when he could see again, he saw that everyone outside the lightning fence was unharmed. The fence not only prevented physical things from going out, but also the energy from the explosion.

The ground inside the lightning fence was all messed up. Only two things Jack saw were still standing on the ground inside, the lightning golem and the High Lich. The ten Crypt Ogre were all lying down amongst the ruined ground.

The High Lich had been forcefully blasted down from up there to the ground, and Jack saw that its condition was not good. Although an undead was already visually battered from the start, its look at the moment was even more wrecked. It was missing one of its arms.

The Lightning Golem leaped at the High Lich, its two hands were forming that make-shift sledgehammer again, intended to smash the High Lich into a pulp. The High Lich's one remaining hand was still holding its skull-head staff. It trusted it forward at the leaping golem. Five runes were created instantly and a stream of black energy shot out and stabbed into the golem.

The lightning golem was held in the air by the black energy as it eroded the golem from the point of impact. The golem's body which was yellow in color slowly turned dark as the electricity around it died down. It soon turned completely black and stopped moving. The golem then shattered into black dust.

"Hahaha, you still have fighting strength. Not bad," the booming voice of the obese man thundered out. He was now floating down approaching the High Lich.

Since Jack saw that the lightning fence protected any stray energy from going out, he dared to approach further. With the obese man no longer high up in the sky, he was also in range for Jack's Inspection. Jack used the skill on the man.

Garland Thunderhand (Rare Elite Human, Lord Commander), level 70

HP: 800,000

#### **Chapter 464: Successful Defense**

'No wonder he treats the High Lich as if plaything, he is a Rare Elite with a much higher level,' Jack thought. This Garland was even more powerful than Duke Alfredo, his rank of Lord Commander also sounded like a higher rank than Commander Quintus.

While Jack was amazed by the man's data, intense electricity crackled from Garland's two eyes. "I grow bored. This ends here!" His body was soon covered by innumerable lightning snakes. The lightning snakes continued to intensify until Jack could not see Garland anymore. All he saw was intense lightning crackling around in the air.

The High Lich tried to cast a spell with its staff, but the staff was gripped by several lightning snakes. The spell formation that was just being formed was shattered. The speed of the lightning snakes was too fast. More lightning snakes nabbed at the High Lich's different body parts, constraining it.

In its restrained condition, it could do nothing as more and more lightning snakes stabbed into its body.. What had happened to the Lightning Golem was now been reversed. The High Lich was being bombarded with electricity from the inside, Jack could see its innard glowing up brightly.

The bright light continued to build up in intensity until the lich's whole body was shining. When it seemed that the energy buildup had reached its tip, the lich's body exploded spectacularly.

Garland Thunderhand looked at the scenery around him, every opponent inside the lightning fence had been defeated. There was still much undead on the outside. He lifted his hand high, a spell formation of seven runes was formed.

The lightning fence which was unaffected by the large explosion or the Crypt Ogre's brute strength was now distorted as if undergoing an extreme pulling force. The fence was unable to withstand the pulling force and got sucked into the energy core in the middle of the spell formation. Some strands of lightning snakes also came down from the sky above and merged into this energy core. Jack also felt a portion of the lightning energy inside him getting pulled.

When all the lightning elements had been sucked. Garland gripped at the energy core and threw it down. The energy core exploded and turned into innumerable lightning snakes that radiated outward.

Jack was so stunned by the display of power. He thought that he would die for sure as the countless lightning snakes passed by him. Yet, none of the lightning touched him. He looked around and saw the countless lightning crashed into the undead and continued without stopping. Each undead touch by the lightning was disintegrated into ashes. None of this lightning touched any soldier from the Themisphere army nor the players, only the undead.

'Peniel, is this spell an AOE or targeting spell?' Jack asked in his mind.

'It's an AOE spell, Perpetual Lightning Judgement,' Peniel answered.

When Peniel explained about the Mana Manipulation after seeing Domon's feat of delivering damage while unarmed. Peniel mentioned that this mana manipulation could be used to not only enhance a skill or spell's strength but also its aim. In the hand of a skillful mana manipulation expert, an AOE spell could be controlled to only harm foes while sparing allies. Jack saw now the application of this ability. But to be able to achieve the current result he was witnessing, he must say that Garland Thunderhand's precision on the spell was Godly.

He had asked Domon to teach him this mana manipulation, but the degree of complexity of this ability was much higher than mana sensing. He could only try to learn it slowly.

That spell just now had taken out almost one-third of the remaining undead. Since the black fog that birthed the undead horde was no more, their number continued to dwindle as the Themisphere army now outnumbered them.

Garland Thunderhand looked around for a while, before he lazily said, "I leave the rest to you people, don't lose the face of Themisphere's army to these weaklings." He turned around and was about to leave when he heard a voice calling out to him. He looked back and saw a man was talking to him on the ground.

Jack had come over to greet Garland after his Perpetual Lightning Judgement spell was over. He said, "Thank you, Sir Garland, for your help. Our guild, Everlasting Heavenly Legends, is in your debt."

Garland looked down at him, his eyes carried disdain. He replied, "Outworlder. Know this, I care not of your kind. If it is up to me, I will have driven you out of this kingdom myself. But a duty is a duty. I have done my share here. Do not attempt to talk to me again."

He then flew away, leaving trails of lightning in his wake.

'Such arrogance,' Jack thought.

"Try not to approach him next time," Jack heard a voice from behind. Jack turned and saw Diego. "He is amongst those that disagree with the king's decree to welcome Outworlders into this world."

"I see," Jack responded, then said to the Knight Captain with a grin, "Well, at least I know sir Diego was amongst those that welcome us."

"Don't just go and make an assumption. I am simply following the king's order. I care not for your kind either! There is still some undead around, I will go and rout them. Don't get killed! Otherwise, it's a taint to our duty."

Diego then sped away rejoining the fight. Jack didn't think this Knight-Captain dislike outworlders as he tried to make it look like. He won't have come to talk to him otherwise.

But Garland, on the other hand, the scorn in his eyes was genuine. Jack contemplated about this. This meant that this insanely powerful Lord Commander was under Crown Prince Therribus' camp. This did not bode well.

With the undead losing their most powerful leaders and without continuous supply. The rest of the undead were soon wiped out.

Once the last of the undead was killed, the battle ended since there was no longer any enemy. The coalition army was too far away to be considered within the battlefield. Everyone from the Everlasting Heavenly Legends heard a notification voice.

"Congratulations to have successfully defended your Guild Headquarters. Every participating member received 500 guild contribution points. Guild receives 20,000 reputation points and 50 gold coins, 200 food, 50 minerals, and 50 lumbers."

Jeanny heaved a relieved sigh. Although the resources weren't as many as when they conquered the Bandit Outpost, they would still be a great help in retraining those lost units.

Everyone cheered from the notification. But as they were cheering, another notification followed, "Guild has successfully defended against an activated Disaster Item within its territory, receiving 30,000 reputation points and High Lich Summoning Crystal."

Jeanny, who was the main leader of the guild, received a notice that the summoning crystal had been placed inside her inventory. Jeanny immediately checked the item.

High Lich Summoning Crystal (Unique consumable, for guild purpose only)

To be used on the Guild Power Crystal. Summon a level 55 rare elite High Lich to defend the Guild Headquarters.

Duration: 3 hours

'Yes!' Jeanny exclaimed. With this item. They should be able to easily defend the Heavenly Citadel one time.

Although they lost quite a lot, the reputation acquired from this battle was also very generous. A lot of guild quests would have been needed to gain this amount of reputation points. Some good still came out of this invasion. Of course, that was in the condition that they won.

The cheering continued for a while. The Imperial Rescue lasted six hours, so the army continued to station outside the Guild Headquarter, guarding it. Jack and the others returned into the Heavenly Citadel to review their losses. Their biggest loss was of the Squires, they had lost more than eighty of them. Since these units assumed the main tanking role during the battle. It would take some time and resources to retrain them.

Most of the players also lost their Amulet of Rebirth. Some were already teleporting back to the city and on their way to re-buy the amulet. Jeanny arranged so the cost of the amulet they bought this time was replaced with an equivalent amount of contribution points and was released from compulsory guild contribution for a week.

Some had died twice and ended up falling back to level 1 and losing all their equipment. Jeanny gave them the promise to power-level them back to mainstream level and provide them with equipment. They were also given extra contribution points and were relieved from compulsory guild contribution for the next few weeks.

All those that were still with them after this battle was being upgraded to Veteran rank. Members who were at Trainee rank were automatically upgraded to Associate rank after two weeks passed. While for Veteran rank, a decision from either a Leader or a Councillor was needed.

Before the battle, the membership of the guild had reached 900 members, almost filling up the guild's capacity. After this battle, outside of the 56 core members, only 439 members still stayed with them. John had recorded the ones that left the guild and put them on a blacklist. Those players were no longer welcomed in the guild.

## **Chapter 465: Preparation For The Next Battle**

Outside, the coalition forces were having sour faces.

"I didn't expect there was such a high-level officer with the army that came. How the hell did they get such assistance anyway?" Manager Steelhand asked.

"You have asked that several times already, nobody here knows," Scarface replied with irritation.

"I know, I just can't get that into my head. Damn it!"

"It's a real pity the army was still largely intact in strength, we can't resume our attack if they continued to linger there," Queen Magenta said. "How long do you think they will remain there?"

"I don't know!" Scarface said with a clear annoyance in his voice.

"Anyway, we should remain here. I don't believe the army will continue to stay here.. Once they did, we should resume our attack. We lost quite a number, but they lost even more. They won't be able to retrain those native units within a day or two. We should have a higher chance of winning if we attack again."

"I agree with Magenta," Manager Steelhand said.

"We still have that Storm Wind to deal with," Scarface reminded them.

"He is only one person. He will cause us trouble, but without those native units, they won't be able to block our charge. All we have to do is just to storm into the Guild Hall and destroy their Guild Core."

"That's true."

"That guild of them no longer just have one expert, there is another one," Scarface said. He then turned to Red Death who was standing by the side. "How strong is that other expert compared to Storm Wind?"

When Red Death did not reply, Scarface called again with a louder voice, "Red! How strong is that other expert?"

Red death turned to Scarface. She seemed lost for a bit, before she answered, "I don't know about his gaming skill, but in terms of martial arts, he is much more skillful than me."

Scarface frowned. He had never seen her in a daze like this before. Was the expert truly that strong? Or were there some other reasons?

"How long is the army stand guard outside?" John asked Jack. The two were with Jeanny, Domon, Silverwing, and Bluedaze inside the Guild Hall. Before this, they wouldn't have allowed Silverwing and Bluedaze into the hall. But after today, they had proven to be loyal allies, so the two were invited to discuss the current situation.

Jeanny and John had finished tallying the loss. The others were repairing their equipment in the blacksmith workshop inside Heavenly Citadel, restocking the potions at the alchemist workshop, or re-buying the Amulet of Rebirth in the capital. Out of the 495 members, not all were battle types. Some just focused on their auxiliary skills, so they stayed behind in the workshops and took care of the repairing and potion-making.

"Less than three hours, give or take," Jack replied.

"We should prepare for another attack. Can you request the army to extend their stay?" John asked.

"Can't. The feature had a four weeks cooldown and I also don't have enough Merit points to make another request," Jack answered.

"Do you think they will attack again?" Jeanny asked.

"I'm certain they will," John replied.

"Then I guess we will have to use this item," Jeanny took out the High Lich Summoning Crystal for everyone to see.

"With a High Lich guarding this place, I don't think they will dare to approach," Silverwing chuckled.

"But this will only buy us three hours. They can just retreat again and wait for the duration to expire before attacking," John said. "I don't think they will believe that we can summon such a high-level monster repeatedly."

"What about the traps that you mentioned last time? I saw that we already built a Blacksmith Workshop," Jack asked.

"To produce the traps, we need to upgrade the Blacksmith Workshop to level 2 first, and then we still need time to do research, which will take a few days. Apart from that, the production of traps also required high-level blacksmiths. Currently, our members with sufficient blacksmith levels are only a handful. Traps were not a solution for our current situation."

As everyone was lamenting the situation, they heard Peniel's voice, "they won't be able to attack again for some time." She had come out of her hidden dimension after the battle was over and was just sitting on Jack's shoulder.

"Oh? Why is that?" Jeanny asked.

"Check your guild page. You should see the headquarter is under protection status," Peniel said.

"Really?" The three of them hurriedly open their Guild status window, while Domon, Silverwing, and Bluedaze watched in silence.

Silverwing turned to Domon and asked, "you are not opening your guild page?" Unlike the three, Domon did not act like he was checking things. Domon replied, "I have no idea what a guild page is."

"It really is!" Jeanny exclaimed. "It said here the protection status will last for another six days twenty-three hours and six minutes."

"Yes, after a successful defense, a Guild Headquarters enters a one-week protection status," Peniel informed. "Otherwise, no one will be able to survive getting attacked non-stop. The number of Guild Headquarters available is very limited, hence every guild will be targeting it. This is a system implemented to allow the defending guild a reasonable time to recuperate."

"Hooray for the system!" Jack exclaimed. "But then shouldn't we be able to exploit it? Silverwing, a week from now, send your members to do a mock attack! This way, we can continue getting protection status, hehe."

"Mock-attack your head!" Peniel scolded. "You think the system is so dumb to get cheated like that. To be eligible for protection status. You will need to suffer a loss of at least 50% of your guild power. This loss of guild power is calculated from the number of your trained native units who die, as with the number of death from the defending outworlders, or any structures that are destroyed. You didn't suffer any structural loss this time, but the number of native units and players dying had passed the 50% threshold, hence you are given this protection status. The same thing also applied to victory rewards. If you didn't lose anything as a defending guild, you won't get any reputation or resources from the victory."

"Oh...," was the only response Jack gave.

"Anyway, we should still prepare for their attack next week," Jeanny said. "We will have a lot to prepare for that."

"Actually, after the coalition knows you are getting protection status, I don't think they will be so eager to attack again," Silverwing said. "I believe that disaster item is the only one they have. Without that item, with Storm and master Domon defending added with the native units you re-train, they will suffer another defeat again. They have used the Disaster Item today because they realized that they can't win."

"I don't attack other human beings unless it is self-defense," Domon commented.

"I agree with Silverwing. By the way, Storm's real name is Jack," John said.

"Hey! My name in this world is Storm Wind!" Jack exclaimed. "And gramps, how about you just stand at the opening of the wall and whoop anyone that comes at you, that should scare everyone from trying to enter. Just like Zhang Fei in ChangBan bridge. Ain't that cool? That can be considered as self-defense, right?"

Domon didn't entertain his grandson with a reply. The others, though, were more preoccupied with the other thing. "Your name is Jack?" Silverwing asked.

"No, my name is Storm Wind!"

"His name is Jack Fei," Domon said. "I am his grandfather. That was the name his parents gave him when he was born. Don't listen to that whatever Wind bullshit."

"Oh! So it's Jack's grandpa! Let me express my courtesy. I'm Silverwing, Jack's good friend," Silverwing said.

'Ugh,' Jack felt defeated. He guessed he could say goodbye to his alias now.

Jeanny giggled, she then said, "let's get back to the main topic. Even if the coalition tries to attack again next week. We can beat them back again using this High Lich Summoning Crystal. That should teach them. I don't think they will continue to attack blindly after suffering continuous defeat."

"But those coalition people are pretty greedy," Bluedaze said. "Two within their guilds already got a Guild Headquarters, another one is joining soon. But they still try to get another one."

"They have?" Jack asked. "Who? Where?"

"Death Associates and Corporate United," Bluedaze answered. "They just got them a few days ago. After they find out that defeating an outpost can get them a headquarters, they have been sending scouts everywhere to search for one. Death Associates' headquarters is in a region where the city Theneward is located."

"Ain't that where the guy called White Death is?" John said.

"Yes. As for Corporate United, their Guild Headquarters is in the region where a city called Thebrington is located. The other one I mentioned is Wicked Witch, they have members going to a Bandit Outpost as we speak. I have not yet got info about where that outpost is, they keep it a secret to prevent other guilds from getting there before them."

"So the force that has attacked us is still not their full force?" Jeanny asked with worry.

"It is impossible to have all of them concentrate in one place. Such a huge guild will have multiple priorities in process at one time. Although the lure of having a second Guild Headquarters should have them pulled the majority of their forces here, we can safely assume their force just now should be roughly the maximum number they could muster for one operation," John said.

"One guild can only have one Guild Headquarters," Peniel interrupted. Everyone turned to her at once.

## **Chapter 466: Something I Need To Do**

"Really?" Almost everyone asked.

"Yes. If you destroy another Bandit Outpost after having a Guild Headquarter, you will simply get the standard reward," Peniel replied.

"How do you know that, little fairy?" Bluedaze asked.

"Trust me. What she says about this world, you can believe it to be true," Jack said.

"Then what about if someone who already has a Guild Headquarters conquers another guild's headquarters?" Silverwing asked.

Peniel was silent.

'It's okay, I trust him,' Jack sent his thought to her..

Only after receiving Jack's assurance that Peniel said, "If a guild who already has a Guild Headquarters destroyed a Guild Core, the headquarters will not be destroyed. The defending guild will still retain the guild. However, the winning offensive guild will gain a guild hostage token from the defeated guild and plunder 20% of its current resources. As long as the winning guild was holding this token, they will get 15% of any gold coin, mana, or resources the defeated guild receives at any time."

"So, it's like a permanent tax or tribute?" Jeanny asked.

"Yes. To cancel this tribute, the guild hostage token has to be destroyed. If you ever get this token, it will appear inside this Guild Hall beside your Guild Core."

"What if this guild is defeated again?" Silverwing asked.

"In what scenario?" Peniel asked back, but resume to answer, "If it is by a guild who not yet have a Guild Headquarters, I guess everyone knows already, the winning guild will take over the headquarters. If it is again by a different guild that already has a guild headquarters, they will get the same reward. One guild can lose a maximum of four Guild Hostage Tokens, resulting in a total tribute of 60%. Afterward, if the guild was defeated again, it will no longer produce Guild Hostage Token, but the plunder amount will increase to 50% of its current resources. If it is by the same guild who have defeated it before, they won't get a second Guild Hostage Token, they will instead plunder 50% resources as well."

"If the headquarters is taken over by another guild, then what about the Guild Hostage Token that it has given out before? The previous winning guild will lose the token?" John asked.

"No, the token will still be there. You just stop receiving any tribute since the losing guild no longer has a Guild Headquarters," Peniel answered. "But if in the future they conquered another headquarters, the tribute will resume. The only way to cancel the tribute is to destroy the Guild Hostage Token or disband the guild entirely and create a new guild."

"But that will mean sacrificing all the guild reputation points they have painstakingly accumulated to level up their guild," Silverwing commented.

"So, it is still a loss either way," Bluedaze added.

"Yes, so it is absolutely important to never lose when you defend your Guild Headquarters," Peniel said.

"Well, it's not a problem for us White Scarf, since we not yet have one," Silverwing laughed. Jack could feel a mocking tone in his voice.

"Open your map," Jack said to him.

"Oh? Why?" Silverwing asked, but he still opened his map. Jack sent a coordinate to him. "What's this?" He asked again.

"It's the coordinate of a small-sized Bandit Outpost," Jack informed. It was the one he saw when he was on his way to Busculla Plateau. "Unless the outpost had evolved, the last I saw it, the outlaws inside

have an average level of 30. If you can get sufficient members to that place, you should be able to raid it and get yourself your own Guild Headquarters."

Silverwing was silent hearing Jack's words, but everyone could see the astonishment in his eyes.

"This... I'm truly grateful for the info," Silverwing finally said.

Jack waved him off. "I'm the one that should be grateful. You have come to our aid during our time of need. We are in your debt. This is just small info. But you better organize a force to that place as fast as possible. For all we know, that outpost can be the one Wicked Witches people are targeting."

Bluedaze shook her head, "No, although we don't know the precise location of their target. We know the general direction they are heading to, and it's not in the direction of these coordinates."

"Well, you people should still hurry. There might be some other guilds stumbling into it, now that more and more players dare to journey around the wilderness. But I need to say something, I ain't giving this info to White Scarfs, I'm giving this info to you," Jack said to Silverwing. "I've heard how the White Scarfs' main leader has forbid you to aid us. Yet, you still come with your personal force. I'm exceptionally grateful for that. I won't lend a hand if White Scarfs is in need, but if it is you who asked, I will not hesitate to come to your aid. I just want you to know that."

"I understand," Silverwing said. "And I thank you for your friendship. Once I managed to take down this outpost and get a Guild Headquarters for White Scarfs, I will make sure the other upper echelons know that this is all due to our alliance with Everlasting Heavenly Legends."

Jack nodded.

"I guess I will take my leave now. I need to make lots of preparation to move out to this outpost as soon as possible," Silverwing said. "But I'm afraid next week if the coalition attack again, we might not make it back in time to help you in defending."

"Don't worry about it," Jack said. "We have one week to prepare. We will be okay. We are not that weak. You just make sure you take down that outpost. Unfortunately, I can't help you on that as well."

Silverwing chuckled, "you giving us this info is already a big help."

"Before you leave, do you happen to know the exact location of Death Associates and Corporate United's Guild Headquarters?"

"I do. Why?"

"I want to repay them in kind for what they did today. Can you transfer their coordinates to me?"

Silverwing sent Jack the coordinates. "Are you thinking of striking them back? It is unwise considering your guild's current state."

Jack didn't say anything more after receiving the coordinates. Silverwing didn't push the subject either. He said, "I bid you all farewell then."

"Wait! We need to work out how we recompensate you for the loss you suffered during this battle today," Jeanny said.

It was Silverwing that waved her off this time. "This info from Storm, I mean, Jack, is compensation enough. I have to go now. You people take care of yourselves."

After another round of courtesy, the two finally left. They were especially in spirit when they left. Considering they had felt that they were left behind by the other guilds due to not yet having a Guild Headquarters, now that they have a good chance of getting one themselves, their excitement was understandable.

After they left, John said, "Okay, let's us discuss our next defensive plan."

Jack said, "You two make your arrangement. I have something I need to do."

"I know I can't beat you, but at this moment, I don't care. If you say you are going to leave us behind again to deal with this guild matters by ourselves, I will fight you," John said. His staff was even in his hand now in a menacing pose.

"I'll assist you," even Jeanny had taken out her spear.

Jack was taken aback by the two's reaction, he hurriedly said. "You two misunderstand me! I might have chosen my words wrongly. What I meant about what I plan to be doing is that I'm going to deal with the coalition. If I'm successful, they might not have the time or the force to deal with us for some time."

"Is that why you asked for the location of Death Associates and Corporate United's Guild Headquarters?" John asked.

"Yes."

"What are you going to do? I know you are strong, but there is a limit to what one person can do," John said.

Jack grinned. "I'm going to return the favor they showed us today."

John could see there was a certain confidence in Jack's grin. After some thought, he said, "fine. Go do what you think is best."

"When are you leaving?" Jeanny asked.

"I want to get the elite class for my Mage first tomorrow. Afterward, I will depart. For tonight, I will do what I can for the guild. Did you two collect all the Common grade equipment and ores as I told you to?"

"Yes. But it is seriously a waste," John said. "Other guilds sold all these common grade things for coins before donating them to the guild. It is much more useful this way. We instead give out contribution points for these useless common-grade equipment and ores. What are you going to do with them anyway?"

"Don't worry, you won't regret it. They are all in the warehouse, right? I will go take them right now," Jack said. "Oh, right. Have you already collected all the info regarding our core members' current list of equipment?"

"Here," Jeanny said. "What for?"

Jack took the list and look at it. "As I guess, many are still using uncommon equipment. All right. Give me one night. I will surprise the two of you tomorrow morning."

Jeanny and John didn't ask further. They just looked at him walking away. He suddenly stopped and said, "ah, before that. I have to sleep a couple of hours first. I just remember I haven't slept since yesterday."

## **Chapter 467: Improving The Equipment Stock**

Outside Heavenly Citadel, after the six hours passed since Jack requested the Imperial Rescue. The Themisphere army was slowly making their way to leave the place.

The coalition that had been waiting all the time there immediately moved. They charged to where Heavenly Citadel stood. They saw that the outside was oddly empty, with no defense whatsoever. Perhaps the loss suffered by Everlasting Heavenly Guild was much more severe than it seemed. If so, this was the perfect chance for them to mount their assault.

Everyone was in high spirit. They swore to wash away the shame of failing the assault earlier today. They will show this backwater guild that the coalition is not something a nobody like them can afford to offend.

As they charged, the frontline banged onto an invisible wall. The ones behind were so passionate in their charge that they couldn't stop their momentum.. Everyone ended up banging the ones in front, with the first row continuing getting sandwiched by the invisible wall and their comrades from behind.

Every time they banged onto the invisible wall, notification voices telling them that the Everlasting Heavenly Legends was in protected status kept on being repeated.

After much chaos, the entire charge was finally managed to be stopped. The people in the front row didn't suffer any damage, but the feeling of getting squished onto a sturdy wall of air was absolutely not pleasant.

The leaders of the coalition stood before the wall as they touched the invisible wall and heard the notification about the protected status. The notification told them the protection status lasted one week.

"Protection status?"

"Does it mean that every time an attack failed, the defending guild will go into protection status?"

The leaders of the coalition discussed heavily regarding this feature. They roamed around the invisible barrier, trying to check if there was any gap. After some time, they gave up. Since there was nothing they could do at this time, they could only leave. It's not like they had no other things to do. They still left several squads to roam around the place, to send news if there was any development.

Inside the Heavenly Citadel, Jack slept inside the Lodging Quarter until sunset. When he woke up, the sky was dark already.

Since he had only one night, he went to work immediately. He went to collect all the common equipment, iron ores, and steel ores from the warehouse. The quantity was enormous. The collection from the previous 900 members was no joke. Since everyone did not need these goods, they just threw

them here because this guild exchange contribution points for them. If they sold them in the city, the coins they got were meager. Other guilds were also not interested in this rubbish.

He spent more than half of his contribution points to take out the goods. Even if he was one of the leaders of this guild, the system didn't allow him to take things from the warehouse freely. Even the bonus contribution points that Jeanny provided to compensate the fallen members, were deducted from the guild coins reserve. So contribution points were not something that could be abused. It was a main currency within the guild and was governed by an absolute system of this game world.

After taking out the goods that he needed, he didn't forget to put in the warehouse all the unusual materials and ingredients that he had collected all this time. He informed Jeanny about them and let her decide how to deal with them.

Jack then look at the number of goods he had taken out of the warehouse. "This is going to take a lot of time," he said to himself. Luckily, he had the Large Bag to hold all these goods. After emptying the warehouse from this so-called rubbish, he went to check the Blacksmith Workshop.

The workshop was rather pathetic, there were only three forges for working, two players were using two of the forges. Two of the forges used common tools, while the third used uncommon tools. It must be because the workshop was still level 1. It should develop into a better facility once this structure was leveled up. But currently, with limited resources, Jack didn't think John would allocate any to upgrade this workshop.

Since there were no rare tools in this workshop, his Master Hammer and Master Mobile Anvil provided a better bonus. Jack returned to the lodging Quarter. A large part of the lodging Quarter had bunk beds for mass usage, but there were also a few private rooms. These were exclusive for the guild's higher rank members. Jack entered one of these rooms and locked the door.

Inside he took out his Transformation Prism, Master Hammer, and Master Mobile Anvil.

"All right, let's get to work," he said.

The next morning, Jack sent a message for Jeanny to assemble all the core members in the Guild Hall. Though she was confused as to the purpose, she still did as was asked. It took her an hour to organize the gathering. After everyone was present, Jeanny sent a message to Jack. Jack went to the Guild Hall immediately. On the way, Jack checked the guild page and saw that Paytowin was not yet a member. He sighed. If his friend didn't feel like it, he won't push it.

Inside the Guild Hall, fifty-three core members were chatting, John was by himself working on the hologram platform, while Domon just stood by at one corner. The old man found it awkward to be amongst all these youngsters.

Jack looked at everyone when he entered. He then went to the front where the Guild Core was. He moved a table to his front and then called out, "everyone, come near, please. I have a gift for everyone!"

"A Gift?" The others who heard were thrilled. After all, who didn't like gifts? Everyone immediately crowded over him, most passionate were the bunch from Men of Solidarity.

"Hey, hey! I said come nearer, but not swarm me like this. Get back! Get back!" Jack shooed them to give him some space. "I will call you one by one. The one who I call please come before me."

"Jeanny," Jack called the first name.

"Me?" Jeanny came forward with a confused expression. She thought Jack was just rewarding the members to motivate them so they will do more works for the guild. As a leader herself, she needed no such motivation.

When she came before the table, she heard Jack read from the list she had given him yesterday, "Jeanny. You have a rare spear, rare headgear, and a rare arm guard. Apart from those, all are still uncommon equipment."

Jack then laid down five pieces of equipment onto the table before him. He said to her, "Take these to replace your uncommon equipment."

Jeanny checked on all the equipment on the table. She was astounded to find all of them were level 40 rare equipment. "These... all level 40 rare?" She was speechless. Even the three rare equipment she currently wore were only level 31. The other gasped after hearing her.

When Jack saw she was still standing there looking at the equipment on the table, he said. "Lady, can you please take these and admire them somewhere else? The others are still in the queue behind."

Jeanny looked back, after the others saw the gifts were high-level rare grade items, they were now even more eager. They didn't say anything, but their eyes beseeched her to hurry up. She quickly took all the equipment on the table, thanked Jack, and moved aside.

"John!" Jack called next.

After John arrived, Jack read from the list again, "John, you..."

"There is no need to read the list," John cut him. "I have six equipment below rare, just lay them out on the table."

Jack stared at him. "Should have called you last," Jack grumbled with annoyance. He took the six rare equipment that he had prepared for the guy and put them on the table.

John made a quick scan then stored them all inside his inventory and walked away while humming.

'Not even a thank you, a\*shole!' Jack complained in his mind.

"Bowler," Jack called next.

Bowler approached with anticipation. After John's comment, Jack didn't bother to read the list anymore. He just laid out the equipment on the table.

Bowler was gleefully taking the equipment before he frowned and asked, "why are they only level 37?"

"I don't have enough ores. Those of the latter half was even only level 35," Jack replied. "Are you going to complain? I will take them back if so."

"No, no! No complaining! Thank you for the gifts," Bowler hurriedly said as he collected the equipment.

Next, he called Fierce Flame, then The Man. Afterward, Trinity Dawn, Giant Steven, Viral Cora, and the rest that accompanied him during the expedition to Temple of Divine Squall. This first half got level 37

rare equipment. The rests afterward were given level 35 rare equipment. After Jack's comment to Bowler, none questioned about the lower level. Wearing level 35 full set of rare equipment was still much above current players' standard.

Jack didn't call Domon since the equipment he wore at the moment was already the best Jack could provide for him.

He also informed Jeanny and John that he had donated some rare equipment into the guild's warehouse. The two immediately opened up the warehouse interface to check. The warehouse that was full of common equipment and common ores before was now empty with only a few equipment inside, twenty-three equipment, all of them rare grades.

### **Chapter 468: Training Cave**

Jack's contribution point after donating this rare equipment ended up even more than what he had previously. When he withdrew the common equipment and ores, the contribution points required were very little, because the goods didn't worth much. But due to the sheer amount, he still spent more than half of his contribution points. But for each of the rare equipment he deposited into the warehouse, he received contribution points ranging from 60 to 80.

Combined with the contribution points he received when he used his merit points to request the Imperial Rescue, he currently had 3260 contribution points.

"You still have this many?" Jeanny said with amazement after seeing the equipment inside the warehouse.

"They are all only level 25 to 30 though. I don't have enough ores to level them too much," Jack informed. "You can use these to reward those veteran members who had contributed the most during the battle yesterday. I will leave them for you to sort out."

Due to all that blacksmithing work last night, his Blacksmith level had increased to Basic Expert.. This increase gave him less failure chance which reduce his material consumption. He also continuously used Runestone of Probability during the blacksmithing process. Though his Runecrafting skill did not increase, it was close to upgrading to the Basic Expert.

"I see there is no medium armor inside?" John commented about the warehouse stock.

Jack didn't reply. He had kept all the medium armor for himself, he needed them to be fused into super rare grade after all. His target was getting a chest and pant armors which were already reaching their level limits. From the work last night, he had fused one super rare chest armor. For the pant, he still needed two rare pants medium armor before he was able to fuse them.

This super rare chest armor was on his person already.

Sin Devouring Breastplate, level 40/60 (super rare medium armor)

Physical Defense: 143

Magical Defense: 122

Durability: 60

Endurance +10

All elemental resistances +5

Each kill increase defense by 10% for 3 minutes, stacks to a maximum of 50%

John pulled Jack and Jeanny to one side, with Peniel tagging along, away from the rests before he asked Jack, "do you have something that can change common equipment and ores to higher grade ones?"

"Uh..."

"John, everyone has a secret. There is no need to pry," Jeanny reprimanded.

"I will say, from what had happened. It was pretty obvious, you don't need to answer," John said. "But we might need to have a different setting on the warehouse because of this. Otherwise, if other members saw the warehouse which was filled up with common equipment was suddenly emptied and replaced by a large number of higher-grade equipment, people will start to suspect. The warehouse function had a public and private part. Next time you donate the higher-level equipment, put them inside this private part. I will set it so that only us three can see the content in this private part. We will then control the number and timing for this higher-grade equipment to be exposed to the other members."

"I see. Okay," Jack said.

"Any chance for you to leave that Godly item here? That way, we don't need to wait for you to come back before making more high-grade equipment," John asked.

"John!" Jeanny scolded.

John just shrugged.

"Hehe, sorry. Just make sure to continue amassing unused equipment and ores. I will convert them whenever I come back here," Jack said.

"Now that we know you can make use of them. We won't hold anything back anymore," John said.

"So, you are still holding back before?"

"John insisted to give minimal contribution points for those unused goods," Jeanny informed.

"His fault for not telling us what he planned to do with those junks," John defended himself. "Now that we see the benefit, we will increase the awarded points to motivate everyone to donate."

Jack nodded.

"So, are you going to deal with the coalition now? Are you still not sharing your plan with us?" John asked.

"You don't need our help? The coalition is also our enemy," Jeanny added.

Jack didn't answer them. He instead showed them something.

"That is..." The eyes of the two went wide.

"I need no help. You two just focus on developing this guild," Jack said. "One thing I still worry about, though. Even if I cause them to cancel any attack on us, I have no solution if they decide to harass our members from monster grinding. Don't ask me to run around searching for their members to kill just to let them have a taste of their own medicine. I don't have the time for that and also the number of their members I can kill in this way is minuscule to them."

"There is no need to worry about that," John said. "We already have two major cities we can teleport to. Thereath has three exit points, Themetus has four. While our guild territory had a large circumference. If they want to block all these points, they will need a massive force. If they only post scout or small squad, we can easily route them while heading out. I will arrange that everyone will always go out in a team of twenty. Once out there, they will need large forces as well if they want to intentionally look for us. I don't think they will waste that much time or manpower just so they can hinder our development."

"Apart from that, if it is only for leveling, we do not even need to go out," Jeanny said.

"We don't?" Jack asked.

"We are currently building Training Cave structure. It should be completed by later today."

Training Cave? He remembered reading about it somewhere.

"It's a guild structure that allows members to go in and kill monsters for exp," Peniel explained.

"Remember the one used by Lindsey and you when you are staying in Commander Quintus' house? It is similar to that. The difference is you won't get any loots inside this training cave. It is primarily for exp only. You don't need to worry about dying in this cave though. If you die, you will simply be teleported out from the cave without losing any exp or level."

"The training cave is separated by 10 levels. Level 1 training cave allows members to train in a dungeon ranging from level 1 to 10, 10 to 20, and 20 to 30. We can level up the structure to level 2 to allow members to train up to level 40. Any member can use their contribution points to use this facility, and there is no limit to how many can enter at a time. Each group will be sent to a separate dimension from the others."

"Our members who had died in yesterday's battle, we can power-level them using this facility. That way, we don't need to risk doing it out there in the wilderness."

"Of course, we still need to go out at one point. To collect coins, loots, and do guild quests. But this will be performed by members who were already at the best level for venturing out. This way, they will still be able to contend against enemy groups if they somehow stumble into one."

"Another point to note," Jeanny added, "now that we have Scrollmaking Workshop up and running, even if our teams met with enemy, they can just try their best to disengage, before using this to escape."

Jack looked at Jeanny's hand, it was a magic scroll. Jack inspected it and found it was called Guild Return Scroll. It functioned the same as Town Return Scroll, with the exception that the user was teleported to Guild Headquarters instead of the city.

"You can buy this with contribution point in the Scrollmaking Workshop. Here, take one." Jeanny offered.

Jack accepted the scroll. He felt much better after their explanation. This Guild Headquarters did indeed provide much help. Without it, he doubted that they could contend against the coalition. But then again, without the Guild Headquarters, he doubted if the coalition would have bothered to fight with them. With him perhaps, but the guild itself had no enmity with the coalition prior to getting the headquarters. Fortune drew envy, they needed to continue getting stronger if they want to keep this fortune.

"Are you leaving now?" Jeanny asked.

"One more thing," Jack said. "I will leave my grandfather here. I want you to arrange a routine morning training session for everyone from our core members, including the two of you. You already saw from his and my display during the battle yesterday, how effective it is incorporating martial arts into our combat. He is a very good martial art instructor, you better make full use of his presence here."

Jack then walked back before the Guild core and motioned for Domon to approach. He also called for the others to pay attention.

"This is Domon, a martial art grandmaster," Jack announced once he had everyone's attention.

#### **Chapter 469: Martial Arts Training**

Jack continued, "From now on, every day unless you are in an urgent guild quest or task that requires you to go far away, you will undergo martial arts training under Domon's instruction."

"I will?" Domon asked. "Are you going to leave me here?"

Jack turned to the old man. "I'm going to go around a lot, and very far. A lot of walking. Do you want to come with me?"

"I am old already, I can't journey too much."

"I know, that's why I ask you to stay."

"But why training this bunch? You know I don't teach much after what happened."

"But I know it is always your passion to teach martial arts. What are you going to do then? Just lazed around like what you did in that hut in the middle of nowhere where I found you? It's time for you to let go of the past. It's not your fault what happened to senior brother. I don't think he wants you to give up teaching as well. Look at this lot. They are a bunch of nobodies. Ain't it a challenge to turn them from wimps into powerful fighters? Won't it be exciting?"

Those who stood before the two gave Jack a stare. Who did he call nobodies and wimps?

Domon seemed to be considering. "Hm... I don't know. My training is not easy..."

Before Jack said anything more, a person lifted his hand. Jack turned to the guy and turned sour. 'Should have known this guy will have something to say,' he said in his mind.

The one who lifted his hand was John. He said, "friend, I am a magic user. What use do I have for martial arts? It's not like I'm going to intentionally run up to my enemy and impress them with it. I can just stand far away with minimal body movement and blast them away with spells."

"Your thinking is too shallow!" Jack scolded. "Do you think learning martial arts only help you in melee fights? Here, I'm going to demonstrate it for you!"

Jack walked forward and then took a plain cloth from his inventory. He used it to cover his eyes. "Now, try to hit me!" He uttered.

"What does that have to do with martial arts? Everyone here already knows about your monacle that can detect people's position," John said.

Jack took off the cloth. "Damn you!" He scolded. Then he took off his monacle and stored it in his bag. "Now, I'm not wearing it," Jack said and covered his eyes with the cloth again.

"Hit me!" He said again after.

John looked around before he pointed to Weird Trap and then gave him a gesture to hit Jack. The reason was because of Ranger's Silent Step skill. When Weird Trap came towards Jack, John gave him a signal to do it from the back. He complied and crept sneakingly to the back. After making sure there was no reaction from Jack, Weird Trap sent out a punch.

His fist struck the back of Jack's head.

"Ouch!" Jack called out.

The others were flabbergasted. With Jack being so confident, they did admit that they were expecting him to do something about the punch.

Jack took off his cloth, looked back at Trap, and asked, "Did you just punch me with your fist?"

Weird Trap had a wronged expression. "Bro, isn't it you who asked someone to hit you?" He said.

"With a weapon, not with a fist! Do you think you are a Battle Monk? You have to hit me with something that can cause damage. Otherwise, I can't sense the mana."

Domon who was watching, said, "You still need lots of training, Afei. Even if a normal punch has little chi, it is not unnoticeable. You should train until you can sense even the smallest of chi. When you tried to hit me in the past, it was also just a normal punch."

'Ugh, why was it me that got reprimanded?' Jack grumbled. Then to Trap, he said, "use your bow or your dagger!" Jack then covered his eyes again.

Weird Trap looked at John, who simply shrugged and gave him a sign to use his weapon. Trap unsheathed his dagger. Though he was an archer now, he could still use a dagger when needed. He sneaked again to another side, before thrusting his dagger.

This time, Jack responded. He sidestepped and evaded the thrust. Trap was bewildered, he looked back to John again, who made a gesture for him to do repeated stabs. Trap complied, he turned serious and prepared his attack. Once ready, he stabbed at Jack.

Again, Jack moved away. Trap didn't let go, he chased after Jack as he stabbed continuously. He even added Swift Stab in one of those stabs. Jack also didn't stay in one place. He swayed and stepped back with each stab. None of Trap's attacks landed on his body. Frustrated, Trap moved away and circled to Jack's back. He then took out his bow and fired an arrow, using Precise Shot skill, aiming right at the back of Jack's head.

As the arrow was about to hit, Storm Breaker appeared in Jack's hand. He swung it to the back and cut the arrow in two.

The others were silent.

Jack took off the cloth covering his eyes and said, "you all saw that? This is an ability called Mana Sensing. The main underlying principle to learning this ability is the same as chi mediation taught to martial artists. Even for a magic user, this is an excellent ability to be learned. With this skill, even when someone used an invisibility spell, you can still sense them, because an invisibility spell covers the user with mana to make them invisible."

"Ah..." John came to a realization. He had always wondered how Domon found out about Red Death's presence when she sneaked into the Guild Hall.

"There is an even a higher stage called Mana Manipulation," Jack continued. "If you managed to reach this stage, you can manipulate your skill or spell to make them even more deadly. Now, who wants to learn?!"

Seeing Jack's display, the others were more passionate now.

"Me!"

"Me!"

"Me!"

Everyone uttered their desire to learn.

Domon lifted his hands to quiet them down. He then said, "Don't expect this mana sensing to be easy to learn. Unless you have great talent. You will need a lot of time to learn it. In fact, not many practice this anymore because of its difficulty. I can say there is only a small circle of old school practitioners like me that still practice it. Most martial artists nowadays prefer disciplines focusing on physical training."

Domon paused a bit as he reviewed the crowd's enthusiasm before he continued, "and let me tell you now! As an old-school practitioner, I won't accept any shortcut requests. You want to learn this mana sensing. You learn them as one package with physical training as well. You follow my program. It's my way or the highway!"

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

Domon ignored him. He addressed the crowd, "those that wish to learn, stay here. Those that do not, get out. I don't wish to teach if you don't wish to learn. I demand full obedience if you decide to learn!"

Domon stood there and waited. No one was leaving.

Jack took the chance to say something, "I think everyone knows already. This here is my grandpa. If any one of you dares to show disrespect to him, I will whoop your ass!"

Domon turned to Jack, "Boy, I'm not that old that I need you to defend me. If any one of them dares to disrespect me, I will whoop their asses myself!"

Everyone took a gulp. They had a feeling this old man was more violent than Jack.

Jack pretty much wrap up what he could do for his guild. He told the others farewell, then he let Jeanny and John knew that he would be heading to Thereath for his Archmage class trial. Jeanny told him now that the guild was in protected status. All the core members could use this reprieve to try their elite class trials as well. They would wrap up here and then head to Thereath as well soon.

Jack wished them luck as they did to him. He reminded them though that the elite class nullified their equipment advantage, so they are not to expect the equipment upgrade that he provided just now would increase their odds.

Before Jack headed to the Teleportation Chamber, he got another batch of potions and Poison Salve from Bowler and Pointy Tip. Now that Life Runner provided them with a steady supply of small poison glands, Tip could produce Poison Salve continuously. He even gave some to the other members.

After teleporting to Thereath, Jack headed first to his two investment places, Ellie's Restaurant and Amy's Bakery. He hoped the profits from these two could refill his pocket.

He had made another 100 gold coins donation to the guild before he left. The coins in his purse were now only 41 gold coins. He donated a big chunk of his coins, but he thought the coins should help the guild in recovering and developing much faster. He was not patient enough to do guild quests, after all, so aside from fighting for the guild, this was how he contribute.

It had been four weeks since he left to fill up the exp for his Lightning God Blessing, if not considering the time-warp inside Valley of Tempus.. So, the pile-up profits from both establishments should be substantial.

## **Chapter 470: Recruiting Another Member**

Another important thing to note from yesterday's battle was that due to the exp points acquired from the first half of the undead invasion, Jack's Blade Dancer class level had increased. Since he stopped his Mage class from receiving exp, all the exp acquired during the defense had gone to his Blade Dancer class and caused it to level up directly to level 32.

Each level-up gave much more attribute points compared to his advanced class. One level-up of Blade Dancer class provided him with:

HP +100

Stamina +60

Strength +8

Dexterity +8

Intelligence +1

Endurance +4

Reflex +7

Wisdom +2

3 free attribute points

3 free skill points

Luck attribute was as expected didn't receive any increase.

He used all the 6 free attribute points and put them all into Endurance, bringing it to 186 combined with the boost from his equipment. He figured that his melee class now had the attributes heavily catered to melee offense, sort of like a glass cannon build. He was pretty sure his soon-to-be Archmage class would also provide not much Endurance, so he spent his free points on endurance to balance it up.

For the 6 free skill points, he spent them on Blitz Slash, bringing it to level 10. Each five-level increase gave him one extra slash. At level 10, all enemies on the path of this skill would receive five slashes that inflicted 145% damage each slash.

When Jack arrived before at the street where Ellie's restaurant and Amy's bakery were, it was very crowded, with players as the majority. As was predicted, this street had become the hub where many player guilds built their Guild Bases. The once empty street was now teemed with activities, not losing to the trade center of the business district.

Some guilds even bought plots of land and built shops to offer their services. Some build restaurants, trying to emulate Ellie's Restaurant's success. But looking at the current busyness of Ellie's restaurant, Jack did not worry. Ellie's restaurant had built up a good number of regular customers. Ellie and Bill's membership in the House of Culinary faction also ensured them a steady source of new recipes, keeping the menu fresh. Dylan's trade connection also provided Ellie with sufficient ingredients to continue utilizing these new recipes that other newly built restaurants didn't possess.

Coincidentally, today was the day this kid trader was visiting Ellie's restaurant to deliver his weekly stock. When Jack sent a message to Ellie informing him that he would come to visit, Ellie said that he was with Dylan. Jack asked her to keep the boy there until he arrived. He wanted to say hi.

When he entered the restaurant, he saw every table was taken. More native workers were working the tables now.

Jack went directly to the VIP room that Ellie and Dylan were meeting at. When he entered, he saw the two were sitting and chatting while enjoying refreshments. Ellie had prepared a set of refreshments for Jack as well after receiving the message that he was coming.

"Hiya! Just Dylan, it's good to see you again!" Jack called.

"That is getting old, you know?" Dylan said, giving him a side-eye.

"Okay, okay. I do admit it is no longer fun. I promise I will call you just... Dylan from now on."

Jack sat at the prepared chair.

"So, why are you here again?" Dylan asked, and then turned to Ellie, "I thought you have cut his service already since I didn't see him anymore all this time."

"Hahaha," Jack just laughed. Jack still didn't let Ellie tell the others about his ownership of the restaurant, so Dylan was still under the impression that Jack was hired by Ellie for mercenary works.

Ellie also didn't answer Dylan's question, she simply smiled.

Dylan didn't seem to push the issue, but he turned to Jack and asked again, "so, why are you here again?"

"I'm here to socialize with my pal. Is that wrong?" Jack answered.

"By pal, I hope you don't mean me? Let me tell you that although we businessmen indeed like to socialize, I myself only believe to socialize with people who bring me profits. I don't bother to waste my time socializing with nobodies."

"Look at you all serious-like. You might be saying that but I know you enjoy talking with me. Why waste your time to explain otherwise?"

Dylan gave Jack a sour expression and pretended to look away in an act of ignoring Jack. But not long after, he turned back. "Well, since you are here. I heard from Ellie that this small poison gland in the list was asked by you? I have said this to Ellie but I say it to you now. I've looked around everywhere. Nobody sells this bloody thing. Who will sell such an awful ingredient anyway? You must be planning to use it for nefarious means."

"Well, as a matter of fact, I did. I use it to kill monsters," Jack said. "Also, there is no need for you to look for that ingredient anymore. I've found a steady supply of it already."

"What?" Dylan was taking a sip of his tea, he couldn't help but spurt it out upon hearing Jack's words.

Jack was thankful that his reflex had increased. That spurt was completely unexpected, yet he still managed to bend his body away, evading it.

"Yo, man! That's gross," Jack uttered.

"You... where do you find that supply of small poison gland?" Dylan asked. He could not accept that someone else could find the wares that he failed to find. He believed that with the combination of his gaming and business skills, he should be ahead of other businessmen who were only good in real-life business.

"I got it from Larabar city," Jack answered.

"Larabar..." Dylan said as he seemed to be trying to remember something.

Jack chuckled seeing him. He said, "You won't recognize the name. It is not a city in Themisphere, it is one from..."

"City from Verremor nation? The kingdom of the Orcs?!" Dylan uttered before Jack completed his sentence.

"Oh? You know?"

"Of course I know! The Trade Associations existed on all seven main kingdoms. And if your rank is high enough, there is information on the list of their main cities. My rank happens to be high enough. How did you gain access to that city anyway? I still have a problem reaching many other main cities within this kingdom."

"Hehe, you should spend more time leveling up then. Many players who reached level 30 are already venturing out making their way to other cities. If you continue to rely on that caravan of yours, you will instead be left behind," Jack ridiculed. When he entered, he used Inspect on Dylan and found him to be level 19 and was still a Ranger class. But then again, Dylan was still better than Ellie who was beside Jack. She was still a level 1 Ranger.

"Cut the crap. That still didn't explain how you get to Larabar. The regions separating countries have many level 50 monsters roaming it."

"Well, long story short. I am in a guild that managed to recruit an Orc player who somehow made his way into this country. I managed to persuade him to join my guild and he established a teleportation link with Larabar. So, now he can travel freely from his town to our Guild Headquarters."

"Guild Headquarters?"

"It's a large structure in the middle of wilderness owned by a guild. I don't think you follow guild matters, so don't worry about it. Thing is, the small poison gland issue is solved already, so you don't need to bother about it anymore."

"So, you can teleport between this Guild Headquarters of yours to Larabar?" Dylan asked.

"Uh... Yeah," Jack answered.

Dylan seemed to be pondering for a while before he exclaimed, "let me join your guild!"

Jack was slightly startled by the request. "Oh? Why?"

"I want to travel to Larabar!"

Jack laughed at him. "You don't know anything. You are a human. Themisphere and Verremor are not in a good political term. If you teleport there, you will be kicked around by the orcs."

"It's you who doesn't know anything," Peniel who was sitting at Jack's shoulder scolded. "He is a Trades Association member. This faction's members gained free pass to any kingdom without concern of the political situation, as long as they were not an official member of the enemy kingdom faction." Peniel turned to Dylan, "you have not yet joined Themisphere kingdom faction, have you?"

"Not yet. Hey, pal. She seemed to know a great deal. Where did you get this..."

"If you call me a pet, I will make you regret it!!" Peniel said before Dylan could finish his sentence.

"Uh... Um... Where did you get this extraordinary winged small lady?" Dylan completed his sentence.

Jack chuckled. Then he looked at Dylan seriously, "well, I don't mind you joining. But weren't you eager to join the Kingdom Faction before? You heard her, if you want to be able to travel to Larabar, you won't be able to join Themisphere faction then."

"I want to join because it allowed me access to the small towns of this kingdom. Between choosing to travel to another country against small towns, it's a no-brainer. The variety of wares in other countries will bring me even more profits.. The trade goods that I can sell cross-countries would reap incredible profits."