

World 511

Chapter 511: Long Journey

Jack never asked Prince Alonzo nor Royal Advisor Mason about the direction to Tranviste, because he had a living compass. Peniel pointed the direction and Jack had Pandora go in a straight line. He traveled swiftly with Pandora but he still make time to dismount whenever he met a new monster that was not too strong for him to handle, or when he met the monsters on his hunting list.

His journey took him across a vast expanse of land, seeing different kinds of flora, fauna, landscape, and weather. There was once where he met some sort of sandstorm but instead of sand, it was fire. So probably it should be called firestorm. This firestorm was rolling towards where he was heading. Pandora was happily going to enter the firestorm, considering it was her element. Jack and Peniel had to remind her that her rider was not, before she changed direction. Luckily her speed was still enough to outrun the firestorm.

The distance of his travel this time was even longer than the previous expedition with the army. He passed through two main cities, Thenident and Therimdell. He promptly established teleportation links with Heavenly Citadel, allowing his guildmates to visit these two cities.

He also visit a few smaller towns, which were not open to regular outworlders. Jack was allowed entrance though, considering he was a member of the kingdom faction. He also established teleportation links with the zone portals in these towns. He instructed Tip to set the Teleportation Chamber so that not everyone could teleport to these towns.

He also encountered several smaller communities, villages. When he saw such villages, he wondered at first how they survived wilderness monsters. But he then noticed that most of these villages were built within areas with few monsters and also mostly low-level. There was always at least one high-level kingdom official in charge of these villages, in case of a monster attack.

There was an incident where Jack was given a quest offered by one of the village inhabitants. The quest was to search for a medicinal plant in nearby woods. Jack rejected the quest. He couldn't afford to waste his time dealing with these small quests and risked failing his faction chain quest.

Once he completed his current diplomatic mission, then only would he take his time to adventure around before returning to report the quest. He had a feeling that once he reported in, he would be given a continuation on the chain quest immediately. He was not ready to so eagerly complete this quest yet, it was an SSS quest, after all.

Hence, after that one incident, he didn't spend too much time inside a new city, town, or village he visited. What if someone threw him a quest in which his heroic impulse could not reject? For example, saving children from the lair of a dragon, or rescuing a young maiden from the mansion of an evil outlaw. So, he quickly established the teleportation links before hurriedly making himself scarce from said places. Not even spending the night there, he used his Camouflage Tent and rested in the wilderness.

He did not forget to continue training his meditation and martial arts. He could now sense the minuscule mana that accompanied every object, though he still need to concentrate hard for that, so his mana sense ability was not yet perfected.

His Formless Flowing Sword Style was getting much improvement. He could now easily execute the burst of forty-eight slashes. His flowing attack also displayed more variation and complexities. The second phase of the sword art could be said to have been perfectly mastered. However, he got tired very easily after using the phase two burst attack though.

When he trained the sword art, he always activated his Dragon's Eye in conjunction now. From his last experience, the slow-motion effect when using the burst attack had contributed much to his improvement. It still did, as it allowed him to analyze the shortcomings and where he could still improve the style.

For Eight Diagram Illusory Steps, when he felt he was adept enough to use it in a real fight, he tested it on some basic monsters. He still needed to concentrate to execute this movement art. It's a good thing his talent, Hundred Synchronous Thoughts, allowed him to think of multiple things at the same time. So he could have one mind focusing on the movement art, while the others on the sword art. The combination of these two arts complimented each other nicely and caused his offensive to be more deadly and unpredictable.

Against a group of elite monsters though, Jack still got hit one out of four times when he used the Eight Diagram Illusory Steps, so he knew he still had much to improve on this martial art.

He met several Gang Hideouts and Monster Settlements on the way, two of the gang hideouts and one tiny-sized monster settlement were within his level range, so he conveniently raided those three. For the hideouts, he summoned his companion, Heathcliffe, which helped him keep the boss busy while Jack destroyed the cores. So the two bosses now occupied the cells inside guild jail, ready to be handed to kingdom authority for rewards.

During the journey, Jack discussed the SSS grade chain kingdom quest with Peniel. Jack joked that probably in this chain quest, he would again get another divine treasure. Imagine fusing with one more and possessing another elemental assault as insane as the Lightning God Barrage.

Peniel responded with a contempt-filled laugh. "First, do you think every SSS quest gives out a Divine Treasure? It only had a small probability even for this highest-grade quest. There are only seven Divine Treasures, for goodness sake. And second, even if you get your hands on another divine treasure, you won't be able to fuse with it."

"Why not?" Jack asked.

"Because one person can only fuse with one divine treasure. Trying to fuse with another one will just cause your body to explode. You will lose everything from this death, no matter even if you wear Amulet of Rebirth. So I assume your Immortal Soul will also not save you from such a death."

"Uh, luckily we have this conversation. Imagine if I immediately fuse with another divine treasure like the last time."

Peniel gave Jack an irritated look. She had berated him severely after his reckless fusing with Lightning God Sphere the last time, he was still thinking of doing it again without asking first?

Despite Pandora's unnatural speed, they still took two weeks to reach the border region between Themisphere kingdom and Sangrod Empire. The region was a vast rocky land with sparse greeneries. Monsters around here were stronger, ranging around level 40 to 60.

There were a few occasions within this region when they saw on the horizon a freak of nature, a titanic monster of incredible proportion. Something similar to the existence of the Grim Sand Drake.

Although Peniel informed Jack that it was unlikely for mythical or level 70 rare elite monsters to appear in this region, she also said that it was not impossible. So Jack chose to circle around such an existence. He did not dare to go near enough to use Inspect. If it was truly a terrifying monster that was immune to Pandora's fear aura, then they would be done for. Such a high-level creature most probably possessed speed that rival the Nightmare.

Because of the tip-toeing around these titanic existences, his journey through this border region was lengthened. It took him four days to pass through it despite Pandora's exceptional speed. But on that eighteenth day since he departed from Thereath, he saw in the horizon the land that marked the beginning of a new country, the Sangrod Empire.

During these eighteen days, although he didn't grind much, single-handedly taking down two Gang Hideouts and one Monster Settlement had netted an abundance of exp points. Out of these ventures, both his class had increased in level, Blade Dancer to 36 and Archmage to 34.

When his Blade Dancer reached level 35, he received a new standard skill.

Whirlwind Slash (Active skill, requires dual-wield swords)

Strike everyone around within a radius of 3 meters, dealing 300% damage.

Cooldown: 1 minute

Stamina: 60

It was similar to his Ice Ring spell. Less radius, but higher damage. Its cooldown was less than Ice Ring, so he could use this skill more often.

He used the 6 free Blade Dancer skill points for this new skill, increasing its damage to 360% damage. The 3 free Archmage skill points were spent on Myriad Ensnaring Chains, bringing it up to level 5. When the spell hit level 4, it added another chain. Now the spell could conjure eleven crimson chains.

For the 9 free attribute points, he went back to dump them on the Endurance stat.

Jack looked at the horizon where Peniel informed him was the start of the Sangrod Empire.

"There seems to be a heavy storm coming," Jack mentioned. The sky ahead was dark despite it was still daytime, the clouds were thick, much more thick and dark compared to the ones usually seen with the coming of a rainstorm.

"That is not due to the weather," Peniel informed.

"Huh?"

"Sangrod Empire was also known as the country of eternal night."

Jack took some seconds to grasp Peniel's words. "Wait! Are you saying the sky of the entire country is like that?" Jack asked in astonishment.

Chapter 512: Lone Monk

Peniel nodded, "Yes, that dark sky is a country-wide enchantment spell cast by the combined power of the ruling families. Vampires are creatures of the night, after all. Their racial skill provided them better attributes, but they also come with a defect, a weakness against sunlight. When they are exposed to the sun, their attributes are reduced by 30%."

"Well, that means the other races can't compete with them within their country, but it also limits them. They will have a handicap when they traveled out."

"That's true, you will very rarely find a vampire race outside of this country," Peniel agreed.

"Hm, wouldn't that bad for outworlders with this vampire race? They will be stuck here," Jack said.

"Not necessarily. I said very rarely but didn't say there is none. Some vampires do venture out. Those that are very old have developed some resistance against sunlight. There is also equipment that protects against sunlight. Certain bloodlines also have such an effect."

"Bloodlines?"

"That's for another time, you don't need to worry about it for now."

Jack shrugged.

Pandora continued to bring him closer to the place covered by the dark clouds. On the way, Jack noticed a blue dot on his radar.

'There is a player nearby! Alone. Very ballsy, this border region has level 40 monster as the weakest. Is the person trying to cross over to Themisphere?'

The lone blue dot piqued his curiosity, so he had Pandora headed over.

"Busybody again?" Peniel asked.

"The last time being a busybody allowed me to reunite with my grandfather, so I don't feel like it is a bad habit," Jack said.

Jack dismounted and unsummoned Pandora when he got close enough and traveled on foot as a precaution. He wanted to observe first. The place had many small rocky hills, so it was not difficult to find a hiding place.

Jack heard battle sounds from the direction he was heading to. From his radar, he saw a red dot beside the blue dot, so it was pretty clear that the player was combating a monster.

'Is the player in trouble? The person probably came with a team but became the last person standing. Jack was planning to get close enough to use his Inspect. As long as the person has no relation to the coalition or the World Maker, he didn't mind lending a hand.'

When he found a place where he could peek out and see the player, he saw a man that was battling a large monster with a deer-like head and antlers, its body was covered with rocky skin.

"That is a Savage Rock Windigo," Peniel explained. "Around this part, they are usually elite grade with a level ranging from 40 to 45. Considering the average outworlder's level, he should be in trouble. If you want to lend a hand, you should not delay."

Jack, however, stay quiet and continued to watch.

"Hey, did you hear what I said?" Peniel called out.

"He doesn't seem to be in trouble," Jack said.

Peniel took a better look at the ongoing fight and realized it was indeed so. The Windigo fought savagely, but the outworlder moved with precision, avoiding the assault with minimal movement. He then struck using his fists every time the monster was wide open after the end of its assault.

"From the way he fights, I guess he is a Battle Monk," Jack said.

"Yes," Peniel concurred. "See the light enveloping his fist? That is Ki-infused Fist. A skill when one becomes a Battle Monk on the first try. It increases basic damage using fists by 20%."

"Same as Weapon Master's Ki Weapon then?"

"Yes. Additionally, when the Ki-infused Fist is active, he also gains the ability to parry using that hands."

"His martial art is very good," Jack commented as he continued to watch the battle.

"By the way, can you tell his race from here?" Jack asked Peniel. Their distance is still not close enough for him to use Inspect.

"His skin is rather pale. Considering he must be from Sangrod, he should be of Vampire race," Peniel informed.

"Damn, then he is better than I thought. There is still daylight. This place is not yet covered by the dark clouds over there. Meaning he is fighting with a handicap."

The battle monk who was battling the Windigo, saw an opening. His fists turned into a blur as he delivered repeated punches on the monster. The punches were so quick and accurately hit the monster's weak points that they kept the monster continuously off balance. Jack saw the damage number increase as combo multipliers continued to pile up.

'Is that martial art?' Jack thought.

"That is Infinite Lightning Punches, Battle Monk's standard skill," Peniel explained. "It releases a flurry of quick punches that deal 50% damage with each punch. This skill is special as it depends on the user for when to end the punches. However, each punch consumes stamina."

From the way that Bottle Monk was displaying, he seemed to plan to finish his punches only until the monster died or his stamina was exhausted. The fist, although fast, could still be controlled by the player to hit the monster's different spots. Half of the punches resulted in critical damage, combined with the combo multiplier, the Windigo's HP soon depleted and fell into dust.

"The monster didn't even hit him once," Jack mumbled. The man he was watching didn't seem to be much older than him. To achieve that level of martial expertise at his age was incredible.

The battle monk took a rest by sitting crosslegged. His HP bar started increasing. Although the Windigo didn't hit him directly, once in a while it released poison fog from its mouth. The fog was an AOE so the battle monk couldn't evade, his HP was decreasing little by little every time the poison fog was released.

"That is Meditate, a Battle Monk's skill when they reached level 35. They need to be motionless for that. It recovered 5 HP each second. If they have any negative status effects, every 10 seconds of meditation will cleanse one random negative status effect."

"I see. This skill made them similar to classes that branched out of Fighter class. As long as they are allowed a breather, they do not need recovery potions. What about Battle Monk's inherent skills?"

"They can jump 300% higher, like Assassin. Their whole body becomes a valid weapon, they can deliver damage with any impact using any part of their bodies. Their dexterity, physical, and magical defense are increased by 10%."

Jack saw that the battle monk's HP bar was almost filled up. He was about to stand up when he saw something that stunned him. A small fairy appeared out of thin air beside the battle monk.

Jack was very familiar with that figure because he had one clinging on his shoulder right now. The difference was, Peniel wore a red dress while this other one wore a blue one.

"That is...," Peniel muttered.

"You know her?" Jack asked.

"Yes..."

"Well, great! Since you know each other, then it will be easier to communicate," Jack uttered and stood up from his hiding place.

"Wait...," Peniel called.

Jack was already walking towards the battle monk. Since they were already out in the open, Peniel just followed Jack.

The battle monk noticed the two approached. His facial expression didn't change despite seeing a stranger was approaching.

Jack used Inspect when he was within range.

Leavemealone (Battle Monk, level: 36)

HP: 1940

Jack's steps stopped for a bit when he saw the guy's alias. Crap, no wonder he was grinding alone in the middle of nowhere. But he was already approaching, might as well just throw the greetings. "Hey, pleasure meeting you. That's a very impressive battle you did just now."

Leavemealone didn't respond.

"My name is Storm Wind. I come in peace," Jack said again, trying to state that he was non-hostile.

Leavemealone continued to ignore Jack, he was not even looking at Jack. It was instead, the fairy beside him that said something, but not as a response to Jack's greetings.

"It's you? Peniel! What is a meddler like you doing here?" The blue-dressed fairy said to Peniel.

"Ugh, you are still as pompous as ever, Carnelia. What are you doing here yourself?" Peniel talked back.

"Hmph, I'm on an important mission. Something that a carefree fairy like you won't understand."

"Carefree?" Jack muttered.

Peniel heard him and turned to say, "not as carefree as you!"

Leavemealone turned when he heard his fairy mention Peniel. Jack could see from the glint of his eyes that he was surprised to see another fairy.

Leavemealone then shifted his attention to Jack, when he saw Jack's face, he uttered, "you guys again? I thought I have killed you people enough. It seems your lot haven't learned enough yet."

He then stood up.

'What? Kill? Who people?' Jack was confused by the guy's words. Jack was just about to ask what he meant when Leavemealone suddenly lunged at him.. His fist punched out.

Chapter 513: Divine Treasures Matchup

Jack was surprised but not flustered. He evaded the punch, but Leavemealone's other fist shot out with unnatural speed. Jack's reflex still managed to put up a hand to block the punch. But since his hand was not considered a valid parrying instrument, he received damage.

'That was Ranger's Swift Stab. Once a Rogue turned to Battle Monk, all his previous standard offensive skills were adjusted to allow them to be executed using fists,' Jack heard Peniel informing him in his mind.

'Then it should be called Swift Punch then,' Jack thought.

Leavemealone continued to punch out. Since Jack did not understand the reason for the aggression, he decided to just continue to dodge first. He used the Eight Diagram Illusory Steps.

Leavemealone stopped after his fists hit empty air a few times. He stepped back and said, "That is profound footwork, but not complete."

He then took a low stance. It was apparent that he was not stopping.

"Wait! Aren't you going to explain first why you are fighting me?" Jack uttered.

Leavemealone answered Jack's question with another punch. Jack tried to block it but it turned out to be a feint. Leavemealone disappeared from Jack's view. He had ducked low and made a leg sweep, trying to negate Jack's footwork.

Although Jack couldn't see, he felt the sweep coming. He jumped up, evading the sweep. But Leavemealone's body suddenly turned upside down, balancing his body on his hands while his legs came up and struck Jack's chest. Jack was thrown away from the kick while receiving damages.

Jack managed to balance himself and landed on his feet.

"Damn it, dude! You want to tussle? Then let's tussle!" Storm Breaker and Whirlwind Falchion appeared on his two hands.

Jack swung his sword. Sword of Light shot out. Leavemealone dodged it easily. Jack used Charge, Leavemealone jumped to the side and punched out. Jack canceled the Charge and use Flash Step and disappeared to his opponent's back. Jack used Flame Charge, but instead of hitting his opponent's back, it struck a glowing fist. Leavemealone's Ki-infused Fist had finished cooldown.

Leavemealone managed to hit the Flame Strike with his own attack, but he was still damaged and thrown backward.

"You can also sense mana?" Jack uttered with surprise.

Leavemealone was also alarmed. He had used a non-standard Battle Monk's skill to block, Iron Punch, it delivered 350% damage at level 1. His fist was also protected by the Ki-infused Fist skill and a rare-grade Fist weapon. To still receive damage, Jack's attack would need to be three times more. This meant Jack's skill damage and attribute were much higher than him.

Leavemealone kept his calm appearance. Instead of answering Jack's question, he returned to attack. His fist turned to a blur as he executed Infinite Lightning Punches. Jack unleashed the burst attack of his Formless Flowing Sword style in retaliation. Sword lights and fist images collided with each other at unreal speed.

The two fairies were floating by the side watching the exchange. They had been chatting while the two men started their bouts.

"You are tasked by the Goddess as well?" Peniel asked.

"A God," Carnelia answered. "It seems that the circumstances of our task are the same. Hey, I sense something different about you."

Carnelia eyed Peniel intently, she then uttered, "Why is your HP so low?"

Her eyes soon went wide in realization. "Wait! Don't tell me. You are a Familiar? How can you allow a lowly human to make you his familiar?"

"Hmph! None of your business," Peniel harrumphed.

"Wait, isn't Call Familiar an Archmage spell? He is clearly a Blade Dancer. How do you become his familiar?"

Peniel gave Carnelia a smirk. "I'm not telling you. If your boy is strong enough to cause trouble to mine, then maybe you will find out."

"Hmph! Mine will surely win! There is no doubt about it!"

"Dream on!"

The two fairies ended up bickering and then continued to cheer their respective partners. Jack was speechless hearing the cheers. Since when did that Peniel ever cheer on him so passionately?

Jack managed to steal an opening and landed a kick at his opponent. Leavemealone didn't receive damage but he tumbled from Jack's strength. He backflipped in an instant to stand back up.

"Let's go over there," Jack pointed at Sangrod Empire's border that was covered by dark clouds. "It is not fair for you to fight with a handicap. We can have a fair duel over there."

"You overestimate yourself," Leavemealone uttered and rushed back at Jack.

"Man, you are really stubborn."

When Jack was about to slash his sword, Leavemealone's body split up. In his eyes, Jack saw multiple Leavemealone.

'That is Illusive Form! A rare non-standard elite skill for classes that branched out from Rogue,' Jack heard Peniel's voice in his mind.

The skill made Leavemealone appear as if numerous. His movements were creating trail images, making Jack have difficulty seeing his real body. He also swayed at high speed, fully exploiting the skill's perk.

Jack had a problem landing a clean hit, while Leavemealone stole several openings and landed a few punches.

'Calm down! Sense his mana!' Jack exclaimed to himself, but Leavemealone's swaying was too erratic that it even clouded his mana. Jack wondered was that movement some kind of martial art?

Decided to brute-force his way out, Jack used Whirlwind Slash. Leavemealone felt the danger from this skill and hurriedly jumped back. But the slash had come, so he punched out in an attempt to cancel the damage. When the fist and sword collided, Leavemealone was pushed away and still suffered little damage.

Now that his opponent lost balance, Jack was not courteous anymore. He used his Formless Flowing Sword style and continued to barrage Leavemealone with slashes after slashes. Jack's speed and strength were greater, causing his opponent to have difficulty recuperating. In a passive state, Leavemealone continued to lose HP.

A glowing runestone suddenly appeared beside Leavemealone.

'Runestone of Combat!' Jack heard Peniel's voice in his mind.

Before he had the chance to ask what was the Runestone of Combat, he felt his opponent getting faster. His punch also carried stronger force. The sudden change caused Jack's sword style to be interrupted. Leavemealone managed to pull himself away. When Jack wanted to chase over, he was stunned by the sudden appearances of numerous large balls of fire.

'Why do those look familiar?' Jack thought.

"That's Fire God Barrage!" Jack heard Peniel's shout. "It's an assault from a Divine Treasure!"

Hearing the confirmation, Jack didn't hesitate. The balls of fire were already floating in the air. Jack jumped back and summoned twenty balls of lightning.

"Lightning God Barrage?" It was Carnelia who was shocked now.

"Where have you gotten the divine treasure?" She asked Peniel.

"I should ask you the same thing!" Peniel responded.

Leavemealone also had the same surprise but he didn't stop his attack. The fireballs shot out at Jack, Jack released his lightning balls at the same time. Forty balls of fire and lightning crashed into each other. The resulting shockwave threw both Jack and Leavemealone away.

Jack had aimed each of his twenty lightning balls to fly in the direction that intercepted Leavemealone's fireballs. Because of his talent, Hundred Synchronous Thoughts, he had no problem controlling the trajectory of each separate ball.

Repeated explosions ensued where the forty balls had collided. The area was covered by firestorms and electricity crackles. The rocky landscape at the area of impact was reduced to a series of craters.

When the dust finally cleared, Jack and Leavemealone watched one another from a distance in bewilderment.

Leavemealone was the first to recover. He readied himself and rushed back again. Jack must admit the guy's tenacity was admirable. He intend to meet his opponent's spirit in kind, but something caught his attention.

"Stop!" Jack called out.

Leavemealone didn't stop.

Jack was annoyed. The fellow's tenacity was perhaps a bit too much. Jack replaced his Whirlwind Falchion with Rapid Dazing Staff. A spell formation was formed rapidly.

Leavemealone was surprised by the change of weaponry, but was even more startled when he felt the cold mana accumulating. He hurriedly jumped back and narrowly evaded a ring of ice energy that radiated out from Jack.

"I said stop! Some people are coming here," Jack exclaimed.

Leavemealone who was confused by Jack casting a spell, finally halt his attack.

"He can cast spells?" Carnelia uttered.

"He has two classes," Peniel answered.

"How is that possible?"

Peniel simply shrugged. "I also don't know. He got it before I met him. He said it was from an alien entity item."

Jack had requested they stop because he had seen ten blue dots coming their way. Leavemealone followed Jack's gaze and soon saw ten figures appearing. The two stood their ground as they waited for these ten to approach.

When the ten was near, Jack saw the lead was wearing God-Eye monocle. Jack used Inspect. The name of the lead was Rawprocessor, a level 37 Archmage. There were two more elite classes, a Paladin and an Assassin. The remaining seven were still advanced classes, a Healer, two Knights, two archers, and two warriors.

All of them were of the Vampire race and were from the World Maker guild.

Chapter 514: Common Enemy

"Leaveme... it is really distasteful saying your name. I'll just call you Alone," Rawprocessor said. "It is time that you follow us back and hand over that divine treasure you have stolen. I admit I have underestimated you a few times, but I have brought enough people this time. You are welcome to use your Fire God Barrage, we have a contingency on that. You have no chance for victory now."

Leavemealone didn't respond. He just looked at the newly arrived group with hostility.

"Hmph, you are always trying to act cool," Rawprocessor continued. "That divine treasure is not something for a lowly person such as you. Only our Master, who is destined to rule this world, deserves it. It is just a matter of time before you ants understand your places in this world."

Leavemealone simply stood in silence.

"Damn it, I really can't stand it!" Jack said. "Can you say something back, please? If not, then just go ahead and smack him already. Why do you let him talk shit for so long? Like he said, do you have to act so cool?"

Both Leavemealone and the World Maker people looked at Jack in confusion. But their confusion was for different reasons.

Leavemealone said, "You are not with them?"

While Rawprocessor said, "Who the hell are you? Why can't I inspect you? If you don't want to get hurt, then just get the hell away!"

The Paladin who stood behind Rawprocessor nudged at him and whispered something to his ear. Rawprocessor seemed to realize something and asked, "Why do you wear God-eye monocle? Where did you get that?!"

Hearing that, Jack turned to Leavemealone and said, "Oh...! So you think I am with them because of my monocle? Damn, dude. You should have said something instead of just attacking me like that. We have fought for nothing. I am not with them. In fact, I am also their enemy."

"Our enemy?" Rawprocessor muttered after hearing Jack's words. The paladin again whispered something. Rawprocessor frowned and then said to the Paladin, "no way. That guy is in Themisphere kingdom. Other than us and the dwarf races, normal players have not yet the means to cross country."

No longer bothering to whisper, the paladin simply said, "he is of the Human race."

Rawprocessor eyes widen. It was true that there were humans in the Sangrod empire, but those were all natives. All the players that arrived in this country were all of the vampire race. And they all had similar characteristics of pale face and the two visibly obvious fangs when they opened their mouth.

Rawprocessor stared at Jack intently and asked, "are you Storm Wind?"

Jack did not answer. In fact, Jack didn't even look at the World Maker group. He was still looking at Leavemealone. "Why are you still silent with enemies in front of you? Just now you attacked me without making sure first, now they are one hundred percent your enemies and you just stand there doing nothing."

Leavemealone was irked. Under normal circumstances, he would have just whacked them without ceremony. But he had misunderstood Jack as their crony because of his God-eye monocle. He did not attack once Rawprocessor appeared because he was worried about dealing with all of them. After the fight with Jack just now, he was not certain if he could win even without the handicap from sunlight exposure. If Jack and Rawprocessor ganged up on him, he would be in huge trouble. That's why he just stayed silent while thinking of a way out.

"Well, since you are not doing anything, I will act first then," Jack said as another spell formation was formed on the tip of his magic staff. Five runes were formed at the same time.

"Multi-rune casting?" Rawprocessor was surprised. He then realized another thing, Jack was holding both a longsword and a magic staff. "You truly are Storm wind!" He exclaimed.

Jack's spell was completed and he threw the spell right in the middle of the World Maker group. The group was startled, wasn't their leader still having a conversation? Not only were their preys ignoring them, they even attacked first. They didn't act like preys at all!

Eleven crimson chains shot out. Rawprocessor, the paladin, and the assassin were the quickest to react. They hurriedly ran away from the area of effect. The advanced class players were slower to react. All seven were entangled by the crimson chains. They tried to hack at the chains without any success.

Jack dove into the middle of the bound players. He activated Adrenaline Rush and used Whirlwind Slash. Whirlwind Slash had a fast cooldown for an elite skill, only one minute.

All the players that were still bound by the crimson chains could not defend themselves. Jack's blade cut through all of them and their HP immediately fell to 1.

Jack had expected it. When he heard Rawprocessor talking about the contingency for Lightning God Barrage, he had suspected they were using the same trick as Yellow Death. They probably also had teleportation scrolls. Unfortunately, they couldn't use it while being bound by his spell.

Jack made another circling slash, but it was not a skill this time. He simply spun his body and slash. The bound players only had 1 HP left. A simple touch was enough to finish them.

Rawprocessor looked at Jack in consternation. Jack, who was standing over the bodies of his seven underlings with eleven crimson chains weaving around him looked very sinister. He couldn't help but gulp.

'What the hell is Gridhacker doing? Throwing his problem my way. Doesn't he know I have enough on my plate already?' Rawprocessor cursed in his mind.

He had no chance to think further as he heard screams from behind. His two remaining underlings, the Paladin and the Assassin, were being bombarded by Leavemealone's punches.

Leavemealone was not simply standing just now. He had activated Meditation to recover the HP he lost during his fight with Jack. Now that his enemies' attentions were drawn by Jack, it was a perfect time to strike.

He used to be Rogue, so he had the Backstab skill. Though he was using fist instead of dagger now, the effect was still the same. He used it on the low HP and low defense Assassin. It scored critical damage.

There was another thing worth noting from his punch. Leavemealone's Ki-infused Fist was on cooldown, yet his fist was shining. The shine was different though. The fist appeared larger. In fact, it appeared as if the fist weapons on Leavemealone's hands had broken apart and were held only by light. Jack saw it and immediately knew, that was a weapon in its Overlimit state. The guy had a weapon similar to his Storm Breaker, a weapon that came from the Seed of Thousand Forms.

The critical damage produced by the weapon was disastrous. The Assassin's HP plunged rapidly but lingered at 1. Leavemealone had seen what happened when Jack dealt with the seven opponents, so he had expected this as well. His other arm punch out and claimed the Assassin's life.

"You!" Rawprocessor shouted in anger. "How dare you ask for a helper!"

"You are one to talk about helpers. You shouldn't have come out to the sunlight," Rawprocessor heard Jack's voice nearby, he quickly erected Magic Shield, just as Jack's sword crashed onto it.

He was surprised to see Jack's sword was different from before. In response to Leavemealone, Jack had also activated Overlimit for his Storm Breaker. Jack had used Flame Strike as well, Rawprocessor's Magic Shield was shattered.

Before the guy could respond further, Jack continued with quick slashes. His second slash reduced Rawprocessor's HP to 1, the third slash claimed his life. Rawprocessor's eyes were still wide. This was too fast and unexpected. He had not yet used all the tools in his arsenal.

The Paladin was just about to throw a Soothing Light at Rawprocessor, but Rawprocessor had already died before he had the chance. Everything simply moved too fast. Peniel later explained to Jack that the

Soothing Light skill was Paladin's first standard skill. At its first level, the skill healed 1000 HP to the target.

Now, the Paladin was bombarded by Leavemealone's Infinite Lightning Punches. With the Overlimit still active, some damages bypassed the Paladin's shield. Leavemealone also sent his punches at various angles that caused the Paladin to have difficulty blocking all his punches.

The Paladin ended up using the Soothing Light on himself, but Leavemealone's punches were still relentless. In the end, the Paladin succumbed.

"They were all wearing Amulet of Rebirth," Jack said. No one dropped any loots, except for one. Jack bent down and picked up Rawprocessor's God-eye monocle. John was going to flip for this.

"You don't mind if I keep this, right?" Jack said to Leavemealone, which was replied with a cold shoulder.

'Damn, this guy really...,' Jack was lost for words. He simply stored the monocle in his storage bag.

Jack was originally planning to capture the World Maker people for interrogation in case he ever crossed one. But after meeting Wilted Tree and being told that the World Maker's base of operation was very far away, he no longer felt like doing it.

Since the base was very far away, and he trusted Wilted Tree's words, it was no use knowing the place. He already got enough matters on his plate. He was not going to travel to that far away place just to settle a score with this World Maker group. He decided to just deal with them if he met them, like what happened just now.

"So, I assume they are coming for you because of your Fire God Blessing. How do you get that divine treasure anyway?" Jack asked Leavemealone.

The guy didn't answer, he walked to where the two fairies were. "Let's go," he said to Carnelia.

Jack called out, "Wait! We have a common enemy. We should work together. How about adding each other as friends?"

Leavemealone glanced back at Jack and uttered, "Leave me alone!" He then turned around and left.

'The hell is this guy's problem...,' Jack said in his mind.

Chapter 515: Arriving In Tranviste

Jack was not the type to push it if the other side was unwilling. He left Leavemealone alone.

He summoned Pandora again and rode her in the direction that Peniel indicated. Under the dark clouds, everything looked bleak. Jack wondered how the players adjusted to living here without any sunlight. It must be weird going on their daily routines without the cycle of night and day.

On the way, Peniel talked about some of the things she had chatted about with Carnelia. The two fairies didn't act like the best of friends when they met but they still chatted as if they were the best of friends while their two partners were fighting.

Peniel said Leavemealone went through a similar experience during the tutorial period, which was saving a divine being from a weird room. The one saved by him was the God of Pride. He had then bestowed Carnelia to Leavemealone and also the Seed of Thousand Forms.

Weirdly, Leavemealone had chosen a fist weapon right from the start for the weapon transformation, even when the standard basic class weapons were a sword, dagger, and magic staff. When Carnelia asked him why? He said he only know how to fight with his fists. He was not interested in the other weapons.

Luckily, he had picked the Ranger class instead of the other two basic classes. Hence, Carnelia could then point out to him the next path he needed to take to be a Battle Monk, a class that focused on fist-fighting.

From Peniel's story, Jack surmised those rewards he got from Goddess Serenity should be the standard rewards from saving her, since they were the same as what Leavemealone received. This made these two incidents appear very much like scripted events. Which was weird, because the place where those divine beings were trapped was almost impossible to get into without the right conditions.

Thinking about it just added more questions than answers, so Jack conveniently threw all these issues to the back of his mind and asked Peniel another thing he was curious about, "What about that Runestone of Combat he used?"

"That was one of the rare runestones usable during a battle, and the one he used is the best one there is. When it is activated, it will increase the user's attributes, damage, and defense. The degree of increase depends on the willpower injected into it. Similar to your other runestones."

'No wonder his strength and speed suddenly spiked,' Jack thought.

Jack continued to travel and killed new monsters which were not too high in level. On the morning of the second day after meeting Leavemealone, or at least he thought it was morning because the sky was always dark, he finally saw something on the horizon that looked like a very large city.

"That is Tranviste?" Jack asked.

"It is," Peniel confirmed.

Jack also saw more and more blue dots around the vicinity of the city. When he was close to the gate, he saw a commotion between a group and a very short man. From his radar's color, these people were all players. Jack looked closer and found that the short man was a dwarf. He was being pushed around by a group of players who were all consisted of the Vampire race.

"There is a dwarf player in this country?" Jack said.

"It is not a strange thing to see dwarfs inside Sangrod cities. The Republic of Palgrost where dwarfs dwell is next to this Sangrod Empire, and the dwarfs have developed some sort of train system that allowed them to travel back and forth between the two countries."

"So even low-level players can travel in between these two countries," Jack thought.

"Yes, but the cost of using these trains is not cheap," Peniel said.

The confrontation between this lone dwarf was getting heated, he could hear the two sides screaming at each other already. Jack looked at the gate. It was still far away, the guards won't do anything unless the commotion was very close to the city.

Spurred by his heroic impulse, Jack came down and unsummoned Pandora. He then walked towards the quarreling group. The two sides were taking out weapons already. The Dwarf was a level 36 Assassin named Sinful Pleasure, while the other side was six players with a mix of different advanced classes led by a level 36 Berserker.

"Yo, what is the problem here?" Jack asked after arriving.

The lead Berserker looked at Jack and said, "this has got nothing to do with you!" He turned to the dwarf but seemed to realize something before turning back. He said, "You are a human? Another lesser race. You are not welcome in this city!"

Jack turned to the dwarf, who said to Jack, "they have also been spouting nonsenses about my race."

Jack then turned back and said, "the hell, man. You people are taking this role-playing business too seriously. We are all players who are originally humans. What is this crap about races?"

"Hmph! We have been chosen to be the superior Vampire race. This city is for us only, other races' players are not welcomed!"

"Do you think you are the mayor of the city? The city belonged to the natives, you freaks! We are all just guests in this world," Jack scolded out.

"You lowly people who are chosen to be of lowly races do not worth our time. Leave now! Or we will send you back to your previous registered city."

"Well, I was originally trying to help resolve this peacefully. But after listening to your craps, it really pisses me off," Jack equipped both his swords and used Shooting Dash.

"Wa—Wait...!" The lead Berserker seemed to be taken aback by Jack's sudden aggressiveness.

Jack's Shooting Dash brought him into the center of the vampire group. His hands were covered by a red aura, signifying the Adrenaline Rush skill. His two swords then spun around at high speed. The Whirlwind Slash claimed all the advanced class players' lives. The lead Berserker survived this one hit but his life was very low.

"Yo—You...!"

Jack used Cross Slash on him, and he also fell.

"Damn! I hate these prejudiced types of people." Jack cursed as he sheathed his swords. He looked at the dwarf who was watching with his mouth gaping. "Are you all right?" Jack asked him.

"Ye... Yes... Thank you for the help...," the dwarf said. "You are a pretty violent one..."

"You all were already pulling out your weapons. Ain't it showing you all are about to resolve to violence?"

The dwarf looked at his hand which was still holding a dagger. "I suppose so," he said. "Well, anyway, thanks again for the assist! I am Sinful Pleasure. I can't inspect your name."

"Storm Wind," Jack introduced himself.

"First time here?" Sinful asked.

"Yes. Have you ever seen any human player?"

"Nope. You are the first. Since you have saved me. Come! Let me show you the city."

Jack didn't decline. This is his first time in another country's city. Having a guide would be beneficial. The soldiers at the gate didn't stop Sinful, but they halted Jack.

"This is the first time you visit a different race's main city, they are simply registering your identity," Peniel explained.

Jack was taken to a guard post next to the gate. He was told to put his hand onto a device.

"Are you a member of a kingdom faction?" The soldier asked.

"Yes, I am a member of Themisphere Kingdom faction," Jack answered.

"Let me check the badge please."

Jack handed it to him. The soldier used the same device to check the badge.

"A viscount. I must advise you, though, your privilege as a Themisphere Viscount is not valid here. So don't act like one when you are in this city."

Jack nodded.

"Stay out of trouble," the soldier said as he gave the badge back to Jack.

"I will. Do you mind telling me where I can find Caleb Lucien?" Jack asked.

The soldier raised his eyebrows. "You should address him as Master Caleb Lucien. What is your business with His Lordship?"

"I am on an official trip tasked by Themisphere royal family. I have a letter that I must pass to Master Caleb."

"You can find him at the City Hall. It was the largest building at the center of the city. Hard to miss."

Jack thanked the soldier and left. Sinful was waiting outside.

"You are taking your time in there, I thought you have a problem," Sinful said.

"No, no problem. I'm simply asking for direction," Jack replied

"Why did you bother asking? You have me!" Sinful declared. "By the way, Where did you get that informative fairy?" Sinful had heard Peniel explain when Jack was held by the soldiers.

"From a quest," Jack answered simply. More players had become Archmages, but not many passed at their first try so not many knew yet about the Call Familiar spell. Jack didn't feel like explaining, he said,

"How about showing me around the city? My destination is the city hall but I guess I can spend some time sightseeing first."

"Sure, follow me," Sinful said. Then to Peniel, he said, "It's nice to meet you, miss. Never seen a fairy before, or any creatures other than vampire, dwarf, and human that can talk like you."

"Tee-hee, I am special," Peniel replied.

"Yes, I can see that. All right, let's go this way first!"

Chapter 516: Missing Outworlders Coordination Center

Sinful took them through the wide main street. The city was not less crowded than Thereath. Because it was always nighttime, every building had many artificial lamps to provide enough light.

"In Sangrod cities, you should avoid going through the alleys. Even in a busy shopping neighborhood, there were not that many lightings in the alleys. With the sky always dark, such places conceal unwanted dangers hiding in the corner. By the way, why do you want to go to the city hall?"

"I am on a quest," Jack simply answered.

Sinful took Jack around the business district to browse on shops. Jack was again hoarding the ores. Sinful was rather confused why someone bothered buying so many common ores? Were common ores expensive in Themisphere?

Jack noticed many of the natives were human. In fact, he had not seen any native Vampire. Even the patrolling soldiers were human.

Some shops were selling various ingredients and materials, but Jack didn't keep track of which was not available in Thereath. Some sold trade goods, seeing those reminded him of someone. He asked Sinful to show him the way to Tranviste's Zone Portal.

Once he established the link, he informed Jeanny of this good news. They could now access another country where their members could visit, unlike Larabar. But he still asked them to set a limitation so only core members or those they trusted, for example, those veterans who had fought bravely with them against the coalition, to have access to this town.

At this time, Jeanny and John were already back at Heavenly Citadel. They had successfully raided the Giant Beehive. Several casualties occurred, but they received an abundance of rewards from clearing the monster settlement.

Jack then contacted Dylan Fairdeal, telling him that the guild now had access to a city in the Sangrod Empire.

Jack received his reply soon, "Incredible! I seriously have my doubt about why they let someone like you be the leader. Now I see your redeeming quality. Perhaps there is still hope for this guild. I originally want to just quit once I finish establishing the trade routes, but I guess I can stay."

"Can you please be a bit less condescending when you talk about someone who has brought you benefits? And I hope you are just kidding about leaving the guild after getting the benefits. I will hunt you down, I'm not joking. I vouched for you to join the guild, don't embarrass me!"

"I am just joking, haha."

Peniel said to Jack, "Tell him that if he leaves the guild. All the teleportation links he established during his time as a guild member will disappear. He has to go back again to the cities and re-establish the links. So he cannot abuse the guild's trust by taking advantage of guild's features like that."

Jack relayed the information to Dylan.

"Ah, damn!" Dylan replied.

"What 'ah, damn?' Are you truly planning that? I tell you, I'm truly going to hunt you down and cut you to pieces if you betray the guild. Don't test me!"

"Don't be so serious, man. I'm just joking. Aren't you the one who likes to joke with me? I'm just treating you the same. You don't like it now, do you?"

"I will get you back for this."

"We will see."

"So, are you coming over now?"

"No, I'm still in the middle of a caravan transport. Will head over once this trade route is completed."

Jack closed the chat. When he came out of the Zone Portal, he asked Sinful to take him to the City Hall. He thought he had seen the city enough.

"So you came from the Republic of Palgrost?" Jack asked Sinful while they were on their way.

"Yes, I am from a city called Doghbarum," Sinful answered. "Weird place. Their city is as if sculpted from the mountain. The place was more like a series of caves than a city. The folks are plenty friendly. The natives I mean, not the players."

"You have native friends there?" Jack asked.

"Yeah. I'm pretty popular there. I am like the friendliest dwarf outworlder there," Sinful claimed.

Another player dwarf passed by at the time. In this city, Jack had seen some dwarf players. Only minuscule compared to vampire players, but it was still a decent number. Sinful called out to the passing dwarf.

"Hey, dwarf! How are you doing?"

The passing dwarf player just gave him a nod as a reply.

Jack laughed, "do you also greet your native dwarven friends in Doghbarum like that?"

"Yeah. They like my friendly nature," Sinful said.

"Do they...?"

While they were chatting, Jack noticed a large building that was crowded. Strange thing was, they were all players. "What's that place?" Jack asked.

"Oh, that is a peculiar place. It was built by a humanitarian group of players. The place is called Missing Outworlders Coordination Center. You know how when we were pulled into this world, we were pulled randomly to different cities. Many of us don't know if our relatives or families are also pulled into this world. But after this long, we can assume that everyone has been. Yet, we don't know where our families end up. That place collects all the outworlders' information and helps them connect with their lost ones. You only need to go there and give them your info, who you are in the real world and who you are searching for, then they assign someone to be your friend. Once they get info regarding the person you are looking for, they will give you a message through the friend system, then you can be reunited."

"Wow! That is a very good and noble intention. Doing that will take up a bulk of their time. That means they won't be able to level up."

"They don't care about leveling up. As I said, they are a bunch of humanitarians. They considered it their calling for connecting and helping others."

"How do they afford the cost? They will need coins for their works, won't they? I mean, how do they even buy that building they are using?"

"Same as in our past world, donations. Their social works had helped quite many players, who were more than happy enough to give them regular donations. Even one who is not benefited from them is inspired enough to donate some coins to their cause."

"I am inspired. Let's go in and have a look," Jack said.

"You have a family you want to look for?" Sinful asked.

"No. The funny thing is, I have managed to find my one family member out of sheer luck. I'm just curious."

The inside was very hectic. There were lots of tables where people were queueing. Sinful explained to Jack that those were the ones who were recording the info. Jack inspect and found the player staffs were indeed low-level. Most of them were mostly below level 20.

"So many people," Jack muttered.

"Yeah, imagine a warzone where people trying to find their missing relatives. This is the entire world, man. Makes you wonder why all this happened," Sinful said.

"Indeed."

Why they were watching the vigor of the place, they were startled by a series of cries.

"Mother!"

"Daughter!"

A middle-aged woman and a teenage girl were running towards each other. They hugged each other as tears streamed from their eyes.

"I finally found you! I'm so glad!"

"I'm sorry, mother! I shouldn't say the things I last said. I thought I have lost you forever."

"Oh, daughter. It's me who should apologize. I shouldn't have pushed you so hard in your study."

"I'm sorry, mother! I fear that awful conversation has been our last."

"I'm sorry, child. You can do whatever you want, you don't need to study if you don't want to."

"Now that we are together, I want to say I'm sorry about what we last talked about."

"It's really was my fault to have pushed you to study so."

Jack, who was nearby the two, said to Sinful, "this is very touching and all, but did you notice that they don't actually listen to one another?"

The mother and daughter who were still hugging turned and gave Jack a look.

"Holy crap! You didn't listen to each other but you actually listened to me?"

"Can you please be a bit more sensitive?" Jack heard someone chiding him. He turned and saw a late-aged woman in a robe. Jack used Inspect and found she was called Florence, a level 19 Healer.

This healer came to the mother and child, she gave a few encouraging words. The two thanked Florence to have helped the two find each other. Florence said she was happy for them. Florence informed them that they were still looking for the father and brother and that she would inform them once they received any news. The two thanked her again before leaving, still hugging each other.

"This is a very noble operation you people are running," Jack said to Florence once the two left.

Florence gave Jack a side-eye. "Do you need something? If you are here just to make fun of people who need help, then I suggest you leave."

"Ahaha, you misunderstand. I admit I do make crude comments sometimes, but I by no means imply any disrespect. I actually admire your works."

"Really? Then how about donating some coins to us then?"

"How about I give you access to a new country?"

Chapter 517: Scheme To Spread Influence

"New Country?"

"Can't you tell I'm a human player?" Jack asked.

Florence scrutinized Jack. "Are you telling me you came from another country? A country with the players being humans?"

"Exactly, it's a country called Themisphere. If you can access the cities there, you can reunite more people. Maybe some of the missing persons you are looking for are in that country."

Florence gave the matter some thoughts, before he asked Jack, "What's in it for you?"

"I am truly sympathetic to your cause. I think it is incredible for someone to be willing to spend the time to arrange such an endeavor to help others. I would like to speak to the leader about this, do you mind introducing me? Is the leader here?"

"You are talking to the leader," Florence said.

"You are? Well, then let me express my admiration. To show you my sincerity, here is my donation," Jack handed 80 gold coins to her. That was roughly the number he had collected after raiding the two hideouts and one tiny monster settlement on his way to this city. He was never too hung up on these coins. He might have been able to apply the third upgrade on Ellie's Restaurant or Amy's Bakery if he had saved more, but he would prefer to use them on something he thought was right, like giving them to the guild or donating them to this socialist lady in front of him.

Florence's eyebrows lifted. "That was generous of you. Few people gave this amount in one go," Florence said as she accepted Jack's coins.

"Now that you see that I have no hidden motive, shall we talk about you helping the players in Themisphere country as well?"

"Sure, but the biggest problem is how we send people over. From what I heard from others who had often ventured out into the wilderness, the border in between countries was not something traversable at the moment. Only the border between this country and the dwarf's enjoyed the luxury of safe travel due to the train system. How do you propose we cross through?"

"That's easy. You just join my guild. Then you can travel to Themisphere using the Zone Portal," Jack said.

"Oh? That is even more generous of you. All the guilds I know only care about increasing their power and being the best. If my people and I join your guild, we will be deadweights. We won't do anything for your guild. We only care about helping others find out about their missing relatives."

"No worry, you can just quit the guild once you arrive in Themisphere," Jack said.

"Aren't you forgetting that those who quit the guild will lose access to the teleportation links they registered during their time as members?" Peniel asked.

"That system you described is good to prevent people trying to take advantage in getting multiple teleportation links during their time as guild members," Jack explained. "But if it is only one link, that system is not too useful. I can teleport to one city, quit the guild. Even though I lost the link to that city, but since I am already in the city, it is easy for me to re-established the link again."

"I see... That's why you asked Jeanny to set so only trusted members to be allowed access to this foreign city," Peniel said.

"Yes," Jack returned his attention to Florence. "So, what say you? You can just quit our guild after. But, of course, we can't keep on letting you use this service continuously. It is only for your starting members to set up your operation and communication between the two countries, I will say ten people. If you find out any missing relatives between Themisphere and this country, you can only ask your clients to

hurry level up so they can cross through the countries in the future. At least they already know where they should be heading."

"Hm... This can work," Florence said.

"Aren't you supposed to discuss this with the other two leaders first?" Peniel said to Jack.

"It is just temporarily borrowing ten guild slot members, what's to discuss?" Jack said.

"Suit yourself."

Hearing Peniel's tone, he decided to still talk with Jeanny and John. Jack said to Florence to wait as he discussed things with his colleagues. Jeanny had no problem. John, of course, being him, had something to say about it.

"Do you think we are a charity?"

"Dude, where is your sense of goodness? Aren't you afraid you will go to hell when your time is up?" Jack said.

"Friend, If I believe there is a hell, I will be terrified, because I know I will head straight there. But luckily for me, I don't. So please don't use superstition on me."

"So, you are objecting?"

"I never say so. We can help, but we have to squeeze some use out of them as well."

"Man... I'm sure you are going to hell. And since I believe in one, it makes me feel better that you will get what you deserve. So, what do you propose?"

"Do like what you originally intended. Have ten, only ten, to cross over here, and soon. Our member capacity is almost filled up, we are reviewing several potential candidates to fill up these remaining spaces, can't let them wait too long."

"Don't you want to free up some space to see if we can get any Vampire race players to join?"

"I think it will need some time for the players in that country to notice us. Anyway, our guild is not too far from level 3, the new members have been diligently doing guild quests. We should have more spaces by then. The two hideout bosses you sent to the jail are certainly helping. With the coalition's reduced activity, we are free to do what we need to do. Your threat on them is certainly long-lasting, longer than I expect."

Little did they know, although it was true the three leaders of the coalition were still wary of Jack's threat. The real reason why they had yet not returned their main activities to Thereath was because, in the past couple of weeks, some natives in masks had been hunting their teams who were focusing on doing the second prince's kingdom faction quests. They had pulled back the majority of their forces again to review the situation.

"So, how do you want to squeeze some use from these kind-hearted socialists?" Jack asked.

"Ask their leader, Florence you said her name is? To stay as a member of our guild. The others you can have them quit once they cross over," John said.

"What for?"

"Publicity. It's time we spread our influence and make sure that Thereath is our turf. They are to do their work under our banner. Make everyone think as if our guild is the one sponsoring this socialist work. If we have as many players feel indebted to us due to this, we will have the backing of the mass. At that time, we don't need to worry about the coalition's superior number. Any independent player will gladly come to our aid if we need help. We will put a large plaque with our guild name on it and hang it at the entrance of their workplace. For that, not only will we help them cross over, we will provide them with a plot of land."

"We will? Do you have the fund for that? If you say I will be the one to pay for that, you have another thing coming."

Jeanny was the one who responded, "I have a property deed. It is an extra reward I received from performing my kingdom faction quest excellently. The site is not the best, it is nearby the slum district, but the size of the land should be enough for your friend's usage."

"I originally want her to use it to build commercial structures to support our guild's fundings," John said. "But the poor site might just end up being a bad business place, won't be able to scrounge up much profit. Your proposal has come at a perfect time for us to use this property deed. Another thing I want you to convey to Florence. Not only do they have to admit us as their backings, but they also have to share all the players' information with us. If we see any potential players from their data, we can recruit these players. Especially if Florence has succeeded in finding their loved ones. They will feel indebted to us for providing the services, it will make the recruitment easier. It's time for us to only pick the cream of the crop as our members."

"Well, as I said. I will leave all this scheming and whatnot to you. I'm not good at this anyway. I will convey your message to her. I can't guarantee she will agree though."

"If she doesn't, then no cooperation. Ask her to find her own way here."

"Man... You are truly harsh. I hope you get burned badly in hell."

Jack then told Florence of John's intention.

"I should have guessed, you guild people always have an angle," Florence commented.

Jack gave her a wry smile. "I'm sorry. If it is only me, I will gladly help you no condition required, but the guild does not belong to only me."

"I guess I can accept the condition. I don't care about your guild's power play, as long as my people and I are allowed to do as we wish. I don't mind letting people see your guild name around our workplace."

"What about the information?"

"You only need the data of level, class, skills, and their profession and affiliation before they were pulled into this world, right? I don't see why that is a problem."

"Great, then we have a deal!" Jack declared.

Chapter 518: Maxius Family

After adding Florence to his Friend list and inviting her into the guild. Jack left their coordinations to Jeanny and John. He walked out of the place and asked Sinful to continue bringing him to the city hall.

The city hall was indeed hard to miss. It was a gargantuan building similar to the real world's cathedral. The fact that a Vampire's administration place was copying the previous world's house of God worship was an irony.

When he wanted to enter, the soldiers barred the way.

"Commoners are not allowed here," the soldiers said.

Jack produced his Themisphere kingdom faction nobility badge and showed it to the soldiers. "My name is Storm Wind. I am a Viscount of Themisphere. I'm here for an official visit under the order of Prince Alonzo, the third prince of Themisphere, to meet with Caleb Lucien and deliver my prince's message."

The soldier checked the badge, before saying, "Wait here." Then one of them went inside, presumably to announce Jack's visit.

"You are a Viscount of Themisphere?" Sinful asked with admiration in his tone.

"Yeah, like I said. I'm on a quest," Jack replied.

"Not a normal quest, I see."

The soldier who went in soon returned. "All right, you can go in. Follow the soldier inside to meet Master Caleb. Do not wander around."

Jack thanked the soldier and went in. When Sinful wanted to follow, the soldiers stopped him.

"Only the Themisphere's Viscount is allowed. You have no business to enter," the soldier said.

Sinful called to Jack, "It's all right! I will wait here."

Jack turned to him. "Are you sure? You have already shown me around. There is no need for you to intentionally wait for me. You can go do your things."

"It's okay. I'm free anyway. I will wait. Hey, how about we add each other as friends?"

"Sure," Jack said and sent him a Friend invite.

Jack said goodbye to him and walked in following a soldier who had been waiting inside. The soldier took Jack through several luxurious rooms with Gothic style. They soon came into a large hall where two men were standing at the other side. The soldier excused himself and left the room, leaving Jack with the two.

One was a middle-aged pale man. The other had his back to Jack, Jack couldn't see his feature, but his long silver hair was rather striking. Both of them wore imposing noble suits. Jack did not doubt that both of them were native Vampires. After learning mana sensing, Jack no longer need to use Inspect to know that someone was dangerous. These two natives had much higher levels than him.

Jack approached the two. From the way they acted, it seemed like the one with his back to Jack was the one in higher ranking, the middle-aged man assumed a deferential attitude to the man, so Jack assumed that long-haired man to be Caleb Lucien.

"Greetings, Master Caleb Lucien," Jack said to the man.

But unexpectedly, it was the middle-aged vampire standing by the side who answered, "You must have had a long journey here. I assume you have a letter from Prince Alonzo for me?"

Jack used Inspect on them.

Caleb Lucien (Special Elite Vampire, High Elder), level 60

HP: 360,000

Horatio Maxius (Rare Elite Vampire, Archaic), level 70

HP: 840,000

The long-haired man was Horatio, while the middle-aged man was Caleb.

'Assumption is truly not good,' Jack admonished himself.

He couldn't help but gulp, this long-haired vampire was as powerful as Garland Thunderhand. The long-haired man turned around. To Jack's surprise, his face was that of a very young man. If judging only from the face, Jack would say that their ages were supposed to be similar.

"So, it is prince Alonzo's champion, we have been waiting for you," Horatio said. His voice was melodious, his eyes were captivating, Jack couldn't help but feel he had trouble looking away under this young vampire's stare.

"You did?"

Seeing Jack's uncertainty, Caleb made an introduction, "This is Master Horatio of the Maxius family, the ruling family of Sangrod Empire. Master Horatio is the third son to the patriarch of the Maxius family, Marcus Maxius, who to other countries is also known as Emperor Marcus."

'Shouldn't that make him a prince then? No wonder Caleb treated this young man with such reverence,' Jack thought. He quickly made a polite bow and said, "Forgive my rudeness, I am not aware that I will be meeting Your Highness."

Horatio waved him off. "I never really care for formality. Please, just refer to me as Horatio. Please sit."

After the three took their sit, Horatio said, "It is surprising to have a human outworlder managing to cross countries while still below level 50."

"I have a very good steed," Jack replied. He then took out Prince Alonzo's letter and handed it to Caleb. "This is the letter from Prince Alonzo."

After reading the letter, Caleb gave it to Horatio. Horatio studied it for a while before he said, "Rivalry between siblings is sad. But it is also almost unavoidable in a family with power. I myself had been in rivalry with my brothers and sisters for hundreds of years."

"Hundreds...?"

"You seemed surprised. How old do you think I am?" Horatio asked.

"Uh... you look twenty-ish...," Jack answered.

Horatio smiled. "We vampires retained our appearance once we are turned. I was made a vampire by the patriarch of the Maxius family seven hundred and fifty-six years ago."

"That... is a long time... You are made?"

"Yes. Vampires are made, not born. But we might as well be, we become something else entirely when we do. Only the human race can be made a vampire, but not all humans had the possibility to. Certain traits and blood conditions were needed. Those who didn't qualify will simply die or turn into mindless ghouls. My father, my vampire father to be exact, the patriarch of the Maxius family, had seen the blood potential within me and thus choose me to be his third son. As a ruling family, he didn't make that decision lightly. Nowadays, before turning a human into a vampire, the subject has to go through a series of examinations and rites to avoid unnecessary casualties. Yet, the probability of one becoming a vampire is still very low, that's why our population is very few despite we can live a long life."

"I guess the population of vampires exploded when we outworlders appeared," Jack joked.

"Outworlders are not real vampires," Horatio said. "Forgive me, I didn't mean any disregard. We have observed outworlders who appeared in this country. Although they shared some of our traits, there are some significant differences. For one, they were not made as we native vampires did. They came into this world already a vampire. Another difference is, they grow old."

"They do? But how can you tell? We only arrive in this world less than four months ago."

"Although it is just a minute change, we can still tell," Horatio said with a smile.

"I see. About turning into a vampire. Have you ever tried turning a human outworlder into a vampire? Is that possible?"

"We are not sure. You are the first human outworlder we meet. Now that you pique my interest, how about you give yourself for us to experiment with?"

"Uh... I... Please forget I said that."

Horatio laughed. "Enough about my race. Let's talk about the formal matter. Let me tell you the truth, it is I who have Caleb to talk with Mason about an alliance. As a third son myself, I understand Prince Alonzo's plight. But although I am sympathetic to his cause, there is another reason why I am looking for this alliance."

'Here we go,' Jack thought.

"I need access to the Themisphere kingdom," Horatio said.

"You want to visit our country?"

"No, I need someone to help me search for someone in your country."

"Someone? Who?"

"A traitor of the Maxius family, Aubelard Maxius. He had fled from Sangrod around one hundred years ago. We have no idea where he is at the moment aside from he should be in Themisphere. Considering the location, it will be bad if we send our forces to search around. The Themisphere kingdom might see it as an act of aggression. But if the third prince's champion could help us in this search, then that will be helpful."

Jack then heard a notification telling him that he had been offered a quest, Search for Aubelard Maxius. It had S difficulty.

'Great... Now I have to search for one person in the whole kingdom. Heck! I haven't even traveled the whole kingdom yet. Where am I to begin? I won't even be surprised if this quest is categorized as SSS difficulty,' Jack lamented in his mind.

As Jack thought about his predicament, Horatio pocketed Prince Alonzo's letter. "Once you returned with news, I will give you a reply letter to Prince Alonzo. Complete with the Maxius family's seal of approval to announce our support. I will await your good news."

'In other words, there is no deal if I don't deliver,' Jack thought.

Chapter 519: Gold Rank Hunter

"All right, I accept. But if I am to search that uncle of yours, I will need more information to go by," Jack said. "How exactly does he betray you?"

"That is Maxius family's secret, you do not need to know," it was Caleb who answered.

"Suffice to say he made a grave mistake," Horatio added.

"Which town was he last seen in this country? Do you know in which direction he headed when he left?" Jack asked another question.

"This city we are in was the last city he was reported to be seen. The report from our pursuer at the time was he was heading Northeast."

"I doubt the pursuers stopped just because of the border. What further report was available after they chased him into Themisphere?"

"There was none."

"You need to help me if you want me to help you. I don't have much to go on if you withhold information."

"We don't withhold any. There was no further report because none of the pursuers we sent had returned. We assumed that all of them were killed. These pursuers were only scouts that were supposed to track Aubelard before we sent someone powerful enough to deal with him, but he must have found out and taken care of these pursuers."

This statement made Jack uneasy, he asked, "How powerful is this Aubelard...?"

"He is a level 80 rare elite vampire," Horatio answered.

"Le... level 80 rare elite...?" Jack stammered. This was the highest level native he had heard of.

"All you need to do is find his location, we are not asking you to deal with him," Caleb said. "In fact, we advise you to not approach him at all. He is a very dangerous individual and will not hesitate to kill you if he finds out that you have anything to do with us."

"That is right. For your sake, we strongly suggest to immediately come back to us once you confirm his location," Horatio added.

"Even if I find him, it is not guaranteed that he will stay there. By the time I report to you, he might have moved on," Jack said.

Horatio shook his head. "I don't believe so."

"Why?" Jack asked.

"He is wounded when he fled this country," Horatio answered. "Although he is still dangerous, he still needs to find a place to stay and heal. He can't afford to move freely or his wound will get worse."

"Wound? That was a hundred years ago. I'm sure whatever wound he had should have healed by now?"

"Our race did have an excellent healing factor. However, his wound is not anything normal. It was dealt by my father, the patriarch himself. Even if several hundred years passed, he will still not fully heal. It will even get worse if he didn't stay still and find enough sustenance."

"Sustenance? Do you mean human blood?"

"Any blood, but human blood will be best."

Jack gave the matter some thought, "anything else you can share with me?"

"Here, this is a portrait of him. Maybe you will get some information if you show this picture to someone who had seen him," Horatio said as he gave Jack a small-sized photograph.

'There is a photograph in this world?' Jack thought as he accepted. But the picture on the photograph looked more like a painting. A very realistic painting. It showed a middle-aged man with neatly combed grey hair in luxurious clothing.

"This should be helpful," Jack said as he stored the photograph.

"However, please note that an old vampire like my uncle has the ability to morph himself to look like a human. He might even look completely different from the picture."

"Uh... Then this picture isn't exactly helpful..."

Horatio smiled at Jack's comment. He continued, "although he could use disguise, it is only at night. If he is hit by Sunlight, the disguise will come off. So, maybe someone still sees him during the day."

"I see... Do you have anything else?"

"I am afraid that's all we have about my uncle."

"All right, I will do my best," Jack said as he stood up.

"We await your good news then," Horatio replied.

After Jack left, Horatio asked Caleb, "What do you think of his chances?"

"Very doubtful. I am confused why the third prince send an outworlder. They are too weak. The representatives from the first and second princes have a much better chance to succeed."

"Although your thinking makes sense, I won't be so sure. Outworlders might be weak for now, but their improvement rate is staggering. They are also very resourceful. I won't say that his chance is any less than the other two. Well, it doesn't matter anyway. I will show my support to whoever gets the information first."

When Jack came out of the city hall, Sinful Pleasure was still there.

"You are really still waiting for me," Jack commented.

"I have a good feeling about you. I think we can be good friends," Sinful said.

"Well, I think so too."

"So, where else do you want to go?"

"Is there Hunters Association and Adventurers Association here?"

"Sure, which one do you want to go to first?" Sinful asked.

"Hunters Association," Jack answered.

"Follow me!" Sinful said.

'I understand why you want to go to Hunters Association, but why Adventurers Association? You have no completed quest to report this time,' Peniel asked Jack using her mind.

'I remembered you said that when my Archmage reached level 35, I will be able to use two swords while still cast spells, right?'

'Yes.'

'I am just a tiny bit left from reaching that level. I want to get to that level first before I go on the search for this Aubelard fellow. So, maybe I will take a short quest that provided me enough exp for that. At the same time, increase my adventurer grade to Gold. I just need a little more points to get to that grade.'

'Hm... Good. In that case, once you reached level 35, we should find a place with Magic Furnace. The Mage academy here should also have one.'

'Like the one I used when forming a contract with you? Why do I need that place again? Is the spell I got at level 35 similar to the Call Familiar spell again?'

'Once you reached level 35, I will explain.'

The building that housed the Hunters Association in this city was similar in shape but different in its ornamentation. It had a lot more decoration and was more extravagant compared to the one in

Thereath. When Jack went inside, he found the layout to be almost the same as the one in Thereath. Because of this, he had no problem finding his way.

All the halls are similar to Thereath, crowded. Jack wondered if he could use the VIP status here as well. Peniel confirmed to him that the badge was valid at all branches of the Hunters Association, no matter the country. He showed his badge to the staff and was taken to the VIP hall. Sinful, however, was barred from entering.

"Dude, how did you get all this privilege?" He said.

"You want to wait for me again?" Jack asked.

"Yeah, I will be here."

Jack went in and handed the two hideout cores and one settlement core. Since the level he got these cores from was higher than the previous ones, the rewards he received were also higher. He received 22 gold coins and 9000 hunter points.

He also submitted his ten completed hunting quests and cashed in all the trophy loots. He got 9 gold coins and 860 hunter points

With these hunter points, Jack had broken through to a gold-rank hunter. The staff informed him of this, at the same time his badge was being processed. When it was returned, the badge was a dazzling golden color.

After spending a short time admiring his new badge, he asked the staff, "Can I see the exchange list for gold-grade hunters?" Jack had 15,323 hunter points available for exchange.

"Certainly, sir." A holographic list appeared in front of Jack.

Though the quality of the items in this exchange list was good, Jack still scrolled them speedily to the top, where the exclusive list was located. At the same time, he asked in his mind, 'Peniel, is the exclusive list in one city the same as the other city? If I take an exclusive item here, will it still be available in Thereath?'

'Exclusive items in neutral and league factions are divided by country. Every city in the same country will share the same exclusive items. But they are separate for different countries. If you take an exclusive item from this city, other cities in Sangrod will no longer have this item available.'

'So if I take an exclusive item here, I can teleport to Thereath and take the same item again?'

'Each country provides a different list. You might not find the same exclusive items if you go to Thereath. And by the way, do you think exclusive items in the gold hall are cheap?'

Jack reached the exclusive list at the same time when Peniel asked the question. His jaw dropped after seeing the list.

Complete map of Sangrod Empire (super rare tool) – 800,000 hunter points

Sun Destroyer Bow (super rare bow) – 600,000 hunter points

Wild Beast Bloodline (super rare consumable) – 750,000 hunter points

Sky Eagle Wing (super rare tool) – 700,000 hunter points

Chapter 520: Shady Merchant

Jack thought his 15,323 hunter points were already impressive and he could exchange for at least one item from the exclusive exchange list. But looking at the list now, he felt like his thought just now was the brunt of a joke.

Jack then asked the staff, "How many points do I need to reach diamond hunter grade?"

"one million hunter points, sir."

"One... one million...?" Jack couldn't imagine how long he would need to collect those many points. His current accumulated points were 16,513 hunter points.

"Don't worry. The higher-level quests gave more points. If you raid higher-level settlements, hideouts, or outposts, they will also give more points."

"Fine, I guess I have to work harder. I see some other maps in the regular list, what's the difference?" He scrolled down again to where he had seen the maps.

"Those maps show partial information only. For example, only show the main cities, only show basic monsters in the region, only show small monster caves, and things like that. The complete map shows everything."

"I see, what about this bloodline? I heard you mentioned it before," Jack scrolled back up to the exclusive list again.

"It is something that gives passive effects and can be leveled up. A higher grade one can even give active skill."

"This one here is not a high-grade one?" Jack asked.

"No," Peniel answered.

Jack decided to just save his hunter points. The lesser maps might be useful even though they contained partial information, but he had a personal guide who also had the same information, so there was no need for them.

When Jack rejoined with Sinful, Jack asked him to show the way to Adventurers Association next. The situation was the same as in Hunters Association, the same layout but more extravagant compared to Thereath's counterpart. Jack went into the Silver Hall and observed the available quests on the hanging boards. The highest difficulty available here was only B difficulty. He looked for the one that rewarded the most exp and adventurer points.

There were some mystery quests, but he avoided this. He was simply looking to increase his Archmage level, he didn't want to get entangled with an unknown quest that might end up taking a too long time to complete. After looking around, he couldn't find one that could give him enough exp points to level up, even if he set his exp setting to 100% for Archmage. So he simply chose one that gave out 50 adventurers points. He just needed 46 more points to upgrade to Gold rank. He should be able to find better quests in the Gold Hall.

The one he chose was a simple delivery task within the city. It was recommended for three people. Sinful was beside Jack at the time. Jack asked him if he was also a member of the Adventurers Association. Sinful said that he was and he was also a Silver Adventurer. Jack then asked him if he was interested to team up on that quest. The exp points rewarded were the same if Jack took the quest by himself or with another partner. Sinful looked at the quest Jack mentioned and agreed to it.

But while Jack could head to the VIP hall, Sinful needed to queue to get the quest. Sinful went to queue while Jack head up to the VIP hall. In front of the VIP counter, Jack mentioned the quest he wished to take. He also asked the staff if he could have another adventurer friend take on the same quest without his friend needing to queue below.

The staff asked for Sinful's full alias and if the person was inside this building. Jack answered yes. The staff then said that he had sent an invite for the quest to Sinful. Jack sent a message to Sinful, "do you get a quest-invite?"

Sinful sent a reply promptly, "Yes, I did. Is this your doing? I have accepted the quest, I no longer need to queue. I will wait for you downstairs."

Jack thanked the counter staff and went back down to meet with Sinful. The quest was rather straightforward, they simply had to take a package, which could not be stored into inventory, from one end of the city to the next. So it was a rather long walk. They ended up in a ghetto in the South part of the city and were besieged by three level 25 basic human thugs.

Jack asked Sinful to protect the package while he dealt with the thugs. It was a simple matter to Jack considering his opponent's lower levels. They completed the job without a problem and Jack got his Gold Adventurer Badge. He didn't bother to look for the Gold-rank exclusive list as he knew he wouldn't be able to afford it. Instead, he looked for a quest that provided sufficient exp points.

There were many, the Gold hall provided quests with A and S difficulty. He took an A difficulty quest which upon completion, should push his Archmage level to 35. He didn't bother with the S difficulty quests for the same reason as not taking the mystery quest. He didn't want to waste too much time on these quests.

The quest he got was called, Help merchant Yilus retrieve a stolen object, the time limit was two days and two people was suggested for this quest. Sinful was still a Silver adventurer, so he should not be able to join this quest. But when Jack asked again at the VIP counter, the staff informed him as a VIP member, he was allowed to take a lower rank adventurer to join the quests. Sinful was rather surprised when he received the quest invite again and was glad about it.

After getting the quest, a location had been marked on both Jack and Sinful's map. It was the coordinates of merchant Yilus' location. Knowing the place, Sinful took Jack to the marked location. It was a shop in the ghetto they had visited before.

The shop was the largest building in that part of the city, but it appeared rather shady. Jack and Sinful went in and asked for the merchant. There were two attendants in the shops, both appeared rather unfriendly. Jack wondered how this shop survived.

The attendant asked them to wait and then went into the closed section with a grunt. Not long after, he came out accompanied by a rather chubby man with small eyes, the guy looked no less shady than his shop.

"You are the one looking for me?" The chubby man, who was a level 35 special elite, asked.

"You are Yilus? You posted a request in the Adventurers Association about a stolen item. We are here for the job," Jack said.

"Ah! Of course, of course," Yilus exclaimed. His round face suddenly beamed with cordiality.

"Come, come, we will talk as we walk," the merchant said as he took a very large hooded cloak, wore it, and walked out of the shop. Jack and Sinful who were confused about why they were discussing the job outside, didn't move at first.

"Hurry up, will you. It's almost night already. I want to show you the place before that!" Yilus called.

'Show what place?' Jack thought. And how did he know it was almost night? The whole sky was dark in this God-forsaken country, but the two of them still followed.

They had a rather long walk. On the way, Jack had been asking about the details of the job but Yilus simply said he will explain later. Instead, he just chatted about unrelated stuff.

They slowly left the ghetto and came upon the business districts where Jack had walked around earlier today. Yilus brought them further into an area occupied by many big residential houses. Sinful explained to Jack the place they were at was the place where nobles lived, mostly vampires. This city was unlike Thereath where commoners were prohibited entry from the noble district. There were, however, more guard patrols in this place compared to the other areas. Jack wondered why the merchant took them to this kind of place.

They soon stopped outside an estate. Jack could see a manor not far away. The estate was not as big as Duke Alfredo's but was still impressive. Yilus didn't bring them into the estate but instead took them to one corner of the street which had a good view of the manor.

He looked around as if afraid someone was watching. With him wearing the hooded concealing cloak, Jack was afraid it might give a passerby a wrong impression.

He then said, "the stolen item is inside that mansion."

It took a while for the words to register, Jack soon blurted, "What the heck? You know where the stolen item is?"

"Yes, it is inside the mansion. Did I not say that just now?"

"Then why do you need us for? Just go and report to the soldiers. They can take back that stolen item of yours," Jack said.

"Well... The situation is a bit complicated."

"What's so complicated about a stolen item?"

"The soldiers won't be able to take back the item..."

"Because the person who has the item is a noble?"

"That is one of the reasons."

"There are other reasons?"

"Well... I might have owed the noble a bit of debt, and he might have taken something of mine as an assurance, which I have involuntarily relinquished..."

"What the f*ck?! That is not a stolen item!" Jack uttered.