

## World 651

### Chapter 651: Gaining a New Student

Peniel joined him again when Jack returned to where everyone was still enjoying the feast, he saw Domon was still with the dwarf. When he got near, Jack realized he knew the dwarf.

"Uncle Jet?" Jack asked. Although the person before him had a body extremely different from how Jack used to see him, the bearded face was still the same.

"Jack boy! It's good to see you!" The dwarf replied. He was Jet Hung, a level 46 Beastmaster.

Jet gave Jack a hug.

"This feels weird," Jack said. "I can lift you up easy, just like how you used to do to me."

"Tell me about it! My excellent body is reduced to this short one. Grrrh... Domon told me about the person responsible. When I get my hands on him, I'm going to wring him dry."

"You will have to get into the queue, my short uncle."

"Trying to be funny now? I can still kick your ass, you know?"

"In our past world, yes. Here? I doubt that," Jack said with a grin.

"Hoho! A challenge? We will see then. I heard from Domon that you will be fighting in the team match?" Jet asked.

"I am," Jack answered.

"Then we will see each other in the team match. I'm looking forward to kicking your ass as I used to do."

"I'm looking forward to you trying to do that with those short hands and legs."

"Smartass! A true martial artist knows how to adjust. Don't you look down on this short body, I might have lost my reach, but my smaller body also meant that it is more difficult for you to hit me! Also, I have developed a new move that adapts to this body."

"Oh? I am looking forward to seeing it," Domon remarked.

"So am I. So, are you doing good in Palgrost?" Jack asked.

"Yeah, very confused at first when the world turned. Learned all this game stuff on the fly, made lots of new young friends who taught me. I taught them martial arts in return."

"Those the people in your team?"

"Yeah, we are tight."

"All nine dwarf players are your friends?"

"Nah. Only the ones in the team match. I'm not familiar with those fighting in the individual matches."

"You are not in a guild?"

"Those young people explained to me about guilds. But after hearing it, I'm not. The guilds are similar to our real-world governments and gangsters, right? All about territory and power play. Not interested. I just want to enjoy my old age."

Jack laughed. "Yeah, that's the uncle Jet I remembered. Anyway, if you need anything, you are always welcome to our guild."

"Domon told me about it. You are one of the big shots in the guild I heard. Such a surprise. A brat like you, I will never imagine."

"Yeah, I'm looking forward to kicking your butt too."

The three chatted for a while. Jack asked Jet to add him to his Friend list, which he did. Jeanny and Giant Steve joined in not long after. Jack told them about the three World Maker players who joined the tournament.

Jack warned Domon about Spring Crown who was in the same section as him, that the person was a very famous gamer and a decent martial artist. Jack explained Spring Crown's fighting style is similar to Jack's in which he combined martial arts and game skills, and that the guy was very expert in using any class, skill, and weapon in past games. He was very good at studying his opponent's move and devising a counter-strategy. All in all, Jack told his grandfather to be careful and not to underestimate his opponent.

Domon simply nodded an acknowledgment.

\*

The feast went on till very late but some people left beforehand to rest early. Jack and his grandfather left together. When on his way, he saw a lone light green dot on his radar not far away, meaning a friend or guild member. He went over with Domon trailing. He could guess who this dot was.

When Jack came near, he saw Leavemealone was doing martial art training. He was practicing by kicking and punching a large tree.

"The council's people here might consider you showing dishonor if they catch you assaulting their tree like that," Jack said to him.

"Mind your own business," Leavemealone said without looking, he continued punching and kicking the tree.

"You saw Wong, didn't you? That's why you are restless? You don't have the confidence to beat him yet?" Jack asked.

"Mind your own business!" Leavemealone said again with a stronger tone.

Domon spoke up at this time, "You have a nice form, but it's too monotone. Your punches and kicks showed your convoluted mind. An expert opponent can easily coax you into making a mistake. You have to conquer your mind before you can conquer your opponent."

"Why don't you mind your own...," Leavemealone finally turned around upon Domon's words. He was still saying his words heatedly when he abruptly stopped. He stared at Domon intensely before uttering, "You are... You are master Domon?!"

"Oh? You know me?" Domon asked.

"I watched a lot of your videos! You are my role model!" Leavemealone said.

"I am? I am surprised I have a fan amongst the younger generation."

"My dad lose to you in the world championship, but he didn't feel bitter. He also idolized you and called you the best martial artist he had known. We always watched the recordings of your fights and my dad trained me in hope that someday I might be qualified enough to challenge you."

"Wow... You suddenly turn into a chatterbox in front of my gramps," Jack said.

Leavemealone turned to Jack with astonishment. "Master Domon is your grandfather?" He asked.

"He is," Jack answered.

"Who is your dad, son?" Domon asked.

"His name is Jared Shaw. You probably don't remember him," Leavemealone replied.

"I'm sorry to say I don't. Where is he now?"

"He had passed away a long time ago," Leavemealone said with sadness.

"I'm sorry to hear that. What's your name?"

"My name is Haon Shaw."

Domon nodded, "Haon, do you wish to learn my martial arts?"

Jack turned to Domon with a surprise. "You are reluctant to teach martial arts when I first asked you to. Now you offer it yourselves?" Jack asked.

"I wasn't interested because the ones you asked me to teach are all second-rates. Well, besides Jeanny, she is not bad. While for him, I know a talent when I see one. And aren't you saying we need to prevent those World Maker's people from becoming winners, right? This guy is in the same section as Wong, isn't he? Then it will serve our purpose if he becomes stronger."

"Well, it's not that I object. I just find it surprising, that's all," Jack said.

"So, what say you?" Domon asked Leavemealone again.

Leavemealone knelt and said, "Haon greets master."

"You two are so old-fashioned," Jack commented.

"Good, now rise. Because of the time constraint, there won't be much I can do to help you in this tournament. We can only hope you don't meet Wong in your first match. That guy is a genuine grandmaster, I admit your chance is slim. But it's a good thing you are not a beginner as well. I can give

you pointers to help you refine your moves and teach you one punching technique. Everything else will be up to you."

Domon started giving Leavemealone instructions on the spot. The two became very absorbed in it. Jack was glad to see his grandfather's teaching passion flared up again for teaching someone aside from him. Seeing the two's passionate spirits, he felt motivated. He moved some distances away and practiced his own Formless Flowing Sword Style.

After an hour of practice, he saw Domon and Leavemealone was still at it. Jack planned to leave first, but before leaving, Jack came to Leavemealone and told him to not use his divine fire skill if possible, for reasons that Peniel had told Jack before.

However, after mentioning the divine skill, he became curious. He asked Leavemealone, "I believe you used that fire god barrage when Wong captured you, didn't you? How did he survive your divine skill?"

"He used the same protective bubble his boss used," Leavemealone answered.

"Damn! How many of those defensive tools do they have?" Jack uttered. "But his tournament didn't allow tool, so he can't use the same trick. But it's still better if you don't use that divine skill in front of these religious natives."

"Doesn't plan to," Leavemealone said.

But Jack suddenly thought of something. "On another thought, scratch that! Use the bloody thing. The natives might bear some grudge against you, but it's better than letting World Maker grab the thing they want."

Leavemealone didn't reply.

"Hey! Did you hear me?" Jack called.

"I won't use that skill," Leavemealone said.

"What? Why?"

"Cause that will mean I accept the fact that I can't win against him with my martial arts."

"What the... There are bigger issues at stake here," Jack uttered.

"Fei, leave the man. If he doesn't want to, then let him be. There's nothing more important than a warrior's pride," Domon interjected.

"Uh... I think the fate of the world can be considered as more important than a bloody warrior's pride, don't you think?"

Now both Leavemealone and Domon ignored Jack.

'F\*ck!' Jack cursed within. It's pointless to reason with these two martial arts maniacs.

Since he couldn't think of a way to persuade them, he just warned the two before leaving to not stay up too late as tomorrow will be the first match, to which he was sure the two would choose to deliberately ignore as well.

\*

The next morning, everyone gathered in the Roman Theater behind the Temple of Courage. The royalties were already there and were again being asked to sit on the simple stone steps. There were also many other natives who Jack assumed were members of the Council of Virtus.

Divine Priest Callan and Divine Champion Pallas were there in the arena below. All the players were again lined up on the huge arena before the two.

Once all the players were present, Callan thanked everybody and said, "Let us start with a prayer."

Everyone slumped.

The prayer this time lasted even longer than yesterday. After a long and excruciating one and a half hours, the prayer finally ended.

"Everyone, I hope you enjoy this tournament. Now, let this world tournament begins!" Callan declared.

### **Chapter 652: The World Tournament Begins!**

Pallas came out next and uttered, "I will now show you the arrangement of the matches."

A projection appeared in the sky, showing an elimination tournament bracket. There are six of these brackets, each representing a section.

\*

#### **Knight Section**

Match 1: Jeanny (human) Vs Hardstick (elf)

Match 2: Rodney (dwarf) Vs Darkrod (ethereal)

Match 3: Arthur Bagrat (draconian) Vs Sharpedge (orc)

Free: Drunkteeth (vampire)

\*

#### **Warrior Section**

Match 1: Handsome Joe (elf) Vs Rollingrock (dwarf)

Match 2: Sane (draconian) Vs Spring Crown (vampire)

Match 3: Boastful (ethereal) Vs Surewin (orc)

Free: Domon Fei (human)

\*

#### **Rogue Section**

Match 1: Kill Order (human) Vs Deep Puncture (draconian)

Match 2: Wong (orc) Vs Windleg (elf)

Match 3: Indigenous (dwarf) Vs Darkradiant (ethereal)

Free: Leavemealone (vampire)

\*

#### Archer Section

Match 1: Ronald Dreary (Ethereal) Vs Telebinge (draconian)

Match 2: Audrey (dwarf) Vs Anotherday (elf)

Match 3: Synapses (vampire) Vs Thick Needle (orc)

Free: David (human)

\*

#### Mage Section

Match 1: Soaring Boar (dwarf) Vs Selena (human)

Match 2: Searing (vampire) Vs Rudeflower (elf)

Match 3: Silverfield (orc) Vs Flarement (draconian)

Free: Blackhole (ethereal)

\*

#### Team Section

Match 1: Elf Vs Human

Match 2: Ethereal Vs Dwarf

Match 3: Draconian Vs Orc

Free: Vampire

\*

The free ones indicate that they had one free win. When others needed to win three times to become the champion, they only needed two. These lucky individuals would compete against whoever won in the third match.

An elf man, named Windleg, lifted his hand.

"What?!" Pallas's voice thundered out.

Windleg cringed hearing the divine champion's crude tone.

"Pallas, be gentle. You are scaring our participants," Callan admonished.

"Forgive me, Your Holiness," Pallas uttered with a bow.

"Now, say your opinion, child," Callan said gently to the elf man, his smile made everyone feel warm.

"May we know how those free ones are decided? We understand Sir Pallas mentioned lucky draws yesterday. We just thought the draws would be done in front of us?" Windleg asked.

"We have done the draws beforehand to save time for all of us," Callan answered. "What's the matter? Are you accusing us of not being fair? Are you insinuating this council of being dishonorable and playing favors to certain parties?"

Callan's voice was still gentle. His face was still smiling. Yet his eyes stared sharply at Windleg, which made the elf regret to have ever opened his mouth in the first place.

"No, no! I won't dare. Please forgive my question, Your Holiness! I'm sure you are being fair!" Windleg hurriedly said.

"Ah, good. For a second there, I thought I have to ask Pallas to throw you down this mountain," Callan said, his smile never wavered.

Most felt cold sweat running down their foreheads.

Pallas resumed his explanation, "each section will only have one match in a day. So not everyone will fight today. Only those marked for the first match will. Tomorrow we will have the second match. The next day the third match. The day after it will be the fourth match which will pit the winners from the first and second matches, and so on. Until we have the champion in the sixth match. So in all, this tournament will last six days. Does anyone have a problem following?"

No one spoke.

"Good! No one match will be carried out at the same time. The order will be knight, warrior, rogue, archer, mage, and we will end the day with the team match. So everyone can watch all the matches. Now, let us begin the first match of the knight section. Jeanny of the human race against Hardstick of the elven race, stay in this arena. The rests please take your seats on those stone steps."

A hand lifted.

"What?!" Pallas's voice thundered out again.

"Pallas...", Callan uttered.

"I am sorry, Your Holiness. You, vampire, state your question!" Pallas said, with a voice that tried to be as gentle as possible, rather unsuccessfully.

The questioner this time, however, didn't show any expression of getting intimidated. The one who had lifted his hand was Leavemealone. "Do we have to stay here if we don't have a match today?" He asked.

"No, you are allowed to leave," Pallas answered.

Leavemealone nodded. He then came to Domon. "Can we train?" He asked. "Sure," Domon replied. The two then left together.

Both Leavemealone and Domon only fought on the fifth match and if they won, the final sixth match. Which meant they had full four days to train. Lucky duo. Was this fate at work? Jack wondered.

Jack chose to stay, like many others. Everyone was wondering how good these other experts from the other countries were. He took a seat next to Paytowin who was there at the spectators' seats.

Inside the arena was now only Jeanny and an elf man in heavy armor. Callan and Pallas had also moved away. Pallas stood at the periphery of the arena while Callan took his seat amongst the other spectators. Despite his high station, he didn't give himself a special seat, just as how the royalties of other countries were treated.

The surrounding area outside the theater became a void, just like yesterday. There was also a transparent layer separating the spectators and the arena. Jack figured that should be some sort of barrier to prevent the contestants and their attacks from affecting the spectators. In the projection above, the words changed.

\*

#### Knight Section Match 1

Jeanny, level 46 Dragoon (human) Vs Hardstick, level 46 Paladin (elf)

\*

Jeanny nodded at her opponent. "Let's do our best," she said.

Hardstick didn't reply, he was grinning instead. "Hehe. You are pretty. Not as pretty as our Goddess, Grace, of course, but still pretty. How about we go someplace after this? We can have a real match without people watching."

Jeanny frowned. This elf man looked decent but his mouth was foul. Jeanny didn't bother talking with him anymore, she took a ready stance.

"No? Such a pity. Never mind. I will show you my power then, maybe you will be impressed," Hardstick said. He brandished a kite shield and a metal club. "Come, babe. Let daddy teach you a lesson."

Jack glanced at the elf royalty section. What the heck were they thinking? Selecting such a player to represent them? Probably they selected outworlders based on the highest levels only.

Jack wasn't indicating that experts had no boastful temperament. He simply knew this elven sentinel was a nobody from his subtle movements. The guy showed too many weak points. He didn't even lift his shield in the ready position.

"Begin!" Pallas declared.

On Pallas' word, Jeanny's spear shot out, accompanied with the skill, Piercing Spear.

Hardstick was startled by the abrupt attack. His body bent backward, narrowly dodging the spear energy that scrapped his helmet.

"You...!" Hardstick wasn't given the chance to speak. Another thrust came to his face. He frantically moved his head to the side.



His club was alighted with flame. That was Paladin's level 35 skill, Sacred Flame. Unlike Jack's past companion, Heathcliffe, this flame was white, not blue.

However, Hardstick didn't have the chance to use the flaming club. Jeanny jabbed the hand that was holding the club, keeping it away. She then used the end of her spear to strike Hardstick's left hand that was about to lift his shield. In between, she made a light slash at Hardstick's body.

Jeanny's spear moved swiftly, repeating the process. Hardstick who never put on a ready stance was not given the chance anymore. His HP went down slowly just from normal attacks.

"B\*tch! F\*ck off...!!" Hardstick yelled in frustration. A translucent layer covered his armor. It was Paladin's level 45 skill, Divine Armor. The skill increased the paladin's defense, reduced damage received, and protected the Paladin from all movement restrictions.

Yet, the restrictions Jeanny applied to Hardstick were not a game mechanism. It was controlling moves that prevented Hardstick's limbs from moving the way he wanted. So the Divine Armor didn't help Hardstick out of his passive state. It only allowed him to survive longer, but the outcome was still the same.

Jeanny finished him off by using Seven Spears Assaulting Heaven. Four rapid thrusts took out Hardstick's remaining HP.

Hardstick's body fell to the ground. All throughout the fight, only three game skills were used. One from Jeanny and two from Hardstick. The elven paladin wasn't given the chance to do anything else.

"Winner, Jeanny of the Human race!" Pallas announced.

The translucent layer vanished. Hardstick's zero HP was refilled to full again. He rose with shame. Jeanny didn't even spare him a glance. She walked out of the arena. She glanced at her sister who was sitting amongst the other elven participants. Her sister was staring at her as well. Both sisters didn't exchange anything else other than the glance.

"Your match has ended, hurry up and leave my ring!" Pallas bellowed.

Hardstick immediately scurried over to where the other elves were sitting. His head hung low the entire time. When he was about to sit, his other teammates looked at him in disdain and asked him to sit further away.

"Next match!" Pallas uttered. The words in the sky changed.

\*

#### Warrior Section Match 1

Handsome Joe, level 46 Mage Knight (elf) Vs Rollingrock, level 45 Blade Dancer (dwarf)

\*

The two who had their names shown walked down to the arena. When the two were ready, Pallas gave them the go sign.

## Chapter 653: The Might of a Heavenly Enforcer

Once Pallas gave the go sign, Rollingrock took the initiative by using Blitz Slash. Joe was taken by surprise but he still had time to cast Mana Shield. It was Mage Knight's level 35 spell. It was similar to Mage's Barrier. The spell created a shield around the caster, but this shield reduced all damage by 50%, and when Joe received damage from the blitz slash, he lost his stamina instead of HP. The shield would vanish if Joe's stamina dropped to zero or if thirty seconds passed.

Joe immediately cast Spectral Projection. Despite Rollingrock's lower level, he had the Blitz Slash, meaning he passed Blade Dancer's trial on the first try. Joe couldn't afford to underestimate him.

Joe sent his spectral projection to clash with Rollingrock while he cast Spectral Blade. Three spectral blades floated beside him. This showed Joe had max-leveled his Spectral Blade spell.

Rollingrock ran past Joe's spectral projection to get to Joe's real body, but the three spectral blades slashed at him once he arrived. The spectral projection then came again and clashed with Rollingrock while Joe put some distance.

Joe cast another spell. Spectral Discharge, Mage Knight's level 40 spell. His left hand started shining. This spell made his casting hand into a beacon that collected energy. This energy could be shot every second. it inflicted small damage, but the caster could also charge the energy for a longer period to build it up into a more powerful shot. This spell lasted five long minutes, effectively turning Mage Knight into a ranged damage dealer during the duration.

Rollingrock activated his level 45 skill, Phantom Blade. This skill gave his two swords a phantom companion. Every time he slashed, these phantom blades followed behind. These phantom blades couldn't be blocked. If the opponent parried the slash, the phantom blade following from behind would continue slashing. It also ignored defense completely. However, the damage it inflicted was only 30% of the real weapon.

Joe's spectral projection suffered under Rollingrock's onslaught, but at the same time, Rollingrock suffered under Joe's ranged attacks. Rollingrock knew he couldn't keep on dealing with the spectral projection. Even if he killed the projection, his HP would already be low by then, when Joe still had full HP. So he tried to force his way to reach Joe again. But every time he approached, Joe's spectral blades kept him at bay. Joe then put some distance again.

Helpless against Joe's tactic, Rollingrock's HP was slowly eaten away. The match lasted rather long. In the end, Joe won with his kiting technique.

Blade Dancer was superior in close combat. Aside from the exclusive skill, Blitz Slash, all its standard skills were melee. Jack could see now if this class simply relied on its standard skills, it was at a disadvantage against ranged classes who knew how to keep its opponent at bay.

But he was also excited after seeing Blade Dancer's level 45 skill that he was yet to receive. If he used these phantom blades accompanying his burst slashes art, wouldn't that double his strike counts? Half of those were even unblockable. Even if their individual damage was low, the combo multiplier would compensate for it.

Pallas called the next contestants.

\*

#### Rogue Section Match 1

Kill Order, level 46 Assassin (human) Vs Deep Puncture, level 46 Assassin (draconian)

\*

Both were assassins, so both had the same skill sets. When Pallas yelled begin, the two rushed over to one another.

When they almost clashed, Deep Puncture vanished.

Kill Order, upon witnessing his opponent's disappearance, used Roll. Deep Puncture appeared behind where Kill Order was and stabbed, but his dagger hit empty air. At this time, it was Kill Order who vanished.

Deep Puncture hurriedly moved away, but his reaction was late. He suffered a stab. But at least he managed to turn his body a little so that the stab wasn't considered a backstab which caused extra damage.

Both Assassins used their exclusive skill, Phase Strike, but Kill Order proved the expert of the two.

Deep Puncture tried retreating, but Kill Order followed closely. The two stabbed each other in a flurry. Kill Order used the opportunity when Deep Puncture was too focused on his dagger to send a low kick. Deep Puncture lost his balance, which allowed Kill Order to land two clean stabs.

Deep Puncture's body disappeared again. He had used Vanish, the assassin's level 40 skill that moved him ten meters away in a random location and became invisible. A moment after he vanished, Kill Order threw his dagger. Deep Puncture was startled to find the human assassin accurately targeted him even when he was invisible. The dagger struck his head and caused critical damage.

Deep Puncture's HP was already low when he used Vanish. He was also afflicted by Poison status from Assassin's skill, Poison Mastery, after getting repeated stabs. His HP zeroed from the last weapon throw.

"Winner, Kill Order of the human race!" Pallas announced.

Jack, who was watching, said, "that guy can also sense mana."

"It appears so," Peniel agreed.

"Sense what?" Paytowin asked.

"Later," Jack said.

"Next match!" They heard Pallas' voice.

\*

#### Archer Section Match 1

Ronald Dreary, level 46 Gunner (ethereal) Vs Telebinge, level 46 Elite Marksman (draconian)

\*

Jack leaned his body forward. This was the first match that involved a Heavenly Enforcer. This was also the first time he would be seeing a Heavenly Enforcer in action. He had known the other two but he had never seen them in action as well, at least in this world for Spring Crown's case. He was curious to know what made Master give these players such a title.

The two contestants stood at the usual starting positions away from each other. Telebinge held his bow and arrow down while Ronald opened the right side of his cowboy coat and revealed a revolver on a holster by his hip.

"Begin!" Pallas declared.

Telebinge lifted his bow and lodged the arrow swiftly, he was in the aiming stance. He was just about to pull his arrow when he saw his opponent didn't make a move. Ronald's right hand was next to his revolver but the weapon was still inside the holster.

Telebinge frowned. "Take out your weapon," he said.

Ronald didn't reply nor did as is asked, he simply grinned. Jack thought Ethereal's mouthless grin was particularly disturbing.

"Suit yourself," Telebinge uttered and pulled his arrow.

\*BANG\*

Before the arrow was released, however, he felt a strong knock in between his eyes. He was sent reeling backward from the force, at the same time critical damage appeared on his head.

\*BANG\*

Before his consternation subsided, another shot landed at the exact same place, scoring another critical hit.

Telebinge couldn't afford to let himself wonder about anything that had just happened. He forced himself to move sideways. The surprising thing was, his opponent never appeared to move at all.

No, he had! Telebinge stole a glance and found that Ronald's revolver was already out of its holster. Its nozzle was currently aiming at him by Ronald's hip. Ronald had been shooting from his hip without taking a standard aiming stance.

The nozzle flared, another shot was fired. Telebinge felt the shot hit his thigh. He lost balance, his running stopped. Another shot was fired from Ronald's revolver and hit his head again. His HP was low already due to the consecutive critical damages. In his desperation, he called out his pet, a red-furred cat, as well as making an urgent shot while executing his level 45 skill, Trace Arrow. This skill caused the shot arrow to chase after a target, dealing very high single target damage.

Telebinge didn't have the time to aim, so the arrow was off-mark. But in its mid-flight, it turned direction and flew towards Ronald. Its cat pet was also dashing towards Ronald.

Even with the incoming assaults, Ronald stayed in his position, not moving away. He opened his left coat and revealed a second revolver on his left hip. His left hand turned into a blur as the revolver disappeared from its holster. The left revolver was also shot from the hip, hitting the arrow accurately in its flight. While his right revolver fired another shot and hit Telebinge on the forehead again.

The draconian fell after that last hit. His pet which was still running was forcefully unsummoned after his death.

Ronald's two revolvers were back inside their holsters. Throughout the match, the gunner didn't even move one step.

Everyone stared with disquiet. The player in front of them was totally in a different league.

"Normal attacks," Jack muttered.

"What?" Paytowin asked.

"All his attacks are standard attacks. He never used any skill," Jack said.

Paytowin came to a realization. "Who is he? Why have we never heard of him? Does he use a different alias from his previous games?" He asked.

"I don't think he is a gamer," Jack said. "That is not a skill gained from playing games."

"The damage those revolvers dealt is rather high for a one-hand gun, even with the critical," Paytowin remarked.

"Those revolvers are set weapons," Peniel informed. "Similar to set equipment, they received a bonus if the same set was equipped. It must have bolstered the damage because he had two guns of the same set."

"Set weapon and set equipment. Damn! You are not kidding about this World Maker guild," Paytowin said.

Jack turned to where Wong and Spring Crown were sitting. Was it possible to hinder two out of the three from winning this tournament?

## **Chapter 654: First Team Match**

### **Mage Section Match 1**

Soaring Boar, level 45 Summoner (dwarf) Vs Selena, level 46 Elementalist (human)

\*

The two magic users stood opposite each other. As Pallas yelled begin, the two started forming spell formations.

It was a matter of casting speed. Selena was evidently faster, she completed a three-rune spell before Soaring Boar and threw the spell where her opponent was standing.

Jack recognized the runes Soaring Boar was casting. It was Avatar Incarnation spell, which proved that Soaring Boar had passed Summoner's trial on the first try. Yet, his decision to cast this spell had been a mistake. This spell required five runes. Not to mention his casting speed was slower than Selena's. He only completed two runes when Selena completed hers.

The floor underneath Soaring Boar lighted up. Arcane Turbulence filled with fire elements shot up.

Soaring Boar had canceled his spell once he noticed the spell and tried to run away from the area of effect. However, his summoner class' movement speed was slow. He didn't manage to flee, so he changed his casting to another spell with one rune. Selena's Flame Turbulence consumed the space around him as he focused his mind to not get disrupted. His body was covered by Barrier.

Despite his Barrier protecting him from damage, he had been battered by Arcane Turbulence for a second. He was already inflicted with Disoriented status. His movement speed slowed, so he decided to just stand his ground and again cast the Avatar Incarnation spell.

Selena was surprised, she didn't expect her opponent to decide to tank through her spell just to complete his casting. Since it was so, she won't be courteous. She cast Elementalist level 35 spell, Ice Field. The spell covered the area around Soaring Boar, further slowing him.

Soaring Boar's barrier shattered due to the two spell's damage, but the time it provided had allowed him to complete his spell. An armored avatar appeared carrying a large two-handed hammer.

Selena was not flustered. She cast Fireball at Soaring Boar who was still inside her spell. Without his barrier, Soaring's HP was slowly going down from Flame Turbulence. He couldn't dodge the incoming fireball. He was already slow as a magic user, Selena's earlier two spells slowed him further. The fireball slammed onto his body, causing him to lose lots of HP.

He was still casting throughout the ordeals, his concentration was pretty solid. Seven metallic golems came out. It was not the normal dirt golem that Jack had seen before. These had bodies that looked much sturdier. Jack deduced the spell must have been altered using an evolved seed.

Selena's Arcane Turbulence ended at this time. Soaring Boar immediately turned around to run. He wanted to leave his summons to deal with Selena as he shot standard attacks from further away.

Yet, before the avatar and metal golems came to Selena, Selena had completed another spell. This spell had five runes. Selena could still calmly cast her spell despite seeing the avatar with the huge hammer running towards her.

Crackling energy shot out from her staff. It crashed onto the avatar, pushing it away while dealing damage before jumping to nearby metal golems that were approaching. It was Elementalist's level 40 spell, Chain Lightning. The lightning snake continued punching one golem after another, blasting them away. After frying its eighth target, it jumped to the ninth, which was Soaring Boar who was trying to run away. The lightning was too fast for his slow feet. It singed his back, before jumping back to the avatar.

Ten jumps? Jack was astonished. This meant Selena had max-leveled this Chain Lightning spell. Peniel had explained to him that Chain Lightning at its first level hit five targets. Each four level-up allowed the spell to hit an additional target. And here he thought that he was the only one with max-leveled elite

skills in this tournament, he had seen two players with max-level elite skills already just from the first matches.

Soaring Boar's HP was already low before the Chain Lightning touched him. He was also suffering from the Burn effect, which caused him to lose HP periodically. Magic users were not known for their low HPs. Hence, when he was hit by the Chain Lightning, his HP was devoured already. He fell to the floor with a body that was still covered by burn and electric residues.

"Hm... Summoner is not a suitable class for dueling," Jack thought. He thought back to his duel with John. John would have a worse fate if he didn't grant him the time to call out all his summons.

After Pallas announced Selena as the winner, he said, "We have concluded the individual matches. We will now take a twenty-minute break before proceeding to the team match. You can enjoy the refreshments and snacks that we have prepared. For the Human and Elf teams, please make sure to return to this arena once the twenty minutes are up."

The void surrounding the theatre dissipated and the gardens surrounding it came into view again. Beside the theatre was a long table with drinks and fruits on it. The council must have set it up during the matches.

"Wow, your faction does know how to entertain their guests," Jack said to Paytowin. The two then walked over to the table with refreshments. Some came as well, but many simply sat, not moving away from their seats.

Jack saw many that remained seated had stern looks. It seemed that many had become nervous after the matches. Only one would win, many others would lose. No one wanted to lose. Their worry about losing might have started gnawing at them.

'Shouldn't I be the same?' Jack thought. Was he still relaxing because he was too confident of himself? Overconfidence was never a good thing. But he thought back to his past. He was not foreign to game competitions. He had learned to condition himself to relax under pressure, so he won't freeze up when action was needed. This kind of mentality was crucial in any kind of competition. Otherwise, you would have lost before you even began.

Jack took one of the drinks available. 'I am next, eh?' He looked over. His opponents were also looked relaxed enough to enjoy the refreshments.

Grace was there, surrounded by his male fans as usual. Those flies kept on trying to attract her attention but Jack could see that she just treated them as non-existence. Grace turned to where Jack and Paytowin were. She saw Paytowin and nodded at him with a smile.

Then her eyes and Jack's met. She turned away with a disgusted expression.

'What the... Shit! She still thinks me looking at her with lecherous thoughts!' Jack thought with lament.

"You should just tell her, you know. It is painful watching you two," Paytowin said while shaking his head.

"Nah, let it be this way. If she dislikes me without knowing who I am, then she dislikes me. This is the real me. I can't deceive her feeling by exploiting our past," Jack said.

"As I said, you are weird," Paytowin uttered. "But good luck," he said while lifting his fist towards Jack.

"Thanks," Jack said and bumped his fist with Paytowin's. It's their gesture to wish each other luck before a battle.

\*

After twenty minutes, everyone returned to their seats. Except for the five Humans and five elves who walked into the arena. On the elf's side, aside from Jennifer and Grace, the rests were part of the men who continued to cling to Grace.

The surrounding was again covered with void and words projection appeared above.

\*

Team Section Match 1: Elf Vs Human

Elf Team

Jennifer, level 46 Dragoon

Assured, level 46 Mage Knight

Wonderman, level 46 Technocraft

Unequaled Grace, level 46 Inquisitor

Bad Omen, level 45 Reaver

Vs

Human Team

Giant Steve, level 46 Sentinel

Storm Wind, level 43 Blade Dancer

Red Death, level 46 Assassin

Yellow Death, level 46 Gunner

Princess Purple, level 46 Priest

\*

"Two healers?" Jack muttered.

"Those two classes do not focus mainly on healing compared to Priest and Druid. Maybe that's why they use two," Peniel said.

The elf team, after seeing the projection, also had a comment. One of the elven men in the team, Wonderman, said with a loud voice, "A level 43? Haha. Hey, Omen! Here I thought you will embarrass us for being a level 45."

"Well, now we know who to gang up on first," Assured said.



"Haha, you are right... Wait! I can't find this Storm Wind using my inspect."

"You stupid! You can inspect the other four, right? Then the remaining one should be Storm Wind! He must be carrying something that prevents Inspect."

"You are right. Hehe. You are dead, kid!" Wonderman pointed to Jack.

The others on Jack's team stared at Wonderman. They couldn't help but feel pity for the guy.

"All of you, do not do anything rash. He is not simple as you think. You all should listen to my orders before acting!" Jennifer uttered.

"Hmph, why should we? Although you are also pretty, we only listen to our goddess here," Wonderman said.

Jennifer was vexed. What did pretty have to do with listening to orders?

"Stick to the plan. We have agreed that she is the leader. Listen to her!" Grace uttered.

"Yes, my goddess."

"Of course."

"We listen to your will."

Somehow, Jennifer felt even more irritated now despite those men agreeing to listen to her.

## **Chapter 655: Splintered Group**

When the two groups on the arena wondered how the ten of them were going to fight in this small arena, two silvery portals appeared before them.

Pallas said after the portals appeared, "As mentioned, team battle will take place in a constructed arena dimension. Each group enters the portal in front of you. It will take you to your starting positions. From there, you will have to advance to search and defeat your opponents. Now enter! May the courageous be the victors!"

Both human and elf groups entered their respective portals. After the last member disappeared inside the portal, the portal vanished. Three giant images appeared in the sky. The top one showed the map of a region, while the two others each showed the five participants who had just appeared out from a portal.

The spectators looked at the map image. The region was a frozen tundra, sometimes there were swirls of ice clouds appearing at random spots. At two opposing edges of the map were five small icons. They surmised these icons represented the group of humans and elves. The map was very large, the two that appeared on opposing sides won't see each other right away. They needed to travel some distance before they met.

"Let the team match begins!" Pallas declared.

\*

Inside the arena dimension, under chilly air and surrounded by a desolate frozen landscape, Jack and the others came out of the portal. They looked around. Their opponents were nowhere to be seen. There were several visible routes that they could take. In the distance, they saw blizzards forming and dispersing.

Pallas' booming voice was soon heard from the sky, telling them the match had begun.

"No wonder they give two hours for the time limit," Giant Steve said. "So, what should we do?"

"Okay, let us all start proceeding forward and... hey! Where are you all going?" Jack called when he saw Red Death, Yellow Death, and Princess Purple all went in different directions.

"The sooner we finish this, the better," Red Death said and dashed off.

"I don't care what you do, I will do whatever I want," Yellow Death similarly took off using another route.

Jack was speechless at the two. He then turned back and saw Princess Purple walking around before finding a suitable rock and sitting down.

"..."

"Are you going to just sit there?" Jack finally asked Princess Purple after some time.

"My job is only healing, right? If your HP is low, come back here and I'll heal you," She said nonchalantly.

"The heck... What if I need healing mid-fight?"

"Then break away from the fight and come back here."

"..."

"Uh... What should we do?" Giant Steve asked again.

"F\*ck this! Steve, you stay with her. I know she is aggravating, but try your best not to kill her and protect her instead," Jack said.

Giant Steve sighed and took position next to Princess Purple.

"Uh, what a mess," Jack uttered. He then took the path straight forward from where they came out of the portal. He figured that should be the shortest route towards their enemies. He was not truly bothered by his teammates actually, he never thought of playing team himself. Once he encountered the enemy group, it should be over by then.

He checked his radar. It's not working. It was considered a tool as well. He tried sending messages to Giant Steve, he received notification that messaging is disabled within this dimension. 'Okay, let's do this search the old-fashioned way then.'

\*

The spectators outside were baffled by the scenes. The human group separated from each other right from the start. The one image showing the human group now broke into four smaller images, showing each of their movements.

"Is that human team's tactic? Spread out to cover more ground in search for their opponents?" One of the spectators muttered.

The projection only showed images, they didn't project voices. So they didn't hear what the participants said inside the arena dimension. The others might not know what happened, but the human representatives understood.

Jeanny sighed, "This is what happens when opposing people are forced into a team."

"Can't help it. We are enemies, after all. It will be a miracle to ask them to work together," Selena remarked. She was sitting beside Jeanny. Although their two guilds were enemies, these two women still respected one another.

"Look! Unlike the human team, the elf team proceeds together. From the way they are moving, they will meet that red-haired human woman soon," a spectator commented.

"Good, I hope they meet soon. I want to see action," another spectator said.

"But she is just scouting, right? She should now be informing the others and wait for the other to arrive before engaging that elf group."

"She should be."

As they watched the image. They saw The elf group and the red-haired human spotted one another. When they were expecting the red-haired human to turn and run, she instead charged straight into the group.

"Huh?" Everyone was baffled.

\*

Inside the arena dimension, Jennifer had taken her team to the right-side route. She thought the central route to be too obvious. Not long after, she saw Red Death coming at them. Jennifer had information about Death Associates, so she was aware of Red Death's expertise. She asked everyone to stop and observed their surroundings. Could this be a ploy where Red Death took their attention while her other teammates attacked them from behind?

The land where they were was mostly flat. Not an ideal place to lay an ambush. When she saw that no other humans were around, she concluded that Red Death was truly intending to take them alone.

"How arrogant!" Jeanny uttered, but this would be a good opportunity for them. She then gave her orders, "Assured, with me! Wonderman, lay traps behind her, cut her escape path! Grace and Omen, you two supports!"

Grace started by casting Empowering Prayer. Assured used Spectral Projection, his copy now stood beside Jennifer while he stayed behind and cast Spectral Discharge, giving him range attack capability. Wonderman summoned his Techno Golem, which was a yellow clunky-looking robot.

When Red Death was near, Jennifer, Assured's spectral projection, and Wonderman's techno golem came forward to receive her. Wonderman put two traps next to each other behind Red Death, sealing her escape path as was ordered. One of these traps was Immobilizing Trap, another was Lightning Trap.

The lightning trap came from his level 35 skill, elemental trap, he had to choose an element when he first received this skill. He chose the lightning element, which made the skill become Lightning Trap. If opponents step on it, it would deal lightning damage as well as cause paralyze.

Jennifer used Piercing Spear. Red Death easily dodged that ranged attack. Jennifer followed up using her family spear art, Serpentine Swift Spear. Her spear spun deceptively before delivering a deadly strike. Yet, Red Death vanished just as her spear was about to hit.

"Behind!" Assured exclaimed when he saw Red Death materializing. He shot the energy accumulated using Spectral Discharge from his left hand, but Red Death disappeared again before his attack hit.

"What? Didn't she just use Phase Strike?" Assured uttered.

The one Red Death used was Back Shift, her non-standard advanced skill that he had used before when dueling Jack. It was a feint before she execute Phase Strike. These two skills back-to-back allowed her to shift position twice, fooling her opponents.

When she appeared the second time, she attacked for real. Jennifer however, was not a novice, she brought her spear to her back and blocked Red Death's stab. As she did, she saw a phantom dagger shift through her spear and stabbed into her mid-section.

The phantom dagger was Assassin's Unblockable Stab. The attack ignored Jennifer's high defense armor and also scored a critical. Red Death, however, frowned. The red damage number shown above Jennifer was 1400. Yet, Jennifer's HP was only lowered by half that amount.

Red Death could also sense mana, she sensed a link between Jennifer and someone further away. Bad Omen, the level 45 Reaver. She knew then what had happened. Jennifer was soul-linked to Bad Omen.

Soul Link was Reaver's exclusive skill that the class received upon passing the class trial on the first try. When a Reaver selected a target to be soul-linked, the caster and target's HP will always stay at the same percentage. Damage and healing received by both caster and target will also be shared. It was similar to Sentinel's Share Damage skill except Sentinel's skill didn't share healing, while Soul-link didn't reduce damage as Share Damage did.

Wonderman's techno golem came punching down at this time. Red Death backflipped to evade. Her figure was then divided into three, it was another of her non-standard advanced skill, Trinity Assault. The three figures stabbed forward at Jennifer, Red Death was intend on taking out the enemy's leader first.

Jennifer stabbed her spear into the ground. The ground in a five-meter radius around her lighted up. She was using Dragoon level 45 skill, Domain of Spears, numerous spears pierced out from the ground. The spears stabbed around the area, including allies. But the allies inside her domain were only Assured's spectral projection and Wonderman's techno golem, so it didn't matter.

Red Death's three images were useless since the spears stabbed all three. She ended up using her super jump high into the air to retreat from those spears.

While she was in the air, she suddenly sensed something on her left. She turned and was surprised to find Grace by her side. Grace's glowing mace came and struck her side. It was an attack done with

Inquisitor's level 45 skill, Judgement Strike. This skill dealt massive damage against undead, darkness, and demon creatures, but still dealt decent damage against all others.

## **Chapter 656: Easy Picking**

Red Death was in the air, so she couldn't dodge. Her HP went down a good deal as she fell back to the ground. She gritted her teeth from the pain as she moved swiftly to dodge all the range attacks that followed.

What she was confused about was how Grace, an inquisitor who had no super jump ability, to catch her in mid-air. When she saw Wonderman near where Grace landed, she understood that Grace had used that man as a foothold.

Wonderman had willingly come inside Jennifer's Domain of Spear and suffered its damage out of Grace's order, before helping Grace to reach the height that caught Red Death off guard.

'She predicted my move?' Red Death thought.

Jennifer had come to her again, her HP was back to full again. With two healers in the team, it was not a problem to lose some health.

Aside from standard heal from advanced Healer class, a Reaver healed by using soul orb. Once someone became a Reaver, he possessed one soul orb. Whenever a Reaver dealt damage, it filled up this soul orb with HP equal to the damage dealt. Any excess healing received by the Reaver would also fill this soul orb. The soul orb could fill up to a maximum of 100% of the reaver's HP, the HP inside this soul orb could then be used to heal any target. If the HP in this soul orb was not used, then the HP inside would deteriorate as time passed.

Red Death activated Combat Clone, Assassin's level 45 skill. A duplicate of herself appeared. This clone could deal 80% of her damage. With her clone, she clashed again with her opponents.

But as time passed, it became apparent which side was winning. While Jennifer and the rest could fight without worry due to healers, Red Death didn't have that luxury. An Assassin didn't have body recovery ability, Red Death also couldn't use potions, so the HP she had lost stayed lost. She fought more reserved, but there were five opponents, all of which were not your run-of-the-mill players. She didn't want to admit it, but if she didn't flee, she would be done for.

When her clone disappeared, she decided it was time to retreat. But when she did, that inquisitor woman who was not around when she was fighting against Jennifer, Assured, and Wonderman, now stood in her escape path.

Red Death was riled, this was the second time this woman showed up when she attempted a retreat. She decided to force her way through. Inquisitors might have melee capability, but they were originally a Healer class, she didn't believe that she couldn't take care of this inquisitor woman.

Grace, who saw Red Death attempt a frontal clash, didn't back down. Her right hand was holding a mace while her left held a shield. She also activated Inquisitor's level 40 skill, Faith Armor. It increased her defense, elemental resistance, status effect resistances, and also regenerated her HP by 50 every second.

Red Death made a hard stab to Grace's left, which she parried using her shield. But when Grace felt the impact, another stab suddenly appeared targeting her eyes. The stab was too fast, she only managed to lower her head a little and the stab hit her forehead, dealing critical damage.

However, Grace didn't back down, she forced herself forward instead, ignoring the pain.

Red Death was startled by Grace's tenacity. She sidestepped while sending Grace another stab. Grace ignored the damage, she was protected by stronger defense and regeneration effect. All she had to suffer was just the pain. She smashed her mace down at Red Death.

Red Death deftly dodged the smash, but then she found herself encircled. Grace had managed to buy enough time for her teammates.

"You will be our first step towards today's victory," Jennifer uttered as she lunged forward.

\*BANG\*

A gunshot was heard. Jennifer felt her spear was hit by a strong impact and her stab swerved to the side.

Four rapid gunshots were heard next. Jennifer, Assured, Grace, and Wonderman were all hit by the shot. Damage numbers appeared.

Red Death didn't let this opportunity go to waste. She jumped high onto Wonderman's techno golem while its owner was still unsteady from the gunshot. She landed on its head before making another jump and escaping the encirclement.

The elven group tried to chase, but another shot was fired. Grace took point and used her shield for cover. There was coincidentally a blizzard forming not far away, Red Death ran into the blizzard at high speed.

Wonderman who had the fastest movement speed intended to continue chasing but Jennifer stopped him.

"Why? She almost dies. We should chase and finish her off," Wonderman uttered.

Jennifer shook her head. "We don't know if it was only the gunner at the place where she was fleeing. It could be their ploy to lure us to a place where they prepared a trap. All her teammates might be there to ambush us."

"We still have to face them sooner or later," Wonderman said with dissatisfaction.

"Yes, but not following the trail they want us to. We should circle and come at them from the other side. See what they are up to. We can't afford to be reckless."

"I agree with Jennifer. We should be careful," Grace said.

"All right."

"Okay."

"I agree with being careful."

Jennifer felt like using her Domain of Spears again on them.

So they moved in another direction. Yellow Death's gunshots had stopped when Red Death put enough distance.

They continued moving while paying attention to the direction where Red Death and Yellow Death were supposed to be. As they moved, they noticed a figure approaching under a blizzard from an opposite direction.

"Hey, look. There is another one over there. Which means they are not together," Wonderman said when he noticed the lone figure.

"Yeah, that red chick is behind us, right? Or do they plan to pin us from two sides?" Assured asked.

"I don't see that red chick nor the gunner coming," Bad Omen said as he looked to their back.

"Wait! Isn't that the level 43 dude?" Wonderman exclaimed when the blizzard started dispersing and Jack came into view.

"Hey, you are right!"

"He is alone. What are we waiting for?"

"Yeah, easy picking! Let's finish him fast and then we will have only four players to worry about."

"Agreed. Let's go!"

"Wait! Don't go! We have to do it together," Jennifer called, but the three elven men had run forward with high speed already.

"Stop! Come back! Didn't I already tell you, people, that we have to attack that person together?" She continued to call, but the three ignored her completely. She turned to Grace, "Why didn't you stop them?"

"I didn't disagree. Let them finish that lecherous man and reduce our opponent's number. The two of us just need to watch the back in case his teammates come to ambush."

"No, you don't understand! That guy is not what he seemed to be," Jennifer said. Jennifer never saw Jack in action, but she had heard reports from Queen Magenta and the rest. Although she still thought that the reports were being exaggerated, she still understood that Jack had to be an expert to at least warrant such reports.

Grace gave Jennifer a look. Her expression showed that she didn't put Jennifer's words in high regard. This man was a coward who even tried to use a fake name on her, even when his real alias would be easily known once the match started.

Grace then heard a scream. She turned back and saw Assured was down on the ground. She thought at first Assured was simply fallen due to tripping or something, but she then noticed his HP bar was empty.

"Damn it!" Jennifer uttered and dashed forward. "Attack together!"

Jennifer activated his level 40 skill, Radiant Javelins. Five javelins made of light appeared around her before shooting forward.

Wonderman and Bad Omen were still in trance. They wanted to believe what had happened just now was simply an illusion. Assured's Spectral Projection and Spectral Discharge was still in cooldown, so he had cast Spectral Blade before he engaged the level 43 human. But when he arrived in melee range, the human easily swatted aside the spectral blades. The human then used Blade Dancer's Cross Slash or at least something that looked like it. The Cross Slash the human had unleashed carried dark energy. After that one slash, Assured was down on the ground.

"Snap out of it!" Jennifer yelled as he used Jump Attack.

The five javelins thrown by Jennifer shot at Jack. Jack's two swords danced around, smacking all the javelins aside. Jennifer appeared above Jack and thrust down. Jack lightly sidestepped to the side and used Flame Strike as Jennifer came down. Seeing her thrust missed, Jennifer immediately pulled up her spear to parry.

The Flame Strike connected with Jennifer's spear shaft. She was thrown away due to extreme force. Her feet skidded on the ground to resist the pushing force. When she finally managed to stop herself, she found out that she had lost half her life.

"But... I parried the strike," she muttered.

Jack looked around. "Hehe, everyone is here. Good. Time to end this!"

Spell formation appeared above him.

"What?!" Bad Omen cried. Grace and Wonderman were similarly stunned by the display.

"He is not just a Blade Dancer, he is also an Archmage!" Jennifer shouted.

Instead of absorbing the information, this news stunned her teammates further. If she had told them before, they wouldn't have believed it anyway. The spell formation was completed and Ice Ring radiated out. Wonderman was frozen, but not before he summoned his Techno Golem and used his level 40 skill, Energy Turret. A tiny tower came out from the ground and started shooting energy balls at Jack.

Jack used Magic Shield to block the energy shots, slipped past the techno golem, and gave the frozen Wonderman several quick slashes.

His techno golem and energy turret vanished when his body fell.

## **Chapter 657: First Victory for Team Match**

Bad Omen was not frozen, but he was slowed. Added to his originally slow movement speed, he was still close to Jack after Jack finished off Wonderman. Seeing that he couldn't flee, he decided to attack instead. He cast Reaver's level 30 spell, Steal Life. A beam of ominous light shot out from his staff and headed to Jack.

Jack zipped to the side and dodged the beam. Jennifer had come again by then, she sent Hundred Spears at Jack. Jack turned to her and used his burst slashes. Sword and spear collided with a speed unseen by naked eyes.



Jennifer was using skill while Jack was using martial art. In Jennifer's opinion, her assault should be superior, because her damage was multiplied by the game system. While Jack's art, although impressive, was still considered as normal attacks. Yet, it was her that was pushed back.

At this time, Jack felt someone coming behind him.

"Oh, no. You don't," Jack turned around and smashed Grace's mace aside using his other sword.

Grace was still surprised that her attempted ambush failed when Jack's straight kick came. Grace blocked the kick using her shield but was forcefully pushed away.

With one hand, Jack parried Jennifer's stab while his sword snaked in three quick slashes on Jennifer's arm.

"That's...!" Grace who was being pushed away uttered.

Jennifer's life which was in danger was healed by Bad Omen. Bad Omen had used up all the HP inside his soul orb to save Jennifer. At the same time, he cast another spell. A ghost-like spirit flew out from his staff.

Jack jumped and ran from the spirit but it continued to follow.

"Forget it, you can't escape," Peniel informed.

Hearing that, Jack let the spirit hit him while he rushed to Bad Omen. The spirit stuck on him, damage numbers started appearing.

"That is Haunting Spirit, Reaver's level 40 spell," Peniel explained. "It summons a spirit that clings to a target, dealing 10% soul damage every second and converted 50% of this damage into HP to heal the caster's ally with the lowest HP."

Jack turned and saw Jennifer was indeed healing slowly.

"Soul damage?" Jack asked.

"Remember when I mentioned another type of damage other than chaos damage that has no resistance? It is soul damage," Peniel answered. "Reaver's attacks mostly carry soul damage."

Bad Omen was casting a spell again, but Jack beat him to it. Jack's mana beam punctured him and interrupted his casting.

While they were fighting, a blizzard suddenly hit. Grace who was about to go back to help had her visibility covered, but at least she managed to throw a last-second heal to Bad Omen before she lost sight of him. As long as Bad Omen moved away from his position and hid in this blizzard, he should be safe for the time being.

But when she was thinking that, she heard Bad Omen's scream, which then abruptly stopped.

That guy is so unfortunate to stumble into the opponent in the blizzard?

While she was still wondering, she heard clashes of metals and Jennifer's yelling.

'What?' The sound of clashing came from another side. Which meant their opponent after dealing with Bad Omen had run directly to where Jennifer was. How did he determine their positions inside this blizzard?

The sound of battle didn't last long. Grace stayed his ground. Although she had a good perception, it was basically nullified within this blizzard. A shadow appeared in front of him. Grace used Judgement Strike and slammed her mace forward.

Jack came into view as her mace arrived. Yet, it simply passed through Jack.

While Grace was in consternation, she felt rapid slashes from behind her. She cast Heal on herself but it was not enough to offset the damages. Her HP zeroed soon.

Jack deactivated his Body Double spell when Grace fell. If he didn't count wrong, he already killed five opponents. Which meant their team had won.

He heard the confirmation soon after. Pallas' voice was heard from the sky, announcing the human team as the winner of the first team match.

\*

At human team's original starting position, Giant Steve was still standing beside Princess Purple, who was currently painting her nails.

'Where did she get the paint?' Steve was curious, but she asked a different matter, "I've always wondered, why girls like to paint their nails? Men never find it attractive. Well, at least I don't."

Princess Purple stopped upon Giant Steve's question. She gave him a disdainful glance before saying, "Sir Giant, how about I ask you? Why do you play games?"

Steve was bewildered by her completely unrelated question. He answered, "Well, because I enjoy it. Don't you play games because of the same reason as well?"

"Girls never find men playing games as attractive, so why do you keep on doing it?" Princess Purple uttered then returned to painting her fingernails.

Steve was still pondering Princess Purple's words when he noticed the words on the sky had changed color. Their names were written on the sky, as with their opponents. Two of their opponents' names which were white color before, had now turned grey. Steve was still wondering about the greying when the remaining ones also turned grey rapidly one after another.

Pallas' voice then boomed in the sky, announcing their victory.

"Oh, it's finished?" He said.

\*

Red Death, who had escaped, was currently hiding and adopting a precautionary approach after her rash approach failed. Her HP was still low. Yellow Death didn't come to her. She didn't know where the guy was. Yellow Death had moved away from his sniping position after aiding her in her escape.

When she heard the victory notification, she didn't feel happy. She was gritting her teeth instead. There was only one person that could score their victory this fast. Her impatience due to the desire to beat Jack to the punch had instead backfired on her.

\*

Outside, the human side cheered upon the victory. The other spectators were speechless. What kind of a team match was this? When the battle happened between the elven team and the red-haired human assassin, it was still within expectation. The red-haired assassin was good. If it was a one-on-one battle or even one-on-two, she could probably come out on top. But going against five was rather short-sighted in everyone's opinion. Not to mention assassin was not a class built for direct confrontation. They were more suited for ambush and hit-and-run tactics.

But when the elven team encountered that low-level Blade Dancer, every common sense they had was thrown out the window. It was a massacre, by the lesser number, by the lower level. Everyone found it hard to grip their mind around it. And what was that about the blade dancer casting spells? Using a sword some more, although the color of the sword on his left hand was indeed reminiscent of Archmage's spell Magic Weapon.

Heck! The human team could probably just send this single player into the team match. The rests were simply window-dressings.

"Hehehe, I am rich," Gruff uttered from his seat.

Paytowin whistled. "I'll be damned," he said.

"He is not kidding when he said all we need to win the team match is simply place him as the participant for the team battle," Duchess Isabelle said to Prince Alonzo.

"Indeed," Prince Alonzo said with a smile.

Rhemos was sour instead. Although he had more representatives in this team match, his champion had been beaten away by the opponent's team while all the credit went to Alonzo's champion. These matches were broadcasted to all the countries. Alonzo had surely gained much merit in the match just now.

In the other country seats, the members of their respective teams were also having tense expressions. A player who could finish five expert opponents with such ease and displayed abilities from two classes. This was unheard of.

The dwarf and ethereal teams were especially anxious. Whoever won between them will go up against the human team next.

"Brother Hung, you are the strongest amongst us. Do you have the confidence to defeat that blade dancer?" One of the dwarf team members asked Jet Hung.

"Hm... I'm not sure. If it is our original world. I will say I beat that kid no sweat. But this game world can be confusing sometimes," Jet replied, but then he broke into a smile. "But do not worry. Although that kid is very strong, their team has one major weakness. We will surely win when we go up against them. All we have to do is just beat up the ethereal team first."

His dwarf teammate gave him a questioning look, but Jet didn't elaborate any further.

\*

On the arena before the spectators, a flash of light and the ten contestants from the team match appeared before their eyes.

"This concludes today's matches," Pallas uttered. "You have all fought well! Those who lost, do not be discouraged. Train harder and claim your victory in the next tournament. For those who won, we of the Council of Virtus congratulate you. Do not get carried away, though. Your trial has just begun. You still have another two matches to win before you become the champions. Now, take your rest and we will continue this tournament tomorrow!"

Everyone dispersed.

Prince Alonzo came to congratulate those that had won today, especially Jack and Jeanny. Prince Rhemos wasn't in the mood, but he had to put up an appearance. He came to congratulate as well, with emphasis on Selena since she was part of her representatives.

Everyone went for their own business after.

Jack asked Paytowin if there was any exp grinding spot nearby. These matches only lasted till noon, there was still plenty of time left in the day. He would spend his remaining day practicing martial arts, otherwise.

Paytowin told him there was not. No monsters inhabited the top half of this mountain due to the presence of the council here. Going down half the mountain would take more than half a day, not to mention the path was not a smooth journey. Additionally, they were not allowed to leave this place as they like, so using the zone portal or return scroll was out of the question.

However, there might be something he could offer Jack to spend his time while waiting for the next match. Paytowin asked him to wait, he would need to ask his superior first if they could allow an outsider like Jack to use the facility.

Jack asked what facility Paytowin was talking about. Paytowin said he would rather tell Jack after he got the permission. Otherwise, he was afraid Jack might be disappointed if he failed. He asked Jack to wait for him over in the Agora where they chatted yesterday.

Paytowin rushed away after, leaving a curious Jack.

## **Chapter 658: The Two Grandmasters**

Paytowin headed to the Temple of Courage, but before he went into the temple, he heard a woman's voice calling him, "George!"

He turned and saw Grace walking over. She was by herself, which was odd.

"Where is your entourage," Paytowin asked with a laugh.

"I chase them away," Grace answered.

"You can do that? I would have thought that they will still insist to follow you even if you ask them to go away."

"They did try. I'm just too lazy to bother any other time."

"Oh? What did you do?"

"I beat one up until his HP is critical."

"I could imagine the guy enjoying the beating."

"Sickly enough, he did. So I just kill him. This causes the other to back off."

"What the... you killed him? You know it is not permitted in this place! You will be thrown out if the people in charge here find out."

"The others will keep their mouth shut. He is not fighting in the tournament anymore, so other people won't notice if he is gone. Also, the guy wore Amulet of Rebirth, he only loses one level."

Paytowin shook his head and said, "Well, I have always known you for the tomboy and the hardheaded girl you are. Completely different from the gentle you who I saw in the television."

"The one in the television is not the real me. Wait, you watched my show?" Grace asked.

"You are famous, everyone watched you."

"Not Lone Wind, though."

Paytowin shrugged, "How do you know? Perhaps he watched as well."

Grace didn't comment, she just stared at Paytowin, which caused him to feel uncomfortable.

"Um... Do you come to me because you need something?" Paytowin asked after the uncomfortable silence.

"I saw you are pretty tight with that guy," Grace answered.

"Which guy?"

"The guy with the multi-class. The one who beat me up in the team match earlier."

Paytowin shrugged again, very uncomfortably now. "Well, you know me. I like to make friends."

"No, you don't. You were mean to most people. Only after hanging out with Lone Wind that you started making friends with others."

"I don't understand why you brought him up..."

"Cut the crap! He is Lone Wind, isn't he?" Grace cut Paytowin's sentence.

"Yes, he is... Oh, darn! Don't tell him that you found out from me. Why do you think he is him anyway?"

"I saw him using that triple slashes he liked to use, then I remember he did a fist bump with you before the match.... Also, he had known that I am the Grace who used to play with you two, hadn't he?"

"Um... That..."

Grace gave him a hard stare.

"He knows..." Paytowin said weakly. "Why do you suspect so?"

"He masked his alias when we first met, even though it would have been obvious that his alias will be easily exposed since we both joined the tournament. Damn him, does he really don't want to hang out with me so much?"

"Uh... Please don't misunderstand him."

"Why? Did you talk to him about me?"

"Um, I did..."

"What did he say?"

"Well, after learning the real world you. He said that you might have misunderstood your feeling because you are too sheltered when we hung out together. Now that nothing was holding you down, he wanted you to explore your freedom to make sure, first. He thought that if you knew he was nearby, it would prevent you from doing that."

"Do you believe that?" Grace asked.

"Sister, I date girls for fun. I am never into this deep relationship shit. Please don't ask my opinion," Paytowin replied, praying for this conversation to end soon. While in his mind, he cursed Jack. What was the guy thinking? Didn't he know that Grace was the most perceptive amongst the three of them? It would be a wonder if she didn't find out his identity when they participate in the same match.

Grace took a deep breath. After some silence, she said to Paytowin. "Don't tell him that I know he is who he is." She then walked away.

Paytowin watched her leaving. 'Crap... What have I gotten myself into?' He thought.

\*

While Jack was heading to the agora to wait for Paytowin, he walked over to a secluded spot near the edge of the mountain where his grandfather was training Leavemealone. Leavemealone was doing some shadow boxing while Domon was watching by the side, giving some remarks once in a while.

"He is a very serious student, isn't he?" Jack asked as he stood beside Domon.

"Yes, he is," Domon answered.

"Reminds me of senior brother Leo," Jack said.

Domon didn't say anything.

"You think he would have a chance against Wong?" Jack asked.

"Who will have a chance against me?" Jack heard a deep voice from the back. He turned and was surprised to find Wong standing not far away. Leavemealone who heard Wong's voice stopped and looked over. Domon stayed still without looking back.

Wong approached. He then stood on Jack's other side opposite Domon. Jack felt weird to have two martial art grandmasters flanking him, but he was more bewildered to find that he could almost not sense Wong. The guy was as if he didn't exist there.

"Your concealment technique was quite good," Domon said.

"Thank you for your compliment," Wong said. "You know, I have always wondered who amongst us is the better martial artist. It's a pity you quit when I make my debut in the world championship. It would have been glorious to have taken the crown from a ten-years straight champion."

"If I have joined, it would have been eleven-years straight champion," Domon uttered.

"Hahaha!" Wong laughed. "Too bad you are not in the Rogue section. Otherwise, we no longer have to wonder who is the better fighter between us."

"I don't need to wonder. I have always known."

"Haha... So, are you training this little cub who I have beaten before in the hope of defeating me?"

Leavemealone clenched his fists after hearing Wong's remark.

"No need to be so eager, boy. Looking at our placements, we should meet in the final. If, you managed to win before the final, of course. I hope you do, so I can beat you up again. This time, in front of your new teacher."

"I won't lose this time," Leavemealone uttered.

"Heh," Wong grinned. He then turned around. Before he left, he said to Domon, "I hope we can spar someday."

"Considering that you have lowered yourself and sold your service to the devil, we will," Domon replied.

"Hehe. I will be looking forward to it."

Wong then walked away.

Jack watched the old martial artist disappear between the trees, the other two heavenly enforcers were nowhere to be seen. Actually, Jack never saw the three interact with each other. The three were in one camp but their relationships were not more than workmates. Jack was glad if that was truly the case, a group tied by such a shallow bond would be easier to go up against.

"What is this concealment technique?" Jack asked his grandfather.

"Can you sense his presence using your mana sense just now?" Domon asked back.

"Only a little, and also after he is standing right next to me," Jack answered.

Domon nodded. "A concealment technique was one that manipulate chi to hide one's presence. Only a perfect chi-sensing can sense a person with this technique. This is an ancient technique developed by

assassins from the past, who like to hide and strike from the dark. I'm rather surprised that guy is proficient in that technique."

"This technique can be useful. Can you teach me?" Jack asked.

"I know the technique, but I must admit, that Wong is better in it than me. But yes, I can teach you if you are interested. However, you must first touch the basics of mana manipulation."

"I want to learn it as well!" Leavemealone exclaimed.

Domon smiled. There was nothing happier for a teacher than having eager students, but he didn't let his feelings show for long. His face turned stern and uttered, "First, you have to beat up that guy who has just called you a little cub! Now, get back to your training!"

"Yes, master!" Leavemealone bowed and resumed his stance.

'Truly an obedient student,' Jack thought.

"Are you going to join us in training?" Domon asked Jack.

"No, I have an appointment with someone," Jack said.

"Don't slack off on your training," Domon said.

"Yes, master," Jack grumbled.

Jack went to the agora where he was supposed to meet Paytowin. The dude wasn't there yet. So, he sat cross-legged at one corner and started training as his grandfather asked him to. In his meditation, he tried to manipulate the mana around him.

When he arrived in this place, his mana sense had allowed him to sense that this place's mana was denser than other places he had visited before. With denser mana, he should have an easier time manipulating mana in theory. He had been doing just that in his free time since yesterday.

He closed his eyes and felt the mana around him. He started to send his thought to a tiny portion of it. He had learned after many experiments that it was easier if he tried to influence a few mana. He guessed like any other practice, he should start small before building up.

As he asserted his 'dominance' to this small portion of mana, he started to give them direction to move. If he asked them to do too complex a maneuver, they started to slip from his grasp and broke free. Then he would have to start all over again.

While he was immersed in the training, he heard noises that became louder each time.

"Jack!"

He opened his eyes and saw Paytowin in front of him.

"The hell, man. You can even sleep while sitting?"

"Sorry," Jack told Paytowin. He had gotten so carried away that he didn't sense his friend arriving.

"Come with me," Paytowin said.



"Where to?"

"I'm going to take you to the ancient battleground."

## **Chapter 659: Ancient Battleground**

Jack followed Paytowin to the Temple of Courage. Paytowin had to show his badge to the clerics guarding the temple. He also had to explain about bringing Jack in and that he had cleared it with the chief treasurer, which Paytowin explained to Jack was the native who he helped and invited him into this faction. The cleric went to check. After a while, he came back and allowed Jack to enter.

Jack asked Paytowin about this Ancient Battleground. Paytowin explained it was some sort of a training simulation that helped the council members in increasing levels and acquiring rewards.

"Like a training cave?" Jack asked.

Paytowin knew about training caves. He had read about this facility in this council's library, but he said although it was similar, it was also inherently different. "It is similar because the opponents you killed in the simulation granted you exp points, you won't lose a level or lose anything if you die, enemies didn't drop any loot. But if it is mainly for leveling up, training caves are a better option. This ancient battleground, on the other hand, is much more difficult. You are more likely to die inside, but there will be a score point. The more enemies you kill and the longer you survive, the higher your score, the better the reward by the end of the session. Training caves provide no reward, only exp points."

"Very difficult?" Jack asked.

"The ancient battleground is the reenactment of past battles. Like training caves, it has simulations that suited our level ranges, but there is one similarity between all these simulations. They are reenacting history battles where we are playing the losing side against overwhelming enemy forces."

Jack was bewildered while they chose such historical defeats for the simulations to train their descendants? Paytowin explained that the Council of Virtus valued bravery the most. There was no higher courage than facing a battle where you knew you would surely lose.

They arrived at a large hall where in its center sat a giant device with a horse-shoe shape similar to the one that was used to enter the legacy dungeon in Heavenly Citadel. A bearded old man in a scholarly robe stood beside this device. Jack used Inspect on the old man, learning his name was Myson, a level 50 special elite human. He also held the title of Chief Treasurer.

"Master Myson, I've brought my friend to enter the ancient battleground," Paytowin said to Myson with a bow.

Jack imitated Paytowin in bowing, showing his respect.

Myson nodded. He said to Jack, "For requesting us to allow you entering our ancient battlegrounds, I can see that my apprentice holds you in high regard. Considering you are one of the world tournament participants and such high praise from my apprentice, I will allow it. But you still have to pay ten gold coins every time you enter. It's just a formality, please understand that we don't allow any outsider to use this facility even if they pay us ten times the coins. Also, note that we only extend this privilege

when you are here during the world tournament. It won't be available anymore once the tournament ends."

Jack checked his bag. He had 169 gold coins, meaning he could enter this ancient battleground sixteen times. Since this facility was only available during the next six days, he might as well make full use of it. He didn't mind spending all his coins.

Myson then explained about the ancient battleground they would be entering. It was a reenactment of the battle of Themisphylae, where the God of Courage sent his force to defend a border pass of Themisphere kingdom against the overwhelming odds of the army of darkness gathered by the God of Greed.

The dark army outnumbered the defender by a hundred to one. They managed to last for days due to a narrow pass that eliminate the advantage of the enemy's vast forces, but later suffer excruciating defeat after the enemy found a secret passage leading them behind the defending lines.

"Crap, why does this sound so much like that famous history battle from our world?" Jack sent a silent message to Paytowin.

"Maybe this Wilted you mentioned is just lazy and simply copy the story out of the history textbook," Paytowin replied.

"I don't think she wrote the backstory to her game herself."

"Well, her development team was lazy then."

After Myson finished narrating the backstory to the ancient battleground they would be entering, he requested Jack to deposit the coin payment.

He then explained that the opponents inside had been adjusted to between level 40 to 50. They would receive exp points but no loots, they needed to last at least three hours inside the simulation and killed at least one thousand opponents. Failing to do either one meant they were not eligible to receive any rewards, so one couldn't just find a corner and hid until three hours had passed. Once these two basic requirements were met, scores would start being allocated. They would receive rewards for the number of scores they secured individually.

Myson asked Jack if he had any questions? Jack asked if he could use any tools inside the simulation. Myson answered no, just skills. True warriors of courage relied on themselves, the old scholar said. His tone half-carried contempt for the fact that Jack even asked such a question.

"If I summon a pet and it dies. It will not die for real, right?" Jack asked another question.

"No, nothing dies for real inside the ancient battleground."

When Jack said that he had no more questions, Myson activated the device at the center of the room. A silvery portal formed in front of the device. Myson waved his hand indicating that they could enter now.

Paytowin took the lead. Jack followed behind.

After entering the portal, Jack came out and found himself atop a half-destroyed fort. Around him were lots of human soldiers with battered armor. Their faces seemed apprehensive and all their gazes were to their front.

Jack followed their gazes. In front was a narrow pass with two steep mountains flanking it. Lots of soldiers stood guard on this pass. Before this pass, in the distance, was a mass of black. Jack squinted his eyes. The combination of Dragon Eye and Archer's Keen Sight allowed him to zoom in to see the distance. That mass of black was a mass of deformed humans in black armor. Within this sea of black humans were also monsters with dark scales and skins. They were packed so tight that no space was visible.

'Hm, tools truly don't work here,' Jack thought when he saw his radar was empty despite so many soldiers standing around them.

Paytowin, who was standing beside Jack, said, "You know, the few times I first entered these ancient battlegrounds and experienced them firsthand. I was truly impressed that this world had such an epic war history. But after hearing your story about the truth of this world, it kinds of feels hollow now. To find out that this is all just the narration to enrich the backstory of a game..."

"Don't be. This world is real now, which means its history as well. It shaped the world into what it is and will also affect what's going forward. We are a part of this world now whether we like it or not."

"Do you think it's permanent? Do you think there will be no way for us to go back anymore?" Paytowin asked.

"It doesn't matter what world we live in. What matters is how we live it," Jack replied.

Paytowin stared at Jack for a bit before uttering, "Smartass. Trying to sound wise?"

Jack laughed. "So, what happens now? We just wait until that sea of black come swarming?"

"They won't be long now," Paytowin said. "In one hour from now, many enemies would also come swarming from the back, drowning this place."

"Since we know the enemies are coming from the back, can't we tell the soldiers to block the secret rear path where the enemies are coming from?"

"That secret path is no narrow pass like the one in front. It was vast. Once the secret path was known, there is no blocking it. Additionally, the soldiers here won't listen to you. They followed a scripted event, you can't change what they do. Aside from how many enemies we killed, there is no changing the outcome of this battle. We are just passengers here."

"So, we don't have a squad to command?" Jack asked.

"Haha, funny. We are just playing the role of footsoldiers here," Paytowin said.

Too bad, Jack thought he could get exp bonuses from the killings done by the other soldiers. In this case, he had to do his own fighting and killing to get the exp.

But one thing he noticed, the mana in this ancient battleground was even much denser than Daminos Square Garden outside. He could easily sense the mana swirling around him. He sent his consciousness

to the ones around his right hand and have them grouped on his palm, it seemed easier to communicate with them in this dimension. If he could spend more time here, he should be able to better understand this communication that was the basis of mana manipulation.

His focus was disrupted when a loud horn sounded in the air. Then he saw the sea of black in the distance start moving closer.

"We have to score the kill ourselves to gain exp points, right? Let's go to the front then!" Jack uttered.

"Yeah, let's!" Paytowin uttered.

They bumped their fists again before the two climbed down the fort and ran forward to the narrow pass where the front-line was.

### **Chapter 660: Hopeless Battle**

While Jack ran forward to the front line with Paytowin, he noticed some group of soldiers who looked different. They wore bright golden armor. Paytowin who saw Jack's gaze said to him, "Those are the knights sent by the God of Courage to assist in this battle. They are a different breed from the other soldiers here."

"Shouldn't we go to where they are then?" Jack asked. "If they are much stronger, they should last the longest in this battle, right?"

"If your objective is to last longer, yes," Paytowin answered. "After I played this ancient battleground several times, I have learned that joining those golden knights do make me last longer. No sweat to pass the three-hour mark. However, getting a kill is another matter. Those knights' damage is high. Unless you are very good in your timing, most of the kills would be bagged by them. It will be very difficult for you to score the one-thousand-kill mark you need. I find it easier to score the kill if I fight amongst the regular soldiers."

"Okay, let's fight away from those golden knights then," Jack said.

By the time they arrived on the front line, the black armor mutated humans from the opposing forces had started clashing with Themisphere's soldiers. Since the narrow pass forced everyone to pack so tightly, it was difficult to proceed forward. Jack and Paytowin just waited near the front line. Jack scanned these black armor mutated humans and found them to be mostly level 40 to 45 basics, a small portion was elites and special elites with higher levels, but none was higher than level 50. He had expected to be unable to inspect those with levels too far from him, but he could inspect them all.

"Hey, my inspect is still boosted by my monocle but why my radar isn't working?" Jack asked.

"Are you asking me? Do I need to remind you that your monocle is an alien entity?" Peniel replied. "My guess is probably the radar function is considered as tool's ability so it is muted but your inspect buff function is considered as equipment's passive ability."

"That's weird," Jack commented.

"Don't ask me!" Peniel uttered.

While Jack was still wondering about his monocle, a large black troll suddenly barged in, it was a level 48 rare elite. It swung its gigantic club and smashed the soldiers on the front line flying. A flood of black-armored humans rushed in through the gaps.

The soldiers quickly covered this gap with the higher-rank soldier dealing with the rare elite troll, but the wave of enemy soldiers that had broken through the gap wreaked havoc behind the front line. Jack and Paytowin immediately joined in fighting these enemies.

Jack summoned his Therras Beast to gain exp as well. Paytowin had heard of Jack's Beastmaster class, but he was still impressed when he saw Jack's medium-sized pet.

Paytowin didn't want to get left behind, he threw his techno golem ball and a shining golden robot appeared. It had a mechanical head resembling a lion. It was named Brave King. From its HP, Jack estimated it was around special elite grade, similar to Wilted's golem.

"Not bad!" Jack commented while dealing with multiple enemies. Most of the enemies were basic grade so he had no problem fighting while talking.

"Thanks! I used up lots of my gathered points just to get the parts. They were exclusive parts only available in this faction," Paytowin said.

"This faction had things for Technocraft as well? I thought they are exclusive factions for knights and warriors?"

"No, this faction is for all classes. Most native members of this faction indeed had classes similar to knights and warriors, since those classes deal with enemies directly so they exhibit courage more easily which is the main value of this faction. But it doesn't mean other classes has no value in courage."

"The faction directly under God and Goddesses are all top-notch factions. They won't just cater to one or two classes," Peniel added. "That being said, the parts available for techno golem is also numerous, you are very good to be able to select through the parts and choose the best combination."

"Hehe," Paytowin beamed at the compliment.

Brave King smote through the enemy with ease. Although its speed was nothing much, its strength was impressive. Any opponent that received its punch got sent flying. The mechanical lion head opened its mouth, a stream of blue flame poured forth. Most of the enemies hit by this flame got burnt to dust. Those who survived received Burn status with very high damage per second.

"Impressive!" Jack uttered. With that blue flame breath, Paytowin's kill count was not any less than him.

"By the way, we are a party, so do we count the one-thousand kill counts individually or together?" Jack asked.

"The one-thousand mark is counted as the combined number we kill as a party," Paytowin explained.

"But once we went past that mark, the score we received from each kill will be counted individually. I won't get any score from the enemy you kill once we are past one-thousand kill."

"Good, meaning we should be able to cross that mark faster," Jack exclaimed.

"We still have to survive past three hours, though," Paytowin said.

By that time, another two spots in the defense line got breached as well. More enemies poured through. Several flying beasts flew high above and came down on the archers and catapults behind the defensive line.

"There are flying enemies?" Jack asked.

"It will only get worse as time passes," Paytowin said.

In addition to the breached defensive line, several shadows shot up. These shadows jumped through the defensive line and landed behind it. Once they landed, Jack got a good look at these creatures. They looked like large monkeys wearing black armor and carrying sharp claw weapons.

While Jack was having trouble getting to the enemy when the fighting started, it was not so anymore now. There was no shortage of enemies. In fact, the defensive line was slowly getting overwhelmed by the enemy's non-stop push.

Seeing the front line getting pushed back, Jack asked, "Hey, George. Does what happen inside this ancient battleground is seen by others outside?"

"No, why?" Paytowin asked back.

"Is the fight here being recorded?"

"No, why?" Paytowin asked again.

"Cool," Jack said and used his Lightning God Barrage while activating Overlimit and all his buff skills. He sent the twenty balls of lightning beyond the front line. Decimating a large portion of the enemies. All basic and elite enemies were reduced to dust immediately, with the special elite receiving a large amount of damage.

"Holy smoke! That was one badass skill. Where do you learn that?" Paytowin uttered.

"Hehe," it was Jack's turn to beam this time. "Don't tell any of the natives in your faction about this skill. It is a skill I learned from a divine treasure."

"Divine treasure? Damn! And here I am, feeling proud for getting into a divine faction," Paytowin uttered.

The two continued to accumulate more kill counts. Brave King exhibited another skill where its two fists detached from its arms. It shot forward and slammed everything on its path before flying back and reattached with the arms again. The skill drew another cheer from Jack.

Paytowin's Energy Turret skill was also different from the one Jack had seen executed by Wonderman during the match earlier. Instead of shooting energy bullets, it shot a linear energy beam, striking multiple enemies' on its path. The beam could also swing around to hit more enemies. The beam lasted two seconds, it then had a one-second cooldown before firing another beam again.

Paytowin informed Jack that he had evolved his Energy Turret skill using a seed he got from the faction's treasury by exchanging his faction points.

"They even sell evolve seeds?" Jack asked with surprise. "This faction is kick-ass!" He uttered.

"It's expensive, though. And the seed is a time-sensitive exchange. It didn't available all the time. I was lucky that I have enough points when it came up on the list," Paytowin said.

As they continued with the battle, they heard a commotion from the back.

"It's starting," Paytowin said.

Jack looked back. 'It's only one hour,' He thought. The defensive line didn't look good. Could they last three hours?

Jack didn't let himself worry. He just focused on killing as many opponents as he could. He mostly picked on the basic-grade enemies. But as time passed, there were fewer and fewer of these enemies, most he found were now elite and special elites. He assumed all those weak basic enemies had been routed, leaving only the stronger ones.

His twenty blade orbs swirled around his two hands. He had been moving non-stop as his Formless Flowing Sword Style continuously slashing the enemies around him, with spells occasionally thrown. He cast Mana Bullet, Energy Bolts, and Magic Bind on the flying enemy that passed above. These flying beasts easily fell from one hit. Jack immediately slashed them to oblivion before they had the chance to fly back up.

Jack's Therras Beast ran around butting and trampling any enemies it could find. Jack commanded it to cover Brave King which had slow movement. Jack also summoned his ten wolves and commanded them to circle Paytowin, giving him cover from enemies that were trying to approach his friend.

Paytowin himself used a gun on his right hand, like Wilted, but his left hand carried a dagger. The dagger was more like a miniature chainsaw, there were tiny blades that rotated around the dagger's edges. Paytowin used this dagger on enemies that came close.

"Damn, you are starting to return to how I remember you, with lots of unconventional toys at your disposal," Jack remarked.

When they almost reach the three-hour mark, they heard loud noises from behind. Jack turned back and was stunned to see a sea of black covering the backline.

"Holy shit...!" Jack exclaimed.

A few minutes after that, the sea was upon him.

He and Paytowin returned to the room where Myson was.

"Goodness! How can one survive three hours with a script like that?" Jack uttered.