

## World 961

### Chapter 961: Seven Fists of Hope

They were already in the third hour since the Hex of Power Restraint's activation. The artifact's duration only had a bit more than half an hour left. While the dragon turtle still had around half of its HP. Finishing the dragon turtle before the Hex's power ran out of duration seemed to be an impossibility.

The merfolk were probably also aware of this grim prospect. Their assaults were getting less aggressive as if they were losing hope. The lower-ranked merfolk kept on glancing at their sea mother, expecting her to call off the attacks. This caused them to lose focus from time to time, which gave the dragon turtle more openings. Thus, casualties among the merfolk increased.

"Fight...! Keep on fighting, my warriors! We will show this beast who is the true ruler of this gulf!!" Ama shouted. She finally noticed her merfolk's half-heartedness.

Another thing caught her attention. She was one of the few natives who could sense and manipulate mana. One of the ranged attacks sent by the outworlders had mana manipulation imbued into it. It inflicted higher damage than others. She traced the attacks and found that they came from the leader of the outworlders, Saint John.

She had looked down on that outworlder because he had coerced her into promising a special class reward. After finding that this outworlder possessed a mana manipulation ability, she had a different view of him. Perhaps it was not a bad thing to associate with this outworlder.

But even so, their situation was far from ideal. Neither she nor her warriors could execute any high-damaging skills or spells due to the Hex of Power Restraint, so they could only chip away the dragon turtle's HP slowly. But if they shut down the Hex, they would be the ones in trouble due to the turtle's dual-world domain. She couldn't think of a way out of this situation.

She didn't let this worry weaken her focus though. Her attention was still fully on the battle. Her trident continued to stab relentlessly at the turtle whenever she saw an opening.

Suddenly, she noticed the strange movement on one of the outworlder's range attacks. That particular range attack flew in a curve and chased after the dragon turtle's head as it tilted away. It then flew in a circle before stabbing into the turtle's left eye. The turtle roared in fury and pain.

Ama didn't question where that ranged attack came from. Only one outworlder she knew here had the mana manipulation ability.

While the dragon turtle was still leering, another ranged attack flew past its head and then circled back and hit its right eye. It was now closing both its eyes.

"This is our chance, attack...!!" Ama exclaimed.

Though the dragon turtle was momentarily blinded, it wasn't exactly paralyzed. Its four limbs and tail flailed around wildly, trying to hit any approaching opponents by luck. Not every merfolk could utilize the opportunity, only those who had the best swimming ability could capitalize on this chance.

As Ama stabbed the dragon turtle frenziedly, she noticed another thing. There was another outworlder down there! A melee-class dwarven outworlder. This outworlder was currently punching the underside of the turtle, its plastron.

'What's the point?' Ama thought. Once the dragon turtle recovered its bearing, if that outworlder didn't run away, he would be squashed flat. He could only attack in a short time. How much damage could a standard attack do in such a short time?

But then, she sensed something unusual. The outworlder down there also attacked using mana manipulation. The spot that the dwarven outworlder struck had the mana lingering. The next spot that he struck, the same thing happened. Furthermore, the mana between those two spots formed a linkage and they intensified each other greatly.

'This...' The revelation caused Ama to pause for a bit. The dragon turtle had slightly opened one of its eyes now. It spotted Ama who was staying still. It immediately lunged forward for a bite.

"Sea mother, look out...!" One of the nearby rare elite merfolk rushed in and pushed Ama away. In doing this, he was the one getting caught instead. The dragon turtle's powerful jaw snapped at him, delivering high damage.

The dragon turtle didn't let go of the merman. Its powerful jaw continued to clamp on his body, repeatedly biting down. The merman was powerless as his HP went down with each bite. He tried striking the turtle's eye with his trident but the turtle closed its eyes. A prey was already in its grasp, there was no need to see.

"No!" Ama yelled. She was feeling guilty. This was her fault. She struck the turtle repeatedly in an effort to free the merman, but the dragon turtle just tanked through the punishments. At one point, she was smacked by one of the turtle's forelimbs due to her reckless assaults.

She was slammed hard to the bottom of the tunnel. She looked up in dismay as the merman who had saved her finally succumbed. His body was severed by the turtle's jaw when his HP reached zero.

At the same time, from down there, Ama noticed the dwarven outworlder. He was still swimming around under the turtle and punching at different spots. There were now five glowing and linking dots under the turtle's body. The dwarf punched a sixth time and that sixth spot also glowed and linked with the other spots.

Ama didn't know what this dwarven outworlder was doing but it was not anything simple. The mana that she sensed from those spots had intensified to a dangerous level. It could explode at any time. She realized then that that was perhaps the point.

The dragon turtle also realized something was wrong then. It could also slightly sense mana, even if it was not as advanced as the natives or outworlders. The momentary blindness and frenzied attacks from the merfolk had taken its attention away, but now the unnatural energy buildup inside its body had become very unstable that it couldn't afford to ignore. It looked down and spotted Jet who was currently swimming toward the seventh and final spot.

Ama also saw the turtle's reaction. She immediately acted without thinking. She knew by instinct that if they were to win, that outworlder had to be allowed to complete whatever he was doing. That fist of his had become their hope!

She shot forward just as the dragon turtle opened its jaw and was about to elongate its neck toward Jet. Ama didn't worry about anything else. She just knew she had to take the turtle's attention. Her trident stabbed deep at the side of the turtle's head.

With her trident stuck deep, she grabbed the turtle's neck with her other free hand and forcefully pulled.

"Sea mother...!!!" The other merfolk shouted anxiously. Seeing Ama take a risk like that, they couldn't afford to play safe. They also rushed in and grabbed the turtle's body. Stabbing it while forcefully keeping it from moving.

With all these merfolk hindering it, the dragon turtle couldn't do anything to Jet. It flailed its body around, trying to shake all these merfolk off. It even forcefully swam to the side, slamming many of the merfolk who were hanging onto its body to the wall, damaging them.

"Stay still, will you?!" Jet uttered. He was grabbing one of the bones of the plastron so he remained close to the turtle while it moved around. But with such erratic movements, it was difficult to strike the seventh spot.

"Shit!" He uttered. He saw the glows on the six spots were starting to dim. He would have to start over if those glows fizzled. He couldn't let that happen!

The dragon turtle was still flailing around. Jet tried to catch the rhythm. His eyes remained on the seventh spot. When he thought his chance was as good as any, he let go of the bone he was holding onto and pushed his body forward. The flailing body of the turtle moved away when he let go of his hold, but it came back again soon once he was close to the spot he was targeting. He stabbed his katar which was already empowered by his Seven Injuries Fists.

"Success...!" Jet celebrated.

The seventh spot glowed and formed links with the other six spots. The glows continued to intensify until all seven spots fused into one large blinding glow. The dragon turtle roared in pain as it felt the chaotic energy running rampant within its body. The rampant energy then exploded spectacularly.

The force of the blow threw everyone away, even the merfolk who were clinging to the dragon turtle's body.

The explosion also stirred the water around the dragon turtle. Water bubbles covered everyone's vision. They couldn't see the dragon turtle's condition.

John was the only one who could still see the dragon turtle using his God-eye monocle. He saw a red outline of the turtle inside the water bubbles. It was still alive and moving. Not only that, Jet's Seven Injuries Fists only managed to take out around twenty percent of the turtle's HP.

The dragon turtle still had around thirty percent HP left.

## Chapter 962: A Gamble

"Crap!" Jet cursed and hurriedly swam away.

The water had turned to normal and everyone could see the dragon turtle again. It was staring menacingly at the dwarf who was running away. It knew it was the dwarf that had caused its intense pain just now. It swiped its powerful tail and its large body lunged forward in Jet's direction.

"Protect him!" John ordered.

Ama heard John. She was also disappointed that the move just now failed to take down the turtle. But then again, what did she expect? The dwarf was not that high-level. It was too far-fetched if she hoped that this outworlder took out half the dragon turtle's HP in a single move without using any skill. Even with skills, taking out one-fifth of the HP from a high-level mythical beast was also unheard of.

Ama realized then, this dwarf's degree of mana manipulation exceeded even that outworlder's leader.

"Protect him...!" Ama echoed John's order.

The merfolk immediately moved following Ama's order. They rushed forward and clashed with the dragon turtle again, hindering it from getting to Jet. Another merfolk, Nogg, swooped in and grabbed Jet, he pulled Jet away before the dragon turtle managed to close in.

Nogg flung Jet in John's direction. Jet somersaulted in the water before balancing himself and landed beside John. He was not angry about Nogg's rough treatment. He was grateful that Nogg bothered to pull him away.

"We are running out of time. You will need to use that martial art again," John said to him.

"Are you nuts?!" Jet said. "Look at that turtle!"

The dragon turtle used to just stay in one place and smacked everyone that came near. It was easier to focus its aim that way. Now, it was zooming around the water, playing chase with the merfolk. Under this situation, it was difficult for the turtle to catch the high-moving merfolk, but the merfolk also landed fewer hits. But most of all, this nullified Jet's chance to creep up on the turtle. Not to mention landing another consecutive seven hits.

"That turtle also sees me as a sworn enemy now. Do you think it will just let me leisurely hit it like before? I'm sure it will ignore everyone and come at me when it sees me anywhere near again!" Jet added.

As they were speaking, the dragon turtle that was swimming nearby suddenly veered in their direction.

"F\*ck! Run...!!" Jet exclaimed. Both he and John quickly slipped through the narrow gaps in the wall and fled to the outside.

They saw through the gaps that the dragon turtle slammed the place where they were. Jet saw the dragon turtle stare right at him through the gap before swimming away.

"F\*ck! There is no mistaking that turtle is holding a grudge against me," Jet cursed.

"You must be imagining it. We need you to execute that martial art again," John repeated.

"Dude! Did you not hear what I said?" Jet complained.

John was massaging his chin. He was looking through the gaps while contemplating.

"Hey! Did you hear me?" Jet uttered again when he saw that John is ignoring him.

"Be quiet please, I want to speak with the merfolk," John said.

"Unbelievable," Jet was speechless.

Will came approaching after seeing the two come out. "Mate, that was truly dangerous just now. You have balls for an old dude! What was that move you used in there?"

"You call me old dude again and I will use that move on you. You hear me, punk?" Jet threatened.

"Chill, mate. I meant no disrespect," Will said.

While the two were chatting, John sent a message to Nogg via their mental connection. "Hey, companion. I need to ask you and Ama something."

"Call her sea mother, you disrespectful outworlder!" Nogg responded. "And we are busy! We don't have time to chat here!"

"I apologize, but it's important that we speak! Ask the sea mother to come out for a bit," John insisted.

He didn't hear Nogg replying, but he saw from the gaps that Nogg was shouting something at Ama. He then saw the two swim towards him. Ama called other merfolk to enter to take hers and Nogg's places.

"What is it? Can't you see we are short on time?" Ama said to John crudely. She was not in a good mood. Losing a score of followers and fighting a losing battle were hardly the things to cheer one up.

"It is precisely because we are short on time that we need to talk," John said. "We can't win if we continue like this."

"Can't he repeat the thing he did just now?" Ama pointed at Jet.

"He can, but you must agree that the dragon turtle won't let him get near anymore," John replied.

"... So, what do you propose?" Ama asked.

"Do you have a skill that can bind the turtle for a time? Even if just for a few seconds."

"I have," It was Nogg who answered.

"Are you sure your skill can stop a mythical-grade monster?" John asked.

"Not for long, but I know it can stop this dragon turtle for at least three or four seconds. I know because I used it on the turtle when I found its lair."

"Why are we talking about this? Isn't the Hex stopped us all from using a skill?" Ama asked.

"We are going to shut it," John said.

"What?!" Everyone who heard uttered.

"We can't win with standard attacks. That's why we are going to take a gamble." John said. "The dragon turtle doesn't know what is stopping it from using its skill. Even if it somehow had knowledge of the Hex of Power Restraint, it would know the artifact's duration was still around fifteen minutes left. I will turn it off five minutes before its duration. The dragon turtle didn't know the exact time when it can use skills again, but we do. I will give everyone a shout once the Hex is turned off. Once you hear from me, unleash all the most powerful skills you possess. You and all your merfolk, especially the high-level one. We will gamble the few seconds before the dragon turtle realizes that it can use its skills again."

John paused to let everyone understand his plan.

"Even if we use all our most powerful skills, I doubt we can deplete all the turtle's HP. If we fail and it unleashes its dual-world domain, we are finished. Only your kind and very few of my merfolk can fight then. Not to mention it can also use its Total Defense skill. Its defense is incredibly tough when it uses that skill and its HP recovery is insane. It can heal back the damage it lost in a short time."

John had witnessed the newborn dragon turtle's total defense. But from Ama's description, this adult's version was even more powerful.

"That's why we need Nogg's binding skill. You have seen this guy's move, right?" It was John who now pointed at Jet. "He could take out almost twenty percent of the turtle's HP with that move. You and your merfolk only need to take out the remaining ten percent. As long as we take the initiative before the turtle can act, we will be able to pull this off."

Ama and Nogg looked at one another. It was risky but they knew they didn't have a better plan. Finally, Ama said, "All right. I think your plan is doable. I need time to convey this message to my warriors fighting inside."

"Take ten minutes to do it. We need to do it before the Hex's natural duration just in case the turtle knows it," John said.

Ama nodded. She called a merman to come on standby with Jet. That merman would take Jet to the dragon turtle's underside once they started their plan. She then slipped back into the tunnel.

Nogg looked at John for a beat before following the sea mother. There was recognition in his eyes. John had forced him to be a companion, so he didn't exactly have a good opinion of John. But he sort of grew a certain amount of respect for the outworlder after this.

"Dude, I hope this works," Jet said.

"It will all depend on you. Don't f\*ck this up!" John warned.

"Damn it, punk! What did I say before about speaking to your elder?!"

Inside the tunnel, Ama and Nogg approached the other merfolk one by one to convey the message. They didn't have outworlder's messaging system, after all. These other merfolk also help to spread the word. They took care to only convey the message when they were away from the dragon turtle. For safety and also in case the turtle can understand language.

John and Jet had silently slipped back into the tunnel while waiting for the time. John had sent an instruction to the player who was watching after the Hex of Power Restraint. The player was now waiting for John's message before shutting the artifact down.

When he saw that there was no more merfolk who was talking and it was five minutes before the Hex's duration. He sent the message to the player. He then shouted to the others, "Now...!!!"

### **Chapter 963: Marine Keeper**

Once the command was given, all the merfolk who had prepared themselves immediately unleashed their skills. Flashy attacks and elemental energies battered the dragon turtle's body, taking out a chunk of its life. It was greatly startled by this sudden turn of events.

The most impressive attack was one delivered by Ama, the sea mother. She conjured countless water spears that struck the dragon turtle endlessly, stopping its swimming. This allowed the other merfolk an easier time landing their attacks.

Nogg was below the dragon turtle. He thrust his green trident down and a score of green eels came out. These eels entangled the dragon turtle and caused it unable to move.

The merman who stayed beside Jet had already grabbed Jet and dragged him toward the dragon turtle once John gave his signal. Jet was already at the underside of the dragon turtle when it was bound by Nogg's skill.

Jet didn't waste any time. He immediately started executing his martial art. Since he had done it before, it was faster this time as he remembered the punching spots. He didn't need to be too reliant on his mana sense to pinpoint the spots.

The dragon turtle was taken aback by all these merfolk suddenly using skills, but its surprise only lasted a while. It immediately realized that it should be able to use skills as well if so. Without delay, it activated its Dual-world domain.

A sphere of light burst out. When this sphere passed, all the water was suddenly gone. The sphere expanded a long distance. Even affecting the water outside the tunnel. The merfolk who found the water around them disappearing, lose their mobility and fell to the ground. Their fish tails were unable to help them walk.

Jet was hitting the dragon turtle's plastron rapidly. When the sphere that drove out the water spread, he had only landed four hits. When the water disappeared, he similarly lost footing and fell. But what was worse was the dragon turtle's heavy body was also falling on top of him.

He was about to roll away when his feet touched the ground, but he sensed someone coming next to him. The person was Nogg. Nogg's fish tail had transformed into two legs, allowing him to still walk in this waterless environment while the other merfolk were floundering helplessly on the ground.

Nogg used his two hands and grabbed the falling turtle, preventing it from squashing Jet. Despite the obvious heaviness of the gigantic turtle's body, he managed to prop the turtle up with his strength so that its plastron was still exposed.

"Finish it...!" Nogg yelled at Jet.

Jet immediately acted. His katar stabbed into the fifth spot. On land, he could move faster. He was about to hit the sixth spot when he sensed the turtle's head coming at him.

The turtle extended its neck unnaturally until it curved downward and was about to bite him. Nogg couldn't do anything about it. If he let go of even just one hand, both he and Jet would be squashed by the turtle's heavy body.

Jet saw the turtle's large jaw coming at him, but he didn't move. Before the turtle hit, his crimson-maned lion appeared before him. The jaw struck the lion instead. The lion planted its feet on the ground and resist the turtle's advance.

However, the turtle was much stronger. Even when the lion activated its armor's skill and boosted its attributes, it still couldn't fight the turtle's strength. Luckily, in this critical moment, John's avatar and feral tiger came and helped the lion hold the turtle's head.

With the three's combined strength, they prevented the turtle from disrupting Jet who stood behind them. The crimson-maned lion who received the brunt of the impact lost HP but its armor mitigated the damage. It also bit down at the turtle's head in retaliation.

Jet didn't let everyone's effort go to waste. He landed his sixth and seventh fist. The dragon turtle again felt the familiar energy turmoil within its body. The force struck from the inside, so all its defenses were useless against it. It roared when the energy buildup reached a critical mass and exploded.

Those who heard weren't sure if the dragon turtle roared out of fury or fear.

Jet, Nogg, and the crimson-maned lion were pushed away by the force of the explosion. When they got back up, they saw that the turtle was no longer moving. Its HP was zero. Everyone watched in silence. They still couldn't believe the fight was finally over, until the dragon turtle's body broke into dust particles.

When it did, the enormous sphere that held out all the water also vanished. The water rushed back in. The merfolk welcomed the return of the water while the players who were standing upright didn't prepare for it. They were washed away by the strong current and tumbled a few times inside the water.

The merfolk cheered then. The players also cheered through messages. Every player received a large number of exp points. The dragon turtle was a level 80 mythical grade, after all.

Jet had dealt almost half the damage to the dragon turtle. Additionally, he was the one who landed the killing blow, so the players received more than John would have expected. Still, the exp points were divided among a hundred players. Even if not all those one hundred players joined the fight, they were nearby and were in the party with those who dealt the damage. So, what was received by each player was significantly less, but it was still enough to push almost everyone's level up by one level.

John was among the ones who didn't increase in level, but he was close to level 59 after receiving the exp points.

He came to the place where the dragon turtle's body used to be. There were a few things on the sea floor. He used Inspect on them. There were the usual coins, mana cores, several pieces of equipment,



and materials. The notable ones were a set of unique-grade claw weapons, a technique book for the Beastmaster class, and an evolve seed.

"Well, you are the one who dealt the highest damage and landed the finishing blow, so I guess it makes sense that the loots that drop mostly catered to your class," John remarked.

"Then these two are mine then, haha!" Jet laughed and was about to grab the claw weapons and the technique book, but John swatted his hands away.

"These two things are yours, but I will keep them first. Let Jeanny do her things. Jack will want this technique book as well," John said.

"Oh...," Jet very much wanted the loots now but he held himself.

John stored all the loot. The technique book contained a skill called Beast Howl, while the evolved seed was a unique-grade seed named Shell Seed. John did not doubt the seed gave a defense-oriented effect.

"We don't get a share?" Billy and Rough Criminal were there as well. They were among the players who had fought with the turtle inside the tunnel.

"You two get a different reward," John said, sending them a guild invite.

"Yes!" Billy clapped Rough's shoulder. Rough Criminal didn't feel as enthusiastic. He preferred a share of the loot, but he didn't reject the invite either.

John also sent Will a guild invite earlier. Will had accepted. If the guild went on many wild adventures like this one, he was very on board.

"I will be forming a sea unit that explores the sea. Will will be heading this unit. I want you two in it as well," John said to Billy and Rough. "I will buy a ship for you to use and send a few battle-capable members to help in the exploration. Just remember that the guild gets a cut on all the profits from your exploration. In time, we should be able to secure more ships and expand into a fleet."

The two became excited after hearing it, even Rough Criminal's eyes lit up.

John left them and headed to Ama. She was briefing their merfolk. They had lost a number of good merfolk but with the dragon turtle gone, the bottom of this entire gulf was finally theirs.

Ama noticed John's approach. "I've heard that our missing children are safely back in our town. I know some didn't make it, that was a pity. But you hold your end of the bargain, the reward is yours."

"Bargain?" Nogg, who was nearby, asked.

"Yes, we strike a deal with him to rescue our missing children," Ama informed.

"What?! But didn't you say..."

"The deal is to save the children. The condition I've given you is to save you. Our deal is fair," John cut Nogg's words.

Nogg wanted to say something but then stopped. He just uttered, "Hmph! Don't call me for aid if there's nothing important!" He then swam away.

"Come on! Don't tell me you didn't level up from killing the dragon turtle just now!" John shouted at him.

Ama just shook her head. "You are one devious outworlder," she said, to which John just shrugged.

John had heard a notification of his quest completion when Ama said the reward was his. He received exp points, pushing him to level 59. He also received a first-class special class, Marine Keeper.

'Marine Keeper?' John was honestly a bit disappointed hearing it. It sounded like a class that could only see its potential in a water environment. But then again, his original plan was only to catch the newborn dragon turtle. This special class was a bonus, so he was grateful for it. The class' grade was a first-class special class, so it shouldn't be bad.

He opened his class page and studied the passive abilities this class granted.

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Intelligence, Endurance, Reflex, Wisdom +10%.

HP +2,000 and MP +200.

Recover 50 HP every second when in contact with water, recover 5 HP every second when not in contact with water.

Stats and movement speed of self and summons +100% when underwater.

\*

As expected, he was more powerful when underwater, but it was still good enough even when he was not.

As for the first spell he received from this special class, it was Summon Dire Alligator.

'Well, at least it is not a pure water creature,' John thought.

"Thank you, sea mother, for your blessing," John said to Ama.

Ama nodded. "I think our deal is done here. Take your people and return to the surface. Don't come down here without permission."

John didn't blame the sea mother's rude treatment. He did use tricks to blackmail them for rewards. This outcome was already much better than his original plan which would have put the merfolk as their mortal enemy. He figured that once the sea mother cooled down, his guild should still have a chance to build a relationship.

John called the others to arrange their return to the surface. After giving instructions, he finally could turn his attention to incoming messages. There had been many pings even during the battle, he had no time to attend to them. Now when he checked, all the calls were from Tip. He decided to call him back directly.

"What's wrong? Something happened in our headquarters?" John asked.

"No, something happened to Jack!" Tip said

"What could possibly happen to that expert?" John asked.

"He had been imprisoned, by the kingdom! He has been caught for the crime of murdering Prince Alonzo!" Tip informed.

#### **Chapter 964: A Visit from a Magistrate**

Inside the underground dungeon beneath Themisphere palace, Jack was sitting inside one of its cells. It had been half a day since he sat inside there. He reckoned it was close to nighttime now, but he couldn't be sure. There was no window for him to look out from.

He also couldn't access his storage bag or contact any friends using his messaging system. Even his equipment's ability was nullified. He had been staying still for a while in the dark but he didn't turn invisible from his Cloak of Shadow's ability.

He had been looking around the jail for something he could use. There was nothing. The entire cell only had a wooden bed on one side.

He even tried to scratch the rune diagram on the wall, which received Peniel's mocking. A rune diagram couldn't be disabled in such a crude way. Unless he had enough strength to destroy the wall completely, it was not possible to erase the rune. This prompted Jack to punch the wall and received another of Peniel's scoldings. His hand was hurting at the time so he didn't quite catch what Peniel was saying.

When he looked out from the jail bar, he couldn't see anyone stationed in this basement. The fact that they didn't need a warden spoke of the sturdiness of this jail's structure. Jack tested this by kicking at the metal bar as hard as he could. It didn't budge.

In the end, he sat back and contemplated what had happened today.

His thought went to Prince Alonzo again. The event had happened so fast. He still couldn't believe that the prince was gone. He honestly considered the prince as his friend. He was very sad that this happened. Who had murdered the prince? Who could profit from his death? Both Therribus and Rhemos were already gone. Losing the prince would just cause turmoil in Themisphere.

Was this an act of foreign powers? Seeking to throw this country into chaos? Was it the World Maker? Seeking to weaken other countries, paving the way for their conquest?

However, now that he thought back at the events earlier today. One thing was nagging him. It was the thing that person had said. Was he involved with what happened to the prince? He hoped not.

Jack thought he won't find any conclusion with such limited information. He decided to just stop thinking about it for now. He looked into his status window. Although his other game functions were blocked, this data access was not. Probably because it didn't contribute to any battle or tactical advantage.

During this week where he attended the rehearsals. He had regularly used the training cave and conquered the guild's legacy dungeons. Although the exp points gathered from those avenues were not as beneficial as the war, he still increased one level to his Brave Swordsmaster. He was now level 63 for that class.

He then turned to the quest page. When he found Alonzo's body earlier today, he had heard an update notification on his kingdom faction quest.

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Throne of Themisphere (Chain kingdom faction quest)

Difficulty: SSS

Rewards: ???

Resolve the situation of Themisphere's throne.

\*

Part 6: Investigate Alonzo's murder

Difficulty: SSS

Rewards: 2,000,000 exp, 100 gold coins, 50,000 merit points

Find out and punish Alonzo's murderer.

\*

He was now staring at this quest's info. The description had changed from supporting Prince Alonzo in ascending the throne to resolving the situation of this kingdom's throne. Which involved finding and bringing Alonzo's murderer to justice.

This quest was designated SSS difficulty. This meant that this was most likely the end of the kingdom faction chain quest. He wondered then, was Prince Alonzo always meant to be assassinated? Only after it happened that an SSS difficulty quest popped up.

Did Wilted write this scenario into the game's original program? No, she did mention that the prince Alonzo she knew wouldn't have risen and fought his brothers for the throne. So, she shouldn't be aware of this quest.

While he was contemplating, Jack heard the sound of the main door to this underground dungeon being opened. Then he heard footsteps approaching. The footsteps were rather short and heavy.

Not long after, Warren came to view.

"You...", Jack uttered. It had been some time since he last saw this person. He thought with Therribus gone, this magistrate should have been sacked from his post. It seemed that Warren had cleverly stayed under the radar that Alonzo hadn't dealt with him.

Warren was grinning widely. It didn't take a brilliant mind to see that this magistrate had come down here to gloat at Jack's misfortune.

"What do you want?" Jack still asked him, though.

"Hmph! I'm just here to see your face. The great outworlder. The one who had even been bestowed the title of the Hero of Themisphere. Such a hero. I have known this will happen. The crown prince was

right. You outworlders only care about benefits. It was foolish for the third prince to ever trust your kind. He reaped what he sowed for his blind trust. That fool!"

"Watch your tongue! That's your prince you are sullyng!" Jack scolded.

"A prince that you murdered!" Warren fired back.

"I did not do that!" Jack lunged forward, attempting to grab Warren's collar. But Warren seemed to have expected that. He had stood just an arm's length from the prison bar. He took a step back when Jack's arm shot out.

'Damn it!' Jack cursed within. He had been wanting to test his luck to see if Warren had the keys to the cells down here. It seemed that this magistrate was not that dumb.

"Every proof point to you as the perpetrator. You won't escape from this," Warren continued their argument. "There is nothing you say that will convince the court otherwise."

Jack had returned to the bed. He lay down on it. After he failed to catch Warren, he was no longer interested to continue their talk.

Warren could see that Jack was no longer entertaining him. Still, he continued to speak, "Hmph! You can pretend as if you will somehow get out of this, but let me tell you something. The court is already in session discussing your crime. It is a closed session, but I'm a good friend of one of the judges. He assured me that deciding you as the murderer of Prince Alonzo is a foregone conclusion. What they are still discussing is what to do with the rest of the outworlders."

Jack sat up upon hearing this. "What do the other outworlders have to do with this?" He asked.

"Hmph! As I said, your kind is a dangerous race. A plague to our world. The third prince should have seen this at the time that failed assassination was attempted on him in this city. It was clear already at that time that the perpetrator was an outworlder. Why he could still believe in your kind after that happened is nothing I will ever understand."

"It is because Prince Alonzo was not a petty person such as you!" Jack responded.

"A fool is more correct!" Warren retorted.

"Wasn't that assassination attempt carried out by Prince Therribus to discredit the outworlders?" Jack asked.

"Hmph, why did he need to do that? Leaving your kind on your own machination was enough to let everyone see you for the pest you are."

"Are you saying that that assassination from before is not carried out by Therribus?"

"I am certain it is not," Warren replied.

Although he disliked this magistrate, he believed Warren's words just now. After all, Warren had no benefit in lying to him in his current situation. Not even for a gloating purpose.

"What do you think the kingdom will do to the outworlders?" Jack asked about a different issue.

"As I said, it is still being decided. But from my friend's info, I can say that the most likely decision will be to push for a regulation to outlaw your kind. We will exterminate all of you and bring you back to the first level, then dig a hole, throw all of you down there, and lock you all inside for the remaining of your miserable lives."

"Not everyone agrees to such a decision, certainly?"

"Of course, some object. Like your good friends, Duke Alfredo and Duchess Isabelle, but they are but a minority. Your kind's fate is sealed!"

"What about royal advisor Mason? Certainly, he has a say in this matter."

"He comes to your defense. But as I said, a small voice in the crowd. It won't overturn what will happen."

Jack just sat there thinking about all this while Warren watched with a gloating smile.

Seeing Jack's continued silence, Warren resumed his mocking, "Enjoy your limited time here. After this, maybe you will even miss this jail, hahaha!"

"Well, a spectacular chat! I want to sleep now. Please excuse me if I don't see you out," Jack said and lay back on the bed.

"Hmph! Try to cover your worry with your jokes all you want. Hehe. I will be there when they execute you. Me and my boy, Walter, if you still remember him, will be the first in line when you are thrown into the hole we will be preparing. Hell, we will also help dig that hole if needed."

"Really? How can Walter dig with only one arm? Or have you finally managed to get that boy to regrow his arm?" Jack asked.

"Hmph! Joke all you want! We will see who laughs the loudest in the end!" Warren banged the prison bars before walking away.

Jack sat back up after Warren left.

"Shit," He cursed. This matter had gone from bad to worse.

## **Chapter 965: Helping Wicked Witches' Defense**

In the morning before Jack found Alonzo's lifeless body, Jeanny and most of her guild members were gathering outside Wicked Witches' headquarters in Aurebor Dynasty. They had received news that today would be the day the World Ruler was attacking. They and the Offline Beasts members had been helping Wicked Witches in preparing their defenses.

Offline Beasts had come to give aid as a repayment for Wicked Witches helping them during their headquarters' defense. Even though the defense had failed, they were still grateful enough for the assist.

In the few days prior, Jeanny had been touring around the Aurebor Dynasty with her sister, Jennifer, to meet the leaders from the other guilds who had been attacked by World Ruler before.

She might not have the tactical mind as John, but she had a different gift. She could bring people together. She had been trying to persuade these other guilds to come together to oppose World Ruler.

However, it seemed that World Ruler had quite an effect on them. They didn't outright express it, but Jeanny could see that they were afraid of World Ruler. Each one of them only said that they would consider sending help but none of them promised it. Jeanny was rather impressed that one guild could intimidate the others to such an extent. Even their guild which was the number one guild in Themisphere didn't have such an effect.

After the tour, she was informed by Jennifer that the World Ruler's method was indeed very overbearing. If any of the guilds they had hit dared to retaliate, they would focus on that guild. Keep on killing the guild's members until they couldn't afford to buy Amulet of Rebirth again and would still continue until most of the members fall back to level 1. Each of World Ruler's members had generally higher levels and better equipment, so it was not a difficult task for them.

Normally, when a guild targeted another guild in this way, their own development would be hindered. Because they couldn't spare the manpower to do guild quests and leveling ups and such. That's why not many guilds preferred such an open and continuous conflict. It would just be a lose-lose situation for both guilds and benefit others who were not in the conflict. However, even though World Ruler persisted in such a conflict, they still could somehow develop at a rate not slower than the others.

Hence, those guilds who had lost their guild hostage token could just choose to bear with it and move on.

"There is no need to feel depressed. Mother had actually proposed we band together to take on World Ruler, but they had also refused then," Jennifer said to her sister. They were on the wall gate, overseeing the others as those players and guild soldiers organized themselves according to their instructions.

Jeanny sighed. She had indeed hoped that she could bring everyone together.

Even so, Jennifer actually thought those leaders who heard Jeanny's persuasion almost agreed to send help. At least those guild leaders didn't reject the request directly. It was a better reaction compared to when Nova, their mother, proposed for their guilds to work together. Jennifer had always known Jeanny to have a knack for persuading people. She used to be jealous of this talent her sister possessed. But now, she was grateful for it, even if it failed to persuade those guild leaders.

She looked at the players Jeanny had brought here to aid them in their defense. That talent of hers had amassed such a great number of people. Some of these players were even remarkable experts. Too bad the most remarkable of the bunch couldn't attend.

"Are you sure Storm Wind is unavailable?" Jennifer asked.

"His real name is Jack," Jenny informed. "Unfortunately, no. If our enemy attacked during the night, he might come to assist, but sadly our enemy decides otherwise."

The enemies had amassed some distance away. Jeanny and Jennifer could see them from the wall. Although most of Aurebor's landscape was forestry region, Wicked Witches' headquarters was located in a large clearing with a small lake to the side.

"They are pretty haughty to attempt no concealment in their assault," Jeanny remarked as she looked at the enemies amassing far away.

"They are indeed haughty. They thought that there is no chance for them to lose in a direct clash," Jennifer said.

"Really? I thought your guild soldiers are rather good, to be honest," Jeanny said as she looked again at the guild soldiers around her.

Wicked Witches had around 15,000 guild soldiers. Several of Wicked Witches' basic guild soldiers were upgraded versions. They had two types of unconventional units. One was a large living tree. Like the treant summoned from Druid's exclusive spell, but larger. They were Forest Elementals. Jennifer and her team had acquired this special unit insignia as a reward from a very difficult guild quest. The insignia of this Forest Elemental was unique-grade.

However, they couldn't train many of this special unit, only six. These units needed a special material to train. This material was called living tree heart, a super-rare grade ingredient that could also be used in alchemy. Ever since infusing the Forest Elemental insignia with their headquarters, they only managed to find six of this ingredient.

The other unit type was Dryad. They were female-like creatures with leaves for hairs. Their skin was coarse, like tree skin. The garment they wore resembled tree branches with leaves which appeared as if an extension of their bodies instead of something they wore. They carried a long wooden staff. They were support units that cast spells that buff allies and debuff enemies. They also had limited healing and curing capabilities.

Wicked Witches had one guild hero and one guild guardian. Their guild hero was a level 58 rare elite elf named Wyn Arrawin. She dual-wielded small crossbows for weapons. Their guild guardian was a giant stag. When the players used their Inspect on this stag, they saw the name was Forest Lord. It was also a rare elite grade at level 60. It had thick white fur and extremely large antlers. Wisps of mana could be seen constantly swirling around these antlers.

"Only rather good? Which means you think your guild has better units," Jennifer said.

"Sister, I don't mean to belittle..."

"I'm just teasing you," Jennifer said with a laugh. "You are always so serious. But then again, I do know your guild army is much better than us. Too bad you can't summon them here."

"Yes, too bad. For a guild conflict, the defenders can only use their guild army and only one guild from the offenders can summon the guild army," Jeanny agreed. "Is the World Ruler's guild army truly that good?"

"You will see... Looks like it won't be long now," Jennifer said as she turned her gaze back to the enemies in the distance.

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On the opposite side from Wicked Witches' guild headquarters, a regiment of five thousand players was gathering. Most of them were World Ruler members. A small portion was Death Associates, while another smaller squad was World Maker.

At the center of this regiment was a group of the leaders, gazing upon those they were about to crush.

"Look at them scurrying, haha," One of the men within this group laughed. He was a level 57 Inquisitor that goes by the alias Lead Designer. He wore a God-eye monocle.

"Hmph! Whatever their struggles, it's meaningless. We will crush them under our feet," a woman at the center of the group said. She also wore a God-eye monocle. She had a beautiful face. Yet this pretty face seemed to only be able to display one expression, aloofness. Every time she looked at someone, there was always disdain.

This woman was the leader of the World Ruler, Mistress. She was level 58.

She looked at everything in disdain because she considered by right this world was hers. She was the eldest child of the owner of the Trigitech Corporation. The same corporation that developed the Second World game. She was the owner's daughter whom Wilted mentioned to have conspired with Apollyon, A.K.A. Master, to turn the real world into a world based on a game her corporation was developing.

Master had promised her a place by his side but she couldn't bear to be someone's shadow. Hence, Master let her create her own guild. The ones who followed her were mostly the staff of Trigitech. Mainly those who had been working on developing the Second World. Thus, many of the members of this guild knew the internal workings of this world. That's how they had been able to progress so fast, by using the knowledge of the game they worked on.

"But I admit it is surprising to see they possess the forest elementals," Lead Designer said. "Too bad they don't know the place to harvest the living tree hearts. Otherwise, they might cause us some difficulties. With only six of that unit, it is hardly a challenge."

Mistress turned to Lead Designer with displeasure. "Larry, you still dare to mention that? I have told you that I want that unit, but you let another guild get their hands on that unit's insignia first. Do you want me to punish you again?"

Larry was the real name of Lead Designer. The fellow was not actually the lead designer in the Trigitech Corporation. The real lead designer was Wilted's partner. Larry, however, was jealous of Wilted's partner and had coveted the position for some time. His choosing of the alias Lead Designer was one way to realize this dream of his.

"I'm sorry, ma'am!" Larry said apologetically. "The trigger to the guild quest that rewards that insignia is rather random. We have tried several times to trigger it, but I never expect another guild had triggered it by luck and successfully completed it first."

"Hmph! You know I dislike excuses," Mistress said. "Forget it. Let's just crush this eyesore of a guild. Summon our guild army!"

"Yes, ma'am!" Larry took out the guild army summoning crystal and looked for a suitable place to place the command platform.

## Chapter 966: World Ruler's Guild Army

"Ma'am, how do you wish us to aid your force?" White Death was there by the side. He had brought a large number of his elite players here. Firstly, because he wanted to give a good impression to World Ruler. He knew this guild was the branch of World Maker. Secondly, he wanted to exact revenge on Wicked Witches because they had dared to interfere when Death Associates invaded Offline Beasts.

Mistress only deigned to give White Death a disdainful glance. "Do whatever you like. Just don't get in our way."

Scarface, Queen Magenta, and the other four Deaths standing behind were angered by the statement, but they didn't show their feelings. White Death had explained to them about their deals with World Maker. As long as they played nice, they would get a piece of the pie in this new world once World Maker made it to the top.

White Death simply smiled at the cold treatment. "As you wish, ma'am," he said. He retreated to organize his members.

Gridhacker and Ronald were also there. Since they were in the area after helping Death Associates a few days ago, they decided to join this battle here. Additionally, they had received news that Everlasting Heavenly Legends was helping Wicked Witches.

"Ma'am, you have better not get too careless, the number one guild in Themisphere is assisting Wicked Witches," Gridhacker informed.

"It matters not who helps them, the result will be the same," Mistress said.

Gridhacker sighed. He had known Mistress' haughtiness. He used to be Trigitech's employee as well.

"Is that multi-class boy here?" Ronald asked.

"No, our source told us they saw him entering Thereath's palace just now. He must be involved in the coming coronation of Themisphere's prince. He won't be joining the battle here."

"Heh. Too bad. Hey, you, lady boss! I reckon you don't need my help, do you?" Ronald called.

Mistress just glanced at Ronald with displeasure. She did not appreciate getting talked to in that way.

"Hehe, I guess not. Well, if you need anything, just holler then," Ronald went to a nearby tree and lay down lazily below it.

"What a useless person," One of the players beside Mistress said after seeing Ronald's attitude.

"You've better not let him hear that," Mistress said to that player. Although she disliked Ronald, she did know the abilities of the five Heavenly Enforcers recruited by Master.

The player was confused by Mistress' remark, but Mistress didn't bother to explain. The player looked again at Ronald who was laying on the ground as if he was on a picnic. He originally planned to bring a few friends over to bully Ronald before they went on the offensive with the guild army. But after

Mistress' warning, he decided to just ignore Ronald. He didn't know that he had spared himself from losing a life.

Larry finally decided on a nearby spot to place the guild command platform. He then summoned their guild army. A large number of guild soldiers appeared in front of the players. Their number was close to 20,000 units. But their number was not their most impressive aspect. All the guild's basic units were upgraded variants. In addition to that, there were many unconventional units.

There were armor-mounted units where the riders instead of riding a horse, rode large lizard creatures. The lizard creatures resembled velociraptors which walked on two powerful hind legs. Their large jaws were full of sharp teeth and their riders carried long-bladed naginata. These units were the Raptor Riders. Their specialties were their fast speed and powerful jumping ability.

There were also Centaurs units. These half-man half-horse units were equipped with light armor and large longbows. They were mobile marksmen with excellent accuracy even when running at full speed. Their high mobility allowed them to kite any melee units that tried to chase after them.

The most intimidating in World Ruler's guild army were green giants with hard woody skin. These were Forest Ogres. Even though they were not as large as Wicked Witches' forest elementals, these ogres were still larger than most units. They carried heavy spiked wooden clubs. They had two large horns at the top of their heads which gave them a devilish look. Fifty of these forest ogres lined the army's frontline. Their expressions seemed eager to charge over the enemy at a moment's notice.

There were also large mechanical creatures that resembled spiders. Above its metallic body was a cockpit where a player sat and controlled this machine spider. Each of its eight legs ended with sharp blades that looked to be able to easily puncture armor. Three gun nozzles were under the main body. Two of those nozzles shot rapid bullets, while the largest one was a cannon that shot explosive slugs.

At the forefront of the army were three beings, all rare elite grades. Two were guild heroes and one guild guardian.

One of the guild heroes was a level 60 Ethereal mage, named Sangumus. He didn't carry any weapon, but a dark purple orb was floating beside him. Shadowy black fire constantly seeped out of the floating orb. The other guild hero was of the elven race. He wore light armor and carried chakrams on both hands. His name was Airdan and he was level 58.

The guild guardian stood tall between the two guild heroes. A manticore. It was larger than the one Death Associates summoned using a summoning stone during their assault on Everlasting Heavenly Legends in the past. This one also had a different tail. Instead of a snake, it possessed a scorpion tail. Its lion head stared menacingly at the distant enemies as its bat wings flapped, showing its impatience to charge forward.

All the players on Wicked Witches' side couldn't help but feel that a difficult battle was ahead of them.

Death Associates players were also in awe of their ally's powerful display. They now understood why White Death allied with this guild. Many of them had been extremely discontent with the guild as of late. After all, they had lost their entire possessions which they stored inside the guild vaults. Combined with finding out that they couldn't roam freely in Themisphere anymore, many members quit.

Death Associates' members were now only less than half of their guild's maximum member limit, which for a level 4 guild was 5,000 members. Death Associates had tasked his remaining members to actively recruit players in this new country to replenish those vacant spots. But these members were not truly in the mood after the recent incidents.

Even Scarface and Blue Death were extremely dissatisfied with how White Death steered their guild. With how Mistress had dismissed them as if she didn't put them in her eyes, the two had complained to White Death once they were among themselves. Queen Magenta also joined in the complaining simply because she disliked Mistress. She couldn't stand another woman who was even haughtier than herself. They had been telling White Death that since Mistress didn't appreciate them, they should just leave. The other Deaths didn't voice their opinions but they secretly agreed with those three.

Now, after seeing World Ruler's guild army, no one uttered any more complaints. Out of all the guilds they had known, perhaps only Everlasting Heavenly Legends' guild army could compare with this one they were witnessing. Of course, that was if they didn't consider Everlasting Heavenly Legends' mythical-grade hero.

A thought came into their mind. They knew this World Ruler was the branch of World Maker in Liguritutum. If this branch already had such an impressive army. What of World Maker's army? They decided then to continue going along with White Death's plan. Perhaps they had indeed joined the winning team.

"Hehe, let's educate these people about what it means to resist us," Larry said excitedly after summoning the guild army. The best feeling he ever experienced after coming into this world was rolling over others using his underlings. He was the most supportive every time Mistress decided to invade another guild.

Mistress came to his side. She had no intention of joining the battle. Battles were meant to be fought by her pawns. All she wanted to do was just watch, in luxury. A player beside her took out a large luxurious lounge chair from his inventory and placed it on the ground. Mistress sat on this lounge chair. The same player took out a small side table. A cup and a teapot. He then poured tea into the cup.

Several other players went around and drew something on the ground around the command platform using some kind of specialized paint. The Death Associates players who saw these players' actions were confused. White Death came to Gridhacker and asked, "What are they doing?"

"Protection," Gridhacker simply said. White Death waited for Gridhacker to explain further but he didn't. White Death didn't push the subject.

"Shall we attack?" Larry turned and asked Mistress.

Mistress was sipping her tea. She took her time, enjoying her drink while another player set up a contraption in front of her. An image soon appeared above this contraption. The contraption was a unique-grade artifact that allowed the user to view an event that happened nearby, sort of like a telescope. The image showed a close-up view of the Wicked Witches' defense.

When Mistress saw that everything was ready, she slowly put the cup back on the side table. She then said softly, "Crush them."

## Chapter 967: The Initial Clash

Larry controlled the army to start moving forward. He didn't let them just charge ahead haphazardly. He was not a newbie in strategy games. He needed to make sure their units arrived together as one fighting force rather than had the faster-charging units arrive first just to be slaughtered.

The defensive force stayed near the wall as they looked at the enemies that slowly approached. Wicked Witches arranged their guild units in line formation along the wall. This formed a very long defensive line that covered the entire front side of the wall.

The players intermingled within this formation. Ranged players and units were positioned on the wall. Since the formation formed a long line, it was not very thick. But the thickness of the formation was just right to allow the ranged players on the wall to support the ones fighting at the front line.

Jeanny and Jennifer were down there at the front line while Selena and Trinity Dawn were taking charge of the ones on the wall.

"Thank you for your aid, friend," Jennifer said to Nomodem, who was by her side.

"You're welcome, sister. These bastards were part of the group that stole our headquarters. We are treating this as payback as well," Nomodem replied. "Though I admit, it didn't seem like our aid will matter much."

"Don't be so dispirited!" The Man, who was there, uttered. "The more difficult a battle is, the more exhilarating it is! Don't you say so, brother George?!"

"Um, I actually prefer easy battle if I'm allowed to choose," Paytowin replied.

"A brave man does not choose his battle!" Mihos declared. Paytowin had just summoned him. He was now level 55. The final battle of the civil war and his own adventures had allowed his level to increase.

Nomodem saw Mihos and used Inspect on the divine champion. After seeing Mihos' grade, he involuntarily exclaimed, "Whoa! Where did this mythical warrior come from?"

Jennifer was also impressed. "Your guild is as formidable as I heard," she said to Jeanny.

"Thank you," Jeanny responded.

"You said you have secured one more helper, right? I don't see them. Are they late?" Jennifer asked.

"They will take action once they see the opportunity," Jeanny answered. "Don't worry. They are professional mercenaries. They know what they are doing."

"I hope so," Jennifer looked to the enemies who were close already. "We will need all the help we can get."

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World Ruler's force stopped a few distances from the defenders. They were still out of ranged attack's reach. When the defenders were confused as to why the attackers stopped. A few World Ruler players at the back took out something from their inventories.

They used the tools in their hands and four gargantuan structures appeared out of thin air behind the World Ruler's army.

"Arrow towers!" Jeanny exclaimed after identifying the four structures.

The arrow towers conjured by World Ruler were slightly different from the ones they saw during the war. These arrow towers also consisted of several floors but the floors had wider platforms, allowing more people to be positioned up there. Ranged units and players immediately entered the tower and positioned themselves on those platforms. These arrow towers had evened up the wall's advantage the defenders had.

"Damn it! Where did they get the schematic for those arrow towers?" Jennifer said dejectedly. Most guilds only had the battering ram schematic, which was a standard one they could buy from the blacksmith structure. Other types of siege weapons were rare schematics that could only be gained from outside sources.

Still, these siege weapons that the guild constructed were not actual siege weapons like the ones the natives used in war. They were different as they were not permanent. Natives' siege weapons could be transported from one place to another albeit slowly. They would only be gone if they were destroyed.

As for guilds' siege weapons, they could be stored inside players' inventory and summoned when needed, but they were considered one-time consumables. They could only be summoned during guild wars or country wars and only lasted one battle. Once the battle ended, they would vanish.

The costs and materials to build a guild's siege weapon were not cheap. So, the act of World Ruler pulling out these four massive structures just for the assault on a guild headquarters showed how deep World Ruler's pocket was.

Once World Ruler's ranged units settled inside the arrow towers, the four massive structures started moving forward slowly using the many wheels under their bases. The army in front of the four structures moved forward as well following the arrow towers' pace.

Larry looked at the 3D projection in front of him with growing excitement. "Hehe, let's get this party started," he said. He then gave the command to attack.

The Forest Ogres and Machine Spiders took the lead as they charged ahead, followed behind by Elven Royal Guards, which was a variant of Knights. Machine Spiders shot the cannon and guns under their torsos as their eight-bladed legs carried them swiftly to the front line. Forest Ogres swung their spiked clubs savagely as they ran without fear into the enemies.

Before the enemies arrived, Wicked Witches' guild guardian, Forest Lord, cast a spell. Its huge antlers shone with a golden color and an energy force radiated out. It formed a very large light dome that reduced all the damage from hostile ranged attacks that were inflicted within this dome.

Forest Lord then stomped its mighty feet on the ground and caused a localized earthquake that traveled forward. The rushing forest ogres and machine spiders lost their ground due to this earthquake and fell, stopping their charge.

Seeing the enemy had landed the first strike, World Ruler's guild hero, Sangumus, didn't stay idle. He floated into the air and the floating orb beside him burst with intense black fire. Seven black flame

serpents burst out from the orb and rushed forward. Those that were touched by the serpents received dark damage and burn status. The serpents could also entangle and immobilize targets.

World Ruler's second guild hero, Airdan, clashed with Wicked Witches guild hero, Wyn. They both used ranged weapons. Wyn fired his dual crossbows while Airdan threw his Chakrams. These chakrams created air vortexes around themselves as they flew through the air. The vortex caused wind damage to anyone that came into contact.

World Ruler's guild guardian, the gigantic manticore, rushed toward Forest Lord. It jumped and flapped its large bat wings, its huge body soared through the air as it headed straight for the giant white stag. It opened its maw and spewed a stream of poisonous breath that cause earth damage and poison status. Forest Lord ducked and its antlers glowed with brilliant light again. A sphere appeared before it and blocked all the poisonous breath.

Even though its attack was blocked, the manticore didn't stop its advance. It was enclosing and was about to engage in a brute melee fight with Forest Lord, but Forest Lord had been casting another spell while blocking the poisonous breath. The spell formation was completed and the Manticore which was about to ram into Forest Lord was stopped in mid-air. Forest Lord made a sweeping motion with its antlers and the Manticore was slammed hard into the ground.

Forest Lord had used telekinesis to control the Manticore's movement. Yet, the manticore had very high strength. Despite the loss on the first contact, it had gotten back up on its feet again. Forest Lord tried to keep the Manticore still with its telekinesis spell, but the manticore resisted its effect with brute strength.

While Forest Lord was focusing on holding the manticore back, the manticore's scorpion tail lashed forward and shot several large spikes. It struck Forest Lord and caused damage. Forest Lord was afflicted with weakened and poison status due to the spikes.

The assault caused Forest Lord to stumble and its hold on the telekinesis spell broken. The Manticore was freed and was now leaping at the wounded stag, attempting to deliver a killing bite. Before it could do so, a golden figure came before it with a huge sword. This sword cleaved down and struck the Manticore's head heavily. The Manticore was forcefully slammed into the ground.

The golden figure was Mihos. Even though his level was lower than the Manticore, the gap wasn't too much. His mythical grade gave him more superiority in terms of attributes.

The defender's motivation was lifted seeing the enemy's guild guardian being forced down to the ground with one blow, but their spirit was short-lived as they themselves clashed with the full force of the offenders. From just the initial clash, it was clear that they were outnumbered, outgunned, and outclassed.

Each of World Ruler's players was better equipped and had generally higher levels.

Being the original staff who used to work developing the Second World, these players also knew about the combination spells. Each of their magic users paired up to cast combined spells that were stronger than the standard versions. Even though Wicked Witches also had this knowledge due to Jeanny's information, this only leveled the playing field.

What troubled the defenders the most were the special units. Machine spiders barged in and stabbed enemies with their eight bladed-legs, all the while shooting non-stop. Raptor riders ran around, biting at enemies while their riders swung their long naginata. Centaurs, who didn't follow the other ranged units into the arrow tower, ran around the battlefield looking for opportunities to land a shot.

The forest ogres tore through the defender's army with ease. Their heavy spiked clubs sent anyone who was struck flying away. Only the forest elementals could stop those hulking brutes from their savage charge.

The forest elementals were larger and stronger, but it was slightly slower than the forest ogres. However, it didn't rely on its speed for the offense. Its body was full of thorns and would reflect any melee damage it received. Its main weapons were the six thick woody tentacles around its body. These tentacles lashed out with massive force. The forest ogres who were hit by these tentacles were easily smacked to the ground. These tentacles could also shoot poisonous clouds from their ends, causing poison status.

Unfortunately, there were only six of these forest elementals. It was not enough to tip the scale of the battle. As time passed, it was clear that the defenders were losing.

## **Chapter 968: Losing Ground**

Jeanny and Jennifer who fought side by side couldn't help but noticed each other's improvement in their spear art.

Jennifer had further perfected their family's spear art, Serpentine Swift Spear. The spin that was the beginning of her art was now even faster. It was difficult to catch the position of the spear within that twister. Before one could see the spear, it already came stabbing.

Jeanny's spear art was more direct, getting even more distant from her family's spear art. Each stab was fast, precise, and deadly. Jennifer saw that the spear in Jeanny's hand was anything but normal. Its blade part constantly exuded dark red flame. The damage resulting from Jeanny's stab was also very high.

"What's the grade of your spear?" Jennifer asked.

"Unique grade," Jeanny answered, which drew a sharp breath from Jennifer.

Jennifer had joined the recent war between the Aurebor Dynasty and Liguritutum. Her achievement was not bad. But even so, her war contribution points were still not enough to get unique-grade equipment. If only she knew that Jeanny also wore a unique-grade chest armor aside from the spear.

The Man was right in the thick of the enemies. Despite being outnumbered, this berserker was not one who shied away from direct conflict. He activated his Berserk skill and used Punishing Cyclone, all the while laughing like a crazed maniac as his axe tore through the enemy's rank.

Paytowin sent Brave king to assist The Man while he provided support from the back. The Man was one of the few players he bonded with inside the guild when Jack or Grace was not around. Perhaps because The Man's bravery reminded him of those native allies he used to have in Council of Virtus.



Paytowin used his Mothership Bombardment, giving the enemies a hard time so they couldn't focus their assault on The Man.

Wicked Witches' players were impressed by Everlasting Heavenly Legends' members' performance, especially their core group. Not only was their equipment as good as the enemy's, if not better, but their fighting skill was also above average.

They had fought with this guild's players in the past when they attacked Everlasting Heavenly Legend's headquarters with the old coalition. At that time, although Everlasting Heavenly Legends' members showed martial arts expertise, only a few were truly remarkable. But now, it's like everyone in the core group was a martial expert, while the normal members had decent martial expertise. They wondered how these players had improved so much in such a short time.

Most of the core members and normal members fought using Nine Stars Formation, the martial art formation taught by Domon. This formation increased the efficiency of their cooperation, allowing them to face opponents twice or even three times their numbers.

Of course, some were much more exceptional than others. Like Balo, Michelle, and Jason. These past students of Domon easily triumphed over World Ruler's players even if they fought against the higher-ups of the guild who wore better equipment.

Another point was that Jeanny had managed to give more of the core group with super rare grade bloodlines. Almost all the core members of the guild had bloodlines now, further enhancing their stats.

Wicked Witches' players felt extremely grateful that this guild was assisting them. If they were left on their own against this formidable enemy, they would have crumbled in a short time.

Even World Ruler's members were taken aback by the resistance. They thought they were going to have an easy battle like the other guilds they had invaded. Their repeated wins had made them consider that no guilds were worth their attention. But after this clash, each of them had the name Everlasting Heavenly Legends ingrained in their minds.

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"I told you, you shouldn't underestimate that guild," Gridhacker said.

He and World Maker's members stayed behind at the command platform area. They were World Ruler's allies but not subordinates. Since Mistress had not asked for their help, they were content to just watch. White Death instead had led the Death Associates' members to join the battle.

"It's just a minor delay. We are still winning. It's just a matter of time," Larry said.

"I don't have all day. Larry, finish this soon!" Mistress declared. She was displeased that someone made her guild look less impressive than she wanted.

"Y... Yes, ma'am," Larry stammered.

Larry controlled both the Manticore and Sangumus, who had flight ability, to rise into the sky. He wanted to hit the enemies on the wall. Right now, both sides were equally supported by ranged attacks from a high elevation. If he disrupted the enemies on the wall, it should help tip the scale further in their favor.

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Mihos didn't have a flying tool, so he could only watch as the Manticore flew away.

Sangumus had been creating much havoc for the defenders. Each of his spells hit a large area and almost all of them caused burn status. If Wicked Witches didn't have dryads to cure their burn status, their players and healer units won't be enough for the task.

After receiving Larry's order, Sangumus who only floated near the ground took to the sky as well. Everyone saw the two fly toward the wall behind them. Everyone was helpless, except for one being.

Forest Lord stared at the two. When they were halfway, it cast another spell. It was the same spell that Duke Alfredo had cast during the civil war. The spell created a large area of no-fly-zone. Both the Manticore and Sangumus fell from the sky.

The defenders were surprised that these two beings suddenly dropped in their midst. But most of the ones on the ground were melee units, so they weren't so worried. They were glad, instead. It was now these two enemies that were getting outnumbered for falling among them.

The Manticore was still fine because it had many melee capabilities. Sangumus, however, was not so lucky. Although he was high-level, he was still in trouble when getting besieged from all sides. He tried his best to cast spells to defend himself, but he could only use quick spells. When he tried casting a powerful spell with a long casting time, he was disrupted.

His concentration was fine. The problem was he was getting hit by Disrupting Shot. Fierce Flame and Sturdy Serpent were on the wall and they noticed the enemy's guild hero fell to the ground. They immediately headed over and called a few of their fellow Elite Marksman or Gunner who also had Disrupting Shot skills. Every time Sangumus cast a seemingly powerful spell, they took turns using that skill on him.

Larry couldn't let their guild hero get taken out. Even if they win this battle, losing their guild hero would become a taint to their victory. Mistress would surely punish him if that happened.

He hurriedly controlled the guild army to barge in and come to Sangumus' aid. He also gave the command for the players to use their war tools. He wasn't being stingy. He just didn't expect they would be forced to use the tools.

Several World Ruler players took out small balls and then threw them to the ground. The ball exploded and produced thick white smoke in a wide area. Everyone had a hard time seeing due to the thick smoke, except for World Ruler's force.

These smoke bombs functioned similarly to Ronald's smoke grenade. It hindered non-ally's vision while ally was given a visual aid of outlines marked with colors. Red was enemies. Hence, they could still fight in the smoke. With help of the smoke, they fought their way to their guild hero.

Out of Larry's prompt, the other sides also used the smoke bombs, giving them even more advantage. It was no different from them fighting blind opponents.

However, in some places, they discovered that they were getting hit back. These places were where Everlasting Heavenly Legends' core members were at. The others might be lost in the smoke, but those core members who had learned mana sense had no problem fighting without using their eyes.

Still, Everlasting Heavenly Legends' core members were limited. They couldn't stop the tide by themselves. The defenders continued losing ground. A squad of World Ruler's players finally reached Sangumus.

"Move aside, you backwater players!" A level 58 Beastmaster barged through the smoke and smacked a player who was hindering Sangumus from leaving. Beside him was his pet, a large silver-fur gorilla. This gorilla wore pet armor.

This player was called Axelmax. He was one of the top players in World Ruler. He used to be a game tester during Second World development together with Anotherday. While Anotherday followed Wilted, Axelmax chose to follow Mistress.

Wicked Witches' melee players tried engaging Axelmax, but both Axelmax and his gorilla were too much for them. Axelmax was a decent martial artist and his understanding of the game mechanics allowed him to collect good equipment and skills, even a pet armor for his medium-sized pet.

Sangumus, seeing the pressure lessened, started casting a big spell. Fierce Flame shot her Disrupting Shot again from the wall, but the arrow was blocked by Axelmax's gorilla. Sangumus' spell was completed. The spell had seven runes and was called Hell Abyss.

A pitch-black sphere radiated out. Every player touched by the sphere received high dark damage. Many players who had no darkness resistance were killed. Those that survived received burn and blind status.

Sangumus cast another spell. Everyone knew that he needed to be stopped, but the pet gorilla and World Ruler's players continued to use their bodies to block the shots from the wall.

## **Chapter 969: Chained Mega Spells**

A shot was heard, but not from the direction of the wall. This shot hit one of Sangumus' eyes, causing him enough pain to stop his casting.

Axelmax turned and saw someone wearing robotic cloth. At first, he thought the guy was a native or a summoned creature. But when he used his Inspect, he saw it to be a player.

"Brave Techno Warrior?" He asked after reading the player's class. He was confused at first but then he realized. "A special class? Where did you get that special class from?"

Paytowin answered by firing his Visor Beam. The beam hit and staggered everyone, except for Axelmax and his gorilla. The two expertly ducked and rushed at Paytowin. They used Combination Assault. Paytowin hurriedly activated his Overdrive mode and rolled away before getting hit.

Paytowin resumed shooting and running after the dodge, but both Axelmax and his gorilla were very agile and fast. They closed in from different angles, cutting Paytowin's escape path.

When they almost caught up to Paytowin, a voice was heard, "Have no fear, for The Man is here...!!!"

The Man barged in with a Jump Assault and struck the white gorilla, allowing Paytowin some leeway for dealing with Axelmax.

From where The Man came from, Brave King ran forward and approached Sangumus. Brave King similarly lost its jetpack's ability to fly because of Forest Lord's spell. Seeing the intimidating techno golem approaching, World Ruler's players immediately put themselves between the golem and Sangumus. As a result, Flame again had a clear sight at Sangumus, allowing their Disrupting Shots to prevent the guild hero from casting another high-level spell.

Looking at the overall situation, the defenders continued to lose their ground. They kept on getting pushed back. Under this situation, Jeanny saw that the enemies had grouped up densely before their front line. She immediately sent a message to Trinity Dawn, "Trinity! It's time. Use the spell!"

Trinity had got into position with other magic-class players on the wall. They were only waiting for the signal. Once it was given, she gave instructions to the others.

She and four others magic-class players started casting spells. Some distance from her on her left and right, other five-players groups also started casting. Then some distance away from these groups, other similar groups were doing the same.

All these five-players groups lined along the wall and cast the same spell. The rune formation they produced were larger than normal.

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Larry and Mistress watched the casting from the image above their unique-grade telescope artifact.

"Mega spells?" Gridhacker, who was also watching, said.

"Im... Impossible! All of them are casting the same mega spell. How can they acquire so many technique books of the same mega spell? Do you know how low the probability of getting one is?!" Larry exclaimed.

Mistress didn't make a sound. She just frowned while watching the image. 'So, that thing is in their hands..., ' She mused in her mind.

\*

On the wall, the magic players continued to cast the mega spells.

Larry sent instructions for everyone to try disrupting the castings, but those casters were out of reach on the wall. The ones who could originally reach them were ones with flying ability, but both Sangumus and the Manticore had been grounded.

There was another unit that could reach the top of the wall, the raptor riders. But these mounted units needed to arrive below the wall first. Currently, Wicked Witches' defensive line was still rather solid. To pierce through all the way to the wall at the back in the time before those cooperative castings were completed was a tall order.

Larry thought about pulling their army back, but it was too late already. He knew that mega spells had a very long reach, and their army had pushed in too deep. Even if he gave the command to pull back, their

current forward momentum prevented them from reversing their direction in a short time. It would be too late by then.

In the end, he could only watch as the combined casting of mega spells was completed.

A titanic ice lotus was formed amid the World Ruler's army. The Absolute Zero Lotus froze everything in the vicinity.

While everyone was in awe of the phenomenon, another ice lotus appeared next to it. The leaves of this second lotus covered half of the first lotus. And then from the other side, a third lotus appeared. And then the fourth, the fifth, and so on.

It continued until a total of eight lotuses formed in a long line, following the eight groups of five magic users who cast the mega spell along the wall.

Each lotus overlapped the lotuses next to them. Hence, doubling its damage output except for the lotuses at the opposite ends.

John suggested this arrangement to Jeanny before they left the Heavenly Citadel for their separate adventures. This chained mega spell was inspired by the chained elemental storms displayed by the Mage Society guild during the Verremor invasion war.

When Jack heard about this tactic, Jack mocked John for being a copycat. To which John replied, "Never feel ashamed to copy a successful method."

The eight titanic ice lotuses were there for a few seconds. During its existence, the time on the entire battlefield seemed to stop. It was absolute silence.

Then, the eight lotuses shattered into tiny particles. At the same time, huge damage numbers appeared on those within the affected field. Although the players now had higher HP, better equipment, and more defensive skills, the players who cast the mega spell also had higher intelligent stats. Additionally, since the spells overlapped, they could be said to have been hit by the mega spell twice.

Many of the players died. Even a portion of the guild units who had already suffered prior damage also perished, while the rest that was inside the Absolute Zero Lotus' AOE had their HP significantly reduced. When the spell ended, around fifteen percent of World Ruler's units and thirty percent of World Ruler's players died.

When everyone was still reeling from the chained mega spell just now, they realized another person on the wall was still casting. It was Selena from the Wicked Witches. The spell formation she was casting had rune symbols as large as the ones that had produced Absolute Zero Lotus just now.

"Another mega spell?!" Gridhacker asked after seeing the scene.

"It's a different one!" Larry uttered, seeing the rune symbols were different. He was trying to search his memory to identify the symbols, but rune designs were not his department, so he couldn't identify the spell at a glance.

Selena's casting was already more than halfway when everyone noticed. She had started casting when Trinity and the others started casting Absolute Zero Lotus. Her casting speed was slower because she

was casting the mega spell on her own while the others did cooperative casting. No one noticed her because everyone's attention was on the group castings.

"It's Ring of Hellfire...!" Larry yelled, finally remembering the spell those rune symbols represented.

But all he had achieved was just remembering the name. He could do nothing to prevent the spell from being cast. If it was only this one spellcaster casting a mega spell from the start, he could do something. Forcing the army to charge at one spot before having the raptor riders jump up the wall. They would lose a large number of units but it would be less than if the mega spell was cast. However, he had noticed Selena's casting too late.

When the mega spell was completed. An extremely large ring of fire appeared within the ranks of the World Ruler's army. A huge stream of fire then erupted within that ring. The fire shot upward, forming a thick pillar of fire. Everyone within this pillar received continuous fire damage.

Selena placed the spell where the largest congestion of World Ruler's guild units was located. These guild soldiers had just survived the Absolute Zero Lotus. Their HPs were not in the best shape. Many were roasted to death from the fire pillar. Only the ones with the highest HP like the forest ogres and the machine spiders still survive this second mega spell. The number of World Ruler's guild units decreased even more.

The defenders cheered when they saw many of the enemies perish in such a short time, but Jeanny and Jennifer shouted orders for them to press on the enemies and to reorganize their formation which had been in slight shambles after getting pushed.

Both of them knew although Trinity and Selena had taken out many of the enemies, it only served to balance the struggle. They were outnumbered at first. This culling only put the enemy's number close to theirs. While in terms of individual prowess, if not considering Everlasting Heavenly Legends' core members, the World Ruler's force was still better. Overall, their odds had improved but not at the level that guaranteed a victory.

They could no longer rely on the mega spells. Those spells had a very long cooldown. Absolute Zero Lotus was eighteen hours, while Ring of Hellfire was twenty hours.

"It should be time for your mercenaries to act, right?" Jennifer asked Jeanny.

"Yes, the mega spell casting was the signal," Jeanny replied.

## **Chapter 970: Past Grievances**

"Hmph! You are not the only one who has a mega spell," Larry said from the commanding platform. He sent a message to his guild members.

They had two players who possessed the mega spell. These two now ran to the back of the line before starting their casting. Spell formation with large runic symbols started forming above them.

Larry knew it was premature. They had not truly locked down the defenders' formation yet. Wicked Witches could still force their way to get to the spellcasters. Those spellcasters couldn't move once they

started casting mega spells. A mega spell took a very long time to cast, this was a weakness by design to balance its power output and range.

Of course, he didn't mind Wicked Witches forcing their way. His army was still superior on average. The forceful charge to cancel the mega spell casting would mean he was given the opportunity to shave the defender's number.

He paid attention to the 3D projection in front of him. He prepared his army to welcome the charging enemies, but those red dots maintained their formation.

"Did they not notice the mega spell castings?" He asked questioningly.

Then he heard a gunshot. One of the magic-class players who was casting the mega spell had its casting canceled. When everyone was still confused by what had happened, a second shot was heard, and the same thing happened to the second player who was casting the mega spell.

"A gunner?" Larry said and looked around.

"No, there was no visible enemy nearby. We would have seen the gunner if so," Gridhacker commented.

"Could it be... A sniper?" Larry said.

"That second-class special class? Someone outside our guilds has acquired a special class?" Gridhacker asked.

"That will explain why we didn't see the gunner. He or she must be hiding in the nearby forest. Only a sniper special class possessed that kind of range."

While the two were discussing, Mistress suddenly said to them, "Get ready, we have company."

Larry and Gridhacker noticed it as well from the radars in their God-eye monocles. There were suddenly many red dots approaching their position. These ambushers didn't show on his 3D projection because that projection only showed the enemies on which his force had direct eyesight.

"Reserve enemies?" Larry asked.

Ronald, who was laying leisurely not far from there, was resting his head on the tree trunk and watching the battle in the distance. He stood up when Mistress and the others saw the red dots on their radars. He didn't wear God-eye monocle like them, but he felt the change in the air. There were killing intents approaching. Whomever these people that came, they were his kind of people. He grinned. Perhaps he won't be so bored, after all.

The others watched Ronald come to their side. Most of World Maker's members were there, World Ruler also left a few members guarding the place. However, those with God-eye monocles could see that the enemies who were approaching had a much more number. Even so, Mistress continued to sit on her lounge chair as if there was nothing to be worried about. Larry also didn't order any of the guild forces to return to protect them.

Not long after, a large group of players appeared from the woods behind them. Many of these players were gunners. These gunners immediately fired their guns without warning.

However, none of the bullets reached World Ruler and World Maker groups. They just stood there watching. The bullets hit something invisible in the air. As that happened, a gigantic rune on the ground flared, and a giant translucent shell became visible.

The bullets had hit this originally invisible shell. Damage numbers appeared as the shell was hit. An HP bar was also seen. All those hits just now didn't reduce the HP bar by even 1%.

"A protective rune diagram?" One of the gunners who had opened fire said. This gunner was David from Dogs of War. Jeanny had hired this mercenary group to assist them in this battle.

Serpent Boss, their leader, told everyone to hold fire and walked towards the World Ruler group. He walked until he was beside the protective shell. He touched the shell, it was solid. They needed to deplete this shell's HP bar before they could get to the enemies inside.

Gridhacker lifted his staff to cast a spell. This shell protected attacks and enemies from entering, but it didn't hinder allies or their attacks. But he stopped when he saw Ronald lift a hand in front of him. The other World Maker's members who were about to attack also stopped.

One of the elite marksmen from World Ruler didn't see the need to heed the command from another guild, so he lifted his bow and let loose an arrow using Power Shot skill. The arrow passed through the protective shell as if there was no barrier and headed straight at Serpent Boss' head.

Serpent Boss simply tilted his head to the side and the speeding arrow went past him.

A gunshot was heard and the elite marksman felt a heavy impact on his head. He was sent tumbling to the ground. The shot had been from Ronald's gun.

The other World Ruler was surprised that their friend had been attacked by their ally. They lifted their weapons ready for a confrontation, but Mistress shouted for them to stay still.

Mistress then said to Ronald, "I don't appreciate you attacking my member. It's disrespectful to me."

"It is because I respect you that I don't kill that a\*shole," Ronald replied. The elite marksman that was hit on the head had his HP near critical, but he survived. If Ronald wanted the man dead, he would have used the Rapid Shot skill.

The elite marksman stood up in anger but Mistress' glare caused him to swallow his pride.

Ronald walked toward Serpent Boss. He said, "Never expect to see you here."

"I have been looking for you for a long time," Serpent Boss said.

"Let me guess, I killed someone dear to you. Well, that is practically the only reason someone is looking for me, hehe. But if you want me to know that particular someone who is the reason, then you will have to give me more clues. I've simply killed too many people. Most of whom I didn't even know the names of. So, you must excuse me if I don't recall our past grievances."

"It doesn't matter whether you know or not, all I need to do is just put you down."



"Hehe, but we won't be down for long in this world. I will simply come back to life again. Wait! I think I remember now. It was that eye-patched boy, wasn't it? Who was it to you? Your friend? Your partner? Your disciple? Or could it be... your son...? Hahaha."

Serpent Boss didn't show any emotion. He just stared at Ronald with a cold face.

"Tsk, you are no fun," Ronald said. "If your face stayed like that, it will reduce my ecstasy when I kill you. Show a bit of emotion, will you?"

"This shell won't protect you for long," Serpent Boss said and turned away.

Ronald grinned. He looked at Serpent Boss' back who was walking away. Suddenly, without any warning, his two hands turned into a blur. His two revolvers were out, aiming at Serpent Boss.

The two revolvers flared with a bang. Yet, Serpent Boss was already out of the bullets' path even before Ronald squeezed the triggers.

Serpent Boss spun around. A rifle in his hand. He opened fire. The shot was done with a non-standard skill, Spread Shot. It caused the bullet to behave as if it was shot out of a shotgun. Instead of a single bullet, the shot discharged a number of pellets that hit a large area.

Ronald didn't move away, he just stood his ground, because the attack won't hit him. The pellets struck the protective shell.

Ronald was still grinning. "It is as what I've heard. You can sense killing intents."

"The same can be said for you," Serpent Boss said. He jumped backward and away. He was not that foolish to have a duel with such a disadvantageous condition. The enemy was free to attack him without any worry as long as the protective shell was in place.

"Light them up," Serpent Boss gave the order once he reached a distance he felt was comfortable.

All the gunners opened fire. Dogs of War brought around one thousand members. More than half was gunner class. The shots from them were like a rain of bullets. The shell was battered non-stop. Damage numbers appeared incessantly above the shell. And yet, the HP went down very slowly.

The rest of Dogs of War who was not a gunner was an assassin. These assassins spread out and hit the shell from all directions, helping to chip the shell's HP further.

David looked at the HP bar and made a calculation. It would take quite some time, he thought. He estimated they might need one hour to fully deplete the shell at this rate. He sent a message to Jeanny informing her.

The players inside the shell were not more than a hundred players. Mistress gave the order to retaliate once Dogs of War did their mass attacks. Gridhacker and the others also no longer stayed idle. They attacked with ranged attacks and spells at the enemies outside. With no worry of being hit back, they had a better advantage.

With the interference from the players inside the shell, Dogs of War couldn't fully focus on just delivering attacks. They had to defend and evade as well. Hence, their damage output lowered. At this rate, it would be more than an hour before they could break the shell.