

## **Second World #Chapter 1831. Two-on-two Bout - Read**

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1831 Chapter 1831. Two-on-two Bout

John called a soldier over. He gave the soldier his chalk and asked the soldier to draw the arena. He wasn't going to go around and do it himself.

After the arena was drawn, Badass, Nameless, David, and Freddie entered the marked area.

"So, which one will you take?" Freddie asked David.

"I will go for the loudmouth," David said, referring to Badass.

"All right," Freddie said.

"Did they think of taking us one-on-one instead of cooperating? What kind of newbies are they?" Badass mocked.

"We will show them how to cooperate," Nameless said. "They are a ranged attacker and a healer. I can't see how they expect to win this. I will keep them busy. You just throw your offensive spells to finish them fast."

"Exactly my plan. Let's do this!" Badass exclaimed.

"No tools and no potions, okay. Is everyone ready?" Jack asked. He self-appointed himself to be the referee.

"Anytime," Badass uttered.

The others nodded.

"Very well then, begin!" Jack declared.

Once the signal was given, three players dashed forward. Only Badass stayed in his position as he started casting a spell.

Nameless, who charged forward, was surprised to see his two opponents rushing forward. For someone with the gunner class and the druid class, he expected them to attack from range. He had used Shield Charge once the battle started to shorten the distance. Little did he know his opponents were also charging forward. David was now right in front of him.

David sidestepped and ran past him. This surprised him again. Did the gunner leave the healer to fend for himself?

Nameless wasn't going to let that. Even though David was a ranged attacker, he would have the advantage if he reached Badass before Badass completed his casting. Nameless canceled his Shield Charge and spun back. The mace in his hand shone. Following the glow was the image of a giant hammer appearing above David. This was Saint Knight's starting skill, Saint Hammer.

David saw the attack. He summoned his Shield Drone and used it to block the giant hammer. The giant hammer was too strong. His shield drone was pushed. David used one foot to kick his shield drone, giving him a boost to jump to the side but, that also stopped his charge toward Badass.

"Hey, your opponent is me!"

Nameless heard Freddie's voice from his back. Freddie's class had lower dexterity, so he was slower than David. Nameless spun back while swinging his mace. At the same time, he wondered why this druid engaged him directly instead of summoning the treants.

His mace hit the air. When he was still wondering where Freddie was, a fist came up from below and struck his chin.

"What?" Nameless was startled by the unexpected hit. He saw Freddie then. Freddie was below him with a weird posture. Before he knew it, several more of Freddie's fists landed on his torso.

Damage numbers came up above him. He was surprised by a druid who fought in melee, but he was more surprised a non-battle monk class caused damage without using a weapon. He had heard such rumors but he thought that was it, rumors.

He activated Paladin's divine armor and sacred flame. He also activated Saint Knight's level 60 skill, Saintly Resolve, a buff skill that enhanced his offense. He could no longer afford to underestimate the opponent.

He then used Saint Knight's level 70 skill, Celestial Hammer. Five living hammers materialized around him. These hammers assailed Freddie together with his mace.

Freddie deftly dodged the hammers with weird movements from his drunken fist style. His fists struck the hammers that came near him.

While Freddie took Nameless' attention, David resumed his advance toward Badass. The interruption from Nameless had delayed him enough that Badass completed his spell. A large ominous gate appeared, blocking him from reaching Badass.

"Hell Gate?" David thought, but the gate in front of him was larger than the usual Warlock's hell gate.

This was because the gate was conjured using Hell Walker's starting spell, Greater Hell Gate. Like Hell Gate, it discharged a torrent of flames as it opened. From inside the gate, two hellhounds, two winged imps, and one wingless demon came out.

Greater Hell Gate summoned random monsters of the underworld, but they were mostly low-level and low-grade monsters.

David moved to the side as he dodged the flames from the greater hell gate. While he did so, Badass completed another spell, Hell Ring. This spell created a ring of fire around him. The fire dealt fire and chaos damage to all enemies who approached. With the ring of fire, he was protected to cast his next spell.

David used Bulletstorm, hitting the hell monsters that came at him as well as Badass. The fire from the hell ring didn't block the bullets but they reduced the damage. As an experienced player, Badass' concentration was solid enough for a few hits to not bother him.

He continued casting. He was casting a big spell. Hell Walker's level 80 spell, Hell's Fire. This spell was divided into two phases. The first phase had the spell hit a large area and dealt massive fire damage. The second phase began after, where fire snakes sprout from the damaged area. These fire snakes attack all hostiles for a duration.

The casting took some time, but He didn't worry. He was protected by the hell monsters and the hell ring. As he was casting, he was amazed when he saw David fight his hell monsters at close range. The hell monsters could barely hit David while they received multiple stabs and gunshots from the gunner. This was the first time he saw a gunner fight in a melee like that.

While he was fascinated by the battle, he heard a growl from his side. He turned just in time to see a barghest lunged at him.

The barghest was David's pet. He summoned it when he was blocked by the greater hell gate. The barghest went into invisible mode once it was summoned, hence Badass wasn't aware of it. It only became visible when it barged through the ring of fire around Badass. It received damage but was not too severe due to its flame shield.

Bullet hits might not disturb Badass' concentration, but being pounced on by a savage monster was another matter. His spell formation broke after getting mauled by the Barghest several times.

1832 Chapter 1832. Everyone Gets Along

"F\*ck! Get away from me!" Badass screamed as he tried fighting the Barghest back.

The Barghest was very ferocious. Badass could still endure due to his superb equipment, but he kept on losing HP. He forced himself to cast a fast spell, Demon Hand. His hands transformed into demon claws and he fought the barghest with them.

With the Demon Hand, he could keep the barghest from disturbing him too much. He wasn't able to cast Hell's Fire, but he had enough time to cast Hell Walker level's 70 spell, Demon's Shadow. When the spell was cast, an apparition of a flaming demon appeared next to him. This spell was similar to Berserker's Ancestral Possession. The demon apparition assailed the barghest and kept it from disturbing Badass.

When he thought he had kept the barghest at bay and could go back to cast the Hell's Fire again, he felt multiple impacts at the back of his head. He knew those impacts were the Rapid Shot from a gunner.

Several of the hits resulted in critical damage and caused the spell formation he just formed to fizzle again. He turned and saw David had approached just beyond his hell ring. His hell minions didn't seem to bother the gunner much.

From that distance, David easily aimed at Badass' fatal points. Critical hits gave a higher chance of disrupting spellcasting. David also placed himself opposite from his barghest. Badass' demon shadow could only protect him from one direction.

Badass was not only troubled by the critical hits disrupting his spellcasting, but the damage from critical damage was also not low. Even with his exceptional equipment, he wasn't a tank-type class. His HP was down to almost fifty percent from those hits.

"Damn it!" He cursed. He called his partner, "Nameless. I need help here!"

Nameless wasn't exactly having a good time. He hadn't been able to hit Freddie despite him clearly being stronger and faster due to the stat superiority of his special class. Even supported by his celestial hammers, he still couldn't land a hit. Freddie's drunken-fist style was simply too weird for him to follow. He had been so absorbed in his attempt to hit Freddie that he wasn't aware of Badass' situation. He was only alerted after hearing Badass' urgent call.

He hurriedly used his Saint Knight's level 80 skill, Heavenly Protection. At the first level, this skill created a barrier on a target that absorbed 50,000 damage. At max level, the barrier could be given to five targets and each barrier absorbed 100,000 damage.

His skill level was high enough to provide the barrier for Badass and himself. Badass was saved from David's subsequent gunshots after the barrier covered him. Nameless also used Soothing Light to heal Badass' HP.

Freddie used the chance when Nameless was distracted to attack. His drunken-fist style swiftly changed to the praying-mantis style. His body spun. His arms were like scythes

slashing away the celestial hammers as he advanced toward Nameless. Before Nameless knew it, Freddie was already before him.

11:00

Freddie's praying mantis hand stabbed into Nameless. Nameless felt as if he had been stabbed by a spear instead of a human's hand. He didn't receive any damage because he was protected by his Heavenly Protection but he couldn't fight the force. He was sent tumbling back.

Freddie was casting a spell with his other hand when he made the stab. A wall of vines appeared behind Nameless. Because he was tumbling back, he fell right into the wall of vines. His divine armor prevented him from being entangled, but the vines were as if alive. They formed a fence around him and blocked him from leaving. This was because Freddie used mana manipulation to control the vines.

Freddie cast another spell, Wild Stampede. A group of rampaging wildebeests appeared and ran Nameless over while his movement was limited. He could only rely on his barrier to tank the spell.

With the protection from Nameless' barrier, Badass again tried casting Hell's Fire. He believed nothing should be able to stop him from completing this spell now.

While he was having that thought, three treants came barging through his hell ring. They received heavy damage due to weakness from fire, but they didn't care. The treant started pounding at him. Nameless' barrier still protected him, so he concentrated on quickly completing his spell. He believed once his Hell's Fire was cast, the enemies would be finished.

A grenade came into his face when he almost did. The grenade exploded. Nameless' barrier absorbed the damage. However, David's grenade was not a normal grenade. It was a modified version, stun grenade. The barrier might have absorbed the damage but not the effect. Badass was stunned and his spell was again disrupted.

When he started casting again, Freddie also barged in. His mana-manipulation finger stab pierced the barrier. The barrier finally exhausted all the damage it could absorb and vanished. Without the barrier, Badass was ganged up on by Freddie, his treants, David, and his barghest. Badass' demon shadow could only do so much against so many opponents.

Badass' HP was quickly brought below half and Jack announced he was out. David and Freddie next went to Nameless who was still hindered by the wall of vines. They kept on blocking his path.

Seeing the situation, Nameless said, "I... I yield."

Losing the damage dealer of the team while he couldn't move freely. There was nothing he could do.

"Winner, David and Freddie!" Jack announced.

Everyone deactivated their skills. Anotherday went to pat Badass on his back.

"... You don't seem surprised by this result," Badass said.

"I don't," Anotherday gave a simple answer.

"You okay, kid?" Freddie asked Nameless.

"You are impressive," Nameless replied. "How do you control the vines like that?"

"It is called mana manipulation," Freddie answered.

"Mana manipulation...? I thought it was just a make-believe thing."

"It is not. Anotherday, Blackhole, and I are already starting to learn it," Handsome Joe said.

"But you are still lousy at it," Jet remarked, to which Blackhole and Anotherday chuckled.

"I did say I just started learning, didn't I?" Joe grumbled.

"Can I learn too?" Nameless asked.

"Sure. I will give you pointers if you want to learn," Freddie said.

"Thank you!" Nameless exclaimed.

"Uh, um... What about me?" Badass asked.

"You are welcome to learn if you want. We will be comrades from now on, won't we?" Freddie said.

Jack smiled seeing the scene. He said to Wilted, "I'm glad everyone gets along."

"Yeah," Wilted agreed.

John was the only one still scowling there. "Where the f\*ck is that sailor...?!"

1833 Chapter 1833. The Twenty-four Departs

After the bout, Wilted gave David and Freddie unique-grade equipment for their prize. She also asked each of the twenty-four players outside her group about their equipment. She brought plenty of high-grade equipment with her. She wanted to share this equipment to improve the overall battle power of the twenty-four players.

Wilted's people gasped when they learned about the equipment worn by Jack, Grace, and Red Death. These three wore a full set of legendary-grade equipment.

Red Death had reached level 80. Her armor was similar to Grace's, a set of sealed equipment given by the Goddess of Wrath. Like Grace's, her equipment also returned to its original state, the legendary grade. People who stood near her involuntarily moved away because they felt an uneasy feeling from her. A feeling as if something dangerous was stalking them.

Wilted's gang was also surprised to find plenty of the players outside the three to possess one or two legendary-grade equipment. Badass and Nameless no longer dared to look down on Jack's group.

However, only Jack's closest circle had that kind of equipment quality. People like David and Scarface still mostly used rare or super-rare equipment. Wilted gave them some unique-grade equipment.

"So, I will still get the unique-grade equipment even without the bout?" David asked.

Wilted only smiled in response to the question.

Will finally appeared around an hour after the bout ended. John gave him an earful for being so late. They were ready to depart now.

"Whatever you go there for, good luck," Domon said to Jack.

"You are going to the front line. You will need that more than me," Jack returned.

"Master, don't push yourself too hard on the battlefield," Leavemealone said to Domon. "You have to keep yourself safe."

Domon chuckled. "I can say the same thing to you. Don't strain yourself too much. You are always overdoing it. Keep it balanced. Relax a little."

"Yeah. You should learn how to relax, man," Jack said.

"I don't want to hear that from you!" Leavemealone exclaimed.

Red Death was talking to Wong who was also there, "Thank you, Master. With your training these past few days, I've improved much."



"Be safe," Wong said to her.

Red Death felt weird hearing that. The old Wong would never say such words to her.

Murong and Muilan were here too to send off Four Winds and Grace.

"Make sure to watch each other's back. The two of you are martial brother and sister," Murong said.

Four Winds chuckled. "I think she has someone more capable than me to watch her back."

After a short farewell with those who sent them off, the twenty-four players walked to the palace's teleportation chamber. Twenty-three teleported to the city closest to the Dorwin region, while Jack teleported to a city in Hydrurond.

The reason Jack went there was because the Themisphere army and the mobile fortress had just arrived there. This army was now preparing the defenses along Hydrurond's border. Jack went into the mobile fortress and used his Judgement of Past Kings. He then bound those kings to the Chalice of Blood inside the mobile throne room.

"Protect this place as best you can until my return, okay?" Jack said to Theridan and the others.

"Don't worry, young king. Leave this place to us. You do what you need to do," Theridan said.

"Yes. We will protect this place with our lives! Er... I mean, our... afterlife, I guess?" Thebalder said.

"Hehe. All right, I'm leaving. The others are waiting for me," Jack said.

When Jack left, Jack saw many natives from the league factions were there. They helped prepare the defenses. Most of these natives were members of the Builder Union. It was a league faction unassociated with any of the player's class or auxiliary skills. This faction had members who could build independent structures independent of the country system.

They were here to build walls and fences to slow the underworld forces. The walls they built possessed decent HP and defensive properties, similar to any defensive structure a country built.

The Alchemist Union was brewing a large number of potions for the army. The Blacksmith Circle was hard at work in crafting weapons and armor. The Scroll Masters were making magic scrolls to arm the soldiers who couldn't use magic. The Trade



Association was securing rations to send to the front line. With them providing these provisions, countries no longer needed to concern themselves with supplies. They could focus all their resources on training soldiers.

11:01

There were also runemasters from the Runecraft Society. They were people with high runecrafting skills and were experts in rune diagrams. They used their technique to add rune diagrams to the walls and fences built by the Builder Union, enhancing their defensive capabilities.

Jack also saw the members of the Hunter's Lodge. These people went around and placed traps near the fences and walls. Their traps were similar to the ones laid using technocraft's skills but theirs lasted indefinitely and affected a large area.

From John's report, Jack knew the other league factions were also hard at work. League factions with battle capability were sending their members to join the fight. Those without battle capability were helping in different ways like the ones he saw here.

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Jack watched the hard-working people from the sky. The scene brought him hope. With everyone working together like this, they might yet overcome this calamity.

He didn't dwell long. He returned to the city and used the zone portal to teleport to the city where John and the others had teleported to. He then resummoned Pandora and took to the sky.

The others had departed earlier, but his steed easily caught up to them.

The rest of the twenty-three players were all exceptional players. They all had unusual steeds. The lowest grade of their steeds was super rare grade. But when Jack arrived, he still attracted everyone's attention. This was because his steed was the only one with the legendary grade.

"How did you evolve your nightmare into that form?" Wilted asked. She didn't remember implementing such a feature.

"Folks, we have a deadline to catch," John said. "This entire trip can be pointless for all I know, so it's best if we finish it as earliest as possible. If you want to chat, do it on the road. We will spend most of our time speeding. Rest will only be six hours a day."

"You heard the boss. I will tell you on the way," Jack said to Wilted.

"I thought you were the boss?" Badass asked Jack.

"What did I say, people?! Let's move!" John's kelpie galloped forward.

The others followed suit.

## **Chapter 1834 1834. Missing People**

They traveled straight in the direction of Chris' coordinates. Thanks to Pandora's fear aura, most monsters moved away from their path. Hence, they could travel in peace.

Jack was itching to stop whenever he saw new monsters, but John forbade him. Even if his steed could easily catch up to them, leaving would mean letting go of Pandora's fear aura. The rest would then get slowed by monsters who happened to be in their way.

The day was not over when they entered the Dorwin region. They continued until almost midnight before they found a clearing and used that spot to build their tents.

They only had free time during the six-hour rest John allocated. John didn't demand everyone to sleep. Everyone was an adult already.

During the first night, everyone took this lightly. Jet and Freddie coached Wilted's gang on mana manipulation. Jack, Grace, Jeanny, Arthur, and Spring Crown had friendly spar to hone their martial arts. Leavemealone, Four Winds, and Red Death trained alone.

John warned everyone not to stay up too late. He then went into his tent to rest.

After sparring for an hour, Jack and the others rested and chatted. Jack mentioned that he felt like he was back in the old time when he was on an adventure with a party.

"We ARE on an adventure," Grace said with a laugh.

"Yeah, but I wish it has been under a better situation, where the world is not at stake," Jeanny said.

"No need to stress yourself on something you can't change, Jeanny," Arthur said.

"Focus on what you can do. For now, hone yourself and go to this place where we hope to find an answer."

"Spoken like a true wise man," Spring Crown said.

"Are you implying I'm not?" Arthur asked.

"Please don't misunderstand me, Master Arthur. Of course, you are," Spring Crown said.

"I heard you self-learn your martial arts. I find that rather hard to believe. Is that true?" Arthur asked.

"Rather than self-learn. It's more like stealing. You have to be careful when you display your sword art around him, Master Arthur. He will steal it if you are not careful," Jack said.

"If he can do that, that means he is very talented. I rarely receive a disciple because I don't have the patience to explain my teaching." Arthur turned to Spring Crown, "If you can learn my sword arts simply by watching. I don't mind showing it to you."

"In that case, I won't hesitate in stealing, I mean, learning your sword arts!" Spring Crown exclaimed.

"Man, you do have no shame," Jack said to Spring Crown.

As they were chatting, Red Death approached them. "Jack, accompany me in training, will you?" She asked.

"Oh?" Jack was rather surprised by the request.

"Wong taught me a few new moves. I want to test it to see if it has shortened the gap between us."

Grace stood up. "He is too strong for you. If you need a sparring partner. I will be happy to."

Red Death didn't even look at Grace. She said, "You don't qualify to."

"What did you say?!" Grace asked.

"Uh... A quarrel. Nice," Spring Crown remarked.

"You are a pig," David, who was sitting by Jeanny, said to Spring Crown.

Jack stood up and mediated before things went out of hand. "Look, how about this. You two come at me."

"What?" Red Death and Grace both asked.

"Like Grace said. I'm too strong. I have three classes, after all. Even if you two wore legendary equipment, I do too. It won't be fair. If the two of you work together, maybe it will balance our power gap."

Jack didn't give the two the chance to object. He walked to an open space and took out two uncommon-grade swords. "Come at me! No skills. Just standard attacks."

Grace and Red Death glanced at each other before brandishing their weapons. They then rushed at Jack. One came to his left. The other came to his right. Jack dealt with each using one sword.

"His sword's heart had greatly improved," Arthur said. "I never expected someone to catch up to me in such a short time. His martial talent is truly outstanding."

"Yeah. That one I can't copy. It's not a movement art, after all," Spring Crown said.

"It's not. It's more like a meditation technique. Do you wish to learn?"

"I'm never good with meditation. Can't stay still, you know. I think I'll pass on this one."

"Those two work together rather well for rivals," David was commenting on Grace and Red Death.

"I at first thought something was going on between Haon and Red Death," Jeanny said. "The two spar quite often when we were in Master's captivity. I guess it was just the need to train at the time. Those two rarely speak again after they are free."

"Maybe we should try matchmaking them? I mean, Jack is for sure close to Grace already, right? This will help him from getting distracted."

While they were chatting, they were yelled at by Spring Crown, "Hey, if you two lovebirds want to show a display of affection, can you please do it somewhere more private?"

"What display of affection? It's just a hug, Goddamnit," David protested.

"Well, it still bothers people who have no couple. Have some empathy, will you?" Spring Crown returned.

"I thought you said you have someone? Where is she?" Jeanny asked.

"Oh, she... She was someone I used to play games with in the past. She went by the alias Swaying Drizzle. She was a very good ranged attacker. She would have been a good archer or gunner if she was here."

"I'm so sorry. How long ago has she passed away?" David asked.

"What...? Hell, no! She is still alive! What makes you say that?" Spring Crown asked.

"No? What the hell, man? Why the heck did you phrase it like that? You made it sound like she is not in this world anymore."

"She is not. That's the thing, man. I've been searching for her all this time but never find a mention of her. I even used that Missing Outworlders Coordination Center, but they never found information about her."

"Maybe she changed her alias?" Jeanny suggested.

"No. I don't believe she did," Spring Crown said with certainty.

"Hm... Come to think of it. I did hear some people claiming some of the people they knew were still missing after all this time."

"That is not wrong," Scarface joined them after overhearing their conversation. "We Death Associates have a rather large member base spanning through multiple countries. We have found many of our members. But to be honest, a large portion is still missing even now. Even after we can travel to every settlement in this world."

"Do you think there is more to this than meets the eye?" Jeanny asked.

Spring Crown shrugged. "We are probably going to meet the creator, aren't we? Perhaps we can ask about this while we are at it."

## **Chapter 1835 1835. Path Opener**

Jack sparred with the two ladies for half an hour before he forced them to quit by throwing both of them to the ground. He then ran into the tent while claiming that he was tired and wanted to sleep. Jeanny and the others were speechless by his rather unconventional method of ending the spar.

Everyone went to rest after that. They were woken up a few hours later by loud gongs accompanied by John's voice powered by mana manipulation. John knew everyone ignored his warning last night. He didn't care. They had to resume their journey at the appointed time. There was no exception, no matter how tired they still were.

Most of these people ended up feeling miserable through the entire journey of the second day because they were sleepy. On the second night, most of them went directly to sleep once they stopped moving.

John made sure everyone was aware that they were not on a picnic. They were on a quest with the world's fate at stake.

Despite their rush, they still chatted along the way. With Jack around, it was hard not to. He got bored if it was a silent journey. He went around chatting people up. As a result,

everyone got to know each other better. The group had a deeper bond compared to when they set out. Even Wilted's people were now more open to the others in the group.

They were on the fifth day of their journey when they got close to Chris' coordinates. They had to stop because the path forward for those traveling on the ground was blocked by a large wall. The wall was very long. Its surface was decorated with strange diamond-shaped patterns.

"That's not a wall. Prepare for battle!" Jack said as he and Pandora landed from the sky.

"Battle?" The others used their Inspect on the wall then.

\*

Jormungandr (Eternal monster, Reptile), level: 95

HP: 5,800,000

Strength: 12,182

Physical Defense: 14,560

Magical Defense: 11,240

\*

"Jor—Jormungandr...?"

"The Midgard serpent from the mythology?"

As they were making sense of the situation, they heard a rumbling sound. The trees shook. The wall in front of them shifted. Not long after, a colossal snake's head rose in the distance before it came to them. It hovered above them, watching.

Everyone had their weapons at the ready, but no one moved.

"Uh... Should we attack?" Giant Steve asked.

"Hey, wilted. Why is such a strong monster here?" Jack asked.

"I... I don't know. I don't remember ever inputting this type of monster," Wilted replied.

"Why didn't it attack?" Joe asked.

The serpent just watched them in silence. After a while, its head moved forward. It was slow, though. It was not an aggressive move. Hence, they all stay put. The serpent's head moved until it stopped right above Wilted. It then lowered its head.

"Stay back!" Joe and Nameless both exclaimed as they put themselves before Wilted. The others also became tense.

"Wait, don't attack!" Wilted call. She pushed Joe and Nameless aside. "I don't think it means us harm."

Wilted took something out. Jack recognized it as the Chris' Memory Stone he had given her. The stone was emitting a soft glow. The giant serpent watched the glow as if hypnotized.

After some time, the serpent grunted before moving away. Its body, which everyone thought at first was a wall, started shifting. Its lengthy body scraped the ground as it moved. After a considerable amount of time, because of the unbelievable length of its body, the serpent's tail was finally seen, and a path was opened for them.

"Why didn't we just fly or jump over the thing?" Will asked.

"If you did that, I'm pretty sure the serpent would have attacked," Badass answered.

The serpent was still watching over them as they passed. They felt surreal getting stared at by such a colossal snake.

After they crossed through the gap the snake opened, its body shifted back into its original position. The gap was closed again. The serpent's head laid back down to the ground, hidden by the trees.

"Now, I understand why Chris said you need that stone to come here," Jack said.

"I don't think the stone is just for that serpent," Wilted said. The stone in her hand was still glowing, and it was now emitting a strong shine in one direction. Wilted was as if holding a flashlight in her hand.

"I think this light shows which way we should go," Wilted said and started walking.

Before them was a dense bamboo grove. The bamboos were so dense that there was no space between the culms for one to slip through.

"We might need to cut these bamboos to make a way," Joe said as they approached the bamboo grove.

Before Joe could swing his sword, the bamboos moved out of his way, and a path was created.



"Huh? They are alive! They are afraid of getting cut," Joe said.

"Afraid your head. Move aside, will you?" John said and pushed Joe away. He then said to Wilted, "Wilted, you walk in front. I think that stone is not just for showing the way."

"Do you mean, the bamboos gave way to the one holding the stone?" Jack asked.

"I believe that is the case," John answered. "I don't think you will have much luck if you try cutting the bamboos. There might even be unknown repercussions. Everyone stays close to Wilted! Don't do anything to the bamboos!"

"Oh...", Joe stored his sword after hearing that.

Everyone huddled close with Wilted at the front. After walking for some time, the light from the stone suddenly changed direction. At the same time, the bamboos where the light was now pointing moved apart. A new pathway was seen.

"I must say. Chris truly wants to hide this place," Joe remarked.

"What stops us from flying up and looking for our way in the sky?" Paytowin asked.

"How about you fly up and give it a try?" John dared him.

"Okay," a voice answered, except it was not from Paytowin. It was Jack. He spread his gold dragon wing and flew up, only to get a bump in the head from an invisible ceiling.

"Ouch!" Jack yelled while caressing his pained head.

John chuckled. "Hehe, I love having peons who are so eager to test my hypothesis. Anyone wants to try cutting the bamboos next?" He asked.

Nobody volunteered.

## **Chapter 1836 1836. Chris' Secret Garden**

The light from the stone didn't lead them in a linear path. They turned a good number of times. Nobody had any idea which direction they were facing anymore. They felt like they were walking through a maze. A maze that kept changing its layout.

After almost three hours of walking, they finally saw something different the next time the bamboos gave way.

They came out to a clearing filled with beautiful flowers. Nearby, they saw a small stream. When their gazes traced the stream to the distance, they saw a hut surrounded by lovely-looking trees.

"Let's go," Jack said as he walked toward the hut. It didn't take a genius to know where they should go.

"My God-eye monocle didn't work here. Are yours the same?" Paytowin asked Jack, John, and Wilted.

"The same," Jack answered. John and Wilted also confirmed.

"Hey! Isn't this place...", Carnelia said after looking around.

Peniel had the same expression as her. She was looking around as if to make sure. The two fairies then looked at one another before exclaiming, "We are home!"

The two then flew toward the hut with the lovely trees.

"Home? Hm... I always wonder where they came from," John said.

As they got near the hut, they saw the beautiful trees in their surroundings had many holes in them. Small terraces made of wood branches decorated the trees. They saw small wooden furniture like chairs and tables on those terraces.

While they were fascinated by the miniature stuff all around the trees, Spring Crown said, "There is something inside that hole."

Everyone turned to where he was pointing, but all they saw was an empty hole.

"Come on. Don't need to be shy. You can come out," Spring Crown said as he approached the tree.

When he saw no response from the hole, he said, "Don't be afraid. We are the good guys." He stopped, turned around, looked at the others before looking back at the hole, and said, "Well, I am the good guy, that's for sure. I don't know about the others."

"Good guy, my ass! Weren't you helping the big bad not long ago?" Paytowin protested.

"Good and bad is only a matter of perspective, my friend. You, people, think you are the good guys by preventing Master from becoming a God because you think he will take everyone's freedom away. He thinks of himself as a savior who brings about order and peace by uniting everyone under his rule. So, both sides think of themselves as the good guys."

"Are you for real? He massacred millions of natives!"

"He thought of them as mere computer codes. Hey, don't crucify me. I left him because of that, remember? I'm simply telling you his perspective. He never sees himself as the bad guy."

"All the tyrants in history see themselves as the good guys. Now, move away! You are scaring the little one," Grace pushed Paytowin and Spring Crown away.

"Little one? Did you see something inside that hole?" Jack asked.

"Yes," Grace answered. She laid her hand just before the hole. "We won't hurt you."

Something peeked out of the hole. It was a tiny person. A mini little girl. Jack then saw the transparent dragonfly wings on the tiny girl's back. She was a fairy! A high fairy, like Peniel, except she looked much younger.

The young fairy came out hesitantly. She slowly extended her hands to touch Grace's finger but stopped before she could. Grace's hand remained still. The young fairy looked at Grace. Grace gave the young fairy a warm and encouraging smile. Finally, the young fairy touched Grace's finger. She then smiled. Her dragonfly wings flapped, and she flew around Grace.

"She likes you," They heard Peniel's voice.

They looked up and saw Peniel, but not only her. Flying down from the leaves above were hundreds of fairies. There were varieties of them. Young and old. Male and female. Many had different colors of wings. They flew around the group. They were giggling and laughing. Their voices were melodious. They were like a colorful parade with a pleasant choir.

"You are from this place?" Jack asked Peniel.

"Yeah. Carnelia and me both. This is the Fairy Village," Peniel answered.

"You didn't recognize the entrance to your own village?" Paytowin asked in disbelief. Only after they went through the bamboo groove that Peniel and Carnelia recognize this place.

"We never went out," Peniel replied.

"That's right. This place is shut off from the outside world."

Jack turned to the source of the voice and saw a grandma fairy with silvery butterfly wings hovering nearby.

"Is this the outworlder the Goddess attached you to?" The grandma fairy asked Peniel.

"Yes, his real name is Jack," Peniel answered.

"Nice to meet you, Grandma," Jack greeted.

"What grandma? Address her properly!" Peniel slapped Jack's head. "She is the chief of the village. She is an elder fairy. The oldest and wisest of our race. We all call her Old Mother Hada."

"I can't see how old mother is more proper than grandma...", Jack grumbled.

When Peniel was about to slap him again, he yelled, "Fine, fine! Old Mother Hada, then! You happy?"

"Haha. I can see you are quite close to him, Peniel," Hada laughed. "Now, may I know what business do you outworlders have for coming to our village?"

"My apology for coming here unannounced," Wilted said to Hada. "But we were invited to come here."

"Invited? By who?" Hada asked.

"By the person who gave me this stone," Wilted showed Hada the Chris' Memory Stone. It had stopped shining after they went past the bamboo grove. It now looked just like a normal stone. However, Hada's eyes lit up once she saw the stone.

"I see. So, it was finally time. Come! I will take you to meet him."

Hada gestured for Wilted to follow her. She flew away. The other fairies followed her. They were flying toward the wooden hut. Wilted and the others also went after her.

When they arrived at the hut, they saw the fairies dancing while flying around the hut. They were singing too. Hada knocked on the door before flying in through the opened window.

"Your people sure are an active bunch," Jack remarked. "I never hear you sing."

"Singing is not my thing. Don't expect me to do it anytime soon," Peniel replied.

"Who lives inside that hut?" Jack asked.

"I... Uh, I can't remember," Peniel answered.

"That's strange. Me too," Carnelia said.

A voice was heard from inside the hut. "Don't worry about that. I set it so you forget about me when you are partnered with outworlders."

"This voice...", Wilted muttered.

The door to the hut opened and Old Mother Hada flew out. Accompanying her was a man in a simple robe. Jack recognized the man from the hologram projected by Chris' Memory Stone.

"Chris...!" Wilted exclaimed.

"Welcome to my secret garden," Chris greeted back.

## **Chapter 1837 1837. Contingency**

When Wilted wanted to go over and embrace Chris, Jack stopped her. She looked at him in puzzlement.

"Use your Inspect. He is not who you think he is," Jack said.

Wilted did so.

\*

Chris (Eternal Human), level: 81

HP: 3,850,000

Strength: 3,150

Dexterity: 2,920

Intelligence: 4,110

Endurance: 2,850

Reflex: 3,070

Wisdom: 3,830

Physical Defense: 3,480

Magical Defense: 4,250

\*

Wilted's Inspect was at advanced master, so she received more information than Jack.

"You... You are a native...?" Wilted asked.

Chris smiled. "You are correct. I am not the Chris you knew. I... or rather, my maker, left some contingencies in case unlikely things happened. I am one of those contingencies."

"What do you mean?" Wilted asked, confused.

"I see you brought the bunch I asked for," Chris looked at the players who came with Wilted.

"You are the one we talked to from the projection?" Jack asked.

"Come, let's find a more comfortable place to talk," Chris said and started walking. The fairies followed and continued to fly around him. They never stopped singing, but their voices didn't disturb the conversation. Their voices were more like soft background music.

Everyone followed after Chris. They arrived beside a small lake. Some normal-sized chairs and tables were there. The place felt like a leisure park. A small bridge carried people to a small island in the middle of the lake. A pavilion was on that island.

After crossing the bridge, they saw a large round table with twenty-five chairs. Chris sat on one while gesturing for the others to take a seat in one of the chairs. The fairies continued to dance and sing around the pavilion.

Wilted took a seat next to Chris. The others just randomly chose available seats. After they were all seated, the fairies brought cups for each of them. Paytown sipped the liquid inside the cup and found it to be an exquisite wine. When he downed the entire cup, the fairies came over carrying a bottle and poured more wine into the cup.

"From the number of chairs, I guess this place was set up for your meeting with us," Jack started the conversation.

"That's right. I've been waiting for you lot to arrive for quite some time," Chris said. "I'm very happy when you two finally contacted me using that memory stone."

"I thought the projection from the memory stone was Chris' memory? Who are you?" Wilted asked.

"I'm exactly that. As I said, my maker left some contingencies. One of them was something that was activated in case he met his demise. That something would be me," Chris said.

When Wilted continued to show a confused expression, Chris continued, "After learning about Apollyon's scheme, the real Chris uploaded his memory into one of the programs inside the game. That program is me. In the case his presence was not detected when the world turned, I am activated. Chris continued to upload his memory into the game

daily. So, the only memory I'm missing is the one from the day he died. In other words, I'm the closest thing you have to the real Chris. You can say I'm created in his image."

A sadness was seen in Wilted's expression.

"I'm sorry to disappoint you. I know you want to meet him very much. If it is any consolation, he wants to meet you very much as well. I know, because I am basically him," Chris said.

"It's not your fault. I know I was expecting too much. Our real world didn't have magic like this one. If someone died, they died. They didn't come back to life..."

"Why do you place yourself in this secluded place? Don't you get bored here?" Jack asked, trying to change the subject.

"I have everything I need here," Chris answered. "I have a portal that accesses all kinds of training dungeons, so I can keep up with average outworlder's levels."

"Average outworlder's levels? Aren't you a native?"

"I'm a special native. Although I'm a native, I have most of the features of an outworlder. I level up fast, and I am bound to the class I chose at the start, even if it doesn't show up on your Inspect. I have the Priest elite class."

"Elite class? I thought you would have given yourself a special class considering you are the creator. I mean, the creator's double," Paytowin said.

"Well, when my program was created, I was also given many limitations. One of which is that I can only get the priest class and will stay an elite class. The real me had the belief that absolute power corrupts absolutely. It prevents me from using my knowledge to give myself unfair advantages and cause imbalance to this world."

"Wise man," Giant Steve remarked.

"Unlike Apollyon," Jack added.

"Unlike Apollyon," Chris agreed.

"I guess we need to bring you up to speed about what he had done. He had..."

"No need to. I already know. He got all the divine treasures and has activated the main story's ending where the underworld forces invade the upperworld."

"Oh? How do you know?" Jack asked.

"Like I said, I have everything here, including the means to see the outside world."



Chris pressed something on the table. A large holographic projection appeared above the round table. In that projection, they saw an army of players fighting the horde of demons. At the center of the demon's horde was a crimson portal Jack recognized as the underworld portal.

"This is the underworld portal in Hydrurond," Chris informed.

"Hey, those are Domon and Wong!" Paytowin pointed.

"A lot of the players are also our guild members," Jeanny said.

"Well, we did send our members to fight the demons from the underworld portals while the natives prepare for the arrival of the main underworld forces," John said.

The Everlasting Heavenly Legends was not the only guild doing that, John had called for the other guilds and many independent players to do so as well. The demons that came out of the normal underworld portals might be troubling, but they were not as powerful as the ones from the main underworld forces. By fighting these demons, players could increase their levels as well as stop the demon tides from causing too much trouble in the country where the underworld portal was located. This was at least until these underworld portals were closed.

The image in the projection shifted. It now showed a sea of demons much more terrible than the one from the previous image. The demon horde in this image was marching. Many strong-looking demons were within this horde. At the lead was a devil they all recognized. The lead devil was Satan.

## **Chapter 1838 1838. Pinnacle Special Class**

"So, you can spy on everything from here?" John asked.

"Yes, I just type in the coordinates, and it lets me see events unfolding at that place. I can even type in the time, and I can see the events that happened in the past," Chris answered.

"Incredible? Can I use it?" John asked.

"No. Only I can operate this tool."

"That's okay. I can tell you where to look while you operate it."

"No," Chris answered flatly. He shut down the projection and the image above the table disappeared.

Everyone was looking between John and Chris.

John said, "My friend, we need all the help we can get to defeat the underworld forces. If we can look at the enemy's every move using this spying tool, we can better plan our counter moves."

"I know, but forget about this tool. You are not using it."

"May we know why? I'm under the assumption you will be helping us against the underworld forces," Four Winds said to Chris.

"Then you have misunderstood," Chris said. "I never said anything about helping you against the underworld forces. Those forces are part of the game I designed. If you want to win against them, you have to fight them fair and square. Do not expect me to help you."

"Are you for real...?" John asked.

"Why are we here, then?" Red Death asked.

"I invited you here to deal with Apollyon. They are two different matters," Chris answered.

"But Master is currently hiding behind the underworld forces. We can't get to him without defeating the underworld forces," Purple Mist said.

Chris simply shrugged.

"Is the real him like this?" Jack asked Wilted.

"Now you understand my frustration when I found out he knew about Apollyon's deed and still allowed it to happen," Wilted replied.

"You guys said it like I didn't do anything," Chris said. "I have already reduced the difficulty by setting it so all the league factions joined the fight when the final battle happens."

"That is your doing?" Wilted asked.

"Yes. But to be honest, I didn't know Apollyon planned on using the underworld forces. I didn't even know he had deleted the main quest. He did that after I died. My original intention is simply to lower the difficulty. Considering this game becomes a real world, I want to increase the probability of the world surviving the underworld apocalypse."

"That's right! If the underworld forces conquer this world, you will also suffer. You should do your best to help us defeat the demons," Jack persuaded.

"Nah. Even if the underworld forces win, this place is untouchable. They won't reach here. Plus, I have another contingency."

"What contingency?" Jack asked.

"The contingency is only for me. It won't help you even if I told you," Chris answered.

"Let me ask again. What are we doing here, then?" Red Death asked again. "If he is not going to help. Let's just leave rather than wasting our time."

"Didn't I already answer that I'll be helping you to deal with Apollyon?" Chris asked. He turned to Wilted and asked. "That's what I said, didn't I? I said if you haven't defeated Master yet, come here with twenty-four players, didn't I?"

"Fine, let's talk about how you can help us to defeat Master. Tell us, what do you offer?" John asked.

"I can point you and give you the key to gaining the pinnacle special classes for each of you," Chris answered.

Jack and John gazed at one another. "As we expected," John said.

"Expected?" Chris asked after hearing John's remark.

"What's the point of giving the twenty-four of us the pinnacle special classes?" Jack asked. "We get stronger, yes, but we can't get to Master with the underworld forces blocking our way. You already knew he had collected all the divine treasures, didn't you? Which means he will become a God soon. Since we can't get to him, it is a certainty he will become one. What's the point of getting a stronger class? We will still be powerless against a God."

"Hehe," Chris snickered. "When I asked Wilted to come here, I considered she comes here when Apollyon already wins and becomes a God. The offer I give you, the pinnacle special classes, have the power to rival or even triumph against a God!"

"Hm... Why does it sound like I've heard that before?" Jack mumbled.

"I don't see how a player with a pinnacle special class can win against a God," John said.

"Aren't you underestimating the pinnacle special class too much?" Chris said. His tone sounded offended. "You don't know about this pinnacle special class, so I can't blame you for underestimating it."

"I know pretty well about it," John said.

"Haha," Chris chortled at John's words. "I know you think of yourself as smart, but please don't pretend to know about things you don't understand."

"Didn't you have this table to spy on things? Haven't you seen him when he used Time Sage's spells?" John asked while pointing at Jack.

"I don't have that much free time to spy on just one person," Chris said. He then turned to Jack, "You have Time Sage?"

"Yeah. I told you I have multiple classes, didn't I? Time Sage is one of them," Jack said.

"Really?" Chris asked. His tone sounded skeptical. His Inspect only showed Jack's main class.

"If you find it so hard to believe, let me show you," Jack said.

He picked up his cup and started casting. When his spell formation was almost completed, he threw the wine inside the cup into the air. He cast his spell then. The spell was Time Lock. The liquid hung in the air, as if a sculpture.

"How...?" Chris asked. "Even if you find the trial place by luck, there is a guardian beast which I set to always be much higher level than the average players. Unless you near level 99, it should not be possible for you to get past that guardian."

"If you truly don't want people to get the trial before level 99, you shouldn't have prevented the guardian from entering the trial cave," Jack answered. "I simply kept the guardian occupied long enough for me to reach the cave. Once I was inside, it was unable to follow me in."

"Oh...", Chris contemplated. "I didn't set the guardians to be unable to enter the trial place. I set it so they had a limited roaming space. If I gave them too big of a roaming space, they might end up wandering too far from the trial entrance and some lucky fool might end up entering by chance when the beast was away... Well, anyway, it's a fact that you have the class."

"Now that you know that we know about the pinnacle special class, you can understand our skepticism when you said this class can defeat a God, can't you?" John asked.

## **Chapter 1839 1839. The Council of Twenty-four**

"Tsk, tsk. Just because you know about one class, don't act like you know the whole picture," Chris snickered.

"Do enlighten me," John said.

"When twenty-four players with the pinnacle special class gathered, they had the power to bring about the council of twenty-four. This council had the power to strip away a being's divinity for a duration."

"Ah... I see. So, you want us to use this power to strip Master of his Godhood and defeat him while the duration lasts," John said.

Chris nodded.

"Isn't that a bit roundabout way to defeat someone?" Jet asked. "Can't you just set the power so it strips his Godhood for good? Or better, just kill him once we activate the council's power."

"I can push a button and erase both him and the underworld forces, but what fun would that be?" Chris asked.

"Anyone mind if I slap him?" Jet asked.

"You can do that?" Jack asked Chris.

"Do what?"

"Push a button and erase all our problems."

"No. It's just a figure of speech," Chris answered.

"I support you on slapping him," Will said to Jet.

"Let's not waste our time," Wilted said. "You said you can point us in the direction of the pinnacle special classes. How about you do that, and we will leave you to your peace here."

Chris turned to Wilted. "You sounded angry."

"Don't act like you know me. You are not the real Chris," Wilted said.

"Very well then," Chris said. He again pressed a button on the table. An image reappeared above the table.

"Hey, isn't that..."

Those who had been to Balgadur recognized the image inside the projection. The projection showed the huge obelisk on the plaza inside Palgrost's capital. Jack and Grace had visited this obelisk and they sensed the strange mana flowing through the obelisk. They couldn't make sense of it, though.

"This is the trial entrance for the pinnacle special class of the Gunner class, the Celestial Commander," Chris informed. "Normally, one needs to solve hidden puzzles that were laid throughout the capital before gaining the item to open the trial space. But even if one does, one still needs to fight the guardian behind that entrance. Now, who among you is the gunner class?"

Chris was using his Inspect to sweep the group, but David beat him to it by raising his hand. Chris then took out a small disc and slid it through the table to David.

"That will let you bypass all the troublesome puzzles," Chris said. "Take that disc out when you are next to the obelisk. You will be sent to the trial space. That disc will also get you safely past the guardian beast. Normally, there will be two stages of trial. But with this disc, you will only need to pass the last trial."

"Why can't you just make it so we directly get the pinnacle special class with that disc? Do we still have to take the trial?" Jet asked.

"Where is the fun in that?" Chris asked.

"Do you have to ask?" Paytowin chided Jet.

"It's my fault for asking," Jet said.

The image above the table transformed. It now showed a different place. Jack and those others who frequented Themisphere recognized it as the Tower of Light in Themetus. It was a mysterious tower that was said to have been there since before the city was built. The tower was mysterious because it had no entrance or opening. No one had ever been inside it.

"This is the place where one takes the trial for Priest's pinnacle special class, the Keeper of Immortality," Chris said. He then looked around the group.

Purple Mist raised her hand without being asked. Chris slid a similar-looking disc at her.

"That will let you enter the tower and get by the guardian beast. Whether you succeed in the trial or not, is entirely up to you. Please understand that dangers come with the trials. Don't expect anything easy. This is the best of the best among all available classes, after all. That's why I asked Wilted to bring capable players. If you think of yourself as second-rated, you might as well pull out."

Purple Mist grabbed the disc and stored it in her inventory. She didn't show any hesitation despite Chris' warning.

"Good," Chris said, "Next..."

He continued to show one different place over another. Some were inside a settlement like the first two, most were in the wilderness. There was a place where all they could see were ice and snow. There was a place deep inside the belly of a mountain in Hydrurond. It was filled with hot-boiling lava. There was a place underwater, at the bottom of the inner sea.

When the image showed a place Jack knew well, the Valley of Tempus, Chris stopped and turned to Jack. He then turned to Scarface.

"If you have the Time Sage, what is he doing here?" Chris asked while pointing at Scarface.

"Uh... We don't know that you meant to give us the pinnacle special class," Jack feigned innocence. "You just said to bring twenty-four players with different classes."

Jack said to Scarface, "I'm sorry. It seems that you won't get the pinnacle special class."

There was disappointment in his eyes, but Scarface kept his cool. "That's fine," he said.

"I don't care about him," Chris said to Jack. "The problem is, we need twenty-four players. Who here is a Blade Dancer aside from you?"

"Um... Can't I get a second pinnacle special class?" Jack asked with worry.

"You can, but to summon the Council of Twenty-four to strip Apollyon of his Godhood, we need all twenty-four presents, not twenty-three people with one person having two pinnacle special classes. It won't work. I don't design the original game for players to have more than one class."

"Hm... Maybe we should have brought another Blade Dancer for a backup," John muttered.

"What now? Should we go back and pick up another Blade Dancer?" Paytowin asked.

## **Chapter 1840 1840. Handing Out the Rest of the Trial Discs**

"Wait...!" Jack exclaimed, which drew everyone's attention.

He stood up. He would be damned if he let another player get the Blade Dancer's special class. That was his main class, after all. He used the Orb of Disguise and changed into Unrivaled Arcaner.

"Oh? You have a disguise artifact?" Chris said with surprise.



Jack didn't reply. He started casting a spell. The spell was Double Clone. Two other Jacks in mage's getup appeared. The true Jack then reverted to his original appearance.

"Time Sage," Jack pointed to one of his clones. He then pointed to himself and said, "Blade Dancer. Will this work?"

Chris was massaging his chin. He said, "Honestly, this is not following the original programming... But I don't see how the system will void this attempt. I think this can work... For the record, I dislike this. This is borderline hacking."

"Your dislike is noted," Jack said. He returned to his seat. "Show me where I can get the pinnacle special class for Blade Dancer."

"It's not your turn yet, but fine," Chris said and inputted different coordinates. The image of the Valley of Tempus was replaced by a place that looked like a creepy forest.

"The Lost Forest?" Jack said when he recognized the place.

"You know the place?" Chris asked.

"Yeah. We go there when we visit the Village of Peace."

"You have visited the Village of Peace? I'm impressed. Well, as someone who managed to get a pinnacle special class without my help, I should say it is expected."

"Now, this reminds me. Jack here got the Time Sage class all by himself, didn't he?" Jet asked.

"Yes. I already said I'm impressed. What more do you want?" Chris asked back with an annoyed tone.

"What if someone else already got one of the pinnacle special classes?" Jet asked.

The whole table became silent after Jet's question.

"That... should be unlikely, the guardian beast..."

"Jack here did it when he was low-level," Jet cut Chris off. "What if others did as well? From what I heard, only one player can get this pinnacle special class, am I right? What if I go to this trial and find out someone has already snatched the special class?"

"Well... If that happens, then we are f\*cked," Chris said.

"This is some brilliant contingency plan you've prepared, mister creator," John said sarcastically.

"He did put his hope on people stumbling into his puzzle to save the Gods," Jack said. "A puzzle guarded by an over-leveled monster which most players are unable to beat, so I said he is pretty consistent in placing his hope on extremely risky and uncertain endeavors."

"Are you talking about the Lizardman Blood Guard? I didn't find that monster difficult to beat," Leavemealone said.

"F\*ck you, man," Jack returned.

"Whatever. Let's get back to the topic," Wilted said. Everyone could see that she wasn't in a good mood. "Let's get this over with. We will go to the trial sites. If someone has already snatched the special class, then perhaps it is our fate to lose."

Jet turned to Chris, gave him a look, and said, "Way to go, dude."

Chris shrugged. "To be fair, this is all true Chris' deeds. I'm just carrying out what he left me. If it's any consolation, I do admit he is an a\*shole."

"Give me the disc," Jack said to Chris.

Chris took out a similar disc to the ones he had given the others and handed it to Jack.

"Like in the Valley of Tempus, you will find a hard time traveling through the Lost Forest. Without that disc, you will most likely get lost. That disc will show you the correct way to the trial space."

Jack nodded.

Chris continued distributing discs to the other players while showing each of them the place where they should go. After he handed out the last disc, Four Winds asked, "How long will the trial take?"

Four Winds was among those who wished to return as soon as possible. He was a country's sovereign, after all. Many matters required his attention. Unlike Jet and Purple Mist whose trial locations were in a city, his was in the wilderness. He would need some time to get to the location. This was already precious time spent.

"It is different for every trial. It is also different depending on your competence," Chris answered. "One might take weeks, or months, or even years, but I dare say you should at least need one week to pass the trial."

"Really? I spent only like a second for my Time Sage trial," Jack said.

"That's right. I'm not even aware he was in a trial. All of a sudden, he is already a Time Sage," Peniel added.

Chris turned to Jack with a condescending look. He said, "The Time Sage trial is special. Others might see it as a mere second, but let me ask you, how long did you spend inside the trial realm?"

"Uh...", Jack couldn't remember, but it was sure very long. He could even say it was his entire lifetime. He almost died of old age then.

"One week," Four Winds muttered.

"Dude, you are very optimistic," Paytowin said to Four Winds. "You did hear he said you might end up requiring years to complete the trial, didn't you?"

"I don't have years. I will complete it in one week!" Four Winds declared.

Paytowin gave him a thumbs up.

"Just so everyone is clear, once you enter the trial space, you won't be able to end it until the trial is complete. You either succeed or fail. There is no stopping midway."

"What happens if we fail?" Jeanny asked.

"You die," Chris replied.

Remembering his Time Sage trial, Jack didn't think the death from failing the trial to be a simple death. He refrained from telling others about this so as not to dissuade them.

"Everyone still wants to take the trial after knowing this?" Chris asked.

"Um... Can I drop out?" Will asked.

"No, you will go through with this!" John said while giving Will a hard stare.

"You are one mean boss, you know that?" Will said.

"I thought you like danger?"

"I do. What I don't like is the prospect of going to war after getting this special class."

"Can't you give us clues on how to pass the trials?" Giant Steve asked Chris.

"That will be cheating, won't it?" Chris replied.

"Dude. We have a world crisis on our hands. You still worry about cheating?" Jet asked.

"I've already given you the means to find the place, get past the guardian beast, and bypass the initial trial. I think I've helped enough."

Wilted stood up. "Okay, people. You have gotten your discs and the coordinates. Let's leave at once."