

Second World #Chapter 1921. The Retreating Army - Read Second World Chapter 1921. The Retreating Army

1921 Chapter 1921. The Retreating Army

With the current situation, the resurrected natives couldn't stay for Sanctuary's full duration. Even so, staying there for a while provided them with sufficient HP to survive the retreat. Purple Mist stayed and further healed them using Heal.

Her advanced spell, Heal, no longer healed a pitiful amount after she became the Keeper of Immortality. The effectiveness of her Heal was now affected by her Intelligence Stat. The higher her stat, the more HP her target recovered from Heal.

One of the natives she had resurrected was Hashi, the number one assassin from the Assassins Guild. Hashi wanted to rush back to the battlefield to assist Ragorth, but Purple Mist blocked his path. Hashi at first wanted to just run past from the side, but Purple Mist's stern words stopped him.

"I'm not bringing you back to life for you to throw it away again."

Hashi looked around. He didn't see any other healers. "You resurrected all of us?" He asked in astonishment.

"Do you see anyone else here healing you people?" She asked back while continuing to cast her recovery spells.

She cast Keeper of Immortality's beginning spell on Hashi, Supreme Heal. This spell healed 100,000 HP and removed all status ailments. The cooldown of this spell was only two minutes, so she could cast it rather often.

She only stopped healing after John called her.

"We don't have the time to heal them to safety. That will have to do. We need the army to retreat now," John said. He then addressed those resurrected natives, "All of you, retreat now! Don't try to be a hero. Your HP is still low. Find a nearby Janus and follow his instructions. You will have a chance for another battle soon."

Purple Mist didn't insist. She stopped healing and went to John. She saw that Ragorth almost got overrun. They couldn't hold the tide much longer.

"Are your monsters close?" Purple Mist asked.

John looked around. "Some have started to show up," John answered.

The spell John had cast earlier was from Monster Overlord's level 60 spell, Call Monster Horde. The spell's effect was the same as Wilted's Pipe of Monster Control, except weaker. His spell summoned 100,000 monsters from the surrounding area of a twenty-kilometer radius. The spell picked the strongest monsters to call, excluding eternal-grade monsters.

John and Purple Mist flew to the front line.

"Be ready for a full retreat!" John shouted at True Janus when he flew past him.

Ragorth and the others were still holding the line to let the others retreat. From the look of it, they were ready to sacrifice themselves to pull it off. This was especially true for Jack's royal agents. Their lives were safeguarded by the Soul-securing Shrine. Only Tetsuo didn't have the insurance of a second life. The guy didn't seem to care. He zoomed in and out among the demon horde, disrupting them using his incredible speed.

"Purple, cast it!" John ordered.

Purple Mist was already in the process of casting her spell. The spell formed eight runes. When the spell formation was completed, everyone on the battlefield heard a hymn from heaven. A wall of golden light descended from the clouds. Following this wall of light was a host of winged beings.

These winged beings had features of angels, except they were composed entirely of golden light. Each of them carried a sword or a spear. They spread out and struck the demons once they got near one.

The army was astounded by this display. Some of the retreating soldiers even stopped to look at this miracle.

"Janus...!!" John called.

Janus was also in awe of the spell. He quickly recovered from his trance and blew the retreat horn for the second time, signaling everyone to break for a run while the host of angels kept the demons busy.

The spell Purple Mist cast was Angelic Host. It was the power-up version of Heaven's Army, the spell that late Callan cast on the day of his demise. Compared to Heaven's Army, the Angelic Host summoned many more angels, and the angels were stronger. Additionally, Purple Mist had leveled her spell to the max. The higher the spell level, the more angels were summoned.

"Ragorth, retreat!" John called. Max-leveled Angelic Host summoned a great deal of angels but didn't have a long duration like regular summoning spells. John only needed it to buy some time.

Ragorth's adrenaline made him want to continue to halt the demons' advance, but his rational mind quickly took over. He ended his Gigantify and started retreating.

"Alfredo, Syndrillis! Let's go!" He called.

Those holding the line started to move away following Ragorth's lead. Purple Mist's angelic hosts took over their jobs, so they didn't have to worry about their backs. They ran as fast as they could. John also cast another two of his pinnacle class spells to help the angelic hosts hold the line.

Monster Overlord's beginning spell was Summon Apex Monster. This spell summoned the strongest monster within a five-kilometer radius. Monsters already affected by his Call Monster Horde spell or were already in hostile status with John or his allies were not affected by this spell. Unlike the Call Monster Horde, this spell could affect eternal-grade monsters.

Unfortunately, no neutral eternal-grade monsters were available in the surroundings. The monster summoned by the spell was a level 78 rare elite grade. It was pretty weak considering, but John was not surprised. The stronger one was already taken by his Call Monster Horde earlier.

His other spell summoned a better aide. Monster Overlord's level 70 spell was Summon Southern Lord, the Celestial Moth. The summoned creature was a moth the size of a true dragon. It was a mythical insect with its level following John's, which was level 97.

The giant moth was a master spellcaster. It started casting once it appeared. Its spells were light and soul-based. Many of its spells were AOE spells that hit a large area. Any demons who tried to approach to disrupt its spellcasting were repelled by the winds caused by its beating wings.

John still had two more spells available but refrained from casting them. These two spells had a long cooldown of two days. The coordinates he gave Janus were around a day away. If the underworld forces followed their troops closely, the battle might resume tomorrow.

He left the front line to the Celestial Moth and the angelic host. He also summoned more minions from his elite and non-standard spells while retreating. He sent these minions to aid the front line.

He looked at their flanks. It seemed Giant Steve, Jet, and Fierce Flame were doing a good job dealing with the demonic bugs hassling the members of the Runecraft Society. The retreating army also gave a hand in stopping those bugs.

The members of the Runecraft Society heaved relieved sighs for the protection. They hurriedly completed their tasks. By the time the army crossed the trap area, all the rune diagrams sealing the traps were halfway dissolving already.

Some fast-moving demons and bugs tailed the retreating army closely, but the defenders had put a decent gap between them and most of the underworld forces due to Purple Mist's angelic host. Top combatants on the defenders' side stayed at the army's tail to face these pursuers. They were Syndrillis, Forctis Lion, Primordial Hydra, leaders of the factions, and leaders of the ancient sect.

As they retreated, the soldiers heard loud sounds of crumbling walls. They couldn't help but turn their heads. What they saw made them glad they had retreated. The defensive walls they were defending earlier were now submerged in a sea of demons and demonic bugs. The angelic host was gone. Not because their duration had ended but because they had all been vanquished.

The celestial moth continued to resist. But with so many demons, the winds from its wings couldn't stop them all. Many demons latched onto its body, hampering its movements while landing attacks. A giant demon with a bull's head slammed its oversized hammer onto the moth. The impact brought the moth down to the ground, where it was further swarmed.

Without anyone stopping them, the underworld forces broke into a full sprint. Thankfully, the traps were active by then. These traps stopped the demons' eager pursuit and halted the entire horde's march.

Beelzebub finally showed itself from among his horde. He always stayed behind his army and let his minions do the fighting. Other than when the ancient sect, the Council of Virtus, and the Cult of Phobos tried to charge through his army to get to him, he rarely battled the defenders. Those three factions learned how folly their attempt was after that day. They could hardly cause any meaningful damage to Beelzebub and they were forced to retreat to the walls.

Beelzebub moved forward until the line where his army halted. He started casting a spell.

Syndrillis put herself at the back. She conjured a golden shield. Multiple runic symbols revolved around the shield. "Get behind me!" She said.

"No, you won't stop that spell!" John exclaimed. He had Hope's knowledge. He recognized the half-formed spell from its runic symbols. "That spell delivers a linear offense. We won't be able to move the entire army out of its path in time."

John turned to Giant Steve and yelled, "Steve!"

"On it!" Giant Steve jumped forward and put himself in front of Syndrillis.

1922 Chapter 1922. Petty Guy

While Syndrillis was wondering how this tiny outworlder hoped to stop Beelzebub's spell when John said she could not, Beelzebub's spell formation formed its last rune. It was a nine-rune spell. Seeing that, Syndrillis kept her golden shield on full power, just in case.

Beelzebub's completed his spell. The area around him darkened. It was as if something absorbed the light in the surroundings. The completed spell formation exploded with dense dark purple light. This light formed into a thick pillar that zoomed toward the center of the defender force, which was where Syndrillis and Giant Steve were.

Even before the energy pillar arrived, Syndrillis sensed how thick its aura was. John was right. She wouldn't be able to block this attack.

The name of Beelzebub's spell was the Extinguishing Chaos Flash. It was a spell with highly destructive power. Its power could probably match Eoranth's Annihilating Soul Beam.

When Syndrillis' mind was in turmoil, a titanic translucent wall appeared. The dark purple beam crashed into this energy wall. She looked down and sensed that this titanic wall was Giant Steve's doing.

She returned her attention to the wall. Beelzebub's Extinguishing Chaos Flash continued to pour onto the wall from the other side. She could still sense the terrifying power from the beam. Yet, she couldn't sense any aura from the wall stopping the beam. She kept on expecting the wall to collapse any second, but it held. Even after the dark purple beam expired its strength and stopped, the wall was still standing.

She looked down again at Steve. She couldn't believe this outworlder had the power to block such a fearsome attack.

The titanic wall came from Eternal Guardian's level 90 skill, Eternal Wall. With this skill, Giant Steve could erect a giant impenetrable wall. This wall was truly as its description implied, impenetrable. Save from the act of a divine being, nothing could pass or break this wall. This wall lasted ten seconds at its max level, which was a longer duration compared to Beelzebub's Extinguishing Chaos Flash. Thus, the spell failed to do any damage to the defenders.

John was instructing everyone to continue retreating as Steve blocked Beelzebub's attack. The defenders put more distance from the underworld forces.

Beelzebub's face turned into a scowl after seeing his top spell get blocked without doing any damage. That scowl quickly returned to normal. He looked down. His demons were still having trouble getting past the traps. He cast another spell, Catastrophic Earth Wave.

The earth before him churned and toppled. The roiling turned into a large wave of earth that rolled forward. Some demons got caught by this earth wave, but he didn't care. The earth wave continued. All the traps that were passed by this wave were destroyed.

When the spell was over, a wide safe path without traps was before Beelzebub. The demons rushed forward through this path.

"Hmph!" Beelzebub harrumphed. He had decided earlier that today would be the day he took out these defenders. That's why he expended much energy to summon a great host of his demonic insects. He was cross his plan failed to be realized.

'Never mind,' he thought. 'I will get them sooner or later.'

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John stayed at the rear of the retreating army as he monitored their backs. The underworld forces were not seen. This meant they had put a relatively safe distance between them and their pursuers. Still, he bet those demons were not far behind. Duke Alfredo and Jack's other royal agents stayed near him.

Ragorth, True Janus, Agamon, Dytess, and other prominent natives approached John. Ragorth asked, "Sir royal advisor, I heard from Janus that you don't want us to go to the prepared defensive line in the Themisphere border. May I know the reason?"

John opened his map and let Ragorth interface with it. He pointed at a place while talking, "Both Jagara and the Khan regions are filled with mountainous landscapes. The mountains in the Khan region are lush with forests. This makes the region a perfect ambushing place."

"You plan to ambush the underworld force?" Ragorth asked.

"Rather than ambushing, I will say it's more alienating the underworld force from Beelzebub," John answered. "Out of the other devils, he and Belphegor are the two who are most refrain from direct combat. While Belphegor chooses not to do so out of laziness, Beelzebub does so because he enjoys having his minions do the job for him."

"Like you," Jet remarked from the side.

"Grown-ups are talking. Please refrain from interrupting," John said.

"My age is at least twice yours, punk!" Jet returned.

"I would say thrice," Giant Steve muttered.

John ignored them. He continued speaking to Ragorth, "Despite being the leader, Beelzebub preferred to be at the rear. What we need to do was to create a situation where he was separated from his army."

"And then we drop our full force on him," Ragorth said.

"Rather than full force, I think we can only spare the five of us," John pointed at him and his friends. "And probably Jack's royal agents. The rest of you will have to be the wall to stop the demon army from giving Beelzebub assistance."

Ragorth was skeptical about how the five outworlders could hope to beat Beelzebub by themselves. Although they rarely engaged the devil, Agamon and the others did so during the first days of battle. Beelzebub was formidable even without his army. But then he remembered the Angelic Host cast by Purple Mist and the Eternal Wall erected by Giant Steve. These five also had levels above 90, way ahead of the other outworlders. Perhaps their claim wasn't just a brag.

So, Ragorth instead asked, "How do you suppose we separate Beelzebub from his army?"

John again pointed at his map. "Because of the mountainous region, a lot of the time, massive troops will have to form a long line as they march. We will put a decoy for the enemies to follow while we lay in wait inside the forests on the mountains here. We will let the enemies pass us by until we see Beelzebub at the tail. We will then cut this tail. The army will engage the demons while we deal with Beelzebub."

"Can't we just lure them to Mount Tigras?" Giant Steve asked. "The coordinates you gave are rather close to Popoki Village. That place is protected by the Tiger God, whose power is equivalent to a God. That deity should be able to take care of the underworld forces no problem."

"The underworld forces won't be so stupid to wander into a territory ruled by a deity," John said. "That's why the minor race forced from their home was only the frogmen. Those frogmen were more like a nomadic tribe on the sea. They didn't possess a territorial deity."

"Don't forget the demons also have a big bad God backing them," Purple Mist reminded.

"Yes. If the underworld forces somehow go into conflict with a deity, I bet Lucifer will appear. However, I believe the underworld forces will leave these minor races for the last. So, forget about the Tiger God. We can't enlist his help."

Ragorth asked the others, "What do you all think?"

Agamon was the first one to answer, "We are under Themisphere banner. If the royal advisor told us to lay an ambush, then we lay an ambush."

Dytess was next. "My queen told me to follow Themisphere's lead."

"We will be more vulnerable since we don't have defensive structures and siege weapons with us," Janus said. "But Sir Royal Advisor here has brought many victories to Themisphere in the past. I say we trust his plan."

Ragorth turned to the others, who were still silent.

The others looked at each other. After that exchange, Hashi said, "We follow your decision, brother Ragorth." To which the other nodded.

Ragorth gave the matter some thought. Although fighting under the support of the defensive structures was safer, they had been doing that for some while. They were nowhere near victory. Perhaps it was time to try a riskier approach.

"All right, royal advisor. We follow your plan," Ragorth told John.

"Good. Since we don't have the luxury to stay put and talk. We will discuss the details as we move. I'm calling some outworlder leaders to come. We will resume our talk when they arrive. In the meantime..."

John paused his speech because he received a message from Jack.

"Hey, I heard that Hydrurond Northern Front is retreating. So, you don't need my royal agents there. I'm calling them over."

John was about to send a reply telling Jack not to do that, but Duke Alfredo and the others already vanished from there.

"Damn it!" John cursed. Jack's royal agents had the advantage of outworlder's fast leveling. Their levels were high enough to provide considerable assistance when it was time to face Beelzebub.

"Hey, where did they go?" Jet asked. He wasn't aware of Jack's message to John.

"They have been summoned by that petty guy," John answered. "He is doing this to return the favor of me sending him alone to face Satan."

1923 Chapter 1923. Satan's Absence

The petty guy John was cursing was battling the demons at Hydrurond's Southern Front.

Earlier, Jack was ready to rush at Satan when he came out of Chris' portal. But after flying around, he was surprised not to see Satan anywhere on the battlefield. When he

went and asked Tip at the mobile fortress, Tip informed him Satan had been absent since a couple of days ago.

The absence could have been a prime opportunity to cut down the number of the demon troops, but it turned out it was easier said than done. Satan's army was composed of many high-level demons. The defenders had also suffered many casualties after the prolonged battle. Even without Satan, they could only hold the demon army at a stalemate.

Eoranth was not available. He suffered a grave wound several days earlier from his battle with Satan. He had retreated to heal. Honuren was also wounded at the same time as Eoranth, but his wound wasn't as grave. After one day of rest, he returned to the front line.

Satan probably did that to them because he planned to be away from the battlefield. Why he left, nobody knew. It was frightening enough to learn that Satan could easily wound them if he wanted. This meant he hadn't been serious all this time.

The mobile fortress itself was in shambles. It had many cracks along its walls and several broken legs. Linda no longer had the mobile fortress on the front line. She kept it behind the troops and used its siege weapons to support them.

After learning the news, Jack considered whether he should stay or go help fight the devil on the other fronts. He decided to stay. Satan could return any moment. He had been assigned this front, so this place was his responsibility.

The Themisphere soldiers were fired up seeing their king. Their morale increased. Jack also took the chance to enter the mobile throne room and spent some ruling powers to activate some of his sovereign powers. One of which was the War Rally, which increased all soldiers' attributes for one day.

Throughout the two and half months of training inside Chris' Secret Garden, Jack regularly manage the affairs of the monarch system. Thus, he continued to be awarded merit points and ruling powers.

His sovereign level was already close to level 19 when he departed to Chris' Secret Garden. The gained merit points during these two and half months pushed him up to the highest level, sovereign level 20.

He could still receive merit points after reaching sovereign level 20, but his sovereign level could not level up anymore. Excess merit points could be converted into ruling powers, with the exchange rate of 10,000 merit points for 1 ruling power.

Each of his sovereign level-ups gave him another sovereign power. As Peniel previously informed, the two last sovereign powers catered to wartime.

At level 19, he gained Justification for War. This sovereign power could last throughout the entire war. Activation of this power cost 50 ruling powers. Afterward, an upkeep of 1 ruling power per day was needed to keep the power active.

This Justification for War kept the minimum morale of Themisphere troops at 50. As long as this power was active, the morale wouldn't go lower than that, no matter how bad the war went. The increase rate of morale was doubled. A small victory would increase the troops' morale higher than it normally would. Aside from that, all Themisphere forces received a boost in their stats. This increase not only affected the Themisphere soldiers but also the native human adventurers and human outworlders.

The last sovereign power gained at sovereign level 20 was War God Blessing. This sovereign power was similar to War Rally, which had a duration and cooldown. It cost 50 ruling powers. This sovereign power lasted one day with a cooldown of one week.

Upon activation, all Themisphere soldiers received a power-up in terms of damage, defense, speed, and skill's cooldown reduction. All soldiers below the mythical grade also received a passive HP recovery. As for the mythical grade and above, their natural HP recovery was doubled.

These two sovereign powers consumed many ruling powers, but Jack had an abundance of them. He gained many ruling powers from the affairs and level-ups. He also exchanged all excess merit points for ruling powers. Peniel had advised him about these two sovereign powers beforehand, so he saved an adequate number of ruling powers for them.

There was no discernible effect when he used Justification for War. But when he used War God Blessing, a red aura enshrouded every Themisphere soldier. They did not only receive a boost indicated in the power's descriptions, but they also felt an indescribable zeal when the red aura enveloped them. They felt as if all their worry and fear were something of a distant past.

The fearsome demons ahead of them no longer seemed terrifying. They uttered a thundering war cry and pushed forward. Their fervor advance instead caused the demons to falter. Unbeknownst to them, the red aura also had a small chance of causing fear affliction to the opponents.

When Jack came back to the roof of the mobile fortress' keep, Linda said to him, "We could have used this enhancement in earlier battles."

"I just got to max sovereign level a few days ago," Jack replied.

"Will you head to the front line?" Tip asked.

"Yes. When can you call our guild army again?"

"The cooldown will be completed in around two more days."

Jack nodded. He asked another question, "Do you know where my gramp is?"

Tip pointed to a spot on his map.

"Let me know if Satan shows up on your map," Jack said.

"Will do," Tip replied.

Jack took to the sky and left the mobile fortress. He flew toward the location where Tip said his grandfather was. On his way, he saw everyone fighting fiercely. The War God Blessing had injected a dose of enthusiasm into them.

He caught sight of Duchess Isabelle. The duchess' missing arm had regrown. He was glad the duchess wasn't hurt again in this war. He hoped it would stay that way. He also saw Themisphere ghost kings. At first, he didn't recognize Theridan among the combatants. He realized then that Theridan was in a different form.

Theridan was in beast form. His beast form was a humanoid creature with features similar to the Therras Beast. Terraxx was fighting by his side. When Terraxx went into bipedal mode from the Ultimate Beast, it and Theridan looked almost identical, except Theridan was smaller.

He reached the spot where Tip said his grandfather was, but he didn't find the old man there. Domon must have moved to a different place. Jack didn't find this surprising. The situation on the battlefield changed all the time.

He flew around and searched. He finally found Domon. He was with a team filled with martial artists. They were far ahead. This was probably because the troops started pushing back after he activated the kingdom enhancements. Domon and the others advanced with the troops.

He approached them and was surprised to see Long among Domon's team. He ended up greeting Long first before his grandfather.

"Yo! Fancy meeting you here," Jack landed next to Long. He also used Flame Strike to strike a nearby demon into the ground. He stepped on that demon and just stood there, preventing the demon from getting up. "It's good seeing you turning a new leaf."

Long turned to Jack. He grunted and turned away without saying anything.

"The hell with that attitude? Are you asking for another beating?" Jack asked.

"Come at me anytime you like!" Long responded this time.

"You ask for it!" Jack exclaimed.

Domon came in between the two before things got out of hand. "Stop it, you two! Have you forgotten we are in the middle of a battle? There are plenty of opponents around. Stop fighting among ourselves!"

"He started it!" Jack defended himself.

"You are the one who provoked me first," Long returned.

"When did I provoke you?!"

"You talked to me."

"..."

"F*ck you! Are you saying nobody is allowed to speak to you?!" Jack yelled.

"I said stop! Long, you and Wong fight over there," Domon commanded.

Long grunted, but he didn't oppose when Wong led him away.

Warpath, who had been following Domon, asked Jack while pointing down, "Are you going to deal with that demon?"

The demon Jack was stepping on was still struggling to get back up. It couldn't resist Jack's strength.

Jack swung his sword down. He used Fighter's Power Swing. This basic skill normally created a wide energy burst that hit multiple opponents, but Jack condensed the energy into a narrow area along his blade. His sword sliced the demon's neck and instant-killed it by decapitation.

Warpath was astonished by the feat. The HP bar from the slain demon was nearly full before Jack's swing. He was sure the swing just now wasn't a big skill. He was confused as to how Jack pulled that instant kill.

On the other hand, Domon went into deep contemplation. His understanding of mana allowed him to grasp what Jack had done with that single swing.

1924 Chapter 1924. The Reason for Satan's Absence

On a desolate landscape in Western Hydrurond, a group of ten players sneaked through the land. They moved while using whatever little covers they could find. After the underworld forces stormed through this region, everything was in ruin. Only a few trees survived. Most had toppled or were broken.

It was nighttime. The players hoped the cover of the night was enough to hide their presence. They avoided the wilderness monsters still roaming the place. They continued moving until the lead player gave them the signal to stop. This lead player checked his map to ensure they were at their target location.

This player was Giddo, a member of the State of Galhana, and Sizhad's right-hand man. Giddo looked around the place. The ruined landscape made it hard for them to sneak around, but it also let them survey their surroundings easily.

It was open space all around. Giddo turned in a full circle twice, making sure no one was around except for the wilderness monsters.

One of his teammates wore a God-eye monocle. "No green dot was on my radar except for us," that player said.

Giddo nodded. He ordered his men. "Spread out! Send a message if any of you see even one demon."

His men nodded. Eight players spread out in different directions, leaving only Giddo and the player with the God-eye Monocle. He waited until the eight were in position.

"Clear."

"Clear."

Giddo received their messages one by one. After all eight players confirmed no demon was around, he took out a Mana Purifier. Seeing how effective these items slowed the underworld forces, Master gave Sizhad a second batch of Mana Purifiers. Sizhad sent his guild members to repeat the errand.

When Giddo was about to use the Mana Purifier, a black hole suddenly appeared where his hand was. He was so startled that he dropped the Mana Purifier and jumped away.

The mana purifier didn't drop to the ground. It was sucked by the black hole and vanished.

Giddo was still unsure what was happening when he heard a voice from above. At the same time this voice was heard, a heavy and suffocating aura washed over him. He found himself unable to move due to the heaviness of this aura.

"You are right. We have some rats sneaking among us."

Giddo looked up. There was nothing up there, but he was sure something was there. Not because of the voice but because of the aura.

"He can't see us. Drop your optic veil. I no longer conceal my aura, so there is no use for it anymore."

Once the words ended, two beings appeared up there. Giddo dropped to the ground from what he saw. His teammate did the same. The two were now sitting on the ground while looking up at two unusual beings. One was a colossal demon with fiery wings and a fiery halo. The other was a giant meatball with an eyeball filling three-quarters of its body. The mana purifier was floating beside the giant eyeball demon.

'How... How did they escape God-eye monocle's detection?' The one with the God-eye monocle sent Giddo a message.

'They are both eternal grades...,' Giddo answered.

"Mana purifier...," Satan muttered. He plucked the floating item from Dajja's side. "So, this despicable thing is the reason why our reinforcements had slowed down."

Flames burst from Satan's hand holding the mana purifier. The flames blanketed the item. Satan then squeezed. Rays of light shot out from the flames. The flames shook. The shaking got stronger as Satan exerted more pressure. A loud breaking sound was heard followed by a flash of light inside the flames in Satan's hand.

Satan opened that hand. The flames were doused. Broken pieces of what used to be the mana purifier fell to the ground.

"Considering the widespread deceleration of the corrupted mana, we can safely assume many mana purifiers have been used," Dajja said.

"But now that we have located the rats, we should be able to prevent more from getting used," Satan said.

Giddo finally built up his courage. He rose and spoke, "Great Lord Satan. If you let me speak, I want to assure you that—"

"How about you sit the f*ck down!!" Satan growled. His voice was as if a hammer slamming into Giddo's head. Giddo was forced back to the ground.

"Now, where were we?" Satan asked Dajja.

Giddo's mind was spinning, and his ears were ringing. He couldn't hear Satan's conversation. When the ringing lessened in intensity, he heard messages from the team he sent to watch the perimeter.

"Demons! Demons incoming! Lots of them!"

"They are too fast! We can't outrun them. Ahh...!!"

He heard similar messages from all eight men he sent out. He came to a realization then. While they thought they were undetected, the demons had somehow spied on them. The demons lay in wait while Satan and Dajja came under a veil of invisibility. The hidden demons only moved after their intention was revealed.

The chaotic messages sent by his team were soon silenced. All of them had been killed.

While Giddo's mind was still in chaos about what to do, the conversation between the two beings above caught his attention.

"Now that we know these outworlders who we granted asylum opposed us, things are easier. We just need to crush them," Satan said.

"Stopping the mana purifiers comes first. We can deal with those backstabbing outworlders hiding in their headquarters later," Dajja said. "Or we can let Lord Lucifer deal with them. They are close to where he is. All we need to do is send a transmission. He should take care of them. As for us, we need to prioritize dealing with the rest of the mana purifiers and the resisting upperworld's armies."

"The mana purifiers should be with a small team like this. It is a hassle to hunt them down. It will require time."

"Not if we know where they are," Dajja said.

"How do you suppose we get that information?" Satan asked.

"That is why I requested to keep these two alive," Dajja answered. "They are the leaders of this team. They should know where the other teams are, or at least their target locations."

It took Satan a second before he uttered, "Ah, yes. You have that mind-reading skill."

Hearing that, Giddo shouted at his partner. "Kill me! We can't let them find out about the others!"

Although they appeared petrified by fear, they were not in true danger. Ever since they started this mission, all members wore an Amulet of Rebirth. They would return to life again after dying with only a loss of one level. The reason Giddo had not yet killed himself was because he had a philosophy of trying every possible solution before giving up. That's why he continued to think of a way out despite their seemingly impossible situation. This changed when he learned about Dajja's mind-reading ability.

Both Giddo and his partner were assassins. They unequipped all their armor to discard their defense. They were about to use their strongest skill, Assassinate Soul, on one another. However, before their daggers touched each other, multiple fire rings

materialized around them. These fire rings tightened around their bodies and stopped them from moving.

"Urghh..." Giddo tried to break out. He used a non-standard skill that removed movement restriction, but the skill's effect only took out one of the three fire rings binding his body. The other two remained.

The fire binds came from Satan. "Hehe, nice try, but you won't die without our say-so," he mocked.

"We still have several more methods to incapacitate you, so no need to waste your energy pointlessly," Dajja added.

The eyeball demon floated down. His humongous eye almost touched Giddo's face. Being stared by such a huge eye from close range was extremely disturbing. Giddo had the urge to head-butt the eyeball. He wondered if it would have the same effect as someone getting poked in the eye, but he decided not to antagonize these demons needlessly. They had incapacitated him. They might not give him true death. But as a war veteran, he knew there were worse things than death.

"Now, look at me, please," Dajja told Giddo.

Giddo didn't respond. He felt defeated, but his soldier spirit made him defiant.

"Sir, I said, please. Don't make this difficult... for you." Dajja's tone was gentle, but Giddo felt like he had just heard the most threatening words in his life.

"Maybe you should try the other one," Satan suggested.

"Nah, I can see from their eye contact that this one is the leader," Dajja said. "I prefer not wasting time. The other one is a backup in case I break this one's mind."

Giddo's partner shrunk away hearing that.

Giddo sighed. He could see no way out of this. "Just get this over with," he uttered weakly and had his eyes looked at the giant eyeball before him.

"Good boy," Dajja said.

The two locked eyes. In Giddo's vision, Dajja's black pupil seemed to move away at a rapid speed. Yet, the remaining white portion of the eye seemed to enlarge, enshrouding him. Giddo felt like he was falling into a white abyss, a white abyss with no way of escaping. All thoughts within his mind cease by then.

It was more than half a day since Jack arrived at Hydrurond Southern Front. He fought together with the defenders. He equipped his Warrior King title, which gave his soldiers a boost. Adding the enhancement of his sovereign powers, the defenders could push back against the demons who outnumbered them.

Domon's team stayed close to Jack. With Jack leading them, this martial artist team became the tip of the spear piercing through the demons' formation. Linda adjusted the army's formation to center around this team and caused the demons' formation to crumble.

Jack took this chance to use the War God's Army, the set skill from the God of Courage's Divine Armor. One thousand warriors in golden armor joined the battlefield. Each one had a wings tool. They could fight enemies on land or in the air. These golden warriors excelled at fighting enemies at close range but could also cast spells.

These golden warriors ranged from level 88 special elite to level 98 mythical. The strongest followed Jack's level. Jack was close to reaching level 98 when he left Chris' secret garden. Considering he was among his army, this half-day battle granted him lots of exp points. This allowed him to level up.

Through Duke Alfredo, Jack learned that the defenders at Hydrurond Northern Front were retreating. Hence, he summoned his royal agents over.

He only summoned eight out of his twelve royal agents. This was because the other four died less than a week ago. These four were Amy, Jonathan, Robinson, and Nerd Bungie. They were still on their way back to the battlefield. Jack could bring these four to him instantly using his King Badge, but he chose not to. The Soul-securing Shrine had a cooldown of one week. He didn't want these four to die again before their life insurance coverage was activated again.

When his royal agents appeared before him, he was glad about their improvements. Thanks to the fast-leveling advantage, these two and a half months of constant battles had pushed his royal agents to stand amongst the strongest natives of this world.

Almost everyone from his royal agents died once or twice during this war. Only three people hadn't died since the war started. These three were Tetsuo, Eyrone, and Elayne. Hence, these three had the most improvement. Jack was glad nothing befell Tetsuo because he was the only one of his royal agents whose life was not insured.

Of the eight he had summoned to join this battleground, Duke Alfredo was level 89, Laurent was level 88, Lindsey was 84, Howard was 83, Eyrone was 91, Elayne was 80, Hatori was 87, and Tetsuo was level 93.

Jack was especially fascinated by Tetsuo. His insectoid beast form combined with the savage techno suit turned him into something Jack thought to be very cool. Hence, he always tried to stay close to this royal agent of his. He had no problem doing that since

his speed didn't lose to Tetsuo. This, in turn, slightly irritated Tetsuo. He always preferred to fight solo. Having Jack tailing him and the others tailing Jack made it so that he never fought alone.

But after a while, he learned to cope with them. Jack was used to team battles so he could synchronize well with almost anyone. Tetsuo didn't feel Jack disrupted his battle style.

"Soul Beaammm...!!!" Tetsuo shouted as he discharged his offensive skill.

"So cool!" Jack exclaimed. He imitated Tetsuo, "Mana Beaammm...!!!"

Tetsuo glanced at Jack. He could tolerate Jack's assistance. But this mimicking..., perhaps it would take him some more time before he could cozy up to this young king's behavior.

Tetsuo ignored Jack. He charged at the high demon who was down on the ground due to his soul beam. That high demon's HP was low. Tetsuo aimed to land a finishing blow on it. His fist was glowing a bright silver.

Tetsuo exclaimed as he neared his target, "This fist of mine is flaring bright! Its shining light shows me the path to defeat my enemies! Erupting Soul Punchhh...!!!"

His shining fist punched straight into the high demon's chest. The glow became brighter.

"Explode!" Tetsuo yelled at the same time the glow did as his statement. The high demon's body erupted when its HP was zeroed.

"Holy shit! That tops everything else! I wish I had recorded that with a recording stone!" Jack exclaimed after seeing the scene. Peniel facepalmed upon hearing the remark.

"I won't lose! Take this ultimate slash!" Jack slashed his sword at a nearby demon while yelling, "Neo galaxy extreme hyper slash!!!"

Warpath, who was nearby, cursed, "F*ck! That was just a normal slash. Why shout such fancy words...?"

All the royal agents received new skills or spells from their level-ups. Three notable spells Jack witnessed during the battle were the Reaper's Curse from Elayne, Phantasm Titan from Duke Alfredo, and Lethal Shadow from Hatori.

The Reaper's Curse was an AOE spell. It cursed all enemies in the target location. The reaper's apparitions appeared above the targets, clinging onto them. The stats and speed of the cursed enemies were lowered. Ten minutes after this spell was cast, affected enemies received a 50% chance of triggering an instant death. Those lucky

enough to survive would not escape scot-free. They received 1000% chaos damage instead.

As for Duke Alfredo's Phantasm Titan, it was a summoning spell. It summoned an illusory humanoid giant. It served as a perfect tank while the duke and other spellcasters cast offensive spells from behind it.

Hatori's Lethal Shadow was the weaker version of Red Death's Death Shadow. The skill enabled him to blend in shadowy areas and attack undetected from the shadows. He wasn't protected if he received attacks while in hiding, though. The speed and damage increase were also lower than Death Shadow.

Jack himself refrained from using big skills, in case Satan showed himself. With his mastery over form manipulation, even his basic, advanced, and normal elite skills were deadly enough, but he used Remote Magic Field and Double Clones. He also used AOE skills like Perpetual Lightning Judgement, which was more effective when used against groups of enemies.

He sent his clones out in different directions to assist the army. The effect of Jack's Warrior King title was doubled for any Thermisphere soldiers in his direct vicinity. It turned out that being in his clones' direct vicinity also worked, so Linda readjusted the troops' formation to follow these clones' movements.

The mobile fortress advanced following the troops' successful push. The healing from the rune tree helped the troops survive even when they focused on the offensive.

Therras and Spark were by Jack's sides.

Therras was level 93. Jack didn't call him out all the time when he was inside Chris' training cave. This was so he received most of the exp points, but he did call his pet out till it was level 90. After that, Jack only used pet food to level his pet. He had bought a lot of pet food before he departed to Chris' secret garden.

When he ran out of pet food, Jack asked Chris for some. It turned out Chris had lots of legendary-grade pet food. At first, Chris didn't want to share. Not long after, Wilted came to ask for those pet food. Jack was behind Wilted, grinning like a fool. Chris gave the pet food while grumbling.

Chris' legendary-grade pet food gave tons of exp points to pets. That's how Therras could increase three levels by relying only on pet food. Jack told Jet about this. Jet also went to ask for some, with Wilted by his side.

As for Spark, since Storm Breaker was level 99, it was at its highest potential. It used two of its skills in the battle. One was the Soul and Chaos Eye Beam. The silver and dark purple beam pierced through multiple enemies. Its strength didn't diminish even

after going through many enemies. The damage it dealt to the demons at the beam's furthest end was the same as the one hit the first time.

Spark's second skill was an AOE skill that hit a large area. The ten wing blades detached from his back and flew in a circle at high speed. These wing blades created a hurricane of blades that struck all enemies within range.

Spark still had several other skills, but they were single-target skills with long durations. Like Jack, it refrained from using this skill in case Satan showed up.

Jack also summoned the gold dragon from his bloodline's power and had it aid the army.

While they fought, one incident caught Jack's attention. The incident was when Domon, who was fighting nearby, used Weapon Master's Ki Strike. This skill normally generated an energy blast that hit everyone in a cone-shaped area directly ahead of the user. But when Domon used it, the energy blast didn't spread like it normally would. It instead shot out in a more focused pillar shape. As a result, the energy was more compact, and it traveled further. This energy pillar hit one of the giant demonic abominations and severed its arm.

"Gramps! You can use form manipulation as well?" Jack asked with surprise.

"Form manipulation? This is what this technique is called?" Domon asked.

"Uh... I just named it myself," Jack answered. "Since when did you start training this technique?"

"Since I saw you do it several hours ago," Domon answered.

Jack clicked his tongue. "Grandmaster martial artist is truly something else. It takes me days of training before I can even start using form manipulation on the easiest skill."

Domon chuckled. "Don't get discouraged. I've studied mana manipulation much longer than you. My understanding of mana is deeper than you, so if I can achieve what you did, it is not something surprising. You, on the other hand, have only learned mana manipulation not long ago. To reach this mastery and create a new technique, I dare say you have gone further than any martial artist I know. That includes me."

Those who were on Domon's team were all martial artists. They all knew what Domon said was not a flattery from a grandfather to a grandson, but a proud commendation from a teacher to a disciple. None of those there denied Domon's claim. Even Warpath, who still bore a slight grudge, accepted that Jack was a better martial artist.

As the battle raged on, they suddenly heard a commotion from behind. They turned back and saw one part of the defensive walls blew up in a fiery explosion. Multiple

fireballs rained down on many other parts of the walls while a colossal being stood where the first explosion was. That colossal being was Satan.

Second World #Chapter 1926. I Accept Your Challenge - Read Second World Chapter 1926. I Accept Your Challenge

1926 Chapter 1926. I Accept Your Challenge

Satan and Dajja could arrive at Western Hydrurond so fast after leaving the battlefield because of a long-range field teleportation rune diagram. After learning the spread of the corrupted mana was slowing down and their reinforcement had reduced, Dajja sent out some demons specializing in stealth and tracking abilities. With this team of special units, he included a high demon who could draw the long-range teleportation rune diagram. He also gave this high demon a communication device.

While Satan's army advanced, this special team traveled back to the West and searched for anything suspicious. One of the demons finally noticed a team of outworlders who sneaked around the desolate area. The demon observed these outworlders under invisibility. Hence, it did not appear on the God-eye monocle's radar.

After reporting this discovery to Dajja, Satan and Dajja decided to go check themselves. Satan incapacitated Eoranth and Honuren without killing them before he left. He and Dajja then used the long-range field teleportation rune diagram.

After Dajja extracted information from Giddo, Satan sent the tracking demons to the spots from Giddo's intel. Giddo and his partner were detained and bound using runic ropes. This prevented them from informing the other teams that their locations had been exposed.

Satan and Dajja left the remainder of this mission to the tracking demons. They sent the reinforcement demons delayed by the Mana Purifier to aid these tracking demons. They themselves returned to the battlefield.

Despite leaving the battlefield, Dajja didn't just leave the battle to run its course. Without Satan's presence, he had a feeling the underworld forces were unlikely to breach the defensive line even when they outnumbered the defenders. Hence, he tasked another high demon, who had invisibility and could draw the field teleportation rune diagram, to sneak behind the enemy's line.

Dajja told Satan this plan on their way back, to which Satan scoffed. Satan didn't see the need to use such a tactic to win against the enemies. He wanted to continue to slowly enjoy crushing these ants who had so brazenly obstructed their advance.

However, when they returned and saw the battlefield from the distance, they saw how things had turned around in their absence. Satan still thought things would change once he joined the battlefield, but Dajja persuaded him again to use the prepared field teleportation rune diagram. Satan finally relented. He never cared for any counsel except if it was from Dajja. This eyeball demon had followed him long enough and had proven himself to be a worthy advisor.

Teleporting behind the enemy's line, Satan didn't waste any time to wreak havoc. He stormed from behind and destroyed a part of the wall using an explosive attack before casting Infernal Flame Wrath, which rained numerous fireballs onto a large area. A large portion of the siege weapons were devastated by this spell. The walls were also in shambles. Many defenders who stayed behind were killed.

The defenders who pushed the advantage were surprised the enemy's head honcho ambushed them from behind. This caused their charge to pause. The demons, on the other hand, were riled up seeing Satan was back. Combined with the pause of the defenders, they hit back ferociously.

Satan's ambush had been very fast. It was too late for Linda to react after noticing his arrival. In the war table's projection, Satan's dot suddenly appeared behind them and moved at extreme speed. There was no time to adjust the army's formation.

Linda gritted her teeth. A lot of field facilities were back there. These temporary facilities housed rations, equipment, potions, and other supplies. Healers and non-combat personnel who took care of these supplies were also there. They didn't have the time to move the supplies or to evacuate from the ambush. Losing these personnel and supplies was a big blow to the defenders.

Satan didn't let up. He continued to wreak havoc.

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"Uh... Jack. You said to let you know when Satan appears," Tip sent Jack a message in the party chat.

"I can see him, all right," Jack replied with annoyance. "How did he get behind us like that?"

"Um... We have no idea," Tip replied.

"We have to stop him!" Linda said in the chat. "I will move the army back."

"No. This is the best setup," Jack said.

"What setup?" Linda asked, confused.

"We need to separate him from his troops. He has done it himself. Now, I just need to defeat him while you all stop the demons from aiding him."

Linda was baffled for a moment. She then said, "Just have to defeat him? Jack, I've heard about your confidence. I just never thought it to be... so out-of-the-world."

"Have faith in me. Organize our army to hold the rest of the demons from interfering," Jack said. He called Tetsuo to follow him. He commanded the rest of his royal agents to work with the army to obstruct the demons.

He flew to the defensive walls. Tetsuo, Tetsuo's battle mantis, Therras, and Spark followed him. Tetsuo and the battle mantis were inherently fast. Therras had high speed due to his armor. Spark caught up with everyone by transforming into a slim blade shaped like a plane. This transformation was not a skill but Spark's second form. It had no cooldown or duration. He lost maneuverability in this form but gained faster movement speed.

While Linda reluctantly carried out Jack's order to leave Satan to him, not everyone in the defending force fell under her command. One in particular rushed toward Satan once the devil showed himself. This person was Honuren. Mid-way, lightning erupted from inside him and formed a titanic suit. A few members of the Council of Elpo followed him.

Honuren reached Satan before Jack because his position was closer. His lightning titan suit sent a charging punch at Satan, which Satan stopped using an open palm. Satan skidded back a distance due to the charging force.

"Harhar. I see you haven't learned your lesson," Satan laughed. He retaliated with a punch, which conjured a gigantic flaming fist. This fist was the size of Honuren's lightning titan suit. The resulting impact sent Honuren crashing into the defensive wall. The wall crumbled from the impact.

The other members of the Council of Elpo attacked Daja and a few high-level demons. These demons came with Satan via the field teleportation rune diagram. The rule of using that rune diagram was the same as the settlement's zone portal. They needed to pay coins or mana cores to use it. Hence, they couldn't bring too many demons. However, all the demons they brought were above level 90 and had either mythical or eternal grades.

From the first clash, it was apparent members of the Council of Elpo were at a disadvantage.

Satan didn't bother pressing on Honuren. He intentionally waited for Honuren to call more of his members over. Meanwhile, he continued casting spells and destroying more of the surrounding defensive facilities.

Honuren was about to charge back at Satan when he heard a mana-empowered voice.

"Satan...!!! I'm your opponent! Do you dare to duel me?!"

"Hm..." Satan turned to Jack. "You are an outworlder, aren't you? I did hear outworlders have a reputation for being a bunch of people who are rarely serious and often joke around as if everything is a game to them. Well, considering you are immortal, I can understand why you rarely take things seriously. However, there is a limit to a joke. This one is way out of line."

17:25

Everyone there had at least mythical grades and thus could sense mana. While they were surprised by how profound the mana carried by the voice was, they were more baffled by the message it conveyed. Out of everyone there, Satan was the one who believed the most that he had heard wrong.

They watched the one who had uttered the declaration fly over at high speed. That person was a small humanoid in dragon form. Following behind this humanoid dragon was a group of unusual-looking creatures.

Jack, in his supreme dragon form, stopped in front of Satan. The battle at that place stopped due to his declaration and arrival.

"Do you accept?" Jack asked Satan.

Satan turned to Dajja, "Did he just propose to duel me?"

"He did, my lord," Dajja replied.

"Really...? Perhaps you've heard wrong. Your ears aren't as good as your eye, aren't they?"

"I am not going to answer that question, my lord."

"Hm..." Satan turned to Jack. "You are an outworlder, aren't you? I did hear outworlders have a reputation for being a bunch of people who are rarely serious and often joke around as if everything is a game to them. Well, considering you are immortal, I can understand why you rarely take things seriously. However, there is a limit to a joke. This one is way out of line."

"I ain't joking," Jack said.

"... Now, that's a joke! Harharhar! A good one! Harharhar...!" Satan held his belly and laughed uncontrollably. The ground shook following his laugh.

Everyone stood in silence as Satan laughed. It was a while before the devil finally stopped laughing.

"... Harhar... I haven't laughed like this for some time," Satan said. "I want to spare you in exchange for this good joke, but, you know, I have to set an example."

A flaming hand materialized abruptly in front of Jack. The flaming hand made a motion of flicking Jack. But when the flaming finger swung at Jack, Jack vanished.

Jack reappeared right beside Satan's head. Jack's dragon claw swung using Flame Strike. The flame strike was the condensed version. The strike collided with Satan's face, causing a fiery explosion. Satan's face turned to the other side from the blow.

Jack didn't continue attacking. He just floated there after executing the Teleport Slash. Everyone else also didn't move a finger.

Satan slowly turned back to Jack. Satan smiled and said, "I accept your challenge."

1927 Chapter 1927. First Strike

Jack pointed at a location away from there. "Too many people here. Let's go there. We will have our duel there."

Satan turned in the direction Jack pointed at. It was the East. "I don't see the point, but all right."

Jack and Satan flew away. The others continued to stand there watching the two. They were unsure about what to do. Honuren was also stumped. He was debating whether he should go and help Jack. He found it hard to believe this outworlder was Satan's opponent. However, the aura Jack released when he slapped Satan was unlike any he had sensed, even among high-level natives. Perhaps Satan sensed it too. That's why the devil agreed to the challenge.

Dajja was also unsure what to think. He knew Satan enjoyed battles. Considering no one dared to challenge Satan in the underworld, this war was like a dream come true. It was not strange if Satan wanted to enjoy it for as long as possible, which included accepting a meaningless challenge from an outworlder. Still, Dajja felt uneasy. In no way did he believe the outworlder could pose any danger to Satan. Yet, the feeling was there, gnawing in his heart. He had learned a long time ago to always listen to his instincts.

Dajja was not given the chance to think for long because Tetsuo suddenly charged at him. Tetsuo used Meteor Dash. Dajja cast teleportation and vanished before Tetsuo arrived.

Tetsuo's mana sense quickly pinpointed where Dajja had teleported to. He aimed his gun and used the Gatling Gun skill.

Dajja was surprised at Tetsuo's fast action. He almost failed to erect a magic shield in time. His magic shield was reinforced by runic symbols. None of Tetsuo's bullets hit him.

Therras and Spark also took action. The battle resumed again. Members of the Council of Elpo fought the high-level demons. Honuren also acted. He went and assisted Tetsuo in fighting Dajja. Once Dajja was defeated, he would go and help Jack. He hoped Jack could last until his arrival.

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Jack glanced back at the resuming battle. Tetsuo initiated the attack under his order. He sent that royal agent a silent command via the King Badge in his inventory. He also used Elevate Beast, Gigantify Pet, and Demonize Pet to empower Therras and give it a starting advantage in the battle. With those demons occupied, they would unlikely interfere with his battle.

Satan didn't care about what was happening. He flew following Jack's lead.

They flew past the land filled with hidden traps. Jack chose East, so their battle location was further away from the underworld forces. Those demons would have to go through the defenders and these traps before arriving at his and Satan's location.

"Here is a good place to battle," Satan said and flew down.

Jack turned to the devil. Satan landed on the ground and just stood there waiting. Jack wanted to draw Satan further away from the armies, but he guessed Satan refused to play along any more than this.

Jack flew down and landed in front of Satan. The two stared at one another. One was a titan. The other was like an ant in terms of size.

"Before we begin, let me say. You are unlike what I picture," Jack said.

"How so?" Satan asked.

"I thought you would be a bit more... devilish. Yet, I get the vibe that I am fighting a principled opponent. You know, like one who values honor and fairness. Otherwise, you wouldn't have accepted my challenge."

Satan laughed. "Harhar! To be associated with honor and fairness is a first for me. I like you, outworlder. You keep on making me laugh. Anyway, I can be devilish. I simply accept your challenge because I think you might entertain me."

"I will do my best to not disappoint, then."

"You better be. Now, I have a question of my own. Are you the strongest outworlder in this world?" Satan asked.

The thought of Master flashed through Jack's mind when he heard the question, but he answered, "I am."

"Hm... There is a slight pause in your answer. Well, never mind. If there is anyone stronger, I will meet that person sooner or later."

"You keep saying as if I am sure to lose to you," Jack said.

"I don't see any other possible result," Satan returned.

Jack grinned. "In that case, shall we begin?"

"Anytime," Satan said and folded his arms.

Seeing that, Jack asked, "Ho... Are you giving me an advantage by not using your arms?"

Satan shrugged. "I'm not giving you anything. If I feel the need to use my arms, I will use them."

"Hehe," Jack grinned again. He spoke no further. His body erupted with a strong aura. He used the Strength of Hope and War God Manifestation at the same time.

Satan was taken aback by the sudden intensity of Jack's aura. He couldn't believe such a drastic augmentation of power to exist.

Satan failed to react in time despite sensing the change. This was mostly due to Jack's power-up far exceeding his expectations. Both the Strength of Hope and the War God Manifestation could be considered a buff at the level of a divine skill. Jack used both at the same time. With his already high stats, it was no wonder even a devil like Satan was caught off-guard.

Jack also activated Demonize Weapon. Since he was in beast form, the one that transformed was his claw. His right claw enlarged and was covered in metallic crimson scales. He added his weapon boost by activating Overlimit. His claw shone accompanied by black lightning sparks.

Jack blitzed to Satan's head and used Flame Strike. The same skill struck Satan for the second time at the same spot. The result couldn't be any more different. If the earliest strike was considered a slap, then this one was akin to getting whacked by a sledgehammer.

Satan's head jerked downward from the impact.

Jack didn't waste this first strike. Before Satan recovered from the shock, Jack activated Dragon Eye and cast Superior Acceleration. Under the enhanced speed, he cast Time Stop. Everything else stopped moving. Jack followed up by casting his mega spell.

The Superior Acceleration was still active when Time Stop took effect. This stretched Time Stop's 5-second duration to 100 seconds in Jack's perception. It was more than enough time for the mega spell to be completed.

The Wrath of the Ancient Dragons was unleashed. The seven elemental dragons advanced toward Satan without any obstacles. Utilizing the time stretch to full, Jack also used his rune technique and his second mega spell, Storm Wrath.

Just as Time Stop ended, Jack used Time Lock. Everything else moved again, except for Satan. He was frozen in time as Jack continued to dish out assaults. The ten golden weapons from the aureole on his back joined in on his assaults by performing Formless Flowing Sword Style. All his attacks were empowered by mana manipulation.

Jack cast Time Realm to stretch the time Satan was under Time Lock. He then used the offensive skill of the Fallen Apostle's Longsword, Scourge of Demon Swords. This skill was similar to the Realm of Sword God, which conjured a large number of swords that hit targets in a large area.

However, there was one key difference. While the Realm of Sword God was a pure AOE skill, the Scourge of Demon Swords was more flexible. When an enemy was attacked by the Realm of Sword God, he was only struck by one sword every second as long as he stayed in the same position. The demon swords from the Scourge of Demon Swords were different. They were as if sentient. If only one enemy was in their AOE, all the swords would swarm that enemy.

A hundred demon swords pierced Satan repeatedly. At exactly ten seconds after Jack used Scourge of Demon Swords, he used Demon Souls Turbulence, the offensive skill of his Fallen Apostle's Mystic Staff.

Since the duration of Scourge of Demon Swords was thirty seconds and Demon Souls Turbulence was twenty seconds, they both ended at the same time. Both skills delivered a finishing explosive blow when they ended. The one hundred demon swords crashed into each other while the demon souls converged. Both resulted in a huge explosion.

At the exact time this explosion happened, Jack fired Soul Breath, War God's Light, and Magic Bombs. Due to the Monarch Form, the soul breath of his supreme dragon form had undergone an upgrade. It was now Divine Soul Breath, the same level as Eoranth's breath attack.

These three explosive attacks synchronized with the final explosion from the skills of Fallen Apostle's weapons. This combination of assaults boosted the damage.

When the explosion receded, Satan was finally free to move again. Jack moved away. Satan looked at his body. Although Jack had stopped attacking, the effects of his rune technique and mega spells were still ongoing. The Infernal Cleansing Flame was burning Satan, as with the Storm Wrath, and the seven elemental dragons that were now ravaging from inside Satan's body.

In the previous battle, the highest damage inflicted on Satan within a short instance was from Thanael's Purifying Heavenly Decree. The true angel managed to reduce Satan's HP by almost ten percent using that skill. However, that was also because the skill caused a double effect on demons.

At this moment, Satan stared in disbelief at his HP bar, which had reduced by more than thirty percent in a bit over a minute since the battle started!

"Hehe, still find me entertaining?" Jack asked.

1928 Chapter 1928. Mano-a-mano

"Im... Impossible..."

Dajja was amidst the battle near the defensive walls but still paid attention to what happened to Satan. His superior eye gave him a very wide field of view. Not as wide as the vision of Tetsuo's Battle Mantis, but his field of view was around two-hundred-and-seventy-degrees. He could also see farther than normal. Satan and Jack fought at a location so far it was unperceivable by normal beings, but Dajja could watch their battle.

This was the first time in his life that he questioned the information his exceptional eye had acquired. He couldn't wrap his head around how the outworlder managed to reduce such a large portion of Satan's HP in such a short window. This was something unheard of, even in the underworld.

His mind was in turmoil. He had to go help his lord! His instinct was correct. There was something unusual about that outworlder.

His state of mind made him careless. He was struck by Honuren's silver lightning, which possessed the soul element. Tetsuo came punching then.

Dajja's eye flared with dark light. Tetsuo suddenly found himself shrouded by a dark blanket. He had trouble seeing and moving. He relied on his mana sense to shoot using his gun.

Dajja ignored the gunshots. He was about to leave, but a lightning cage barred his way. Honuren in his lightning titan suit approached.

"You, pests...!" Dajja cursed.

"Dajja, calm down... It's unbefitting of you to lose your cool."

"My... my lord...?" Dajja heard Satan's voice in his mind.

"Do you truly have that little faith in me?" The voice asked.

"No... I..."

"Stay out of my fight. I should be the one who loses the cool, and you are the one keeping it. Let's keep our roles like that, shall we?"

"Ye... Yes, my lord..."

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Satan was conversing telepathically with Dajja, but he didn't show it. He was observing his body, which continued to be assailed by the turbulent energies from Jack's rune technique and mega spells. Damage numbers kept popping up above his fiery halo.

"Heh..." Though Jack's feat surprised the shit out of Satan and Dajja, Jack himself found it hard to believe what he was seeing.

Any normal being assailed by either his rune technique or mega spell would have been writhing in pain, but Satan's expression showed as if they were just minor inconveniences.

When his Time Lock ended, Jack didn't stop his assaults because he wanted to. He stopped because his instinct told him to move away.

"I apologize, outworlder," Satan finally spoke. "It seems I've gravely underestimated you. What is your name?"

"... You can call me Storm Wind," Jack answered.

"Hm... I thought you outworlders had real names aside from the ones shown from Inspect. Very well, Storm Wind. I will remember your name."

Finished speaking, Satan's body shook.

He seemed to be exerting. Jack could sense Satan's mana fluctuating greatly. Then all of a sudden, the devil let out a booming roar. At the same time, the air around Satan exploded. A shockwave radiated out.

A huge damage number came up above Satan. His HP bar dropped again. It was below sixty percent now.

"What...?" While the huge damage suffered by Satan was a pleasant surprise, something else shocked Jack, not in a good way.

All the energies from Jack's rune technique and mega spells that were assailing Satan were gone. Satan and everything around him were serene.

"You... You break the spells by force?" Jack asked in disbelief.

"I am rarely forced to exert this much force," Satan replied. "Even when I fought against that so-called lord of the dragons and the leader of the strongest divine faction in this upperworld. You, Storm Wind, deserve my full attention. I'm going to enjoy this one-on-one fight."

Satan's arms were no longer folded. Runic symbols gleamed throughout his body.

Jack sighed. He had seen this when Satan fought Eoranth and Honuren. It was Satan's protective layer. It was not a skill but came from a combination of Satan's mastery over mana manipulation and understanding of rune diagrams. If Satan had applied this protective layer right from the start, Jack wouldn't have scored that huge damage from the series of assaults after his first strike.

Violent flames erupted from Satan's body. It was his buff skill, Flame Rage.

'Crap! Now he truly takes this seriously,' Jack thought.

"My turn," Satan uttered. He then charged forward.

Satan's speed was fast after the Flame Rage, but Jack was not slow either. Jack zoomed away when Satan's fiery fist came punching. Satan vanished with a burst of flames after missing the punch.

Jack activated Gold Dragon Sight. It turned out Satan had multiplied into many. Each of his fiery selves was now coming from multiple angles. All their punching fists were aimed at Jack.

'Battle Monk's Multi-sided Strikes,' Jack recognized the skill.

Jack retaliated with Hundred Shadow Strikes. His split shadows clashed with Satan's multiple images. Their rapid clashes caused tremendous explosions. At the end of these explosions, something shot out and crashed into the ground.

That something was Jack. He lost HP, but nothing serious. He was back to standing when Satan appeared above him. A fiery hammer materialized in the devil's hands. This fiery hammer came down at Jack. The force radiated from this hammer swing gave the impression that it could flatten anything it smashed.

Jack felt the suffocated pressure but did not panic. The ten golden orbs from his aureole combined into a titanic golden tower shield. This tower shield blocked the fiery hammer. The tower shield only lasted a second. It shattered and turned back into ten golden orbs. The fiery hammer continued downward.

Though the golden tower shield only gave Jack a second, it was enough. Jack cast Teleportation and disappeared from there. The fiery hammer slammed into the ground and created a huge crater.

"Your Overlimit is almost at its end!" Peniel reminded.

"I know!" Jack exclaimed.

Chris informed Jack that if the Demonize Weapon and Overlimit were activated together, a special finishing skill was available. Using this skill would end both the weapon's skills. Overlimit might be at its end, but Demonize Weapon still had around five minutes left. Jack chose to end it to see the finishing skill.

Jack sent a mental command for that finishing skill. As he did, the glow on his right claw intensified. The glow flared with the brilliance of silver and dark purple. The two colors intertwined until they formed into a rapidly spinning giant ball the size of Jack's body. Jack could sense how intense the power of this ball was.

Satan sensed where Jack had teleported to. His fiery hammer was already swinging in that direction. Jack threw the giant spinning ball in his hand to this incoming flaming hammer.

The ball and hammer collided. The force from both sides appeared stalemate for a brief period, then a clear winner was seen. The spinning ball pushed forward while eroding the fiery hammer. The hammer slowly lost shape.

Satan found it hard to believe his weapon lost to the enemy's attack. The flaming hammer transformed into a fiery buckler as the spinning ball proceeded forward.

The same thing happened. Though the flaming buckler could stop the ball, it was slowly eroded. A hole started to form where the ball touched the buckler. Satan left his flaming buckler to keep the ball anchored. He himself flew up, away from the ball's trajectory.

He realized something as he flew up. He didn't sense the outworlder anymore. While he was wondering, a strong impact struck his head from behind.

The strong impact came from a giant golden hammer. This hammer was formed from the combination of War God's ten golden orbs. The powerful impact was enough to send Satan back to the ground.

Jack placed Void Cage right where Satan fell to. A strong pull kept the devil from moving away while he was assailed by chaos damage.

By that time, the spinning ball had fully eroded the flaming buckler. Satan was a distance away, but the ball was as if alive. It turned and flew in Satan's direction.

Satan sensed the ball approaching. He couldn't dodge in time due to the gravitational pull from the Void Cage. He shoved one hand forward in the incoming ball's direction. A flame shield covered by runic symbols stopped the ball. The runic symbols flared brightly as the shield resisted the ball's erosion power.

Jack didn't stay idle. The giant golden hammer transformed into a spear. He thrust this spear down using One-word Thrust.

The spear stabbed into Satan's arm holding the flame shield. Satan lost strength on that arm, and the runic symbols faltered. The flame shield was destroyed. The spinning ball continued its advance. Satan folded his flaming wings forward to cover himself.

The spinning ball touched the wings. It abruptly expanded into titanic size. Satan was engulfed by this titanic ball. Inside this ball, Satan was assailed by rapidly spinning turbulent energies of soul and chaos.

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When the soul and chaos spinning ball dispersed, Satan was visible again. His HP was half now. The wings he had used to protect himself were no longer burning. The bones forming those wings had cracks and broke in two places.

"Impressive, Storm Wind," Satan said. He then asked, "Can you repeat all this again? You managed to bring my life to half in such a short time. If you can do it again, you will be able to defeat me."

Jack smiled wryly. He couldn't repeat the Demonize Weapon and Overlimit since those were his weapon skills, but he could repeat the series of assaults following his first strike by using Reset. However, he doubted he could land those assaults as easily. Satan underestimated him in the beginning. He had utilized that to score the combos. The situation was different now.

'Satan's defense increases as his HP lowers,' Jack received Peniel's message. This further reduced the chance of him pulling off the same feat.

"Thank you, Storm Wind," Satan said.

"... For what?" Jack asked.

"For this exciting battle."

Finished speaking, the flames on Satan's wings were rekindled. The broken bones didn't grow back, but the flames made them look as good as new.

A different flame also burned on Satan's body. These flames looked gentler than his Flame Rage. Following these flames, recovery numbers appeared above Satan. This recovery far exceeded the number from his natural HP recovery.

"Flame meditation!" Peniel exclaimed. "It's a variant from Battle Monk's Meditate. Don't let him stay still! Or all your efforts are wasted!"

"Damn it! As if this isn't difficult enough," Jack cursed and charged forward.

Satan stood his ground. He cast Fire Shell for protection. He spat fiery lances at the incoming Jack. Jack swerved to the side, evading the lances.

Satan waited until Jack was close enough before he used Infernal Fire Breath. The wide reach of the breath rendered Jack unable to dodge, but Jack had many skills at his disposal.

Jack zoomed away using Wind Dash. The three dashes of his skill brought him to Satan's back. The ten golden orbs from his back combined into a giant golden axe this time. He performed One-word Slash using that axe. The axe sliced through the fiery shell but was halted when multiple fiery rings bound it. One of these fiery rings also attempted to bind Jack, but Jack flew away before it did. Yet, before he moved far, he felt an invisible force grabbed him.

"Ugh...," He couldn't move no matter how hard he tried.

He realized then he had been caught by Satan. The devil cast Extreme Telekinesis after casting the Fire Bind. Jack's augmented power still couldn't compete with Satan in terms of raw strength. He was pulled toward Satan.

Satan never moved from his spot, so the flame meditation continued to heal him. Jack floated to him under his influence. When his hand was about to grab Jack, Jack vanished.

Jack used Void Walk to escape. He reappeared next to Satan's head and performed another Flame Strike. While he hoped the spatial distortion to disorient Satan and give him the opportunity to land a strike, it didn't go as hoped. Satan tilted his head away right when Jack reappeared. The spatial distortion failed to hit him.

Unlike before, Satan no longer underestimated Jack. He had expected Jack to have a way to flee from his Extreme Telekinesis.

Max-level Void Walk let Jack teleport five times. He could still do it another four times, so he vanished again. This time, he reappeared next to one of Satan's legs. While the devil could easily tilt his upper body, he couldn't do so with his legs unless he wanted to move and end his Flame Meditation.

Yet, before Jack could hit the leg, he sensed danger from above. He quickly warped again, just as a flaming spear came piercing where he was an instant ago. Satan had reformed his flaming weapon. His acute mana sense and fast reaction allowed him to follow Jack's Void Walk.

The spatial distortion of Void Walk might have hit Satan's leg, but the devil's stature was too big for the distortion to affect Satan as a whole being. His leg went numb from the distortion, but his hands up there were unaffected. He continued to swing his flaming weapon at Jack when he reappeared.

Due to this, Jack failed to land any hit even after expending all five teleports. To make matters worse, Satan remained at the same spot. His Flame Meditation never stopped.

"Okay, big guy. You asked for it!" Jack moved away. He then made a slashing motion.

Satan was ready to tank whatever Jack attempted to throw at him, but what he sensed made him change his mind. He ended the Flame Meditation and moved away, just as a big tear in space appeared.

The tear came from Jack's Void-tearing Slash. The tear was very large due to the skill being maxed stars. Its max stars also gave it insane pulling power. The wide area it covered caused Satan to fail to escape in time. He was at the tear's edge but was still affected. He received the chaos damage from the skill and had trouble pulling himself away.

While Satan was fighting the void's pulling power, Jack rained down ranged spells on the devil.

A ring of silver and dark purple materialized before Satan. This ring blocked all of Jack's spells. Jack remembered seeing this ring when he watched the war from Chris' spy tool. This seemed to be Satan's ultimate defense skill. He had been wondering why the devil didn't use this ring to block the Soul and Chaos Spinning Ball earlier. Probably, he finally pushed the devil enough to force him to go all out.

It was the time when he fought against Master. When both Master and he were using the divine forms of their divine skills. Master was in Wind God Incarnation at the time. Similar to the Lightning God Incarnation, the Wind God Incarnation had a finishing blow where the user released an explosive power that hit everything within the vicinity. But instead of that standard form, Master's finishing attack was altered to a beam attack. This was the same as Satan's current move.

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After stopping Jack's spells, Satan shoved the Soul and Chaos Ring of Defense into the void that was still pulling at him. As he did, Jack witnessed something that made his eyes go wide. The ring sliced through and cut the void. A clear line appeared in the middle of the void. The spatial distortion went rogue, and the chaotic energies of the void collapsed on itself. The skill was ended before its full duration.

"That defensive ring can be used for offense as well...?" Jack muttered.

"I'm enjoying this, but you are getting on my nerves, Storm Wind," Satan said. His body changed color. One half was silver, and the other was dark purple. "Sorry, but I'm ending this. Begone!"

Satan brought his two hands together.

"Do you want Invulnerability?!" Peniel asked in a hurry.

"No need!" Jack exclaimed.

A massive beam of silver and dark purple poured out of Satan's hands. This was not the Soul and Chaos Chain Reaction, but the Soul and Chaos Extinguishing Cannon with higher firepower. Jack was too small. The wide area of this skill rendered Jack unable to dodge. Even if he used a fast-moving skill, Satan could easily redirect the beam to chase after Jack.

While the Soul and Chaos Chain Reaction's destructive energy hit instantly, the Soul and Chaos Extinguishing Cannon lasted quite a while. That's why Satan chose this version of the skill. He intended to finish Jack with this one hit. He didn't believe an outworlder with limited HP could survive against this skill.

Ever since witnessing this skill from Chris' spy tool, Jack had thought about what to do if he was at the receiving end. He had a couple of skills he could use. One was the Ghost Form, but he was not using that spell.

The silver and dark purple beam washed over Jack. Jack just stayed there as he watched the energies pass him by. He could sense how destructive these energies were. Even with his high HP and using all available defensive buffs, he still wouldn't survive getting hit by these energies.

Fortunately, none of these destructive energies touched him. The one that rushed at him from the front continued charging at him, but they never arrived. This was because there was a vast distance of stretched space between him and the beam. A space distorted by the Void Defense skill.

"Do you think this beam lasts longer than thirty seconds?" Jack asked Peniel.

"It didn't seem to last that long when he used it against Eoranth," Peniel answered.

Jack had also witnessed the incident Peniel mentioned. He didn't think what he saw then to be absolute. There was a chance Satan simply stopped the beam because Eoranth had been pushed outside the beam's effective range.

One thing piqued his curiosity after experiencing this skill at close range. This Soul and Chaos Extinguishing Cannon was a result of form manipulation. He could sense the mana molding this skill. This took him back to something from the past. He had seen the exact same Form Manipulation before.

It was the time when he fought against Master. When both Master and he were using the divine forms of their divine skills. Master was in Wind God Incarnation at the time. Similar to the Lightning God Incarnation, the Wind God Incarnation had a finishing blow where the user released an explosive power that hit everything within the vicinity. But instead of that standard form, Master's finishing attack was altered to a beam attack. This was the same as Satan's current move.

This made Jack wonder. Did Master already learn Form Manipulation, then?

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'That doesn't need to be the case,' Jack thought.

Master might have exhibited an ability similar to form manipulation, but he hadn't heard about Master exhibiting a similar ability outside of that one time. He remembered when he was under the effect of Lightning God Incarnation, everything felt slightly different. It was not as profound as when he was under Mana Awakening, but close. Probably this special condition let one exhibit an ability one couldn't have pulled off under a normal situation.

He thought about when he altered the finishing blow of Lightning God Incarnation. He didn't alter its form as Master did. What he did was simply suppress the accumulated energy from being released and focused those constrained energy into his fist to deliver one powerful punch. It was not fully a form manipulation but was still an alteration. Perhaps at that time, he had already touched the realm of form manipulation without realizing it.

Nevertheless, the same concern lingered. This proved Master's advancement in mana manipulation was better than him. Even if Master did it unconsciously, he could already perform Form Manipulation while under the divine form when Jack still couldn't.

"Hey, do you plan to find out how long Satan can maintain this beam?" Peniel asked.

"Not really," Jack answered. "Let's go."

Jack moved forward. He advanced normally through the powerful pushing force of the Soul and Chaos Extinguishing Cannon. The pushing force from the beam couldn't reach him because the distorted space was too vast. The destructive beam might as well be in another country than where Jack was.

*

'Did he die?' Satan thought.

He no longer sensed Jack's presence once Jack was engulfed by the Soul and Chaos Extinguishing Cannon. The plausible explanation was Jack vaporized from the intense power of the beam. If that was true, then he was disappointed at this outworlder. He expected Jack to be more resistant. Not die from this one hit.

Then again, he remembered when he couldn't sense Jack's presence earlier. When Jack smacked his head from behind using the giant golden hammer. The golden weapon, now an axe, was still floating nearby. It was held in stasis by his fire bind.

Seeing that gold axe, he thought, 'If Storm Wind dies, shouldn't that axe disappear?'

Something burst out between his hands, which was still firing the silver and dark purple beam. He turned to see Jack's draconic face grinning at him, right before Jack's claw slammed into his face. He jerked backward. His concentration was disrupted. The Soul and Chaos Extinguishing Cannon ended.

Jack pressed on his assault by activating Soul Asura. His two claws executed Penta Slash, while his four extra arms used Formless Flowing Sword Style. Jack's boosted speed let him land many slashes before Satan could retaliate.

Satan opened his mouth and roared. The roar created an explosive shockwave. Being so close, Jack felt like he was blasted by a cannon. His assault stopped.

When Jack paused, Satan's eyes flared. Two flaming beams shot out from those eyes. Jack was too close to dodge. He was also stunned by the roar just now. The flaming beams smashed into him, and he crashed hard into the ground.

Jack quickly rose again. A layer of golden suit covered his body. That was War God's Suit. Though he couldn't dodge, he could still activate this defensive skill to reduce the damage he received.

"You can erase your presence?" Satan asked. He massaged his face. There were thin marks where Jack's Penta Slash had hit. Jack used form manipulation to make the Penta Slash sharper. Still, they couldn't pierce Satan's skin. They only left slight markings.

"... Maybe," Jack answered.

"Hehe," Satan simply chuckled at Jack's vague answer.

"Hehe," Jack chuckled back. He might be chuckling, but he was wary. Satan's HP was almost back to sixty percent, courtesy of his high HP recovery and the Flame Meditation. With the runic layer protecting the devil, Jack couldn't deal meaningful damage. He was also running out of big skills.

The gentle flames of the Flame meditation were burning again on Satan's body. Like Battle Monk's Meditate, its cooldown was only a short one minute.

"Damn it! You won't let me relax, will you?" Jack cursed and rushed forward.

But as soon as Jack charged forward, Satan also lunged. His flames changed color as he lunged. Half became silver, and the other half dark purple.

'Soul and Chaos Peak Flames...!' Jack exclaimed when he saw the transformation.

Both of them were charging at one another, and the transformation gave Satan a boost of speed. By the time Jack registered the transformation, Satan's fist was already next to him.

"Fuc—!"

Jack didn't complete his curse because he was already swept by Satan's flaming fist. He lost significant HP when the punch touched him. Thanks to his Ring of Dark Abyss, this punch didn't take out more than half his life. The excess damage was reflected at Satan, but the devil didn't seem to care.

Jack was stuck on Satan's fist. The punch was simply too swift. He saw the ground approaching fast from behind. Satan wanted to flatten him into the ground. He didn't have time to cast any spell. Luckily, Teleport Slash was off-cooldown.

Teleport Slash brought him to a target within range. In this case, Satan. Hence, he reappeared next to the devil. He hurriedly used War God's Recovery to heal himself before delivering his slash. But before his slash hit, he was again swept by another fist.

'How did he detect my position?!" Jack thought. He was using mana concealment.

Satan didn't use mana sense to detect Jack's position. He was using his eyes. After activating Soul and Chaos Peak Flames, his perception also improved significantly. He saw and reacted the instant Jack reappeared after Teleport Slash.

Similar to the first punch, Jack couldn't escape getting stuck on Satan's fist. Jack used Gold Dragon Scale just before Satan's fist slammed him into the ground. A silver explosion detonated at the point of impact.

Satan lifted his fist. Jack was buried deep in a crater. His HP was near death, even with all his buffs. Jack used Gold Dragon Vitality. His HP was fully refilled, and his max HP doubled.

Satan's fist came down again. This time, Jack was ready. He was already casting when he hit the ground. He cast Ghost Form and turned into a smoke. Satan punched at him multiple times without success. Jack flew away while in smoke form.

Seeing that he couldn't hit his opponent. Satan stopped trying. He stood still and waited.

Jack noticed something then. Even though the Flame Meditation was still on cooldown, Satan's HP recovery when he was not moving was still higher than his natural recovery rate. This meant Satan had an inherent recovery boost when he stayed still.

Jack sighed and ended his Ghost Form.