

## World 471

### Chapter 471: Red Death's Warning

"Okay. I don't mind you joining, but if you join, you should at least spend your time providing exotic goods for the guild as well. I will make sure that you don't have the obligation to do guild tasks, but you should be willing to help the guild with your expertise. You can still of course do your own business along the way, like providing wares for Ellie's restaurant here," Jack said. After all, the restaurant was still his. He couldn't let such a good ingredient procurer neglect his restaurant after joining his guild.

"All right, should be no problem as long as the task is to look for goods," Dylan said. "But why did you say it as if you can make the decision? Shouldn't you discuss this with your guild leader first?"

"Hehe, kid. I am one of the guild leaders," Jack said with a proud expression.

"What? For real? You completely don't look like a guild leader material. I'm now having a second thought. Are you sure that guild of yours is anything good?"

'Ugh,' Jack was repressing his indignation. Peniel was on his shoulder trying to stifle laughter.

"How dare you say my guild is nothing good! Do you know that my guild is currently the number one on the guild chart?"

"Number one? Hey, don't tell me your guild is Everlasting Heavenly Legends?" Dylan said with surprise.

"Oh, so you do know. And here I thought you don't care about guild stuff."

"I keep the top ones in mind because you never know if you will do business with any of them. Are you sure you are from that guild? Not to mention even the leader?"

"Bloody hell. Don't make me smack you and drag you to the headquarters to show you that I'm boss there."

"I'm not debating with you. Send me a guild invite if you want to prove it," Dylan said.

"What the shit! You still don't believe me? Fine!" Jack opened his guild interface and sent Dylan an invite.

Dylan received the invite, he then opened it. He appeared to be concentrating, as if scrutinizing something.

"Do you need that long to read the invite?" Jack asked.

"I'm making sure the guild name is the legitimate one. Do you know that email scam where they change one letter on the email address to make it look as if it is an email from someone in your contacts? Only to find out later that it is a scam. I'm making sure that this is not the case."

'Motherf\*cker...' Jack cursed in his mind.

"I will be damned! It truly is that number one guild on the chart... Are you truly the leader?" Dylan asked again.

"If you doubt me one more time, I will reject you from joining the guild," Jack declared.

"Oh, great leader. Please don't be offended. Your humble member apologized."

"That's more like it," Jack said. "Now, once you accept the invitation, you can use the zone portal to teleport to Heavenly Citadel, that's the name of our Guild Headquarters by the way. Once there, send a message to Jeanny, she will take care of you. The teleport option to Larabar is limited, I will send her a message to set it so you have access to that city."

"Excellent! I'll head over right away!" Dylan rose and shook Jack's hand. Jack found it strange to have this boy acting so friendly after all this time pretending to be cool. "I always thought that befriending you is a waste of time, one of the less likely people that I will find valuable, that you are just a simple brute, but it turns out that you are pretty useful after all."

He then bolted out the door. Jack was still arguing with himself if he should scold the boy for what he said just now. He heard a giggle from his side, he turned and saw Ellie standing up. She said, "it seemed that he got you this time."

Jack didn't think about it too much. He sent a message to Jeanny to treat Dylan as one of the core members as well. She was questioning this new member at first because she could see from the guild page that Dylan was just a level 19 Ranger, but Jack gave her a short introduction about Dylan. He informed him to utilize his position as a member of the Trade Associations and that he was very good at sourcing things.

Life Runner might be good as their connection in Larabar, but he was no trader. With Dylan accessing Larabar, he might even gain access to the other cities in Verremor. That meant they could get more exotic materials and ingredients unavailable in Themisphere.

"There is another advantage by getting him into a member, you know?" Peniel said.

"Oh? What is it?" Jack asked.

"Every trade goods sold by a guild member will have 2% of the profit automatically given to the guild."

"Trade goods? That's the goods that Dylan mentioned can't be stored into player's storage bag and has to be transported using caravans, right?"

"Yes. He was right about cross-countries trade goods, they were extremely profitable. Just by having him focus on doing trades, your guild can get a steady supply of gold coins."

Jack immediately relay this information to Jeanny. He also reminded her to persuade Dylan if he could get more players from the Trades Association to join their guild. The more members who did trade goods, the more coins they would get from the profit shares.

Jack spent a little more time chatting with Ellie and Bill. Ellie gave him more Well-Done Steak. Dylan had delivered more ingredients required to cook this food that Ellie also had spare to sell to the public. It was a big hit for the players. Since there wasn't any problem with the restaurant, Jack left them to proceed as usual.

He then went to take his share of the restaurant's profit. It's a four-week accumulation. Although he had expected it to be substantial, the amount still made him take a deep breath. 141 gold coins were

transferred into his bag. At this rate, in another four months, he should be able to make the final upgrade to this restaurant. That, of course, considering if he didn't spend the coins, which was most unlikely.

After finishing with the restaurant, he went next door to Amy's Bakery. Amy and Samantha were also busy, despite having more staff to help them. Business had also picked up greatly after the second upgrade. But because this was a native shop, it didn't have the same improvement on recipe variations as Ellie's restaurant. Still, Samantha was a great cook from the start, so her cakes and bread were still sought after.

When Amy saw Jack, she just left a customer behind and came at him. Samantha shook her head as she took over in serving the customer.

"Hey, you know I'm considered a partner of this shop, right? I can complain about you treating a customer badly," Jack said as she approached.

"Go ahead," she said with a smile. She proceeded to bombard him with questions about where he had been these many weeks. She also complained that he never spent time with them anymore. Jack felt bad hearing it. He was originally planning to immediately depart after his Archmage trial. But with Amy's pleading look, he promised he would spend tonight staying with them.

Amy was elated hearing it. She said she looked forward to hearing about all his adventures tonight. Jack left them to deal with customers as he went to check on the bakery's profit. It was less than the restaurant but still impressive. He collected 92 gold coins as his share.

He felt very rich again now. With a smile, he walked out of the bakery.

"Jack," he heard a woman's voice calling his real name.

He turned while wondering how fast the news about his real name had traveled. Even someone outside the guild had known already.

Jack saw Red Death as she stood beside the bakery.

"How do you know I'm here?" Jack asked.

"Please, you are our number one enemy. Our member had broadcast your presence once you stepped into this city."

"I see... So, are you really Cleo?" Jack asked. Domon had informed him about Red Death's infiltration during yesterday's battle and about her real identity.

Red Death didn't answer.

"This is truly unexpected," Jack said. "That tomboy from before has turned into such a stunning and beautiful woman. Deadly, of course, but still, you look great."

Some redness seemed to appear on Red Death's cheeks, but Jack thought it must be just an illusion.

"I see you are still as casual as before. Should have realized it was you."

"No way. We are still kids not even ten when we last saw each other. It's natural that we don't recognize one another."

The two stood there for a while. Jack began to feel awkward. He asked, "Are you looking for me for any particular reason?"

"I want to tell you, despite our past, we are still enemies."

"Okay."

Jack felt like he heard Red Death grinding his teeth. Must be his imagination, he thought.

Red Death turned around, but she didn't leave. She said, "Be careful, Death Associates is sending a specialized team to hunt you down. This team is led by one of our top members named Yellow Death."

"Is this Yellow Death more skillful than you?" Jack asked.

"No," Red Death replied.

"Then I have nothing to worry about."

"Suit yourself," Red Death said and then started walking away.

"Thanks for your warning," Jack called out.

Red Death paused for a second before resuming her walk.

## **Chapter 472: Archmage Trial**

Jack asked the natives for direction to the Archmage Academy and went directly there. It was nearby the dilapidated hut which was the entrance to the Order of Magi.

"Let me guess, the Archmage Academy was overseen by the Order of Magi faction?" Jack asked Peniel.

"Yes. Just like how League of Champions is in charge of all the four academies branching out of the Warrior class."

"Wow. So, you do get me to join the top-tier factions of both my classes."

"You don't say."

Jack observed the building in front of him. At least it was not another dilapidated hut. The building size was still small though, unlike what you would have expected as a place that could hold many people or as a venue of a test. Heck, the Mage Academy was much larger than this. But he had learned from entering the Order of Magi that space physics didn't matter to these mystic people.

The building, though small, was mystifying. It had an irregular shape with a floating roof that defied the law of physics. The surface of the wall itself seemed to be constantly shifting. He could not get a clear grasp of what type of material was used. Sometimes it looked like woods, another time concrete, then it appeared as metallic, then glass, then brick, and so on. Jack decided to just not look at it after a while.

Jack walked towards what he thought was a door at first, only to find out it was an opening on the wall, with nothing to see from the other side.

"Well, whatever," Jack said and then stepped into that opening. He came out into an empty round space with nothing but beige color. 'Hey, isn't this...'

"Ah, mister Storm Wind, welcome!"

Jack turned around and saw Janus. 'Man, is this guy everywhere?'

"Um... I'm here to take the Archmage trial. Do I have to transform myself into a mage first?" Since Janus had known about his two identities, he just asked him directly from the get-go.

Janus chuckled. "It's ok. You can take the test as you are now."

He made a wave and a golden portal appeared in the middle of the room. "Just go in whenever you are ready."

"Am I only allowed to use Mage's spells in the test?" Jack asked, remembering the Order of Magi's challenge spaces.

"Do you expect you will be having a battle for the test?" Janus asked back.

"Uh, yeah..."

Janus simply smiled. Jack remembered again that the Mage class trial didn't involve any fighting. So, this Archmage trial could probably be the same. Anyway, one way to find out.

He was just about to enter the golden portal when he stopped and asked Janus, "I'm just curious. Are you also watching the entrance to the other trial academies? The Elementalist, Summoner, and Warlock?"

"You can go there and see for yourselves if you want to know," Janus replied with a smile.

'I don't have that much free time,' Jack said in his mind.

He was about to step into the golden portal but it was Janus that stopped him this time. "Wait! No helper," Janus said as he created a bubble of air that trapped Peniel in place.

"Hey!" Peniel protested.

"There is no need for that, you know. She never really try to help me with a test. She likes to see me struggle," Jack said.

"Hey!" Peniel yelled again.

Jack then entered the golden portal. He came out inside another spherical space. Smaller, but didn't appear as empty as the beige space he came from. The spherical wall of the space was full of drawings, or runes to be exact. A series of runes with a multitude of lines connecting each other. It looked very much like a haphazard of multiple rune diagrams laid on top of each other.

Jack looked around. There was nothing else. He figured these runes on the wall should be the test material. He studied them. This series of runes were like a puzzle. It could be moved around and set into

different positions to form a proper rune diagram. He of course did not know how any of these rune diagrams was supposed to look like in their final setup. The clue was on the multiple connection lines which the runes could be moved around.

He also found out that to move the runes, he needed to activate them by forming the runes imitating the drawings, just like how he draw the runes for his spell formation. Some runes could only be moved if he activated and moved other runes at the same time.

They were like a more chaotic version of what he did with the diagram that imprisoned Pandora.

After studying them for a while, he smiled. Under normal circumstances, he would need lots of time for trial and error to get to the right diagram. He would also be struggling to control multiple runes at the same time. But with Hundred Synchronous Thoughts, this problem was alleviated.

He also had no problem knowing which path and position the rune should be placed on. That's because he already had the ability to sense mana. It was clear as day to him.

"This is... a piece of cake," he said.

Janus and Peniel were chatting as they waited for Jack. He still didn't let her out of the bubble, though. Peniel was complaining about it all through their chat, but the purple-haired mage just laughed her off.

The golden portal had disappeared when Jack stepped into it. Now, it suddenly appeared again. The bubble that trapped Peniel burst with the reappearance of the golden portal.

"Oh? So fast?" Janus said with surprise.

Jack came out of the golden portal soon. Though Jack looked the same, Janus felt the change inside Jack.

"I must say, I'm rather astonished to see you clear the trial this fast," Janus said.

"Hehe. It's a walk in the park," Jack said proudly.

"Really? Hm... I guess I should increase the difficulty."

"Eh? No, no. Don't do that. This difficulty is fine already. This test simply suits me. It is by no means easy," Jack said. He was not selfish enough to cause others to be unable to pass the Archmage trial.

"Well, anyway. Congratulations on becoming an Archmage class," Janus congratulated. "You won't regret this class."

"I hope so, but I have a question," Jack said.

"Shoot," Janus said.

"I got this Call Familiar spell for passing the trial on the first try, but when I try to cast the spell, nothing happens."

"Ah... That's because you have to get a familiar first," Janus replied.

"Where can I get one?" Jack asked.

"The Mage academy where you took your previous class trial has the facility. They have a decent selection there. You can go there and buy one, then use the magic furnace there to make a contract to bind with the familiar."

"There is a selection?"

"Yes, there are different types of critter that you can bind a contract with to become your familiar. The most common ones are imps, sprites, pixies. These are all available in the Mage Academy."

"Well, then while you are at it. How about you give me tips on which familiar I should choose?"

"That will depend on your preference. Do you want a boost in your offense, defense, healing, movement, or such? Speaking of which, you already have the perfect material for a familiar."

"I did?" Jack asked with a confused expression.

"Yeah." Janus turned to Peniel. "I wonder why you didn't tell him?"

"Tell me?" Jack turned to Peniel as well.

Peniel was silent as she was being stared at by the two men. After a while, Janus showed an expression as if he realized something and said. "I'm sorry. Perhaps you are unwilling. Forget I ever said anything."

Jack also seemed to realize. He turned back to Janus and asked, "which familiar can help with healing that is available inside the Mage Academy?"

"If you are talking about healing then the best is...", Janus had instinctively turned to Peniel as he was saying. He stopped and then continued, "pixie! You can buy a pixie and bind with it."

"I see, after that, I can summon it when I fight?"

"A familiar is not something that has a duration. Once you bind with it, it will follow you constantly, like..." Janus had turned to Peniel again. He hurriedly forced himself back again. "Like a small companion," he continued.

Jack nodded.

"Don't treat it like an Archer's pet, though. A familiar does not have any standard attacking capabilities, except if it possesses offensive skills. It mostly just provides buff while it stays by your side. It has one innate skill at your spell's starting level. Every five-level increase of your spell level will provide your familiar with additional skills."

"So, at max level, my familiar will have five skills at its disposal," Jack said.

"Well, ain't you good at counting," Janus mocked.

"As pleasant as I am in chatting with you, I will take my leave now."

"See you again then."

"Okay, see you when I visit the Order of Magi again."

Janus shrugged, "Hm... perhaps sooner."

## Chapter 473: Familiar Contract

When Jack became an Archmage, he received several inherent skills, same as when he became the Blade Dancer. These inherent skills were a 10% increase in his Intelligence and Mana recovery. The range of all his Magician and Mage's spells is boosted by additional 20 meters, and all elemental resistances are increased by 5%.

For the spells, apart from Call Familiar, he received another spell which was the standard spell acquired when someone became an Archmage. The spell was called Mana Beam. It was an offensive spell that shot an energy beam that traveled in a linear line. At level 1 it dealt 300% magical damage to all within its path. The spell's range was 50 meters with a 1-minute cooldown.

After he became an Archmage, he set his exp setting back to 50:50. So both his Blade Dancer and Archmage class received an equal amount of exp points.

At this time when he was heading to the Mage Academy, Peniel was awfully quiet along the way. Jack didn't bother her.

"It's not that I'm not willing," Peniel suddenly said. "I..."

"No need to say anything," Jack cut her. He smiled at her. "You are already extremely helpful the way you are. There is no need for you to do anything more. I'm happy as it is. I believe I will get a better familiar."

"Oh? So you think there is one better than me?"

"Uh, I mean, I will get a great familiar second to you. There is no need for you to worry about it. I don't like to force people into doing something they don't want to. I believe you have your reason and it's fine by me, either way. So, don't worry. I'm cool. I truly am."

After that, the journey continued again in awkward silence.

Jack felt weird with the silence. He was just about to randomly say something when Peniel beat him to it, "all right, I will be your familiar."

The statement was rather unexpected so Jack just watched her with a weird expression. When he managed to make sense of what she had just said, he soon replied, "no, no, I don't accept. Janus mentioned the familiar having HP, which means if you become one, you can be attacked. I cannot accept the risk of you dying."

"A Familiar has HP and yes, can be attacked. But it didn't die for real like archer's pets. If familiars run out of HP during combat, they will simply phase out. Similar to me hiding in my hidden dimension. After some time has passed, you can call the same familiar out again. So there is no worry of losing a familiar. You will only lose a familiar if you decide to replace it with another one."

"Oh... Then why did you hesitate about becoming one just now?"

"Becoming someone's familiar is not something simple. It means you are bound with that person. It is not something to be taken lightly."



"I am confused. Aren't we already bound by such a thing?"

"What we have now is the Goddess' order, I have no say in it. If I sign a familiar contract with you. It will be a deliberate action. Being bound to someone out of our own free will is something of huge importance to us high fairies."

"Hm... so it's more like a customary kind of thing. Why get so tie-up with tradition? It's not as if we are having a marriage or something."

"Moron!" Peniel scolded as she stormed off.

"Hey, hey! Did I say something wrong?" Jack called as he chased after her.

Peniel remained quiet as they arrived at the Mage Academy. Jack didn't know what to say. If he said something, he was afraid that he would just annoy her again, so he also kept quiet. 'Understanding a woman is never really my forte,' Jack lamented inside.

When Jack entered the Mage Academy. It was the same as he came the first time. There was no one except for a single old mage reading a tome by the bookshelves. Jack was sure now he must have entered a separate dimension. There had been lots of players who became Mage class, no way no one else was here whenever he came in.

Jack came to the old mage, "Sir, I'm told that I can use the magic furnace here to bind a contract with a familiar. I like to ask for permission to use it."

The old mage looked at him before gesturing for Jack to follow him. "Come. Take you to choose familiars."

"Wait!" Jack called out. "I already have a candidate. I just need the magic furnace to proceed with the contract."

The old mage turned back. Jack turned to Peniel and asked, "you are still okay becoming my familiar, right?"

"Whatever, let's just go through with it," Peniel replied.

"Hm? Thought you were unwilling?" The old mage asked.

Jack was slightly confused by the old mage's response. How did he know about Peniel's reluctance to be his familiar before? He also felt something familiar about this old mage. Of course, he had met this mage before, but that was not the reason he felt the familiarity. As he paid attention, he noticed several unique characteristics. Neatly combed long white hair but there were traces of purple in it, a face that was sure to be handsome during his young age. This old mage terribly reminded him of someone he just met not long ago. Jack used Inspect on the old mage.

He had tried to inspect this old mage before, but he failed to gain any info. It was the same this time. Since his Inspect was not working, he decided to just use an old-fashioned information-gathering tool.

"Uh, um... Are you somehow related to the Janus that was watching over the Order of Magi?" Jack asked. "Are you his dad probably?"

"Not dad," the old mage replied. "Same. Only older."

Same person? Jack was both surprised and also kind of expected this answer at the same time. That young Janus had multiple copies everywhere. So having another copy here was not that far-fetched. But apart from the age, their personalities were also very different. The young one was very chatty, this one liked to use a minimal number of words in a sentence.

"Um, if you don't mind me asking, how many of you are there?" Jack asked.

"Many."

Damn! Perhaps he should just reserve his questions for the young chatty Janus the next time they met again. But Jack still asked one more question as he could not hold his curiosity, "Which one of you is the original Janus?"

"You not meet, yet. Leader," old Janus answered. "Come."

'Leader? Did he mean the leader of the academy or leader of Order of Magi?' Jack wondered. But he didn't ponder about it long since the old Janus was already on his way. Jack chased after him.

The old Janus took him to the basement where he last came to make use of the Orb of Disguise.

"Have magic stone?" Old Janus asked.

"I have," Jack said as he fished out an uncommon magic stone.

Old Janus shook his head. "Needs rare magic stone for Familiar contract."

Jack took out another magic stone which was of rare grade. He had bought several for stock. Although it was classified as a rare grade, these rare grade magic stones were abundantly sold in the shops. They were ammo-refill for magic-user's weapons, after all.

Old Janus nodded. He then left, leaving Jack with Peniel to work out the magic furnace themselves.

'Definitely different from the young one,' Jack thought. The young one would have stayed and accompanied him through the process.

Jack didn't mind though, he had Peniel to guide him. He approached the Magic Furnace. "How do I do this?" Jack asked her.

"You don't need to do anything. Just put in the magic stone. I will work on the magic furnace. Afterward, you just establish a link with it as you did with the Container of Souls or the Lightning God Sphere."

Jack interfaced with the magic furnace and then inserted the magic stone. He then stepped back as Peniel took over. Several runes appeared around Peniel and the magic furnace. They spun around and enveloped her. Soon Jack received the notification asking him if he wished to enact a familiar contract with Peniel.

Jack agreed. He felt a prickling sensation within him for a brief instant. He then heard a notification congratulating him to have successfully bound with a familiar. He didn't feel any different but he noticed there was now an HP bar above Peniel when she flew back to him. Jack used Inspect on her.

Peniel (Mythical Familiar, High Fairy), level: 32

HP: 1,025

"Good heaven! You are a Mythical grade!" Jack exclaimed.

"Hmph! Are you impressed now?" Peniel gave Jack a proud expression. "Do know that I'm not just any High Fairy. Normal High Fairy is only a Rare Elite grade. The Fountain of Knowledge given by the creator is what elevated my grade. However, I don't have any battle capacity despite being a mythical."

"Ah, no wonder. Your HP is too low for a Mythical grade," Jack added with a disappointed expression.

"That's because a Familiar HP is always tied to the one she is bound with!" Peniel exclaimed. "Blame your own self for having a low HP!"

"Low HP she said, try finding another outworlder with HP as high as mine," Jack grumbled. "But there is no need to worry about your HP, you can just hide inside your hidden dimension."

"If I do that, you will not get any buff from me. I also cannot aid you with spells. A familiar has to be present with the partner to be useful," Peniel said. "Open your skill page. The description of your Call Familiar spell should have been updated."

Jack did as told.

Call Familiar: Peniel - High Fairy, level 1/20 (Special spell)

Summon a High Fairy with 50% HP of bound partner's max HP. Cooldown if killed: 1 hour.

Passive skill to Familiar: Reduce all damage by 50%, Regenerate 10HP every second, become invulnerable for 5 seconds when HP falls below 30%

Passive skill to Partner: Regenerate 5 HP every second.

Active skill 1: Fast Heal = Recover 50% HP and remove negative status effects to partner.. cooldown: 3 minutes.

## **Chapter 474: Departing Again**

"I want to make sure, this passive recovery buff will also be in effect during combat, won't it?" Jack asked.

"Yes," Peniel answered.

"Cool," Jack commented. Peniel's passive healing effect was stackable with his existing body recovery skills, allowing him even better continuous regeneration during battle. Her Fast Heal skill was also better than Healer's Heal spell since she heal a fixed percentage. So the higher Jack's HP was, the more the amount she was healing.

"Alright! Let's upgrade this spell!" Jack announced.

He had 8 free skill points stocked from his Mage class. Now that he had gained Elite spell, he didn't feel the need to stock anymore. He didn't yet spend them before because he was unsure which spell to

spend them on. He had three elite spells: Call Familiar, Mana Beam, and Myriad Ensnaring Chains. He wanted to check on the result after binding with a familiar before making the decision.

The Myriad Ensnaring Chains spell had evolved into an elite spell once Jack became an Archmage. This spell now produced ten crimson chains instead of three. The chains were also bigger and sturdier. The length of the chains had also increased from fifteen meters to twenty-five meters. Overall, the power of this spell had been greatly boosted, but its spell formation now required five runes instead of four, which Jack had suspected before.

Jack was very much tempted to level up the Myriad Ensnaring Chains, but after seeing the Call Familiar spell, he opted for it. Both were very useful spells, just different applications, but Jack's decision could be said to be largely affected by his sentimental feeling for Peniel. If he had gone with another familiar, he might have leveled up the chains spell instead.

Jack poured all 8 free skill points into Call Familiar spell. Aside from that, he also had 182,456 souls inside his Container of Souls. Courtesy of all the coalition players and undead decimated during the Guild Headquarters battle. Jack had come close enough to the High Lich to capture its souls when it was killed, hence the high souls reap. The other high-level undead killed by the soldiers had also gone into his container. That was one of the reasons Jack had been running around the battlefield even if he could just sit back and let Themisphere soldiers clean up the undead horde.

Although it was a lot of souls, it could only upgrade an Elite spell by a single level. Jack used 100,000 souls to level up Call Familiar. Janus had informed him that each five-level increase on the spell granted the Familiar with additional skills.

Call Familiar: Peniel - High Fairy, level 10/20 (Special spell)

Summon a High Fairy with 72.5% HP of bound partner's max HP. Cooldown if killed: 1 hour.

Passive skill to Familiar: Reduce all damage by 50%, Regenerate 10HP every second, become invulnerable for 5 seconds when HP falls below 30%

Passive skill to Partner: Regenerate 5 HP every second.

Active skill 1: Fast Heal = Recover 50% HP and remove negative status effects to bound partner. cooldown: 3 minutes.

Active skill 2: Group Fast Heal = Recover 50% HP and remove negative status effects to bound partner and allies within a radius of 30 meters. cooldown: 10 minutes.

Active skill 3: Healing Field = Mark an area with 15 meters radius. All allies within the area are healed 300 HP /second and are immune to negative status effects. Duration: 1 minute. cooldown: 30 minutes.

The level increase boosted Peniel's HP and her cooldown if killed. Her additional skills were also very good. "Your first skill stays the same," Jack said.

Peniel explained, "All my skills will only increase if the spell proficiency increases. When your spell reaches the first star, my skills will receive improvement."

"How do I increase this spell's proficiency?" Jack asked.

"Whenever I use my skills," Peniel answered.

"All right. From now on, use your Fast Heal skill every three minutes. Use it even when my health is full!"

"Dream on! Do you think I'm as maniac as you in training battle skills?"

"Urgh... Do I have the ability to trigger your skills?"

"No, they fully depend on my decision."

Jack sighed. He said, "never mind then. Let's head over to Corporate United's headquarters."

"Why not the Death Associates' one?" Peniel asked.

"Because it was the Corporate United that unleashed that Undead Horde on us. An eye for an eye, as people said."

Jack opened his Map interface and checked at the coordinates Silverwing had given him. "Which city should I start from that is closer? Themetus or Thereath? They both looked similar distance from the map."

"If considering the terrains and the monsters on the way, Themetus should provide an easier traveling path."

"Good, I still have that parcel to deliver in Themetus. We will depart from there then. How long do you reckon I will need to reach our destination?"

"With Pandora's speed, three days should be enough."

"Great, let's depart then. Oh, yeah, Peniel. There is something good now that you are my familiar."

"What?" Peniel asked.

"People won't keep on calling you my pet anymore," Jack said with a grin.

"And you think I prefer being called a familiar?" Peniel rolled her eyes.

Jack went to Hunters Association next, to pick up ten monster hunting quests that he most likely encountered along the way. He also sold all the trophy loots and handed over the Hideout core in his bag, netting him an additional amount of coins. The hideout core also supplied him with 4000 hunter points.

This hideout core provided him with much more hunter points compared to the previous settlement core. Considering the settlement core was obtained from a settlement guarded by a level 15 boss while this hideout core was guarded by a level 31 boss, Jack didn't find the difference to be surprising.

Jack was thinking if he should also pay Duke Alfredo and Prince Alonzo a visit before leaving, see how they were doing. They should be long back by now. But decided against it. What if they gave him an emergency quest? He would go see them once he was done dealing with the coalition and gave his guild a breathing room.

As promised, Jack spent the night with Amy and Samantha, chatting about various things.

The next morning, Jack teleported and appeared at Themetus' Zone Portal. He asked the guards for the direction to the infirmary. After getting a direction, he went immediately. He half expected to be stopped again by those people from Six Rings of Prosperity, but they were nowhere in sight.

He checked his Friend list and saw that Paytowin was still in Themetus. He didn't send his friend any message, Paytowin might misunderstand him for being pushy about joining his guild. So he left him alone, now that Paytowin had his contact, he could send him a message if he needed anything.

The infirmary in Themetus was much larger compared to the one in Theseval. The building was even behind the Healer Academy. Probably allowing many of the native healers produced by that academy to help at the infirmary.

When Jack went in, many people were going about their duties. It felt almost like a real-world hospital. Jack looked for something that looked like a receptionist and went to ask. "I'm looking for the Grand Healer," He said to a woman behind the desk, who wore clothes that looked like a nurse outfit.

"What's your business with him, sir?" The nurse look-alike asked.

"I'm asked to deliver a parcel for him."

"From whom?"

"Um, from Albert, a healer in Theseval town," Jack answered.

"What's inside the parcel?"

"Uh... I'm told not to look inside."

"Let me check it first."

Jack was hesitant at first because the quest asked him to give the parcel to the Grand Healer, but he thought a respectable nurse in what looked like a respectable infirmary wouldn't have sabotaged his quest, right? So he handed the parcel.

The nurse put it on some kind of a device. It lighted up as runes appeared along the parcel surface.

"It was protected by a seal unique to our faction. The parcel is genuine and had not been tampered with. Good." The nurse gave the parcel back to Jack. "Take those stairs and go to the second floor. The third door on the left. The Grand Healer is waiting for you."

Jack took back the parcel and started going in the direction given. All the while wondering about the parcel. 'It has seal?' It's a good thing he stuck to his reliable postman's code. Otherwise, he would have been found out.

"Hey, Peniel. What's the faction that runs this infirmary?" Jack asked.

"It should be the Healer Society, they are the one that runs infirmaries in main cities," Peniel answered.

"They are another favorite league faction for Healer class and its branches, aside from the Church of Creation. In fact, the two factions used to be one. They separated due to differences in ideology. One focused on faith and religion while the other focused on healing the mass."

Jack just gave a non-committal mumble. He was not that interested in studying this world's history. He just cared about its current state. "So which is better? The Church of Creation or Healer Society?"

"They both has its strength and weakness. You are not joining anyway, what's good for you to know? If you want to know so you can advise your friends. Don't worry. I have already given that John fellow the overviews when he developed the guide for your guild members."

"Oh, okay."

They arrived in front of the door that was mentioned. Jack knocked on it. The door was soon opened and he saw an old man in a white robe. "You are the one that has the parcel from Albert?" He asked.

"Yes. Are you the Grand Healer?" Jack asked at the same time he used Inspect. The old man was really a Grand Healer and his name was Girolamo. He was a level 65 Special Elite Human.

"I am. Give me the parcel."

"Uh, okay," Jack said as he handed it. He didn't mind the old man's direct-to-business attitude. He wanted to complete this quest and then just continue on his way.

As Jack was about to say goodbye, the old man said, "Wait here!"

#### **Chapter 475: [Bonus ] 475. Mysterious Girl**

"What the hell? Again?" Jack uttered when Girolamo disappeared into his room.

Not long after, he came out with, as expected, another parcel. "Here, please take this to the Grand Healer in Thereath."

Jack just stared at the package in the old man's hands.

"What's wrong? Hurry up! I don't have all day, you know," Girolamo said.

'So do I, old man. Do you think of me as a real postman?' Jack asked in his mind. But then he thought about the destination for this next request. It was in Thereath, where he would be going back to after dealing with the coalition. If it was another city, then he might truly consider just forfeiting the quest. He couldn't afford being asked to go all around the kingdom just to deliver parcels.

"All right," Jack said as he took the goods from Girolamo's hands. "Tell me. After I deliver this one. Will they ask me to deliver another..."

Girolamo closed his door on Jack.

"... parcel again."

Jack stared at the door for some time.

"How rude...! What the heck!" He felt like throwing the parcel in his hands at the door, but he managed to calm himself down. He stored the parcel into his storage back and grumbled, "I swear. If after this, they asked me to deliver another one to another city again. I will tell them to just shove the bloody thing up their asses!"

Peniel who heard it said, "Oh, then I do hope they will ask again. I want to see you say those things to a level 65 Special Elite. I believe the other Grand Healer would not be any weaker than this one just now."

Jack rolled his eyes at her. She seemed to be enjoying this.

Not planning to get sidetracked again, Jack headed immediately to one of the city exits. On the way, he saw a few players with guild tags that he recognized, like Death Associates, Wicked Witches, and the like. He asked Peniel, "I have always wondered. What if two groups from different cities tried to form guilds with the same name. For example, Death Associates have some people who originated from this city as well as in Thereath. They can't communicate at first and have no idea about each other's existence. So what if they both register their guild name as Death Associates? Then there will be two guilds with the same name."

"They can't," Peniel answered. "The name will go to the first one who registered. The second one will have to use a different name."

"Like Death Associates 1 or Death Associates Junior, something like that?"

"Any name. I have no idea what you outworlders' preferences for names."

"But I don't see any of those kinds of names. The ones I saw from the players around here are the same as the ones in Thereath. Hm... Maybe when they found out that the guild name they wanted to register had already existed, they just applied to that guild?"

"Despite knowing that such a guild exists, they can't apply to become a member of a different city. Not until one of that guild members comes to this city and established a link. For example, your guild. Paytowin won't be able to apply to your guild before despite seeing your guild's name as the first on the guild chart. Not until you come here and establish the link to the zone portal of this city. Only then, the players in this city can apply to become a member of your guild."

"I see... Then how do you explain why I didn't see any guild name variations on the players I saw here. I don't believe they stayed guildless and waited for their formal guild to come here and establish a link."

"They had probably used the guild merging function."

"Guild merging?"

"Yes. Two guilds can choose to merge and decide on which name of the two to be used. But such an option is mostly a sentimental purpose. More loss than gain. Because when you merge, the reputation points carried over will only be from the highest one. The reputation points amassed by the lower one will be nulled, so all those hard works to accumulate the points will have been wasted."

"What if both guilds have a guild headquarters?"

"Then it will be a dumber move to merge the guild. As I said, one guild can only have one Guild Headquarters. All their guild coins and resources will be combined, they won't lose them. But the weaker Guild Headquarters will disappear. Only the stronger one will remain."

While chatting, Jack finally arrived at one of the city gates and summoned Pandora. He opened his Map interface to check the destination before having Pandora rush in the direction.



During the travel, Jack no longer needed Peniel to direct him into going through low-level areas, because Pandora's fear aura allowed her to just rush through in a straight line. Jack still made time to stop whenever he saw a new monster or the targets of his hunting quests.

There was one time when he decided to circle around though. It was when he caught a large dark red dot on his radar, indicating a much powerful monster compared to his current level. Something that probably rivaled the Grim Sand Drake or that Land Behemoth he saw in the past.

Although Peniel had informed him that only Mythical and level 70 Rare Elite were able to resist Pandora's aura, Jack decided to be prudent and avoided crossing near that dot. What if coincidentally that red dot was exactly a Mythical or a level 70 Rare Elite being? He steered Pandora away from there before resuming his journey.

During the travel, his Archmage's level had increased to 31. His Mage level was already close to level up in the past, which prompted him to stop feeding exp points to it. So, now after he set back the exp arrangement so the Archmage class received exp again, it didn't take long for it to level up.

When the Archmage class level up, the attributes increase he received were:

HP +70

MP +100

Strength +2

Dexterity +2

Intelligence +10

Endurance +4

Reflex +3

Wisdom +8

3 free attribute points

3 free skill points

He spent the three free attribute points in Reflex. As for the three free skill points, he added them into Call Familiar spell again. It was level 13 now, bringing Peniel's HP to 80% of his, but no new skill yet for her. He needed to allocate another two skill points to the spell for that.

Due to the frequent stops, the supposed three days journey ended up becoming four days instead.

When he woke up on the third day after he left Themetus, he was notified that he had reached the third month of his age. He actually felt it had been longer, then he remembered this feeling was due to the distorted time inside the Valley of Tempus. His race skill: Limitless Potential, had increased again, now becoming rank 3, providing him with HP +600, Stamina/MP +100, and all attributes except luck +3.

"Will this race skill continue to be the same? Simply increasing in its potency?" Jack asked.

"You will see a different race skill next month," Peniel answered. "And then on the fifth month, it will be a race skill in conjunction with your class? This means every human outworlder with a different class will get a different race skill. However, I am kind of curious about the case of you having two classes. I wonder which one your fifth-month race skill will determine as your class."

"Probably I will get two race skills at the same time then?" Jack said with a grin.

"You can wish, but my take is that it will pick your highest-level class as a priority. Which in your case, is the Blade Dancer class."

At the beginning of the fourth day, Jack could see from his map that he was getting closer. He estimated before sunset today, he should be able to arrive at where Corporate United's Guild Headquarters was. While he was storing his Camouflage Tent that he used to spend the night, he noticed three blue dots approaching.

'Blue? Player?' Jack gazed in the direction the three were coming. Nowadays it was no longer strange to have players roaming around the wilderness. But even though it was no longer strange, it was still rare. Because the mainstream players were only at the minimum level for traveling, thus there were only very limited low-level areas that they could travel to. And at this time, people's understanding of which areas were low-level was still very limited.

The three players seemed to be heading directly to his position. Could it be that a\*shole magistrate Warren placed a VIP mark on him again? He had been tempted to go meet with Prince Alonzo and tell him about the assassination attempt but decided against it. He was not one to complain to someone else about his difficulty. He would prefer to deal with that magistrate himself once he had gotten stronger. Not to mention magistrate Warren was backed by Prince Therribus. Jack doubted that Prince Alonzo could do anything significant to Warren even if he wanted to.

Assassination or not, as long as the ones coming were players, Jack was not afraid. He stood his ground and waited for them to arrive. If it was a native assassin like Oswald, then that's a different story. But with Pandora, he believe he could flee now even if it was Oswald that come for him. He had not yet seen any steed that was as fast as Pandora.

Before long, the three players appeared in his view. The lead seemed to be a girl, followed by two men. They were walking at a steady pace, not running at him. Jack didn't move as they approached. 'Perhaps they are just adventuring players coincidentally passing through here?' Jack thought.

But that thought was soon doused once the lead girl was near enough for Jack to have a closer look. Storm Breaker and Whirlwind Falchion appeared on each of his hands.

In one of the girl's eyes was a God-eye monocle.

## **Chapter 476: The Enemy Of My Enemy**

"Hold!" the lead girl called out. "Mister Storm Wind, we are not your enemies."

Jack didn't lower his stance. He observed the three. The lead girl was an elegant-looking beauty with a mature temperament. She was wearing light armor with a hood that looked kind of modern considering the medieval setting of this world, it accentuated her attractive body curves.

The two men behind her, one was wearing heavy armor while the other was wearing a fancy white coat with its collar so high up it covered half of his lower face. The eyes of the ones with the coat were cold and drifting away as if not seeing Jack as someone worth noting.

Jack used Inspect on the three of them.

Wilted Tree (Technocraft, level: 34)

HP: 1600

Handsome Joe (Mage Knight, level: 34)

HP: 1940

Anotherday (Hidden Weapon Specialist, level: 35)

HP: 1690

Jack was rather astounded. All of them were very high in level. Rivaling his guildmates who had followed him during the army expedition. Especially the man in a white coat, Anotherday, was the highest in level. Jack felt like he had heard this alias somewhere. His level of 35 was the same as Fierce Flame when he left Heavenly Citadel four days ago.

Fierce Flame's high level was due to the help from the expedition army added with her fierce grinding and the exp acquired from the undead horde during their headquarters defense. He wondered what method these three here used to achieve a similar result.

But the most surprising fact from the three was all of them were already elite classes.

While Jack was trying to hide his astonishment, he was hit by another surprise due to the lead girl, Wilted Tree's words. "Cloak of Shadow, no wonder I can't inspect you. You are pretty good to get super rare equipment this early. Do you mind telling me what your level is? For both your classes?"

Although his Cloak of Shadow had a distinctive appearance. He had never told his cloak's name to anybody. To be able to discern the name of his cloak accurately meaning she had seen the same cloak somewhere else.

"Why would I tell my enemies anything?" Jack replied.

"Hey, boy! Didn't you hear what she said just now?" The Mage Knight, Handsome Joe, uttered. "We are not your enemies. But if you prefer us to be one, I don't mind entertaining you."

"Side character please be quiet," Jack copied John's saying.

"You! Are you looking for a fight?!" Handsome Joe exclaimed.

Wilted Tree gestured at Handsome Joe to calm down. She then said, "You are as brash as I heard. But I also hear you are capable enough to give World Maker some trouble."

"You are not with them?" Jack asked.

"We are not. In fact, we are their enemies. As they say, the enemy of my enemy is my friend. Isn't that make us friends then?"

"Well, I also heard people say don't trust a stranger. So, I can't be sure that you are the enemy of my enemy. For all I know, my enemy probably has no other enemy, you are the friend of my enemy pretending to be the enemy of my enemy to be my friend while in truth you are my enemy."

Wilted Tree giggled, while Handsome Joe was still trying to make sense of what Jack just said.

"If we are your enemies, we wouldn't have come to you in the open like this," Wilted Tree said. "I'm capable of hiding my information just as you do."

She took out an orb. It flashed for a bit. She then said, "try inspecting us again."

Jack did so. The results on all three were now only question marks. Not only that, but their presence on Jack's radar also disappeared.

"I didn't do so to show you that we come in good intention," Wilted Tree said.

"That's an Orb of Concealment, a Unique Artifact," Peniel, who perched on Jack's shoulder, said.

Only now did Wilted Tree pay attention to Peniel on Jack's shoulder. "A high fairy?" Her eyes showed surprise, and then she said, "How do you know what this is?"

"Lady, this high fairy of mine knows everything there is to this world," Jack said.

"Really? A high fairy shouldn't have that kind of knowledge."

"She is not just any high fairy. She has the fountain of knowledge in her."

Wilted Tree gave Jack a confused expression, she seemed to be in deep contemplation.

'Hey, you seemed to have disconcerted her,' Jack said to Peniel through his mind. 'Weird, she seemed so sure of herself all this time.'

'She was probably awed by my presence,' Peniel replied.

Jack rolled his eyes at her. Wilted Tree seemed to have regained her composure. She said, "Where did you find this High Fairy, their kinds should not be accessible by us players at this stage."

"Sorry, that's my secret. You seem to know a lot about this world, just like those World Maker people. So excuse me if my suspicion of the three of you is not exactly lessened. You don't suppose to know about how all of us have been brought over to this game world, do you? How about you tell me about that? Then maybe I can consider about us being friends."

Wilted Tree smiled and said, "I'm sorry, I can't say anything about that."

Jack shrugged. He didn't expect these strangers to just provide him with an explanation either. "So, from what you have been saying, looks like you come here specifically for me. Mind telling me how you find my exact location and why are you looking for me?"

"Sorry, how we find you are our secret." Wilted Tree returned Jack's words at him. "About why we find you. We want to make sure you are strong enough to carry the Lightning God Blessing."

'So, they know about that as well,' Jack thought. But he had been displaying that move a lot of time, the news about that could have easily spread. "How are you going to determine that I'm strong enough? I guess in the end, you still want a fight, eh?"

"It is just a friendly bout," Wilted Tree said. "Don't worry, we will try to stop when your HP is low. I hope you won't use the Lightning God Barrage as well."

"I certainly won't waste using Lightning God Barrage against three players. However, I can't promise I can stop when your HP is low. You know the saying, blade doesn't have eyes."

"Heh, you certainly think too much of yourself," Handsome Joe scoffed. "You must be getting cocky because of having two classes. Don't think you are invincible just because your attributes are higher."

Jack shrugged. "Don't care. If you want to fight, then let's fight. I never turn down a challenge. But if you challenge me, then you better be willing to accept the consequences."

Wilted Tree nodded. "All right, and since you have dual classes, I hope you don't mind if the two of us fight against you."

"Two? I thought the three of you will go at me together."

"We are just wasting time with him," Handsome Joe said. "I don't believe this cocky man to worth anything for our cause. He might instead allow Master to get the divine treasure. Let's just proceed with the contingency plan."

"We will burn that bridge only if we have to," Wilted Tree said to him. She then turned to Anotherday who had been silent all this time. "Can I trouble you to test him?"

"Not interested," Anotherday answered.

"You know he will never bother unless the opponent is qualified enough," Handsome Joe said.

"Well, then it's you and me then," Wilted Tree said to Joe as she took off the hood that covered her hair.

Jack was given another surprise as the girl unhood because the girl had two pointed ears, something that was the basic characteristic of a certain fantasy race. As Jack took a closer look, the three of them had very clean skin. Handsome Joe's ears were hidden by his helmet, while Anotherday had long hair that covered his ears, but Jack could slightly see a small sharp protrusion of his ears from his hair.

"You three are elves?" Jack asked.

"We are," Wilted Tree replied.

"How did you get here? The elven country... What's the name again?" Jack turned to Peniel.

"Aurebor Dynasty," Peniel answered.

"Yeah, that one. It is supposed to be far from here, ain't it? How do you travel all the way here?"

"We have our way. Shall we begin?" Wilted Tree asked as her hand revealed a pistol weapon.

'Ain't Technocraft branched out from Rogue? They can use a gun?' Jack asked Peniel in his mind.

'They can. They don't receive any gun skill, but they receive a 10% bonus for using mechanical weapons, for which a gun was one such weapon. It is a good choice to support her techno golem from a distance.'

These three just gave him more questions than answers, which annoyed Jack. He guessed he would just beat them up to alleviate his annoyance.

"Make your move," Jack said while in his mind he said to Peniel, 'describe to me their skill sets.'

## **Chapter 477: Cool Robot**

"A Mage Knight standard skill is called Spectral Projection," Peniel informed. "They can create a second body that carried all the same attributes and can also use skills as the real one. However, any skill used will share the cooldown time with the real body. So if the copy has used Power Strike, the real body has to wait till the cooldown expired before being able to use the same skill. At level 1, this spectral copy possesses 100% of the caster's max HP."

As Peniel was explaining, Handsome Joe cast a spell formation of four runes. He was holding a sword and yet he was able to cast a spell. The spell formation was completed and a red color copy of Handsome Joe appeared in front of him. Jack saw some kind of an energy cord linking the copy with the real body.

"If he was successful in passing the Mage Knight test on the first try, he will also have access to Spectral Blade spell," Peniel continued. "At level 1, it summoned a magical blade that floats around the caster. This magical blade will attack any opponents that come into melee range, dealing 70% magical damage with each slash."

At the same time, Handsome Joe cast another four-rune spell and two illusory blades appeared beside him.

'Hey! There are two blades,' Jack exclaimed in his mind.

'That means he had upgraded the spell to level 10. Every ten levels gave the spell an extra spectral blade,' Peniel explained. 'As for the Technocraft, their standard skill is Techno Golem. It summons a mechanical construct that fights alongside caster.'

Wilted Tree took a few steps back and threw a large metallic ball to the ground. The ball exploded with a display of light as mechanical components swirled around and assembled into a large and impressive-looking robot. It stood three meters tall. Its skin was shiny black with two yellow glowing eyes

'F\*cking hell...! That was damn cool!!' Jack exclaimed inside. 'Make me wish I could choose that class!'

Peniel didn't see the admiration in Jack's eyes, but she felt Jack's excitement. She just associated this battle maniac's excitement for the thrill of the coming battle.

She continued her explanation, 'Techno Golem skill was special as they did not automatically strengthen the golem as its skill level increases. Instead, it removed the limitation when constructing the golem. A techno golem is divided into six main parts: head, arms, torso, legs, backpack, and energy core. There were also sub-parts such as weapon attachment or skill program. Each part is obtained by loots, buying, or crafting. The strength of the golem depended on these parts. A higher skill level allowed a

Technocraft to assemble the golem using rarer parts and also installing more skill programs. From the looks of this techno golem, it doesn't look like a standard beginner golem. It had been assembled with higher rarity parts. That girl clearly had deep fund and knew where to get those parts."

While Peniel was explaining, Jack had used Inspect on the Techno Golem.

Mazin (Techno Golem, level: 34)

HP: 68,000

Seeing the golem's name, Jack had a new respect for the girl. It was clear that she was a classic mecha anime fan. Jack decided there and then that such a girl was not possible to be a villain. She was not part of the World Maker group.

'The golem has a level?' Jack asked Peniel.

'Its level follows its owner. The parts used to assemble the golem determined its grade, its attributes then scale with its owner's level. From what I see, I estimated the average grade of its parts put this techno golem at around Special Elite strength."

'Not a problem then,' Jack said. 'What about her other skill if she passed the Technocraft trial on the first try?'

'The skill is called Immobilizing Trap. She can place a trap anywhere on the ground ten meters away. Any opponent that comes into contact will receive 80% damage and is stunned for 3 seconds.'

'The trap is invisible?'

'It is visible 1 second when it was placed. After that, yes, it turned invisible.'

So, one fighting with a Technocraft had to constantly observe the surroundings. If the 1-second placement was missed, the person would constantly worry about accidentally stepping on a trap. He doubted his God-eye monocle would detect this player-placed trap. If it was before, he truly had to pay extra attention. However, the current him had the ability to render this trap skill useless.

'Tell me about Hidden Weapon Specialist as well,' Jack said.

'Isn't he not fighting you?' Peniel asked.

'I doubt that. I'm very sure he will join.'

'All right. Hidden Weapon Specialist skill was special as their skills function more like giving them access to different throwing weapons. The standard first skill is Flying Dagger. It is a throwing weapon that flies in a straight line. At level 1 it can fly at 40 meters range and deals 120% damage. It also has a 30% chance to inflict Bleed effect. The skill they receive for passing their trial on the first try is Boomerang. It is a thrown weapon that flies at an arc, dealing 200% damage at level 1, as well as a 30% chance to inflict Dizzy. The weapon has a reach of 40 meters. Considering he had reached level 35, he should have access to another throwing weapon, Concealed Needle. At level 1, it threw ten needles dealing 80% damage each and 5% chance to inflict Paralyze."

'Their range and damage are rather lacking for an elite range class,' Jack commented. Flame's Power Shot skill had a range of 60 meters while his Mana Beam spell has a range of 50 meters. He felt the Hidden Weapon Specialist was at a disadvantage if the skills were being compared.

'Don't look down on this class. What they lack in firepower and range, they make up with attack frequency and status effects. The Flying Dagger can be used every 2 seconds, while the Boomerang has only 10 seconds cooldown. They had the shortest cooldown skills amongst Elite skills and spells. Each of their throwing weapons inflicts different types of status effects. If you suffered a status effect from a Hidden Weapon Specialist, its duration will be reset if you are hit again by another throwing weapon. So an expert Hidden Weapon Specialist can keep your status effect indefinitely by continuing hitting you.'

"As for damage, the throwing weapons they received when they first acquired the skills are always uncommon grade. They can increase the damage by acquiring throwing weapons of a better grade, this is done by looting, buying, or crafting."

While Jack was communicating with Peniel, Wilted Tree and Handsome Joe were waiting for him after they made their preparation. Handsome Joe was getting impatient. "Hey! Are you ready or not?" He called.

Hearing his words, Jack responded, "Ain't I tell you to make your move already? As a party with disadvantages, it is fair for me to let you make the first move."

Handsome Joe gnashed his teeth, he was waiting for Jack to make the move because he considered two against one as not fair for Jack, but instead, the guy treated it as the other way around. Angered for being underestimated, Handsome Joe decided to teach this cocky guy a lesson. "Let me gauge him first!" He uttered to Wilted Tree. While his real intention was to show Jack that he alone was enough.

His spectral projection rushed towards Jack, while he followed from behind. Two spectral blades continued to spin around him.

Jack went over to meet him, two swords in his hands. The spectral projection arrived before Jack and used Power Strike. It cleaved through Jack's body, but the attack simply passed through. Jack had used Flash Step and appeared behind the copy, facing Joe's real body.

Without wasting time, Jack used Formless Flowing Sword style as he swung his two swords. Joe was not an amateur, he also brandished his sword expertly as his other two spectral blades clashed with Jack. At the same time, the spectral projection came at Jack's back. Jack ended up being besieged from all sides. It was like fighting four opponents at the same time.

'He is pretty good!' Jack commented in his mind.

'Both the Spectral Projection and Spectral Blades can be left to attack opponents in automated states. But like your Body Double copy, the caster can assert their control to allow more complex maneuvers. From the moves he exhibited, it is clear that he is manually controlling both skills. I will say, if not considering your Hundred Synchronous Thoughts talent, his multitasking ability is better than yours.'

Even though Jack commended his opponent's skill, none of the attacks hit him. Every swing was deflected by his sword art.

Anotherday who was indifferent all this time turned his eyes to the fight.



"Are you interested?" Wilted Tree who stood not far from Anotherday asked.

"His sword art is rather profound," Anotherday replied. "You better give aid. I don't think Joe can hold out for long."

It was as Anotherday said. Although Handsome Joe was as if four people fighting against one, Jack's expert sword movements and supremacy in strength and speed slowly pushed him back. Joe was unwilling, but after the clash, he must admit that he would not be able to defeat Jack by himself.

Jack decided to go for the kill when he saw an opportunity and used Flame Strike. Joe felt the danger and jumped back, his two Spectral Blade spun in front of him serving as a shield. The two blades were smashed aside. Joe used Charge to escape further while his Spectral Projection came at Jack. Jack also used Charge to chase after Joe's real body.

Jack was about to catch up to Joe when he sensed something where he was about to step on. He quickly cancel Charge and changed direction.

'What?' Wilted Tree exclaimed silently. 'Is it a coincidence?' She had placed Immobilizing Trap when Jack's line of vision was covered by Joe. She had then informed Joe about the trap position to let him lure Jack to the trap. Traps would not activate if stepped by an ally.. Yet, Jack had changed direction without any reason when he was about to step on it.

## **Chapter 478: Qualified Enough**

Although Jack had to change direction, his speed still allowed him to arrive before Handsome Joe. But as he was about to deliver his attack, a looming shadow came over him. He turned and saw a very large but also very cool-looking robot by his side. One of its arms was lifted high before it was brought down at him.

**\*BAM!\***

The ground shook and cracked. Jack had jumped away before the fist came down. He rolled on the ground away from the golem. An explosion was heard as he was at the end of his rolling. He quickly got back up to the ready position, only to see Mazin zooming in on him with extreme speed. He hastily crossed both his swords in front of him.

**\*CLANG!\***

Mazin's fist slammed onto his crossed swords. Jack was thrown a long way back. He fell on his back and skidded on the ground for some time before he kicked the ground to bounce back into a standing position. He was expecting the golem to speed at him again, but it was currently running towards him.

Jack had received damage despite parrying using two swords. That spoke about how strong the Techno Golem's punch just now was.

'That just now must be a skill,' Jack surmised.

Handsome Joe's Spectral Projection was running alongside Mazin as the man followed again from behind. When Jack was about to meet them head-on, he heard a gunshot sound and felt a punch to his

side. A damage number appeared. It was Wilted Tree who shot him. The bullet's speed was too fast to allow Jack to sense mana from the incoming bullet.

Wilted Tree fired again. Jack was not staying and being a sitting duck. He dashed off to the side, just as Mazin's eyes glowed.

'Don't tell me...' Jack thought.

The Techno Golem didn't disappoint. Its glowing eyes soon shot a laser beam at Jack. Luckily Jack was already in high gear. His fast-moving speed had him away from where the laser beam struck. But as Jack was running, he saw Mazin turn its head with the laser beam still shooting. The beam followed and came after him, burning the ground in an arc.

Jack used Shooting Dash. His burst of speed allowed him to escape the laser beam. The beam soon died down. Jack estimated it lasted around three seconds.

'That Techno Golem has two skills. For one at level 34, that girl is very resourceful to achieve that,' Peniel said.

Jack had used his first Shooting Dash to escape the eye beam. He used the second dash to return and activated Adrenaline Rush at the same time. With the attack speed burst, he performed the burst attack of Formless Flowing Sword Style.

Twenty Four slashes flooded both Joe's Spectral Projection and Mazin. The spectral projection could not stand the accumulated damage and burst as its HP zeroed out, while Mazin also received damage and was pushed back.

Both Handsome Joe and Wilted Tree were surprised by the feat. They had never seen anyone push Mazin back in a physical engagement.

Jack didn't let go of his offense. While Mazin was unbalanced, he followed with Blitz Slash. His body turned into a shadow and rushed past the golem, five instant slashes landed on the golem's body, each scoring more than 500 damage.

Jack's Blitz Slash sent him to the golem's back, arriving in front of Handsome Joe who was taken aback by Jack's sudden appearance.

Due to his surprise, Joe did not control his Spectral Blades to perform complex maneuvers. The two blades slashed at Jack on their own, which Jack easily swatted aside. Jack followed up with Cross Slash.

Joe had snapped back by now, he used a skill to face Jack's cross slash head-on. His sword bloated with golden light and crashed at Jack's Cross Slash. An explosion of light resulted and threw Handsome Joe away. He had lost the clash, he suffered damage that put his HP to half.

Another shot was fired and Jack was hit on his leg. He clenched his teeth and endured the pain. The heavy steps of Mazin were heard from his back. Jack moved to the side and spun around as another shot was fired. The best way to deal with a gun was to keep moving or find a cover.

Jack used the large Mazin as cover. His two swords danced and clashed with Mazin's fists as he put the large robot in between him and Wilted Tree. The girl couldn't get a clear shot. She tried to circle around but Jack adjusted his position.

Jack executed another burst attack again. The slashes caused Mazin to stumble while the combo damage built up. While Mazin was unbalanced, Jack stored his weapons and jumped onto the golem, he then started climbing. Once he reached its head, he used one hand for hold while the other re-summoned Storm Breaker. He stabbed at the back of Mazin's neck and caused critical damage.

Mazin tried to grab at Jack on its back but its bulky arms were unable to reach backward. It whirled around continuously to throw Jack off, but Jack hold on steadily, continuingly stabbing the golem. Wilted Tree fired a few shots, but because Mazin and Jack kept on spinning, none of her shots hit.

She had to forcefully control Mazin to stop and expose Jack's back to her. She then fired a few shots.

Those shots hit Jack's back but he ignored them and continued stabbing. His high HP and defense with continuous regeneration from both Superior body defense and Peniel's passive healing allowed him to tank the damage.

Wilted Tree was not an expert gunwoman, so she came nearer to get more accurate shots. She was targeting Jack's head to score critical damages. Handsome Joe had drunk a healing potion and was also coming to provide support.

Suddenly Jack jumped down and then used Charge which was already off cooldown. Wilted Tree was on high alert when she saw Jack approaching. She used Roll to evade just as Jack arrived. At the same time, Jack heard a familiar explosion sound. He turned and saw Mazin's back erupted. What looked like jet engine fire at the back of Mazin propelled the golem with extreme speed outburst.

Jack was ready this time. the Golem's punch pierced through Jack's image while his real body appeared near Wilted Tree. He slashed the unsuspecting woman, scoring a hit.

Jack flowing sword style never stopped with one slash. However, his follow-up slash hit only air. Wilted Tree used an unknown skill and her body turned to smoke. But Jack's mana sensing allowed him to identify her new position immediately. He sent Sword of Light at her.

The crescent light came at her just as she changed position, catching her in surprise. When the light almost hit her, a flying dagger interrupted. The dagger was smashed aside, but the crescent light power diminished. It hit Wilted Tree and almost took out her remaining HP.

She quickly jumped back with a scare. If the flying dagger had not come as it did, she would have lost her life.

"So, you finally think that I am qualified enough?" Jack turned to Anotherday.

"Yes," he said. Three daggers appeared in his hand.

'Three?' Jack wondered.

'He must have leveled up his skill to at least level ten. Every five levels allowed him to throw one extra dagger simultaneously,' Peniel explained.

Anotherday threw the daggers. All three came at different angles and targeted Jack's weak points. From that one throw, Jack knew Anotherday's expertise was not a joke.

The angles made it so Jack couldn't use his swords to deflect all three of the incoming daggers. He slashed and deflected two while moving to the side to evade the third. He immediately sensed another unseen attack from the side. He jumped just as a boomerang flew below him.

The boomerang returned to Anotherday's hand and he threw it forward again at the same time another three daggers appears in his hand.

'I thought the boomerang had ten seconds cooldown?' Jack asked as he stepped back to dodge the boomerang.

'If the boomerang didn't hit its target and returned to the thrower's hand, it can be thrown immediately without a cooldown,' Peniel answered.

Flying daggers and Boomerang continued to cover each other, preventing Jack from approaching. Every throw of the daggers targeted Jack's critical point.

"Damn it! Do you think you are Xiao Li?" Jack uttered. He decided to just force his way through. He let the boomerang hit him to activate the weapon's ten seconds cooldown. He was afflicted with the Dizzy effect, but his Purifying Pendant automatically negated that negative mental status effect.

Anotherday still managed to take advantage of that one second when Purifying Pendant took effect. Two of his three flying daggers landed on Jack. Jack's HP went down and he was afflicted by Bleed. Jack still tried to force his way through, but Anotherday sent another flying dagger before the 2 seconds cooldown. This one dagger flew with a speed much faster than the previous, taking Jack by surprise as it stabbed into him.

As if without stopping, Anotherday threw three daggers again right after. Only then did Jack remember that a Hidden Weapon Specialist used to be Archer class. Anotherday could still use Precise Shot skill but no longer needed a bow for it, it could be done using his flying dagger. The two skills were considered separate so each cooldown was calculated differently. Anotherday had used the Precise Shot skill to cover the 2-second gap in between his Flying Dagger skills.

'If utilized properly, this Hidden Weapon Specialist boasts the highest attacking rate amongst range classes,' Jack thought.

As Jack remembered Anotherday used to be an Archer, he was reminded of another of Archer's skill. He sensed danger coming at him from above. At the same time, Wilted Tree came out from Anotherday's back and supported him with gunshots.

Jack decided he could not risk tanking through all those attacks. He used Flash Step away from his position before rolling to put more distance. He saw a large eagle had swooped in at the position he was before. Missing its target, the eagle flew back and circled above Anotherday.

'That should be his pet, a Grey Sharp-winged Eagle,' Peniel informed the same time she used her Fast Heal skill. A soothing light enveloped Jack, bringing his HP back up and alleviating the bleed effect.

Mazin and Handsome Joe arrived at this time. Whirlwind Falchion disappeared from Jack's hand and was replaced by Rapid Dazing Staff. One rune was formed rapidly and Ice Ring exploded out.

Mazin was frozen while Joe was slowed.

"You finally use your second class," Wilted Tree said.

"Yeah.. The three of you are qualified enough."

### **Chapter 479: Arriving At Corporate United's Guild Headquarters**

Jack sent Shredding Fang at Anotherday and Wilted Tree. Five fangs came out of the ground and charged at the two. He also added Mana Bullet and Energy Bolt for the two.

Jack then went at Handsome Joe who was slowed. His two Spectral Blades were not affected by the slow effect. Joe controlled them to slash at Jack hindering his approach. Jack's staff was replaced by Whirlwind Falchion again. The two spectral blades were not Jack's equal opponent. They were struck to the side, exposing Joe, who was wide open for a beating.

"Hold!" Jack heard Wilted Tree shout.

'Yeah, right. As if anyone ever stops when an opponent yells hold,' Jack thought as he did a feint slash yet swiped at Joe's leg.

The guy fell from the swipe. Jack delivered a slash to put him into critical, but he saw a round ball being tossed from the corner of his eyes. The ball exploded and formed a protective shield around Joe. Jack's sword hit the shield and he felt as if he was hitting a solid metal wall.

"I said hold!" Wilted Tree said again.

"So, we are allowed to use tools in the fight?" Jack asked as he took out Disruptive Bomb.

"Good God! You are really stubborn. It's enough already, we are not fighting anymore," Wilted Tree said. To prove her words, Mazin which had come out of frozen status no longer attack Jack. It came over to its owner's side and stood on standby. Anotherday was also just standing still.

"Why stop? He has not used his Concealed Needle yet," Jack said pointing to Anotherday.

"You are quite knowledgeable about other class' skills," Wilted Tree commented. "Can you please move away from him?" Wilted Tree pointed at Handsome Joe. Jack looked at the guy that was still protected by an energy shield. Joe looked him back with an ugly face.

"Fine," Jack stored his weapons and moved away.

Wilted Tree came to Handsome Joe's side. She did something and the protective bubble disappeared. Handsome Joe stood back up.

After making sure Handsome Joe was okay, Wilted Tree turned back to Jack and said, "It seems that you really can protect yourself. In that case, the Lightning God Blessing should be safe with you. Please don't let it fall into World Maker's hands."

"Never plan to," Jack said. "So, are you people going to tell me now what is the deal with those World Maker people and what's your connection with them?"

"I'm sorry. We don't trust you enough for that," Wilted Tree said.

"How about the place where these World Maker people gathered? Maybe I can go there and ask them myself."

"If you go, you will just be delivering your Lightning God Blessing to them. So, I won't tell you. Please do not underestimate them. We know now that you are strong, but they are in another league. You should be grateful that you came to this world into Themisphere country. This country was very far away from their base of operation, hence they are not very active here. If you want to fight against them, become stronger. I will come to ask for your aid when that time comes."

"Well, if that time comes, if you ask nicely, perhaps I will consider," Jack said. "Are we done here? Or do you still have another test for me?"

"No, no more test. We won't bother you anymore," Wilted Tree said.

"What are you doing all the way out here anyway?" Handsome Joe said. "Took us a while looking for you."

"I'm going to the Corporate United's Guild Headquarters that way," Jack didn't hide his purpose. These three didn't seem to be the kind who associated with guilds. He didn't believe they would warn Corporate United people. Even if they did, Jack was not afraid.

"What are you going there for?" Handsome Joe asked again. "The information on you is that you are enemy with them."

"Exactly. I'm going there to destroy their headquarters," Jack replied.

The three were quiet. They subconsciously looked behind Jack. 'You and what army?' Their faces said.

"If there is nothing more, I will take my leave then. Oh, right. Before that, I heard you talk about a contingency plan. Mind telling me what it is? Or is that a secret as well?"

Wilted Tree smiled. "The contingency plan was if you proved weak. We will kill you. That way, the Lightning God Blessing will leave your body. It can only be gotten again from a new SSS quest. We will not know where to get this quest, but so will the World Maker people."

"So... you were lying when you said you will hold back when my HP is low. Well, not that I believe you will hold back anyway. However, since you know I have two classes, you should be aware of my Immortal Soul as well, right? I will simply revive in a safe zone. The Lightning God Blessing will still be with me."

Wilted Tree's smile was getting wider. "I have a tool that will cause you to revive at the place where you died. So we can kill you again when your Immortal Soul is in cooldown."

"There is such a thing?" Jack turned to Peniel.

Peniel shook her head. "Not in my knowledge."

"An alien entity then," Jack mumbled. Jack looked again at the three, he saw them in a different light now. This group was not a pushover. They didn't use any tools during the fight. But evidently, they had plenty of it. If they went all out, he might not have an easy time. But then again, he himself was also still

holding back. He only used his Archmage class at the last moment and he also comply with Wilted Tree by not using Lightning God Barrage.

No longer having any questions for them, Jack walked over. The direction of Corporate United's Guild Headquarters was at their backs. They didn't respond as Jack passed them by, but Wilted Tree called again.

"Mister Storm Wind, I hope you truly put my warning to heart," she said. "Unless you have sufficient allies with you, please run when you meet World Maker people. Do not attempt to search them out. Particularly the Master, if you meet anyone with that alias, make sure to run immediately."

Jack turned to her. "This Master guy is that powerful?"

"More than you can imagine," Wilted Tree said.

"He is a player though, right? Not a native?"

"Yes."

Jack didn't believe there was a player that can render him powerless. Every player came to this world at roughly the same time, so everyone had the same amount of time and resources to improve. Even if this Master had some tools that aid him, Jack believed he should still be able to somewhat contend.

"Okay, I will be careful if I meet him," Jack said.

"Not be careful. Run immediately!" Wilted Tree insisted.

"Fine, fine," Jack lied.

He took out a red whistle and blew. Pandora appeared with splendor.

"A... a Nightmare...?" Wilted Tree stammered after seeing the appearance of the fiery steed.

Jack climbed up to Pandora and sped away.

"Isn't that...?" Handsome Joe asked halfway.

"Yes... a Unique steed," Wilted Tree answered.

"How did he get his hands on one?"

"... I don't know."

"I thought you are supposed to know everything about this world?"

Wilted Tree responded by giving Handsome Joe an irritated stare, which shut him up.

"He said he was going to destroy a Guild Headquarters," Anotherday said. "Wanna watch?"

"Well... we do have some free time to kill..."

The three then took out their own whistles and summoned their steeds. All of them had rare steeds. Although they were not as fast as Pandora, they were not slow as well. They hurriedly rode in Jack's direction.

Jack still spent some time killing monsters when he met a new one. He was in the process of completing the monster of his last hunting quests when Wilted Tree and the others caught up to him. They didn't come near Jack though. Wilted Tree just stayed at a distance as he watched Jack's dot on her radar.

Jack also noticed the three. "What are the three of them doing following me?" He thought. He was thinking of going over and asking them, but he then decided not to. If they wanted to attack him again, he would welcome them. He would not hold back anymore though if that happened.

Jack continued on his way after dispatching the monsters. It was again slightly off than he had estimated. It was an hour after sunset before a large structure of a Guild Headquarters came into view.

'They had developed it until this stage? As expected of a famous guild,' Jack thought. Corporate United had gained this headquarters later, but from its structural look, its progress was not lacking compared to Heavenly Citadel.

Jack noticed from his radar, some activities by both blue and white dots could be seen. The blue dots should be the Corporate United people roaming around their headquarters' territory, accompanied by the white dots which were the native soldiers they trained.

Jack was pondering how he should approach this. He saw on his radar the three had caught up again. These three stayed at the periphery, not interacting with the Corporate United people.

'So, they only want to watch,' Jack grinned.. "Let's give them a show then."

## **Chapter 480: Facing An Entire Guild**

Jack looked ahead. There were quite a few groups of these Corporate United teams grinding around their territory. The monsters here were around level 30 to 35, similar to the area around Heavenly Citadel. Each of their teams consisted of five players accompanied by three native Footsoldiers.

Jack used his magic staff and cast Body Double spell formation. Two identical Jacks appeared beside him. The two then ran to the right and left, away from Jack. After his two copies put enough distance, Jack called Pandora out again.

On top of Pandora, Jack rode forward in high speed towards Corporate United's Guild Headquarters.

The distinct sight did not escape the Corporate United members who were monster-grinding around the territory. After all, Pandora was very eye-catching and she also left a burning trail behind her. All the members that saw immediately sent a message to the ones inside the headquarters.

Soon, a flood of players poured out of the structure, while the ones grinding around the territory hurriedly rushed back.

Their swift reaction was due to their recognizing the burning steed. It was in the report of the attack on Everlasting Heavenly Legends' Guild Headquarters. There were even some who had participated in that failed assault and had personally seen the unusual steed.

They knew who that steed belonged to. And thus, they knew the rider didn't come here for a friendly visit.



The mass of players who streamed out of the structure got into a neat line as they formed defensive formations. Jack stopped some distance away and just stayed there as he waited for Corporate United members to gather.

After a while, as the guild members were arranging their formation, another wave of large numbers of players came out of the structure. Jack recognized some amongst this new wave. They were Manager Steelhand, Assistant Manager Ironhand, and Supervisor Killmonger.

Jack greeted them once they were within earshot, "How are you doing, manager? I thought you are still hanging around Thereath preparing to attack our headquarters again?"

Instead of answering, Manager Steelhand replied with a curt tone, "What are you doing here?"

Steelhand didn't answer Jack's question but Jack knew that this second wave should be the ones on standby to assault Heavenly Citadel again once the protection status was lifted. They must have arrived here so fast by using the Guild Return scroll, which meant that they had built a Scrollmaking Workshop.

A famous guild truly could not be underestimated. For them to be able to complete so many structures when they had started later. But then again, Jack noticed they had not built a wall. They probably thought they had no need for it and focused their resources to build other structures first.

'Damn, ain't they arrogant! Do they think no one dares to attack them just because they are a famous guild?' Jack thought. But he should be thankful about this, as this had allowed him to get very close to their headquarters structure.

"Hehe, will you believe me if I say I'm here to admire your headquarters?" Jack replied to Manager Steelhand's question.

There was an aged man with shining armor who stood beside Manager Steelhand. From his pose, it seemed he had a higher rank than Manager Steelhand. "This is the punk that foiled your attempt in dominating Thereath region?" This aged man asked, to which Steelhand nodded respectfully in response.

Jack used Inspect on him.

Director Forcelabor (Paladin, level: 32)

HP: 2010

An elite class. Jack observed the mass. Mostly were level 31 with some at level 32. Their numbers were astounding. He knew from the report that Corporate United's guild level had also reached level 2 a week after Everlasting Heavenly Legends gained Heavenly Citadel.

In these few weeks after they became level 2, they had almost filled up their full quota of 1000 members. The ones he saw here were probably around 800 members. The higher-ups must have called in everyone available. Jack felt flattered. Aside from those, there were also more than 200 Footsoldiers. This guild had produced even more native soldiers than his guild despite starting later.

"Do you need all these people? I'm just alone, you see?" Jack said.

Manager Steelhand didn't answer. He didn't have it in him to comment that during the battle of Crestfall Plain, they had faced him with similar numbers and still failed.

"Are all of you out already? Or you are still gathering? I will wait," Jack said again. Jack was actually telling the truth. His copies were currently hiding at the far end of both sides, trying to sneak as close as possible to the headquarters' entrance.

"You are as the report said, very cocky," Director Forcelabor said. "You might have been leading with that anomaly two classes of yours, but most of the ones you fought before are our low-level members. This time we have more of our experts available, not to mention these trained native soldiers.

"What are we discussing this for? Let's just waste him. I can't wait to wipe that arrogant face of his with the ground," a man in medium armor carrying a golden trident said.

Manager Straightpole (Weapon Master, level: 32)

HP: 1820

Another elite class. He wondered how many more were within this mass. He could not inspect every one.

This Manager Straightpole had a sudden change in his facial expression before he turned to Manager Steelhand and uttered, "don't be absurd! Why should we wear Amulet of Rebirth? Have you been scared by him until you become a chickenshit? You are a disgrace to our guild! Everyone, ignore that order, there is no need to wear Amulet of Rebirth!"

Manager Steelhand gave Straightpole an irritated expression. From what Straightpole just said, Jack surmised that Steelhand had issued a silent command in their guild chat.

Despite Straightpole's instruction to ignore Steelhand's order, Jack still saw many proceeded to wear Amulet of Rebirth. This amulet had a unique design, so it was easy to recognize. Most of the ones who wore were those that had come out in the second wave. Those that had fought in Thereath region.

Director Forcelabor came forward, but he kept his distance. He kept on feeling this unsettling feeling which he could not pin for the cause. Little did he know that it was due to Pandora. Jack was still sitting on Pandora. He had kept the Nightmare on purpose, to use her aura to delay this mass from coming at him. He wanted to provide his copies with as much time as possible.

Director Forcelabor said to Jack, "If your purpose here is to fight, please know that we will gladly welcome it. But our guild can't be seen as a bully of abusing our numbers. So, we will give you the chance to leave. We will consider this matter as a slight misunderstanding."

Jack smiled at his words.

"What are you smiling at, you punk?" Straightpole scolded. "Our director had given you face! If it is up to me, I will have killed you without a word."

"I'm sorry, I just find it funny. He said your guild can't be seen as a bully by abusing your number. All the times that I had confrontations with your guild, that is exactly what happened. Your guild and the others in the coalition are the epitome of bullies who abuse their numbers."

"Arrogant punk!" Straightpole spat. He then turned to Forcelabor, "Director, let me have a one-on-one with him. We will show the world that we are not a pushover or a bully."

"No, don't!" Both Manager Steelhand and Assistant Manager Ironhand spoke.

"You two cowards be quiet! I have great respect for you before, but it seemed this world had turned you soft."

He then strutted out without waiting for Director Forcelabor's permission. Yet, Forcelabor also didn't utter a word to stop him.

Manager Straightpole activated Ki Weapon. A blazing white aura enveloped his golden trident. Although the unsettling feeling that gnawed in his heart kept on increasing, he continued walking with poise. He couldn't afford to look bad in front of all his subordinates.

"Activate the recording stone. We will show this to the world and let them know our guild is not one to be messed with!" Straightpole shouted.

'Hey, great idea!' Jack thought after hearing it. He still had that one recording stone in his back. He went ahead and activated it.

When Straightpole arrived before him, Jack asked, "Are you really sure you don't want to wear Amulet of Rebirth?"

Straightpole harrumphed, "Hmph! Don't lump me in with all the weaklings you have fought. Get down from your horse!"

The second Straightpole called her horse, the Nightmare's eyes bored deep into the man. All kinds of horror surfaced inside Straightpole's mind. His eyes were wide with terror. His knees were about to give but he forced himself to remain standing.

Jack had actually been counting on this to happen. Once he saw the change in Straightpole's gaze, he jumped from Pandora's back. Somersaulting past the petrified Straightpole and landed behind him. He kicked at the back of Straightpole's knee and forced his one leg to buckle. His two swords then danced. Twenty-four bursts of slashes landed on Straightpole who was having trouble maintaining his thought, much less defending.

His HP zeroed in an instant then his body fell to the ground.