

World 671

Chapter 671: Falling into the Chasm

Four Winds must have used a seed on his Berserk skill to produce these crimson tattoos. Considering how fast he had moved, this enhanced Berserk must have improved his speed by a great deal. However, Jack also noticed another thing that was different from Four Winds. His HP recovery rate was faster compared to a normal Berserker. Whether this was due to that enhanced Berserk mode or his other skills, it was unclear.

Megan used Judgment Strike and Four Winds used Heavy Cleave. The two elite skills collided. Megan was sent reeling back, indicating that she had lost the exchange even if she suffered no damage.

The reeling back didn't make her lose balance though, she made a graceful whirl as if a pirouette and smacked her mace at Four Winds again. Four Winds met her blow by blow.

"The two of them were clearly martial art experts," Jack commented.

"Look at that silver girl," Paytowin said.

The silver girl was Violent Blizzard. She wore heavy armors that looked so matching to one another that they appeared as if one full set of suits instead of seven separate pieces of armor. Peniel later confirmed his conjecture, she was wearing set equipment, a complete set at that.

She was currently lifting her greatsword high. Her greatsword was also silver in color following her armors. Jack wondered how she got such a matching weapon and armor, Peniel confirmed to him that no set equipment included both weapon and armor, so the greatsword was not a part of her set equipment.

Violent Blizzard was currently just letting Tripsy's Concealed Needle riddle her body. Damage numbers appeared from the multiple hit. At the same time, avenging orbs appeared one after another.

'Oops!' This expression appeared on Tripsy's face. She had provided her opponent with more ammunition.

Violent Blizzard activated Righteous Fury, sacrificing all ten avenging orbs and boosting herself. A blue aura appeared above her greatsword, creating the image of a giant flaming sword. The crossguard of the imaginary sword spread out and formed flaming wings. The spectacle was striking. The skill was without a doubt a non-standard skill. Peniel informed Jack that the skill was called Blue Wing Slash.

Violent Blizzard swung her greatsword down. The giant blue aura sword swooped down at Drake and Sour Face. The display alone had intimidated the two, not to mention the pressure the two felt from the attack. The two jumped to opposite sides to avoid the skill.

The giant sword slammed onto the ground. The aura spread out into waves, towards the left, right, and forward. Both Drake and Sour Face were hit by the waves, suffering damages. The forward wave also headed to Tripsy who was just about to throw her knives. Since she was further away, she managed to use Roll and dodge the attack.

Antsy who was about to complete his Summon Treant, felt a sharp pain from his back. Disco Rain who had vanished prior had appeared behind him, delivering backstab. When she tried to run away, a long ice wall appeared in front of him, cutting him from the rest of his teammates. It was the Elemental Wall spell cast by Water Lily.

Megan was just about to cast Heal on Antsy, but she lost sight of the druid due to the ice wall. Now the enemy's Assassin was free to bully their main healer. Megan was about to move back but Four Winds had come before her again. His two axes danced before her.

"That's...", Jack was transfixed seeing Four Winds' axe arts. It was similar to his Formless Flowing Sword Style, yet different. The two axes danced around the berserker, creating a bubble of light formed by quick slashes. It deflected Megan's mace strikes and at the same time landed a slash when Megan was unbalanced. The art was effective for both defense and offense.

Megan hurriedly retreated and cast Heal on herself.

"Look at their positioning," Paytowin said.

Jack took away his attention from the close-up fight and looked at the battlefield from an overall perspective. Somehow, the orc team had positioned themselves around the draconian team, forcing the draconian team into a position where they were in a kill-zone. Water Lily's AOE spells struck then, hitting multiple targets at the same time.

Each of the Orc team members was also highly skilled in either game mechanics or martial arts. The one in the draconian team who could fight either one of them on equal footing was only Megan. In this condition, it was more like she was one person fighting against five.

"It's a martial art formation," Jack said. He didn't know this formation but it certainly functioned like one. The five's teamwork worked very well within this formation.

From the scene, it was easy to see that the draconian team was in a tight spot. The draconian team themselves realized their situation. Antsy cast Healing Wind and Healing Spirit but their HP still decreased at a faster rate than their opponents. Megan finally led them to break through the formation. They would get slaughtered if they remained here.

But as they were forcefully punching through the enemies' siege, Disco Rain caught one of their members, Sour Face, and caused him to stumble back away from the rest. Megan cast Hallowed Ground on Sour Face. With Hallowed Ground's HP recovery and Sour Face's decent HP, it should allow him to survive until they provided aid.

Four Winds came to Sour Face's side and used Power Strike, causing Sour Face to stumble. He then cut at Sour Face's legs. Sour Face lost all balance then. Four Winds slammed his body on Sour Face and used Charge, stopping just when he was about to go over the edge of the arena. Sour Face, however, could not stop his momentum. He was thrown out of the floating arena, falling to the bottomless chasm below.

His name on the sky was greyed out, which confirmed that those who fell into the chasm below suffered instant death.

Megan gritted her teeth from losing her teammate. She regretted her decision for direct confrontation. Their enemies were more formidable than she thought. Both their expertise and equipment were top-notch.

The rock bridge was very narrow, only one person could pass at a time. Megan activated Faith Armor and stood her ground to cover her team's escape.

"I admire your bravery, but that won't save your team," Four Winds uttered as his weapons and Megan's clashed.

Water Lily had been casting a spell. It was a five-runes spell. Tripsy tried throwing her weapons to disrupt Water Lily's casting while crossing the rock bridge, but all her thrown weapons were deflected by Violent Blizzard and Disco Rain.

Everyone expected Chain Lightning to be cast, including Megan. She jumped in front of Water Lily. Chain Lightning would strike the closest target first. Against magic attack, her Faith Armor protected her further, reducing any magic and elemental damage by 25% and negating all splash or jump effects when the spell hit, so the Chain Lightning would stop after hitting her.

Water Lily's spell took effect. However, no lightning crackle was heard. Instead, they felt cold energy from above. They looked up and saw a very large chunk of ice boulder in the sky. This boulder had a sharp end at the bottom and it was currently falling.

Jack found the spell similar to Trinity Dawn's Ice Nail, except this was a much larger block of ice that was dropped. Peniel informed him this spell was called Ice Fall. It was the elite version of the Ice Nail.

The huge ice fell on top of the fleeing team. Tripsy tried to move away from the point of impact. However, Lily's target was never the players. The huge ice fell and smashed the rock bridge, it broke the bridge apart. Antsy was the last to cross, he was not yet far. Megan managed to pull him back and save him.

The other two draconian players, Tripsy and Drake, were too far at the middle of the bridge already. Tripsy fell to the void below, while Drake activated his Jump attack at the last moment. The other side was still too far, so he teleported back to the floating arena instead. However, as he reappeared in the air and fell, he found Disco Rain was making a super jump towards him.

Drake stabbed his spear which still got the bonus from Jump Attack, but Disco Rain parried it in the air. She received damage while her body somersaulted with one leg swinging high. Her heel struck Drake's head. Drake didn't suffer any damage but the kick pushed him away from the floating arena.

Drake ended up also falling into the chasm following Tripsy who was ahead down there.

Megan's heart sank for seeing her teammates defeated in such a rapid manner, but she didn't just submit to fate. "Antsy, Deep Wisdom! Stampede!" She commanded.

As Antsy was a Draconian and a magic user, he also had the Deep Wisdom race skill. While his casting was protected from being disrupted, he focused on casting the spell while Megan swung her mace keeping opponents from physically touching Antsy.

Antsy completed his spell amongst a barrage of range skills and spells from the enemies. He would have died if Megan didn't cast Heal on him. His life was just a hairbreadth when his spell took effect. He cast Druid level 45 spell, Wild Stampede. The spell summoned a group of rampaging wildebeests that goes on a stampede in a direction, dealing 300% physical damage every second to all within the path and causing knockback.

Megan had been planning to have Antsy use this spell when the opponents chased them on the bridge, knocking them down in one swoop. Unfortunately, that plan would never come to fruition.

However, the stampede on the floating arena might still be effective. The arena was not that big. If the enemies continued to get knockback, they might still get pushed to the edge.

As the rampaging wildebeests appeared, the four orc women retreated to Four Winds' back. Four Winds grinned as the stampede approached.

Chapter 672: Fastest Growing Rookie Guild in Gaming History

Four Winds' two axes then danced again. This time even faster than the previous. The slashes sometimes scrapped upon each other that they created sparks. Uncountable starlights swirled around the berserker. The wildebeests that came ramming were smacked to the side continuously.

Purple Mist was casting a spell behind Four Winds. Although Four Winds' axe art was impressive, it couldn't sustain such pressure for long. The Wild Stampede spell lasted 5 seconds at its first level. Every level increased the duration by half a second. Antsy had upgraded his spell to level 11, allowing it to last a long ten seconds. Four Winds won't be able to continue deflecting the stampede for that long.

Purple Mist completed a spell. She and the four nearby her suddenly vanished. The stampede trampled over the place they were at a moment ago.

While everyone was wondering what had happened. A circle of runes appeared beside Megan and Antsy before the five orc players materialized within that circle.

"It's Mass Teleportation spell! a very rare non-standard spell," Peniel exclaimed. "Teleportation spell is a rather common non-standard spell to acquire for magic users. You should be able to exchange for this spell once you reach the next rank of Apprentice in the Order of Magi. But Mass Teleportation is a harder spell to get one's hands on. She is very lucky to have acquired it."

'Teleportation spell,' Jack thought. He hoped he can truly get his hands on this spell soon. It is a very useful spell to get one out of a tough situation as was exhibited by the orc team in this match.

On the arena, after the orc team reappeared, the fastest member of this team immediately took action. Disco Rain lunged towards Antsy. Her figure turned into a blur before multiple slashing flashes fell on Antsy.

'That is Oswald's move!' Jack thought when he recognized the skill from the assassin NPC who had targeted him in the past. Peniel had informed him before that this skill was called Deadly Flash Strikes.

Antsy was already low on health, the last move by Disco Rain took him out.

Megan was left all alone on the battlefield. She knew she had no hope to win anymore. Yet, her eyes didn't show that she was going to go down just like that. She advanced with her mace swinging.

"Do not touch her!" Four Winds uttered and met Megan head-on. The other four followed his command and moved back, allowing them some space.

The two exchanged lots of martial moves. As time passed, it was clear that Four Winds was the better expert. Megan finally fell. Her name on the sky was greyed out.

The ten appeared back onto the arena below as Pallas announced team orc as the victors.

"That orc team is not simple," Paytowin said.

"Yes. Each of them is a martial expert with good equipment. All of them also have non-standard skills and spells. They might still keep other surprises," Jack agreed.

"That's not all," Paytowin said. "Try inspecting them."

"Oh? Why? We already know their names," Jack said, but he still did as his friend asked.

"They... They are all from one guild?" Jack uttered after using Inspect on the five. "No wonder their teamwork is good. They are used to fighting together already. Hm... Cipher Flight, I feel like I have heard this guild name before."

"You should. Remember the previous most popular game we played, Lord's Realm?" Paytowin asked.

"Ah, yes! They are that rookie guild," Jack uttered.

"Yeah. They are that rookie guild that everyone called the fastest-growing rookie guild in gaming history. Under the leadership of their charismatic leader, Four Winds, they had become one of the top guilds. Many old veteran guilds banded together trying to put them down, but those guilds were miserably beaten back."

"Yes, they certainly made a huge wave back then."

"I guess that they are still making a huge wave here, at least in Verremor Nation. It's not an easy feat to have a country send a team match consisting of all the members coming from the same guild. They must have some kind of a pull in that country's politics to achieve that."

Jack nodded. He watched the orc leader, Four Winds, as he led his team away. The team match had ended so the tournament also ended for the day.

Jack and Paytowin scurried towards the Temple of Courage and dove back into the ancient battleground. Nothing much changed from yesterday. Jack and Paytowin killed as much as they could before they went over to the golden knight's side. Actually, Jack didn't put much effort into the killings. He truly was not interested in the trashy rewards. His priority was only to learn mana manipulation.

In their second run of the day, they didn't hit the required kill marks, but Jack told Paytowin to start moving to the golden knight's side before they started their suicide charge. It would be more difficult to chase after them if they were ahead. Jack didn't want to miss the chance in studying the knight leader's moves just to catch the one thousand kills.

He also tried to perform attacks using mana manipulation. It was easier to do in this dimension due to the unnaturally dense mana. He didn't try fancy moves like the One-word Slash, though. That move required high concentration. He was not proficient enough in mana manipulation to do the move during battle. He simply tried to apply mana manipulation in a simple slash.

After several trials, he found it easier to start from attacks using his own body instead of using swords, with punches and kicks. Regulating the mana around his body was much more direct. His body was the one tool he was most used to, after all. It had been with him since he was born.

So, Jack decided to store his swords during the middle of their second run and instead fought using his fists and legs. Paytowin was flabbergasted at first. He was just about to ask what Jack was doing storing his weapons in the middle of a battle, but then he was shocked when Jack's punch resulted in damage to the opponent.

"Do you have a fourth class which is Battle Monk?" He asked.

"This is the power of mana manipulation!" Jack exclaimed as he gave the mutated human a backhand fist, which didn't cause any damage.

"Oh..." He uttered before the mutated human retaliated by slashing him.

"Shit! I still can't control the mana as I wish," Jack said. He focused his mind to work with the mana around him, guided them to follow his punches and kicks as he dished out punishments. His Hundred Synchronous Thoughts gave him the ability to focus on mana control while still fighting efficiently. Still, two out of five hits were blank. He still needed a lot of practice.

He figured when he was out there with a less mana environment, his success rate would drop further. Thus, he needed to get himself accustomed to this mana control while he was still given the chance of entering this battleground.

They didn't hit the required kill marks on their second run precisely because Jack was busy practicing instead of killing. Paytowin didn't complain, however. He understood what his friend was trying to achieve.

After they finished the second run, Jack was tempted to dive a third time again, but he contained himself. He had a match tomorrow. He needed to have a good rest to prepare himself. His game body might not be tired, but he still needed to rest his mind. A dull and tired mind was as good a source of failure as a tired body.

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The next morning, everyone gathered for the fourth match. Everyone was excited about today's matches. Unlike previous, these fourth matches consisted of participants who had won previous fights. So, the ones competing today were all victors. They had seen how these victors claimed their victories from their last matches. They were eager to find out how they were going to claim today's victories from each other.

Domon and Leavemealone were present again because Wong was fighting today. They should be able to see more from that grandmaster's match today because Jack mentioned his opponent, Kill Order, was a gaming expert who also could sense mana.

They sat beside Jack on the other side from Paytowin.

Once everyone gathered, Pallas announced that today's tournament was to begin and for the ones with their names shown on the sky to come down to the arena.

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Knight Section Match 4

Jeanny, level 46 Dragoon (human) Vs Rodney, level 46 Avenger (dwarf)

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Jeanny and Rodney came down to the arena below and took their positions.

"That girl is your friend, right?" Paytowin asked.

"Yeah, she is the main leader of the guild I'm in," Jack replied.

"I hope she wins."

"She will."

"You are very confident. I hope she doesn't carry your overconfidence as well. Her opponent is a good reversal expert as he had shown in his last match. She needs to stay on her toes even if she is winning."

"Don't worry, she isn't stupid."

As they were chatting, Pallas announced the start of the match, "Match four of the Knight section, begin!"

Chapter 673: Couldn't Afford to Lose

Once Pallas announced the match, Rodney weaved his head away as he readied his two-handed hammer.

Everyone was confused why he did that, but then they remembered that Jeanny had made an abrupt and aggressive thrust the moment her match started last time. Rodney must have thought that this was how Jeanny liked to start her match. Little did he know that the aggressiveness was because of her opponent's rudeness.

However, Jeanny was indeed aggressive when she attacked. It's just that she was too polite to go all out right from the start unless the opponent riled her up, as it happened on her first tournament match and the one with her sister.

Seeing Jeanny was just waiting with a ready stance. Rodney decided to deliver the first strike. He lunged forward with his hammer swinging.

Jeanny thrust. The tip of her spear hit the shaft of Rodney's hammer. The impact threw Rodney back. Jeanny's stance was steady.

Seeing his assault deflected, he decided to proceed more carefully. He walked sideways as he circled Jeanny. Jeanny followed his movement with one pivoting foot, keeping Rodney in front of her.

Rodney finally lost patience and attempted another swing. Another thrust came and forced him back again.

He gritted his teeth and made successive swings, even camouflaging Power Strike in one of the swings. However, all the swings were repelled. Jeanny used her own Power Strike to counter when her opponent used his.

"Grrhh...! Do you want to fight or what...?" Rodney uttered. He felt as if the girl was playing with him.

But during the middle of his speech, Jeanny disappeared.

'What...?' Was the question that surfaced in his mind when he remembered his opponent's skill sets. He hurriedly jumped to the side just as Jeanny's spear thrust down from above.

The spear stabbed onto the floor, missing the target. Yet, Jeanny had trained with this skill numerous times to devise a follow-up attack when the assault missed. She used her spear which was embedded into the floor as a support to push her body that was still in the air towards her opponent.

Rodney, who was just turning around to deliver a counterattack, was stunned when he found Jeanny was right above him. Jeanny's foot swooped down and gave him a solid kick. He didn't receive damage but he lost his footings.

Jeanny landed next to him and used the butt of her spear to knock Rodney's head again, before swiping his legs with her spear. Jeanny executed Domain of Spears when Rodney fell on his back. Since he was in a laying down position, he wasn't just hit by one spear when numerous spears pierced out around Jeanny.

Without letting Rodney get up, Jeanny used Hundred Spears, stabbing the laying down Rodney multiple times.

Rodney activated Last Stand and Righteous Fury as his HP fell below 30% and he had full ten avenging orbs. However, he was still in a laying down position. He tried to strike back but Jeanny moved to an angle where he had difficulty hitting her. All the while, Jeanny never stopped her Hundred Spears. Her stabs continued stabbing the parts that prevented Rodney from getting up. Without getting up, he couldn't perform any meaningful attack with his hammer.

He lost his life without being able to counterattack.

"Wow! She is indeed good," Paytowin uttered in admiration.

"Yeah, she really gets it," Jack said.

"Gets what?"

"The best time to hit someone is when they are down."

Paytowin rolled his eyes.

"Next match, warriors!" Pallas declared.

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Warrior Section Match 4

Handsome Joe, level 46 Mage Knight (elf) Vs Spring Crown, level 47 Weapon Master (vampire)

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Joe was scowling all the way to the arena. He knew this was it! He was facing a heavenly enforcer now. He couldn't afford to lose. This was their real opponent. For the sake of their cause, he had to win. He would not disappoint Wilted.

"You are too tense. Lighten up," Spring said. His slight smile was still decorating his face.

Joe's scowl was getting even more prominent now. "Don't try to condescend me!" He uttered.

Spring sighed. "You are truly too serious. See, that scowl has ruined your namesake. How can people still call you handsome if you continue to put on that face?"

"My scowl will disappear once you are down. Now taste my spectral...!"

"Wait!" Spring exclaimed and put his palm out while Joe was still speaking.

"What? Don't tell me you want me to give you time to prepare!"

"Man... You are truly... The referee hasn't asked us to begin yet," Spring said.

Joe turned to Pallas and saw the divine champion was staring at him. "Are you two done talking?" He asked.

Joe nodded.

"Done here," spring replied.

"Begin!" Pallas announced.

Joe immediately became tense again. He took a low position, ready to receive Spring Crown's attack. But the guy was just standing at his position in a leisurely stance.

"You said you want to let me taste your spectral something? Go ahead. I'm waiting," Spring said.

Joe frowned. Wasn't this guy underestimating him too much? He cast his spell with his left hand while the sword on his right hand was ready in case Spring decided to attack. But the number one gamer just stood there watching with his little smile.

Joe's spell was completed and his Spectral Projection appeared. He continued with another spell and three phantom blades swirled around him. All the while, Spring Crown didn't move a muscle.

"Max-level Spectral Blade and level 12 Spectral Projection. Not bad," Spring uttered.

"How do you know my projection's level?" Joe asked. Determining his spectral blade's level was easy since only a max-leveled one would have three blades, but there shouldn't be a tell for the spectral projection.

"As the levels progress, your projection becomes more detailed. You don't know the distinction of your own spell?" Spring replied.

Joe wasn't sure if he believe Spring's words. Details? The projection looked just the same. Was this guy messing with him? But the guy indeed guessed his spell's level correctly.

"Are you done preparing your spell? Or should I wait longer?" Spring asked.

Hearing that, Joe was furious. He cast another spell. "You will regret looking down on me!"

Joe's left hand glowed, indicating the Spectral Discharge spell. He then controlled his projection to charge forward while he shot range attacks using the left hand that had been armed by Spectral Discharge. He was planning to repeat his previous match's strategy.

Spring twirled his spear and smacked the energy attacks Joe shot at him. When Joe's spectral projection arrived, a dagger appeared in Spring's left hand. He blocked the projection's assault using his spear while cutting the energy attacks using the dagger.

The exchange went on for a while. None of them suffered any damage. It was obvious for Joe since he attacked from a distance, but Spring was also completely fine despite being besieged by melee and ranged attacks. The smile on his face never wavered. It was even as if he was enjoying this.

Joe even had his projection activate Adrenaline Rush to increase its attack speed. Spring did the same, turning it into an even contest again. Joe looked for an opening and controlled his projection to execute Power Strike, but Spring used the same skill. The two weapons clashed and no damage resulted.

Joe was getting agitated as the fight continued. His opponent was still smiling as if he was fighting for leisure. Since long-range attacks were not working, he decided to come forward. With him and his spectral blades, Spring would have to deal with attacks from multiple directions.

'Let's see if you can still act relaxed!' Joe uttered in his mind. He rushed forward while continuing to shoot range attacks.

When Joe arrived, the dagger in Spring's hand turned into a long sword. Playing with the two weapons in his two hands, he blocked the projection, Joe's swords, three spectral blades while dodging Joe's occasional range shots.

"He had a good dual wield form," Domon praised.

"Yeah," Jack agreed. "It was not simple handling a spear using only one hand."

"He is also rather proficient in using those different weapons," Domon added.

"He is good in using all kinds of weapons," Jack said. "Not only weapons but he can also be said to be an expert in all kinds of classes and game systems as well. He is truly an all-rounder."

"Good in all things means he is average in everything," Leavemealone commented.

Jack was surprised the guy commented on something other than Wong's match. Jack replied, "not really. He might not be the best in everything, but he is at least above average in everything. He had another thing that he is best in, though."

As Jack said that, Spring also uttered something in the match, "time's up." His spear changed to a hammer and he smashed Joe's projection aside using Power Strike. He then thrust at Joe using the longsword on his left hand. However, the thrust was too forceful, it opened himself up.

Joe was delighted. His opponent finally made a mistake. Joe parried the thrust using his sword while his three spectral blades slashed at Spring who was defenseless.

But just before the blades touched Spring, they vanished.

Chapter 674: Perfect Control

'Their duration ends?' Joe thought in surprise when he saw his Spectral Blades disappear. Time's up? Was that what his opponent meant by the words?

While he was taken aback by the event, Spring twisted his sword and slashed Joe's wrist. Joe hurriedly retreated and started casting another spell. Spring's hammer and longsword disappeared, replaced by his blue spear again. He made successive stabs, causing Joe difficulty in casting.

Joe's projection returned. Confident that his projection would hinder Spring, Joe resumed his casting. The projection slashed at Spring. Spring, however just rushed ahead without stopping.

Joe was confused by Spring's action, but he was then stunned when his projection also vanished just before its slash hit Spring.

'Duration ends again?' Joe thought in alarm.

"The max-leveled Spectral Blade and level 12 Spectral Projection had only a twelve seconds difference in their duration, and you have cast the spectral projection first," Spring uttered while his spear stabbed repeatedly at Joe.

Joe had to cancel his casting to defend. He suffered damages because he couldn't block all those stabs. His mind was in turmoil, how could one keep such detailed timings during a fight? Did he have an internal stopwatch inside his brain?

Spring's spear changed to an axe as he approached. It seemed that he was using the same approach as the previous match, utilizing Weapon Master's perk while enclosing.

A small green light suddenly flashed at the right side of Joe's waist. This green light slashed upward with surprising speed. Anyone would have been caught unaware by this sudden strike, but Spring had jumped back before this green slash hit.

"Wind Slice, an Elf's race skill in conjunction with the classes from Warrior's branch," Spring uttered.

'He has predicted it?' Joe thought in dismay. The Wind Slice was indeed his fifth-month race skill. It slashed with wind energy in melee range, dealing 200% wind damage and a 20% chance to cause Poison effect. The best thing about this skill was it had no telltale sign aside from the brief flash before it slashed. Any opponent in an intense melee exchange wouldn't have paid attention to this brief flash. Yet, Spring did.

Joe didn't let his surprise stop his movement. Even if the Wind Slice failed to hit Spring, it still allowed him to put a distance. Joe backstepped further as he cast a spell.

Spring's weapon changed into a spear again as it thrust, which Joe parried with his sword while continuing backstepping. Joe's spell was completed and his body was covered by Mana Shield.

With the shield, he was more confident to engage Spring. He charged forward and continued shooting range attacks with his glowing left hand. Spring who had been advancing was moving away instead.

"What are you doing? Don't you want a melee fight?" Joe shouted.

Spring Crown simply smiled in silence.

As the reversed cat and mouse continued, Spring suddenly sprang forward after some time. His weapon was empowered by Ki Weapon, it seemed that Spring had decided to be more serious. Joe aimed his left hand to shoot at Spring but nothing came out. His left hand was no longer glowing.

"Shit!" Joe uttered.

But his Mana Shield was still active, he proceeded to clash with Spring. Spring's melee weapon constantly changing, causing Joe to have difficulty in anticipating his fighting style. The Ki Weapon glow remained even when Spring changed his weapon. Joe suffered several hits but his Mana Shield absorbed the blows.

Joe was worried that he would be caught off guard again when his Mana Shield expired, so he looked at its duration.

'Shit, four seconds?' He exclaimed in his mind. He hurriedly disengaged from the melee. From the exchange, it was clear that his martial expertise was not at Spring's level. He won't survive a pure brawl.

Spring didn't chase but he readied his stance to deliver Ki Wave. Joe saw it and started casting a spell.

Spring's Ki Wave shot out. Joe's completed his spell and a round portal appeared in front of him. It was Mage Knight's level 45 spell, Displace. The spell created a portal that displaced all range attacks coming from the front. Another portal appeared near Spring, the Ki Wave shot out from this second portal back to Spring.

Spring didn't appear surprised by Joe's move. He was still smiling when he assumed a defensive position. His spear glowed with soft light. The Ki Wave hit his spear and was seemingly absorbed into his spear. The glow on his spear turned bright.

"That's...," Joe was taken aback by Spring's move.

Spring used Charge to close in. Joe also used Charge to flee. However, he bumped into something just after moving a few meters. He realized then he was already at the edge of the arena. He had bumped into the transparent protective layer around the arena.

"Shit!" Joe cursed again.

Spring had arrived before him. "You should have paid more attention to your surroundings," he said as he thrust his spear forward while executing Ki Strike.

A large blast of energy engulfed Joe. His mana shield is no more so he received full damage from the blast. Joe was already not in full health before suffering the blast. But even if he was, it won't make a difference. The damage number indicated that Joe would also die if his health was full. Joe's lifeless body fell to the floor beside Spring.

"Very high damage," Jack uttered.

"Aside from his Ki Weapon and Ki Strike are already max-level. His damage is further added by Absorb Energy skill," Peniel explained.

"Absorb Energy? Was that the skill he used when he blocked his own Ki Wave?" Jack asked.

"Yes. It is a non-standard Weapon Master skill. It allowed the weapon to absorb any energy attacks, amplifying the weapon's stat for a short duration. The degree of increase depends on the energy it absorbed. His Ki Wave just now must also be at max-level to boost his spear's stat that much."

"He didn't use that skill against Joe's attack because his own attack is more beneficial to be absorbed. He had used Joe's own spell for his benefit. He is frighteningly in perfect control throughout the match."

Jack turned to his grandfather. "He will be your opponent in the final round. What do you think?" Jack asked.

"His martial art is above average, but nothing that I can't handle," Domon replied.

"Tsk, that's not what I'm asking! You have to be careful against that control of his," Jack uttered.

"No one can be in full control in a fight. I will teach him that. Don't worry, I will secure a victory for you," Domon said.

"You are so sure your grandfather will reach the final?" Paytowin asked.

"Against that weird lovebird? No doubt," Jack said.

"Afei, we can't be so certain of our victory until the end. Even against a seemingly weak opponent, we have to be vigilant," Domon admonished.

"F*ck me! You just said you will secure a victory against a strong opponent a moment ago."

"If it is a strong opponent, we have to be confident to increase morale. If it is someone we think is weaker, we have to be vigilant to not be caught off guard."

"This sounds similar to something you have said before, doesn't it?" Peniel said to Jack.

Jack decided to not comment.

After coming back to life, Joe walked with slumped shoulders back to his seats. Anotherday and Darkradiant were also wearing glum faces. This meant the two of them couldn't afford to lose.

Pallas announced the next match to proceed.

*

Rogue Section Match 4

Kill Order, level 46 Assassin (human) Vs Wong, level 46 Battle Monk (orc)

*

Another heavenly enforcer, Jack thought. He was kind of putting his money on Kill Order more than Darkradiant. If Kill Order could stop Wong's advance here, then they were one step in stopping Master's plan.

"You mentioned that Wong is a martial grandmaster, right?" Paytowin asked Jack.

"Yeah."

"You said he can use mana manipulation as well?"

"No doubt."

"But why are his damages not as impressive as that Arthur guy? That Arthur only used two attacks to finish off an Avenger with a high HP pool. This Wong fellow needed five strikes to finish his opponent who had lower HP. Is it because mana manipulation is more powerful if used with a weapon?"

"No, the reason is that he didn't use mana manipulation in his previous match," It was Domon who answered. "Well, his attacks are not exactly bereft of mana manipulation. He simply didn't use active mana manipulation. For a grandmaster, even if he didn't intend to use it, a little bit of the chi still enhanced his strikes. Yet, the difference between actively using mana manipulation and not is the difference between heaven and earth. If he used a proper martial technique with mana manipulation, he could have ended his previous match with a single punch."

"He underestimated his opponent," Leavemealone commented.

"A weakness that you can exploit when you go up against him," Domon said.

Chapter 675: A Grandmaster's Power

Wong was standing with his arms folded when Pallas announced the start of the match. He was still standing without moving a muscle.

"You are not going to finish this match quick?" Kill Order asked. "Should I be flattered because you take me as a worthy opponent?"

"Don't kid yourself, I never put you in my eyes," Wong replied. "I just want to show someone in the audience that every player here is nothing before me unless he comes down and challenges me."

"Oh?" Kill Order turned to the spectators' seats, wondering who his opponent was referring to. "Care to tell me who you meant? Maybe the person will challenge me after I defeat you."

"Hahaha, good joke! Tell you what? I will give you a benefit. I won't use my arms. How about that?"

Kill Order frowned. Wasn't this getting a bit too overboard? He then snorted. He concluded that it was only a taunt his opponent used to try to rattle him. Not using arms? He wanted to see how this person tried to keep his words. He had seen Wong's fight, he knew his opponent was a highly-skilled martial

artist. But this world was based on the game system, the rules were different. Not to mention, he was not your average martial artist as well.

Kill Order's two hands held two daggers. One had a red blade that sometimes produced scorching smoke, the other had a blue blade that constantly chilled the air around it. These two daggers were both super rare weapons that delivered fire and ice damage.

He activated Poison Mastery. With this skill active, his attack would deliver fire, ice, and earth damages. Wong simply stared at him without any expression.

'Let's see you keep your words,' Kill Order thought and ran forward.

Wong continued to stay still despite Kill Order's threatening approach. When Kill Order was about to arrive, he lifted his right hand, preparing to deliver a stab. But suddenly, he made a hard jerk to the right.

An extremely fast shadow swept by the place where his head had been. He didn't see Wong moving. He had dodged the attack due to mana sense. If he only relied on his eyes, he would have been hit by that attack just now.

Kill Order looked down and realized that Wong was not exactly not moving. One of his knees was slightly bent. And then Kill Order felt the danger again, just as that leg with the bent knee turned into a blur.

This time, Kill Order didn't manage to dodge completely. He placed his two arms in front of him to block. He felt a very strong impact on his arms. He hurriedly retreated as multiple leg shadows swiped at him.

Kill Order retreated far away before stopping. He only stopped after realizing his opponent did not chase him. Wong was still standing in his original position. His two arms remained folded. His statement of not using his arms was not a taunt. Wong was even grinning now. A very smug grin in Kill Order's opinion.

"Shadowless kicks," Kill Order muttered while gritting his teeth. He was not going to let himself get humiliated like this. He swore he was going to make Wong regret the decision of not using his arms in this fight. He lunged forward again.

This time, before he arrived, he threw his left dagger. The dagger flew straight at Wong's head. But before it hit, Wong's leg came up and smacked the dagger away. The dagger that was smacked away vanished at the same time Kill Order also disappeared. The two appeared behind Wong's back, the dagger was already back in Kill Order's hand. Kill Order had used Phase Strike to get behind Wong.

Wong's body swiveled as he back kicked. A leg's reach is still longer than an arm holding a short dagger. If Kill Order proceeded with his attack. He would be hit by the kick while his opponent would still be unscathed, so Kill Order canceled his stab and jumped to the side, evading the kick. But he executed Unblockable Stab before that. A phantom dagger shot towards Wong as Kill Order moved away.

Wong's feet that had kicked out, retracted with a high speed as it lashed at the phantom dagger. Kill Order sensed a spike of mana in the battle monk's feet before it hit the phantom dagger. The phantom dagger was shattered from the kick.

Despite he had predicted it after sensing the unusualness in Wong's kick, Kill Order was still shocked that someone could stop the Unblockable Stab.

Wong jumped while Kill Order was still stunned. He finally moved away from his initial position. The Battle Monk class also gave him super jump ability. He was directly above Kill Order, his arms were still folded. His two legs turned into a blur.

Kill Order felt multiple kicks coming at him from all directions. There was no space for him to retreat. Out of option, he used Vanish. His body disappeared as Wong's storms of kicks rained on the floor where he stood a moment ago.

Wong sensed Kill Order's position. He ran in that direction.

Kill Order was not surprised seeing Wong gunning at him despite his invisibility. For a more skilled martial artist like Wong, the old orc should certainly have higher expertise in mana sense.

Kill Order used Combat Clone. He lost his invisibility when he used a skill, not that it mattered to Wong anyway. Two Kill Orders appeared at the same time. Since this clone was not an illusion and could deal damage, it had mana as well. Hence, it was more difficult to differentiate which was Kill Order's real body.

The two Kill Orders came at Wong from two sides. Wong was not flustered. His legs sent multiple shadow kicks. Repelling the two Kill Orders' stabs. Even with two bodies, Kill Order still found it hard to land any attack on Wong. That was already under the condition that Wong was not using his arms at all!

One of Kill Orders lunged forward forcefully, trying to land a stab without a care for his life. Wong figured this should be the clone. He dodged the forceful assault and made a roundhouse kick. The kick struck the clone's head, causing damage and sending him reeling.

Wong then approached the real Kill Order who was retreating. He used his shadowless kicks to stop Kill Order from escaping, before tapping Kill Order's hands with two quick kicks, opening him up for a larger attack. Wong then lifted his leg high and sent it down with a devastating axe kick.

The axe kick struck Kill Order squarely on the face. Wong seemed to be tired of this match and wanted to finish it, so he used mana manipulation in that axe kick. A huge damage number appeared above Kill Order's head.

When Wong thought the match was done, he suddenly sensed something from his back.

"What?" He was just about to turn back when a swift shadow arrived before him and stab onto his back.

The one that Wong had kicked away the first time had been the real Kill Order, while the retreating one was the clone. Kill Order had intentionally done a forceful assault to trick Wong into thinking he was the clone, giving him the chance when Wong was distracted.

He then used a non-standard skill, Fleeting Shadow Strike, this move turned his body into a shadow that zoomed forward with extreme speed and delivered a deadly strike. With Rogue's Backstab in effect, the resulting damage would be very high. It could possibly take out Wong in a single strike. At least that was what Kill Order hoped for.

At this time, however, the tip of his blade hovered a quarter inch away from Wong's body, unable to push forward.

"Steel Body? No... He will still receive damage despite that skill," Peniel muttered. Steel Body was Battle Monk's level 45 skill. It turned the Battle Monk's body into as hard as steel for thirty seconds and reduced damage received by 30%.

"That is not a game skill," Domon said. "That's Iron Shirt, a defensive martial art that accumulate chi at the point of impact and prevented the blow from hitting."

Kill Order, who was stunned by how his dagger refused to stab into Wong, felt extremely dense mana around the spot he was stabbing. The mana blocked the dagger from going further. This mana then exploded, pushing Kill Order back. Kill Order was the one attacking, but he was the one sent reeling back.

Wong turned around and sent a high left kick at Kill Order's head. Kill Order could feel the dense mana from the kick. It would not be a simple Battle Monk's standard damage if he was hit. He dodged away from the kick. But just as he did, he sensed another attack coming from the opposite side. He had only a glimpse before Wong's right feet slammed onto his head.

"Twin Dragon Kicks," Domon said.

"Twin Dragon Kicks...?" Jack turned to Red Death. It was similar to the double stabs that Red Death used on him during the warehouse fight. Perhaps Red Death modified this martial art into using daggers instead.

Kill Order lost control from that strong kick, his head slammed strongly to the floor. The last thing he saw before reviving was Wong's foot stomping down on his face.

Chapter 676: Knives Against Bullets

"He truly didn't use his arms," Jack said.

"Show-off," Paytowin uttered.

"He has the right to show-off since he has the ability," Domon said, he then turned to Leavemealone, "Should we leave?"

Leavemealone stood up without saying anything. Domon stood as well. The two then left.

Wong and the revived Kill Order walked back to their seats as the next participants entered the arena.

*

Archer Section Match 4

Ronald Dreary, level 46 Gunner (ethereal) Vs Anotherday, level 46 Hidden Weapon Specialist (elf)

*

Anotherday's expression looked deadpan but Jack could see the tense glints in his eyes. He bore the same burden as Handsome Joe in his previous match, he couldn't afford to lose this match.

Both men stood opposite each other in the arena. Both wore a long coat that covered most of their bodies, concealing their weapons. Ronald swiped his coat aside, revealing his two revolvers. As before, he didn't take them out. His hands simply hung beside the weapons. But everyone who had seen his match before understood that his stance now had no difference with the guns already in his hands, ready to shoot.

"Begin!" Pallas declared.

At the same time as Pallas' word was heard, Leavemealone's coat moved and a knife shot out. It was a flying knife that was thrown using Archer's skill, Precise Shot. Aside from enhancing damage, this skill also increased the speed of the projectile. The throwing dagger zoomed with blinding speed, almost as fast as a bullet.

BANG

Yet, a gunshot was heard and the speeding flying knife was knocked out in the air.

Ronald had made a shot from the hip using his left revolver. Almost instantly, his right hand turned into a blur and the right revolver also fired from his hip.

BANG

Followed soon after the sound of that last gunshot was the clanging sound of metal hitting metal. Anotherday was holding his knife right in front of his forehead. He had predicted the gunner to target his forehead the same as the previous match. The bullet had hit the knife instead.

At the same time, Anotherday moved to the side as four flying knives were thrown.

Ronald made two simultaneous shots. Two of the flying knives were hit in the air, and they flew at an angle that hit the two other flying knives, canceling all four flying knives. The spectators' eyes were bulging seeing the display.

"F*ck! Is he playing a pool game using his bullets?" Paytowin uttered.

Anotherday who was on the move was no less shocked than the others, but he didn't let his assault stop. His enemy's accuracy was too inhuman. He needed to keep the offense to stand a chance. It's a good thing a Hidden Weapon Specialist had the highest attacking rate among the range classes. His hands never stopped throwing weapons while his legs never stopped running.

Anotherday took a chance when his Flying Dagger skill was off cooldown to throw four knives again. At the same time, he threw a boomerang that targeted Ronald from the side. Ronald would have to move if he was to avoid all the attacks.

Yet, Ronald insisted to stay on his ground. In exchange, he used his first skill in this tournament, Rapid Shot. Five shots were fired consecutively from his right gun, indicating his Rapid Shot was at least level 15. His left gun fired a shot to the side, hitting the boomerang in the air.

The five Rapid Shot's bullets hit the four flying knives without fail while the fifth bullet hit Anotherday's leg.

Anotherday endured the pain but never slow his movement down. Against such a highly-skilled shot, staying still was identical to a shooting dummy. He continued his assault and threw another knife using Precise Shot.

Ronald fired simultaneous shots again. One bullet hit the knife in the air while the other hit Anotherday's other leg.

The gunner, however, was surprised when he saw that after the throwing knife in the air bounced away, there was a small round ball flying towards him. The small ball had been flying behind the knife, out of sight.

The small ball was Anotherday's Exploding Bullet, the ball was already close to Ronald by then. It then exploded.

Ronald could no longer insist on staying on the same spot. He moved to the side in an attempt to dodge the explosion, but he was still hit and damaged by it.

Anotherday wasn't going to let this chance go. He immediately rushed forward and unleashed Concealing Needle.

Thirty needles came at Ronald from all directions, sealing his escape. Seeing there was no way to escape, Ronald used his Throw Grenade skill. The grenade, however, was thrown just a little bit above his head. The grenade exploded, damaging himself in the process.

The force of the explosion, in the process, struck all the flying needles coming his way. The needles were thin and weak. All thirty needles couldn't bear the explosive wind and were swept away. Everyone who was watching was in consternation seeing the gunner using such a self-harm way to save himself. But when they thought about it, if the thirty needles hit, the damage would be much more than the grenade damage. Not to mention the paralyzing effect, it would open up Ronald to further attacks.

That was actually Anotherday's plan. He didn't expect his opponent to use such a suicide move to ruin his plan. But he couldn't afford to stop. He threw his knife into the smoke from the grenade explosion. A normal Throw Grenade skill wouldn't have left that much smoke. Anotherday guessed it was a skill modified by a seed.

He had also summoned his Grey Sharp-winged Eagle when he threw the Concealing Needle. It was currently flying above and was swooping down at Ronald who was still inside the smoke.

A shadow shot out from the smoke and snapped the flying knife in the air. When the shadow landed, Anotherday found it to be an odd creature that looked like a cross between a dog, badger, and raccoon. It had black-ring eyes and a body covered with white and grey striped fur.

"That's a Boom Hound," Peniel uttered when she recognized the creature. "It's a rare elite beast monster, but small enough size to be an archer's pet."

The Boom Hound made a shrilling sound. The sound created a sonic bullet that shot out from its mouth. The Hound's accuracy and attack speed were not as good as its master's, so Anotherday could still easily dodge its attack with his speed.

Its movement was fast though, it ran forward amongst Anotherday's knife throws. Its hide was thick enough to endure the knife attacks.

Ronald, who had Anotherday's eagle swooping down at him, aimed his revolvers up. Two bullets shot and hit accurately at the eagle's wing bones. The eagle's HP was high enough to tank the damage but the hit to its wing bones caused it to lose its ability to fly for a moment. It fell to the floor as Ronald moved away.

Anotherday used Powder Throw to the Boom Hound that had come near.

"He shouldn't have let that Boom Hound comes so near," Peniel commented from the spectator seats.

"Why," Jack asked.

The Boom Hound itself answered the question. When it was blinded by Anotherday's skill. It opened its jaws wide and released a deafening high-pitch sound. A shockwave radiated from the beast. Anotherday was hit by this sonic shockwave.

He received small damage, but that was not the problem. At the same time, he was also inflicted by Curse and Confused effect. Both negative effects prevented him from using skills. He could only make a normal range throw for a duration.

Due to the surprise of suffering from the negative effects, Anotherday's movement had stopped. Ronald's bullets came then. Two bullets hit almost at the same time at the side of Anotherday's head, scoring critical damage.

Without the ability to use skills added by the critical hits just now, Anotherday's heart sank. He wanted to run again but the mood affected his movements. He was not as fast as before. Another two shots came and hit his head again, claiming his life.

Match four of the Archer section ended with another victory for the heavenly enforcer.

Handsome Joe slammed the side of his seat. He didn't blame Anotherday. He was blaming himself for not being strong enough. He looked over to where Darkradiant and Blackhole. Even if Darkradiant could win her match, another heavenly enforcer still needed to be defeated. Could it be done by the other participants? Were they to lose getting the item they came here for and even had to watch the enemy get what they after?

Anotherday, after reviving, had the same gloomy expression. His cold face that was as if nothing could bother him, was now having a frown.

"You are good," he heard a voice from his side. He looked over and saw it was Ronald who was talking to him.

"Good enough that I deem you a worthy target. I will put you on my list. See you again in the wilderness, hehe."

The ethereal gunner went away after that.

Chapter 677: Fist Bump

The match proceeded to the last individual match of the day, the Mage section.

*

Mage Section Match 4

Selena, level 46 Elementalist (human) Vs Rudeflower, level 46 Warlock (elf)

*

The two women stood inside the arena, waiting for Pallas' cue, which he gave soon, "Begin!"

Rudeflower cast Mana Bullet and Energy Bolts, just as how all the matches of Mage section had started with since match two. Selena, on the other hand, didn't follow the norm. She readied her Magic Shield and received the range spells. Only after she had blocked all the attacks that she cast her Mana Bullet and Energy Bolts. She started forming spell formation after those basic spells.

"Shit!" Rudeflower cursed as those basic spells came at her. She could choose to start casting and just tank these basic spells, but that was a chance her concentration might slip, so she blocked using Magic Shield. By the time she was done blocking, Selena was already halfway with her spell casting.

The spell took effect. The area around Rudeflower lighted up. It was the Ice Field spell. Ice Field covered a five-meter radius area. A slow-moving Warlock didn't have movement speed fast enough to escape such a large area. She received cold damage and worse, she was frozen.

Selena cast Fire Enhancement on herself. All her attacks now carried additional fire damage. She shot her normal range attacks that were boosted by fire element at the frozen Rudeflower.

When the short duration of Frozen ended, Selena started casting her next spell, Flame Turbulence. Rudeflower might have come out from the Frozen status, but she was still slowed.

Flame Turbulence covered a lesser area of three-meter radius, but since Rudeflower was slowed, she had no hope of escaping the area.

After getting a slow status, Rudeflower was resigned to not being able to escape the spell's radius, so she started casting her spell instead. She only managed to finish half of her spell formation when the Flame Turbulence erupted around her.

She focused her mind to endure the pain and the heat as she maintain her casting, trying her best so her spell formation didn't break. Due to that, her casting became even slower than normal. The spell finally took effect and she was protected by Barrier.

She then started casting her big spell, Hell Gate. Once her hellhounds came out, she could reverse this loss.

However, Selena's Fireball came. Between the Fireball and Flame Turbulence that was both boosted by Fire Enhancement, the damage was enough to gobble up the barrier. Selena added by sending normal range attacks again.

Before Rudeflower could complete even one-third of Hell Gate's spell formation, her HP had been depleted.

Selena had won the Mage section match again.

Rudeflower was full of regret after she was revived. She had lost simply because of a wrong first move. But a loss was a loss, she congratulated Selena for the win. Selena returned the courtesy and said that she was lucky.

The crowd cheers on the display of sportswomanship between the two.

*

They had a twenty-minute break as usual before the team match. Jack and Paytwin again mingled down there while enjoying refreshments. While they were enjoying, Jack found Grace to be nearby, also enjoying refreshments. Their eyes met.

"You will be fighting next," Grace said to him.

"I am," Jack answered. In his mind, he was wondering why Grace was suddenly friendly? Wasn't she still consider him a lecher? He at first thought that she would be scolding him again when their eyes met just now.

"I wish you luck," Grace said next.

"... Thanks."

"Do you have a plan on how to deal with them?"

Jack shrugged, "Beat them till they were all down?"

Grace laughed. Jack thought her laugh was very sweet. "You better be careful with the Bard, though. The one that can turn invisible. You never know when they will strike with that skill."

"Don't worry, I have an ability that can detect people even if they are invisible."

"Really?"

"Yes. It is a martial technique called mana sense."

Jack then explained to her about the mana sense. How that martial technique allowed one to detect attacks. In this world with dense mana, the ability was further enhanced, giving people superhuman's senses.

They continued to chat about other things. When Grace started talking with Jack, Paytwin had intentionally moved away slowly, leaving the two to chat.

"By the way, I just realize. Where is your boy band?" Jack asked Grace during their conversation.

"What boy band?"

"That group of boys that keeps on following you around."

"Oh, them. I asked them nicely to stay. I want to enjoy these snacks by myself." She did not. She threatened them to not follow her, or else she would do to them what she had done to the last one that

insisted on following her. They were currently at the spectators' seats staring dagger at Jack who was talking to their Goddess.

There was another pair of eyes staring at the two. Red Death didn't come down to the refreshment table. She stayed in her seat.

"Good. You shouldn't let yourself be shackled by those people. You should enjoy this world more freely," Jack said to Grace.

Grace nodded, she then asked, "Do you mind if I add you to my friend list?"

"Oh? I certainly won't mind. Who wouldn't want such a beautiful girl as a friend?" Jack said as he worked with his friend interface, not noticing Grace's face that turned slightly red.

After the two added each other to their Friend list, Jack bid Grace farewell. "My match is coming up. I will prepare first."

"Good luck," Grace said and lifted her fist at Jack.

Jack almost bumped his fist on hers out of instinct. The three of them with Paytowin used to do this fist bump gesture in the past before battle. He stopped himself and looked at Grace questioningly.

Grace said, "I used to do this with my friends to wish them luck. Since we are friends now..."

"Oh, okay. Thanks! Now, I will surely win after receiving a pretty girl's blessing," Jack said and bumped his fist on hers.

When he walked away, he again didn't notice Grace's cheeks that were getting redder. Paytowin, who observed from afar, could only shake his head.

Jack, who was walking away, had seen Jet nearby enjoying the snacks as well. He approached the old martial artist.

"You seem rather relaxed," Jack said.

"I can say the same about you," Jet talked back.

The two stared at one another for the longest time before Jet said, "Let's have a good fight, eh, lad? Whoever wins or loses, I hope there is no hard feeling."

Jet remained smiling as he went to take other snacks. Jack watched him for a while before turning in another direction. Jack saw Princess Purple was also down there, enjoying refreshments. He went to her.

"Hey," Jack called.

Princess Purple turned with a frown, who dared to call her with such a manner? Her frown turned deeper when she saw it was Jack. "What do you want?" She asked curtly.

"I think there we can't underestimate the dwarf team. Let's go discuss our coming match with the others," Jack said.

"Not interested," Princess Purple replied swiftly and took a plate of cake from the table. She then started eating while acting as if Jack was not there.

Jack was helpless with the girl. Since she was unwilling, Jack could only try another. He turned and saw Red Death and Yellow Death at the spectators' seats. They were not interested in the refreshments. Jack went over there.

"I think we need to talk about our next match," Jack said when he arrived before the two.

"What for?" Yellow death asked, curtly as well.

"I think the dwarf team is not simple. We need to talk about how to deal with them."

"Easy, you just go in and kill everyone, just like what you did the last match," Red Death said.

Jack felt some annoyance in Red Death's tone. Was it just his imagination?

"Well, I plan that, but I don't think it will be that simple."

"Why not? Do you think any of those five dwarfs can beat you?" Red Death asked.

"Um... No?"

"Then there's nothing to worry about, right?"

Was she angry about something? Jack thought.

"If there's nothing else, move aside! You are blocking the view," Yellow Death uttered.

"What view? There is no match!" Jack talked back.

"I like to see the sky, and you are blocking it!" Yellow Death scolded.

"Fine, whatever!" Jack uttered and walked away. It's impossible to talk with these people, he thought. Whatever, it would be just like Red Death said then. He would simply charge into the opposite force and killed everyone. Uncle Jet might be a problem. He studied martial arts under the same master who taught his grandfather. He was not as strong as his grandfather, but he is also not your average martial artist. But still, in this world, with Jack's current equipment, stats, and skill sets, he didn't think he would have trouble dealing with that old dude.

The twenty minutes passed by very fast.

"Match four of the tournament will begin. Human team and dwarf team, come down to the arena!" Pallas called.

Chapter 678: Second Team Battle

Team Section Match 4: Human Vs Dwarf

Human Team

Giant Steve, level 46 Sentinel

Storm Wind, level 43 Blade Dancer

Red Death, level 46 Assassin

Yellow Death, level 46 Gunner

Princess Purple, level 46 Priest

Vs

Dwarf Team

Longstick, level 46 Paladin

Hideout, level 45 Bard

Sierra, level 46 Elite Marksman

Jet Hung, level 46 Beastmaster

Outdoor, level 46 Druid

*

The two teams entered the portal and found themselves coming out in an apocalyptic landscape, it was a deserted city with dilapidated modern buildings and half-destroyed tall buildings.

"Isn't this set up a bit too non-fantasy?" Jack remarked after seeing the landscape.

No one answered. Red Death and Yellow Death just strolled off in two different directions.

"Wait! We need to figure out how to deal with their scout who can disappear!" Jack called.

"I will know if he comes anywhere near me," Red Death replied without stopping.

"Mind your own business!" Yellow Death uttered.

'These two...,' Jack gritted his teeth.

Princess Purple was already sitting on a chair with a table. There were lots of broken furniture around them, she had managed to find a fully intact chair and table to use.

"You want me to stay with her again?" Giant Steve asked.

Jack sighed. "Yeah, you do that. I will try to find the enemies and finish this as soon as possible."

He then ran off taking the center pathway. He looked around the broken buildings as he passed. There were too many places for that Bard with the Hide skill to hide. But no matter, he won't get a jump on him or Red Death who had mana sense. Giant Steve also possessed some basic mana sense already. Even though Steve couldn't sense mana as well as Red Death and Jack, it should still prevent him from getting backstabbed if the enemy tried to sneak behind him.

*

On the other side, the dwarf team gathered together to have the last discussion before moving out.

Jet spoke to them, "Remember what we have discussed yesterday? Hideout, you walked ahead, we will follow close-by. Remember to avoid that multi-class kid and the red-haired woman. They will know your location if you go too near. Make two taps if you see them, we will move away. If it is the gunner, send us three taps. If we don't meet any of them, we will proceed to their spawning position."

Everyone nodded. Hideout moved away and turned invisible. They no longer use the powder trail anymore. Everyone had seen that trick from the previous match. They will easily be found out if they still use the powder trick.

The four from behind were following Hideout with not as far a distance from the previous match. Hideout made a regular one-tap sound using a stone on the ground or the nearby wall then scratched a direction after every tap. This allowed his friends following behind to know which direction he was heading in.

Jet looked around as they moved.

'This terrain is perfect,' he thought.

*

At the place where the human team came out into this dimension, Princess Purple was again coloring her fingernails. Giant Steve no longer dared to comment about it.

Steve was bored, though. He thought this tournament would be a glorious fight. The others did, as he had watched. But all he did till now was just stand and do nothing, the match ended when the enemy team meets Jack. Maybe he should have asked Jeanny to give him the individual match instead.

He thought back to the third team match between the Orc and the Draconian teams. Now, that was a battle. If only they could have an exciting battle like that. While having the thought, he looked back at Princess Purple and sighed. It was a tall order to have that kind of team battle with team members that hated each other.

Bored, he started to practice the martial arts Domon had taught him. Steve was using a war hammer in his right hand and a tower shield on his left. Domon had Steve practice a lot of swinging since a hammer was Steve's preferred weapon.

A hammer was mainly a weapon for swinging, it was not designed to thrust. It was a weapon that utilized momentum to give a powerful impact against heavily armored opponents. Armors were basically useless considering a hammer could damage the opponent without penetrating the armor. The hammer in this game-world reflected that property. Every blunt weapon like a hammer always possessed an ignore defense stat of at least 20%.

Princess Purple glanced at the giant man when he started swinging his hammer around, but soon lost interest and returned to her fingernail polishing.

After practicing for a while, Steve looked up at the words in the sky. No names were grey out yet. It had been some time. Had none of them met the enemies yet? He wondered.

As he was still gazing at the words in the sky, he suddenly sensed something from behind. He quickly positioned his tower shield at his back, just as a series of hard impacts forced him back. At the same

time, he heard Princess Purple scream and utter, "Who are you, people?!" To which Steve thought was a stupid question, considering they already knew their opponents before they entered this dimension.

Still, he was surprised that these opponents had slipped through their three teammates who had spread out in three different directions. At least they should encounter one of them, shouldn't they?

The one who had forced Steve back was Jet Hung, while his four friends surrounded Princess Purple. The dwarf team had indeed met one of the three from the human team, the red-haired woman. Hideout made a two-tap sound once the red-haired woman came into view. Hideout led the others away from where Red Death was heading by making low tapping sounds.

Jet had instructed them to avoid Jack and Red Death. Jack was obvious. For Red Death, they could surely beat her if they worked together, but it would still take up time, which opened the risk factor in case Jack happened to be nearby. So they took the prudent choice and avoided her.

Giant Steve was trying to get to Princess Purple to help her. She was a priest, she won't be able to survive on her own against four opponents. Yet, Jet blocked his way. Each of Jet's fist strikes using his Katar sent Steve back even further. Steve could feel from the impact on his shield that this old dwarf was using mana manipulation in each of those strikes. Not as powerful as Domon's but still enough to make him step back.

Steve cursed himself. He shouldn't have positioned himself so far away from Princess Purple. His only job here was to protect her, after all. He was currently more than thirty meters away. He needed to get into that range before he could use either Share Damage or Urgent Save to help Princess Purple.

Urgent Save was a Sentinel's level 45 skill. It was used by marking a target. When the target's HP fell below 30% during the five minutes after the mark was placed, the Sentinel would automatically teleport to the target and performed cover. All damages received during the cover were reduced by 70%.

Steve needed at least thirty meters from the target to place the mark. Once a mark was placed, the target could move far away and he would still be teleported when the target was near death.

"Move away!" Steve shouted as he used Shield Bash, trying to forcefully charge through.

Jet performed a double-handed punch at the shield. It was his martial arts called Yin Yang Fists. The punches effectively canceled the knockback effect of Steve's Shield Bash. Steve was instead forced back another step again. Frustrated, Steve made a wide swing using his hammer accompanied by Power Strike.

Jet stepped forward, allowing the hammer's head to hit the air behind him while he caught Steve's swinging arm. He grabbed and pulled the arm and kicked Steve's legs at the same time, making him lose balance, before throwing Steve's huge body away, sending Steve even further away from Princess Purple.

When Steve got up, Prince Purple's name on the sky had turned grey. At this time, the four others from Jet's team came over.

Seeing the situation, Steve decided to turn tail.

"Hehe, too late," Jet said and used his Call Wolf Pack. Six wolves appeared. They ran with high speed and blocked Steve's advance. Steve's slow movement was not able to outrun these fast creatures.

Steve performed Death Carrying Cyclone. His war hammer swung in a wide circle, bashing all six wolves aside.

"You learned Domon's move, not bad," Jet commented. He had arrived near Steve again while the Sentinel was busy with his wolves. The other four dwarves placed themselves in four different directions, sealing Steve's escape path.

"There is no escape, boy. Just accept your fate," Jet said.

"GRAAHH...!!!" Steve couldn't bear to just roll over like that. He used all his skills and abilities to drag the fight longer. In the hope of giving any of his teammates time to return here. But with five expert players ganging at him, he couldn't last long.

His name in the sky was also greyed out.

Chapter 679: Wait Ou

When Jack noticed Princess Purple's name in the sky became grey, he had started running back to the starting location. His heart sank when he saw Giant Steve's name became grey as well. By the time he arrived at their spawning place, everything had ended. The enemies were nowhere to be seen.

"Damn!" Jack uttered. He now knew what Jet was planning. Unfortunately, the message system was disabled here. He couldn't contact the remaining two members of his team.

*

On the roof of a broken high-rise building, Yellow Death perched on its railing which was still intact. He had chosen this building because this was the only tall building where its surroundings were vacant lots without other buildings. This way, he could see if someone came near this building.

His Archer's skill, Keen Sight, gave him the ability to see things slightly further than normal players. He also had a non-standard skill, Zoom Vision, which allowed him to adjust his sight to see things even further. Sort of like looking through the sniper scope of a rifle.

These skills, in addition to Gunner's Shooting Stance and Snipe, boosted with the higher elevation of his current position, he should have no problem shooting anyone that tried to come near. His current weapon was also a rare rifle that had one of its stats increasing the shooting distance even more.

His only problem was that he couldn't see all three hundred and sixty degrees. He had to rotate every few seconds around the four corners of the roof to make sure that no one was approaching. The vacant lots below were wide enough so he should be able to spot someone within those few seconds he was rotating. Except, of course, for that invisible one. But if it was only one person sneaked in here, he didn't believe he couldn't take down that single Bard.

He had seen the names of Giant Steve and Princess Purple getting greyed out in the sky, but he didn't care. He never thought of relying on the others anyway. He stayed in his position. This was the best place for him. He could fight the others on his term here. He would defeat anyone that dared to come near.

After countless rotations on the roof, something finally caught his sight. Yellow Death immediately took a crouch and used Shooting Stance while activating his Zoom Vision.

Two dwarves, the Paladin and the Druid. They were sneaking around from cover to cover. From the way they were moving, they were heading in a different direction than he was in. They were not yet aware of his position.

He watched them a bit longer. Where were the other three? Perhaps they split up? Or perhaps there were three down there? One of them was invisible?

He should be able to snipe them from this distance. His Shooting Stance was already max-leveled, giving him an additional 50 meters of range from his standard range.

Yellow Death relaxed himself, controlled his breathing. He wanted to target the Druid who had less HP, but that Druid made a better use in cover. The Paladin, on the other hand, was more careless. Since he couldn't target the Druid, he could only go for the Paladin.

When he had a clear shot, he hold his breath and pulled the trigger.

BANG

It was a headshot with critical damage. He had used Snipe skill with that shot. Too bad the damage wasn't enough to finish the Paladin in a single hit. His health was critical, though. The Druid started casting a spell to heal her partner. Yellow Death wasn't going to let her. One more shot and he would score his first kill in this match.

As he was about to pull the trigger again, he heard something snapping from behind.

He immediately whirled back, rifle ready to fire. But a hand stopped his rifle midway. Another hand with a sharp blade came punching. The sharp blade of the katar sunk deep into Yellow Death's skull.

"Argghh...!" He screamed. Although he didn't die despite the critical damage. The pain was still unbearable.

Rapid punches followed. The katar pierced his body multiple times. Before he fell, he saw that besides the Beastmaster that was using him as a punching bag, on his left and right were the dwarven Bard and Elite Marksman. As he fell, he was wondering how these three had managed to sneak in without him noticing.

The fact was Hideout had found his position while being invisible. He then went back to inform the others. They then separated into two teams. One was to attract Yellow Death's attention, making him stop looking at the other sides. This bait team consisted of Longstick and Outdoor who had slow movement.

The other three with fast movement sneaked into the building that Yellow Death was in while his attention was taken by Longstick and Outdoor.

*

"F*ck!" Jack cursed when Yellow Death's name in the sky was greyed out.

He had been running around aimlessly, trying to find either his teammates or better, the enemies. But his search was fruitless. He was truly missing the feel when his God-eye Monocle was working.

There were just too many buildings on this map that blocked eyesight. Very difficult to spot anyone.

'This is not working,' he thought.

After thinking for a while, he headed inside one of the broken buildings. No one should be able to see him unless they came into this building. If they did, then Jack would be happy to welcome them.

Inside the building, he sat cross-legged and meditated. He concentrated his mana sense to the fullest. His awareness started to spread, he then felt his consciousness leave his body and soared. He sent that consciousness to the areas around him. Sweeping one building after another.

If using eyes, there were many places around the buildings to hide. He might not be aware of a person hiding in a gap between two fallen walls even if he passed nearby. But with mana sense, it was like a scanner. He scanned everything in the area. Even the smallest insect would not escape his notice.

He started from a close distance to the furthest he could send his consciousness to while performing a circling sweep. It took time as the area was large. After a while, he finally sensed someone. Not the enemy, it was Red Death. She was hiding in one of the abandoned buildings and peeking out from the window. She probably planned to wait until the enemy passed and ambushed them.

After finding Red Death's location, his consciousness returned to his body and he hurriedly headed over to that place.

*

Inside the building Jack had seen during his sensing form, Red Death was still peeking out from the windows. She had been roaming around aimlessly for a while. When her teammates' names started greying out one after another, she understood the enemy was targeting them one by one.

At that time, it was too late to regroup with the others. Also, her pride didn't allow her to do so. She wanted to prove that she could also take down the enemies by herself, like Jack. So she decided to hide and waited until the enemy passed. That way, she should be able to make a jump on the enemies. If she could take out one enemy with this ambush, she could disengage and then trail after them again and continue the hit and run tactic. Hence, she continued to stay inside this building even when she saw no one after so long.

Another advantage of hiding inside this building, there was only one entry point. If that invisible Bard came here, she would be able to sense him entering.

But no enemies came. Instead, she saw someone that annoyed her come running toward her position. 'What is he doing here?' She wondered.

"Cleo! Come out!" Jack called as he approached.

Since Jack was shouting her name, there was no point for her to hide. The enemies would have already known her position if they were nearby.

"What?!" Red Death uttered irritably after coming out. "How do you know I am inside anyway? Is that tool of yours that can detect people's presence work inside this dimension."

"No, it's not working. I found you by using mana sense," Jack answered.

"Mana sense? I don't see you nearby."

"I use the focus mana sense to sense further places," Jack said.

"Huh?" Red Death was confused by Jack's explanation. "Anyway, what do you want?!"

"What do I want? Don't you see from the words in the sky that we are the only two left in our team?" Jack said.

"So what? Even if there is only you alone. You can still kill them all when they come for you, can't you?"

"Thank you for your confidence. But I'm afraid our enemies don't plan to do that."

"What do you mean?"

"Do you remember what Pallas said about the conditions to win this team match?"

Red Death frowned at Jack's words before she came to a realization. "Do you mean..."

"Yes, they will wait out this match. When the time limit ended, if the opposite team has more surviving players than us, they will be declared the winner. There is no need for them to come and challenge me. They can just hide for the remaining of the match and they will win. And we only have less than an hour left."

Chapter 680: Searching for the Enemies

"We have to work together," Jack said.

"Hmph! Aren't you great? Why do you need my help?" Red Death uttered.

"Cleo! This is not the time for your pride!" Jack scolded. Red Death was slightly taken aback by the scolding.

"I'm sorry, I don't mean to yell, but we truly need to work together. Don't you want to win?" Jack asked.

"Of course, I want to," Red Death replied.

"Then we have to work together. We have to win, not just for our pride or for rewards. Bigger issues are happening and we need to win to help with the situation."

Red Death was puzzled by what Jack meant by it, but she didn't care to ask him to explain. She wanted to win, that's all she cared about.

"What do you propose?" Red Death asked.

"We have to find out the dwarf team's position," Jack answered.

"Yeah, no shit. I've been trying to do that most of the first hour. No luck. That's why I decided to hide and wait for them. How are we going to do it with the little time we have left?"

"By doing what I do to find you," Jack said. "Come."

Red Death was clueless as to what Jack meant but she followed after him. After walking for a bit, Jack looked around before deciding to enter one of the buildings.

"Watch the entrance while I go look around," Jack said as he sat crosslegged.

"Go look around?" Red Death was puzzled. So why were you sitting?

Jack closed his eyes. He then did as before. He allowed his mana sense to expand before sending his consciousness away. There was a limit as to how far he could sense. From the first attempt when he found Red Death, he should have covered around one-quarter of this arena dimension. If he was lucky, he should be able to find Jet's team in this second attempt. If he was not, he might need to change location two more times before finding them.

After letting his consciousness roam for a while, he got a result. He opened his eyes, "Found them!" Jack exclaimed.

"What? How?!" Red Death asked.

"I used my mana sense to scan the places away from here," Jack answered as he stood up.

"... I don't think that's how mana sense work."

"Really? It works just fine that way. You should try it sometimes. Come! They are hiding inside an enclosed building. From how I sense them, they should be planning to wait out there until the time limit of the match ends. So they shouldn't be leaving that place."

Red Death followed after Jack despite still being puzzled.

*

Inside a building that still had its four walls intact, Jet and the other four dwarfs were sitting on the floor. Once in a while, Hideout peeked out from the half-broken window.

"Stop peeking out," Jet said to Hideout. "If they happen to pass by and happen to look this way, they will see you and our hiding place will be found out. It is still okay if it is the red-haired Assassin. If it is that Blade Dancer, it will be a hassle. They won't come into this building for no reason. Just stay down and stay calm. I will know if anyone comes too near."

Hideout nodded and sat down, but he was still restless. He was not used to staying still. He hated waiting. He couldn't stop shaking his leg.

"Stop that, you are distracting," Sierra said to him.

"I'm bored," Hideout replied.

"Keep your voice down!" Jet warned them.

Silence returned as they wait.

"Should be less than half an hour now, shouldn't it?" Hideout said again after some time.

No one answered. He didn't ask the second time. His leg started shaking again.

This time, Jet was the one annoyed by his leg shaking. He was just about to reprimand him when he sensed something. His eyes turned wide before he yelled, "Move to the side!!"

A bright thick beam crashed through the window that Hideout used to peek out before. The beam struck Outdoor who sat at the opposite wall. The beam shifted and tore the wall as it moved and hit Longstick that sat not far away from Outdoor.

The beam ended. The dwarves looked at each other in confusion. Jet felt another thing and immediately shouted, "Out! Out! Out of the building!"

He jumped to the broken wall where the window used to be and rolled outside, just as the floor in the room lighted up and thirteen crimson chains burst out of the ground. The chains captured two dwarfs that were still in the room. Hideout and Sierra were the closest to the broken wall. they had also managed to run out before the Myriad Ensnaing chains appeared in the room.

When the two came out through the broken wall, the ground underneath them shone again. Arcane Turbulence erupted and engulfed them, dealing damage as well as causing Disoriented status that slowed their movement.

Jet had sensed the spell and had moved away. He located Jack right away. "Run!" He shouted to Hideout and Sierra. "I will hold him down!"

Without hesitation, he ran towards Jack. He used Call Wolf Pack and summoned his bear pet. They ran together with him charging towards Jack. Jack summoned Therras and cast Magic Weapon, turning into a dual-swordsman.

*

Outside the arena, the royal representatives from the human team were visibly gaping when they saw Jack summoning his pet. This was the first time Jack called out his pet in front of them.

"Isn't that...!" Prince Alonzo was unable to finish his sentence.

"It seemed it is," Duchess Isabelle said. "This outworlder is truly interesting."

Prince Rhemos was also greatly surprised. His face then turned into a deep scowl.

*

Inside the arena dimension, Therras clashed with the bear. Jack used Whirlwind Slash when the six wolves came near. Jet jumped to Jack's back before making a fast punch with his katar but Jack turned back in time to parry the punch.

"How do you find us!" Jet asked.

"By using my mana sense," Jack answered while parrying Jet's follow-up punches and counterattacks with slashes.

"Bullshit! You just attack immediately once I sensed you. You already know where we are."

"That's right. I already know because I use my focused mana sense to sense you from three blocks away."

"That's not how mana...," Jet was about to repeat what Red Death said to Jack before stopping himself. He thought of something that made his movement stopped. Jack didn't let go of the chance. He used Penta Slash.

The first slash hit, but it woke Jet up from his trance, he immediately defended himself by sending his fists to meet Jack's subsequent slashes. Jack's Penta Slash damage was far higher, thus Jet was still damaged despite he blocked the slashes using his punches. He took the brief gap after the fourth slash to roll, dodging the fourth and fifth slashes.

"Damn! You are still fast despite those short legs," Jack uttered.

"Hmph! Don't you underestimate me!" Jet uttered as he jumped and slashed with his katar.

Jack dodged and was about to slash at where Jet landed, but Jet was gone already. Jack sensed that old geezer above him and felt a quick slash at his back. He turned with a slash, Jet had jumped again to his side. Jack felt another slash by the side of his arm.

Jet kept on jumping around him like jumping fleas. His jumpings seemed erratic. However, Jet always went to Jack's blindside. Even with his mana sense, Jack found it hard to keep track of the old dude's jumping. Luckily, the slashes were shallow and his defenses high. With his high body recovery rate, such little damages were meaningless.

Irritated, Jack cast Ice Ring. Jet felt it and hurriedly jumped away, out of the Ice Ring's reach.

"Is that the new martial art you mentioned you have developed for your new body?" Jack asked.

"Hehe, what do you think of it?" Jet said.

"Impressive. You utilized the Beastmaster super jump ability into it. I'm impressed by your creativity."

"You are pretty calm. You might have found us, but you can't keep us here. My four other friends will leave and we will still win, even if I fall here. The two-hour time limit is almost at an end. As long as they keep running, you won't be able to do anything."

Hideout and Sierra had left the area of Arcane Turbulence and had already run away following Jet's order. Longstick and Sierra were still bound by Myriad Ensnaring Chains, but the spell's current grade only lasted twenty-eight seconds. The chains were coming off at the moment Jet was speaking.

"They won't escape," Jack said with a grin. He called his wolf pack out. Ten wolves rushed towards Longstick and Sierra. At the same time, Hideout's voice was heard. Jet turned to the voice and saw Hideout getting ambushed by Red Death. Sierra was trying to help his partner.

Jet wanted to head over but Jack blocked his way. "Your fight is with me," Jack uttered.

"Moved aside, boy!" Jet exclaimed as his two fists produced seven after images. "Even your grandfather takes extra care when receiving this art of mine! Now, move aside or taste the might of my Seven Injuries Fists!"

Jack stayed his ground. His swords danced as they met Jet's seven katar images. The fists, however, seemed to border between fake and real, they seemed far and near at the same time. Jack had a problem gauging their distances. His slashes which were supposed to hit the fists, missed three out of the seven punches.

The three punches struck Jack's body. The first punch made his insides tremble. The second punches produced heavier internal shaking. When the third punch landed, Jack felt a connection between the spots where the first and second punches had landed, then he felt as if he had been electrocuted from the inside.

The damage he suffered was nothing on the first punch, but the damage increased on the second punch. On the third punch, it spiked. Jack's tremendous HP fell by half after receiving the three punches.

If all seven punches had landed, despite his awesome defense and HP, he had a feeling that he would still be instant-killed.