

World 851

Chapter 851: Another Urgent Summon

After what Jack felt like an uncomfortably long time, Greed finally spoke, "I want to spend some time alone."

He then vanished.

This was rather unexpected. Jack was ready to speak more to persuade Greed to stay on the right path and not to return to the dark side, but it seemed that this ex-bad God never intended to give him a chance.

Since it was this way, Jack could only hope for the best.

He waited for an hour inside the hut. There was still no sign of Greed. He decided to just return to his routine. There was no point to worry about something that he had no power of, so he just forgot about the whole deal. Peniel remarked about how easy it was for him to take it easy. She reminded him that there was a chance that Greed might decide to torch this place the minute that God returned, with Jack included in the torching.

Jack simply said that he would try to reason with Greed if he was back, but if bad things happened, then they happened. He couldn't afford to worry about something that might or might not happen. It's better to use his time for something productive and within his power, like grinding the endless wave portal and the dragon flight portal for exp and draconic essences.

He didn't even bother to search for a way out. As Greed had pointed out, Greed never treated Jack as a prisoner. Jack was free to roam this place, and he did. For the first few days in this place, Jack spent hours after the portal grinding to look around the cave hall, but he was unable to find any exit. If his mana sense was not obscured, he might have been able to find a clue, but the environment here prevented that. So, after days of futile search, Jack gave up and just focused on leveling up.

Greed ended up being absent for three whole days. So, Jack abused it by grinding more of the endless wave portal, since there was no one requesting a compulsory portal.

Jack was beginning to wonder if Greed had left him here for good when Greed reappeared. He was slightly relieved when he saw Greed again on the third day, relieved that he was not left stranded here with no way out.

But his relief soon turned to worry. What if Greed decided to torch this place with him in it as Peniel mentioned?

Greed was just standing there quietly with a stern look, so Jack also stood still like an obedient student waiting nervously for his teacher to either hand him candy or a stick.

Without a word, Greed just motioned for him to follow him into the woods. They arrived at one of the trees with the portal and Greed just pointed and said, "Today's compulsory."

Though his mind was still worried, Jack went into the portal. It was one that contained a maze layout. He had to find his way through the maze while being hunted by minotaur monsters. The minotaurs were

rare elites with the same level as him and they mostly appeared one at a time, so it was not a problem for him. But they did halt his exploration of the maze, which annoyed him as the maze was very large. He ended up spending almost an entire day before he found the exit. He only had the time to enter one more portal that day because it was late already. He chose to enter the dragon flight portal.

The next day, it was as if everything was as before. Greed didn't even mention about what they had talked before. Since it was so, Jack also didn't bring up the subject. He did the compulsory portal, which luckily didn't take as much time as the maze from yesterday, and then grind his routine portals for the rest of the day.

By that time, he had spent eighteen days inside this place. All the grinding inside the endless wave portals had allowed all his classes to increase to level 55, with his Blade Dancer not far from level 56. His Terras also enjoyed the express leveling as Jack always summoned him inside the endless wave portal. It was now at level 57.

If he did exp grinding outside, it would be impossible to get a five-level increase in less than three weeks like this. Much less for all his three classes. The most he estimated might only be a two-level increase. This was even considering if he found a suitable leveling ground.

His intelligence and wisdom stats, which were running behind previously, had started to catch up because the stats given by the Time Sage class were massive. Now, it was his Strength and Endurance stats that were getting left behind. He had 48 free attribute points. He used all these points to increase his Strength stat.

He also had 15 free skill points for each of his classes. He had no problem choosing the skill to invest in for Time Sage. He poured all fifteen points into the Acceleration spell. Each level-up added the duration of the spell by one second, while every five level-ups gave him an additional target.

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Acceleration, level 16/20 (Active spell, range, requires magic weapons)

Increase the overall speed of 4 targets by 500%.

Range: 50 meters

Duration: 25 seconds

Cooldown: 1 hour

Mana: 300

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For his Beastmaster class. Since he didn't have many skills, there were fewer options. The only skill that was not yet max-leveled in that class was Strength of the Wild, which was currently at level 15. He spent 5 skill points on this skill, increasing it to a max level of 20.

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Strength of the Wild, level 20/20 (Active skill)

Call upon the blessing of the wild to bestow power. +200% increase to attributes, +10% increase to damage, +100% increase to defense and resistances, +100% to movement and attack speed, immune to movement restriction, recover 110 HP every second.

Duration: 2 minutes

Cooldown: 1 hour

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The remaining 10 free skill points for Beastmaster he couldn't use on any other skills. He realized he might need to search for new Beastmaster's skills, but since he didn't join any faction focusing on this class, that would be rather difficult. He could only leave it to fate.

As for his Blade Dancer's free skill points, he had more choices to pick from. After a brief thought, he invested all 15 free skill points to Phantom Blade. This skill was very useful when paired with Asura. It practically tripled this skill's damage output when it was used with Asura.

Each level up to this skill increased its duration by two seconds.

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Phantom Blade, level 16/20 (Active skill)

Summon a phantom sword that accompanies each sword. Deal 30% damage, cannot be blocked, ignore defense.

Each hit generates 2 sword orbs instead of 1.

Duration: 50 seconds.

Cooldown: 10 minutes.

Stamina: 225

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His daily grinding inside the dragon flight portal also yielded many draconic essences, despite only entering once a day. Since the first time, he had spent another seven times completing that portal. He gained a total of 2,730 draconic essences.

This increased his bloodline level by another one level and he gained one additional active skill.

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Divine Gold Dragon Bloodline, level 5/10 (Legendary bloodline)

- Passive skill: +36% to attributes, HP, Stamina, MP.

- Active skill 1: Gold scale armor: Cover user's skin with gold scale, reducing all damage received by 50%, immune to all negative status effects and knockback effects during activation, all healing and recovery on user are increased by 100%. Duration: 3 minutes. Cooldown: 2 hours.

- Active skill 2: Gold Dragon Sight: Trigger slowdown vision, all object movements are slowed by 1000%, sees invisible objects, can zoom in on distant objects. Duration: 10 seconds, Cooldown: 2 hours.

- Active skill 3: Gold Dragon Vitality: Max HP +100%, HP recovery +200%, attributes +100%, immune to instant-kill effect. Recover all HP and remove all negative status when skill is activated. Duration: 5 minutes. Cooldown: 4 hours.

Draconic Essence: 5940/7000

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On his nineteenth day inside Greed's sanctum, something unexpected happened. Jack had just completed his compulsory portal and was talking with Greed inside his sanctum when suddenly he received a notification.

This notification came from his Recall Plate. It said that Paytowin had activated the Recall Plate Jack had given him. An interface appeared before Jack asking if he wanted to heed the summon.

Jack looked at the interface with surprise. He thought Greed blocked all signals from this place? But then he remembered Greed said it was most signals, not all. Perhaps this Recall Plate was strong enough to bypass Greed's barricade.

Hope rose in Jack's heart. If the Recall Plate was strong enough to receive a signal, perhaps it was also strong enough to send him out? Perhaps this was his chance to escape this place?

He caught Greed's eyes which were looking at him. Greed had been lying leisurely on a couch, but he was now staring at Jack with a serious expression.

"No, no. Don't you..."

Greed was still speaking when Jack hurriedly pressed the accept button. Jack disappeared from there.

"A*shole! What a prick! How dare he leaves without my permission...!" Greed stood up in anger. But the anger subsided as abruptly as it appeared. He sat back down. "Well, I did say he is free to leave. Whatever, I will just punish him when I see him again." He laid back on the couch.

"Hm?" Greed sat upright again and gazed into the distance. He then grinned. "One just left, and another one comes. What luck, to get another plaything so soon after. Hehehe."

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Jack found himself no longer inside Greed's sanctum.

"Yes!" He exclaimed. "I'm free!"

A huge explosion sound cut off his celebration as the ground below him quivered.

"Bro, what are you so happy about? I need your help!"

Jack turned and saw Paytowin's distressed expression. He then looked around the place he was in. He was in a garden.

"This is Daminos Square Garden!" Peniel exclaimed.

Jack recognized the place after Peniel's words. He walked past this place during the outworlder world tournament event. He then noticed fire and smoke in the distance. Several explosion sounds were heard again.

"What the hell...?" Jack was dazed by the situation.

"I need your help, bro. We are under attack!" Paytowin uttered.

"Under attack?"

"Yes! The Council of Virtus is under attack!"

Chapter 852: Assault on a Divine Faction

Jack had trouble understanding Paytowin's words. The sounds of explosion convinced him that Paytowin wasn't joking.

"I thought this place has a barrier protecting outsiders from entering?" Jack asked.

"The invaders used something to deactivate the barrier," Paytowin answered.

"Who the hell dares to attack a divine faction?" Jack asked, still couldn't believe what was happening.

"I'm not sure."

"You didn't see the assailants?"

"I don't dare to go near. The fighting is too fierce."

"The f*ck...! So, why do you call me? Do you think I can do anything against people who dare to attack a divine faction? Well... Not that I complain about you summoning me here. You have helped me out of a prison. I am in your debt, George."

"What...? That's not important! I need your help to get into a shrine. My boss, Myson, had entrusted me with a task to activate a defensive mechanism in the shrine, but there were enemies guarding the place."

"How strong are those enemies?"

"As I said, I don't know. Once I saw them from a distance, I move away and decided to summon you. I need you to engage them. If they are too strong, you can draw them away from the shrine so I can sneak in."

"F*ck! You want me to be bait?"

"Yes!"

Jack saw Paytowin's serious expression. He figured his friend must have been desperate to try anything to complete his task.

"All right, point me the way," Jack said.

As they were about to move, Jack noticed something on his radar. "Hey, are there other players here aside from us?" He asked.

He had seen white dots on his radar. Some were grouped together and moved haphazardly within that group. He figured those should be natives who were fighting. But he also saw several blue dots.

"If there are players, then they should be with the enemies. No players are permitted in this place aside from me," Paytowin answered.

Jack grabbed Paytowin and moved away.

"Two players and two natives are heading here," Jack informed. Since players were sure to be with the enemies, then it was better to avoid that group.

Paytowin didn't ask how Jack knew because he knew about Jack's monocle.

"Where is this shrine you want to enter?" Jack asked.

"That way," Paytowin pointed in a direction.

As they headed there, Jack again dragged Paytowin sideways from where they should be going.

"Another enemy?" Paytowin asked.

"Same group...," Jack answered.

Jack changed direction again, this time he led Paytowin moving back, away from the shrine.

"... I think I know who this group of players is," Jack said.

"Who?"

"The World Maker. One of these players must have the same monocle as mine. This group keeps on changing direction following our positions. I bet this group is part of the enemies who guarded the shrine. They must have detected you when you checked on the shrine from afar. They had been coming at you since."

"The World Maker? But, why do they want to attack this place?"

"I don't know. But if there is any player group crazy enough to dare attack this place, I can only think of them as well."

"What should we do? I need to get into the shrine fast," Paytowin uttered. They had continued to move away. Every step away from their destination was making him more restless.

"We will make a jump on them," Jack replied.

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Four figures walked at a fast pace across vast beautiful gardens. A player with the Avenger class was leading the group. They had been tasked to guard a certain shrine. Their leader had mentioned that someone might come to use the defensive mechanism inside that place. They were to stop anyone who tried to do so.

The avenger had noticed a blue dot on his radar. He was surprised to see this blue dot because his leader had mentioned that it was unlikely for a player to be in this place at this stage. That blue dot left soon after.

He was curious about the existence of this player. So, he went with a portion of the group that was guarding the shrine and go after this mysterious player.

As he did, he was becoming even more surprised when he saw another blue dot popped up on his radar.

He stopped for a while due to this unexpected circumstance but then decided to proceed again. He had two level 60 special elite natives accompanying him. He himself was a level 53 Avenger, while his other comrade was a level 50 Assassin. The current mainstream players were mostly still level 52. His comrade was lower than the mainstream's level because his comrade had died once before. Still, he didn't think the four of them would have a problem dealing with these two mysterious players they were chasing. Those two shouldn't have levels higher than the mainstream.

These two players kept on moving around randomly. He wondered what they were up to. And then, one of the blue dots suddenly disappeared.

'The heck? What is going on?' He wondered. This second player popped up without explanation and now mystically vanished again. The original blue dot was still moving away, so he decided to just catch the player that was still there to be interrogated.

The blue dot suddenly stopped.

'Hm?' The Avenger gave the others the sign to slow down. He observed the blue dot that had now stopped. Was this player looking for something? He was not sure if this player was on the side of the Council of Virtus. He didn't think this player could do much to affect the current battle raging in this place but it was still better if he made sure.

He gave a hand signal informing the others that their target was nearby, just behind that row of trees. They all moved slowly to avoid making noise.

As they were getting closer to the row of trees, the ground underneath them suddenly alighted with eerie green light. Fifteen vipers burst out of the glowing ground, pouncing at them without warning.

All of them were ensnared except for the assassin. The assassin had managed to use his Vanish skill before any of the vipers touched him. He disappeared from the glowing area and reappeared some distance away. While being invisible, he surveyed his surroundings.

"Behind you!" The avenger shouted. His assassin comrade didn't wear God-Eye monocle, so he wasn't aware that the second blue dot, which had now turned into a black dot, had suddenly appeared again behind them just as they were assaulted by these green vipers.

Just as the assassin wanted to turn back, a ring of light clamped his body. His two arms were locked by the side of his body and he couldn't move. It was the Magic Bind spell.

Jack had used Cloak of Shadow's ability to turn invisible under the tree's shadow. Even a high-level native like Arlstraxx couldn't detect Jack when his cloak's ability was active, and so too was the radar of God-Eye monocle. Jack had waited until the four went past him before he sprung his attack.

He was rather surprised when he saw the four because the two players were the ones he knew. One of them even died by his hand in the past. They were GraphicZ and Soundeffect. These two had confirmed his suspicion of the World Maker's involvement.

The two natives following the World Maker duo were priests from the Cult of Phobos. No wonder they dared to attack this place. Only a divine faction would be brazen enough to attack another divine faction. What he was wondering, though, was what was World Maker doing attacking this place? Weren't they busy enough fighting the Liguritutum's civil war?

Paytowin came out from behind the row of trees he was hiding and started shooting using his gun. Brave King followed after him and rushed forward. It went into Myriad Venomous Vipers' circle. Since Paytowin was in a party with Jack, the vipers didn't hinder Brave King.

Under the punishment from the vipers, Paytowin, and Brave King, GraphicZ didn't last long. The two natives lasted longer because they had high HP, but from the rate their HP went down, they also won't last past the Myriad Venomous Vipers' spell duration.

Soundeffect tried to break free but the ring of light that was locking him won't budge. He had never experienced such a sturdy Magic Bind before aside from Master's one.

"Hello, we meet again," Jack came in front of him. "Mind telling me what you people are doing here?"

"You...!" Soundeffect uttered, recognizing Jack. It would be weird not to, considering Jack was the only one that had ever killed him in this new world. "The lightning thief!"

"Lightning thief? Hm... Not a bad title," Jack said. He was thinking about taking out a restraining rope to continue his interrogation, but Paytowin seemed urgent to get to the shrine, so Jack decided to let go of his curiosity and deal with the matters at hand.

"Magic Bind is not a spell that last long, so goodbye," Jack said. He proceeded to use Soundeffect as a practice dummy for his sword art, incorporating mana manipulation. Since this Daminos Square Garden had dense mana condition, a third of his hit successfully carried mana manipulation attacks.

Soundeffect lost his life for the second time before the Magic Bind's duration ended.

Chapter 853: Approaching the Shrine

The two priests of Phobos lost their lives as well, dropping coins and mana cores. Soundeffect didn't drop anything. GraphicZ dropped his God-eye monocle. The monocle was a sure drop item, aside from that, nothing else was dropped. They must have been wearing the Amulet of Rebirth. Considering they were attacking one of the strongest factions in this world, it would be stupid not to wear one.

Paytowin didn't even bother to pick up the loots from the fallen priests of Phobos. "Hurry!" He uttered and ran towards the shrine with Brave King.

"Wait!" Jack said. He picked up those loots and the God-eye monocle then ran after Paytowin.

Jack looked up, some of the natives were fighting in the distant sky. There were even more individuals who could fly here compared to those in the entire army during the civil war between Therribus and Alonzo. If not counting the number of their Eagle Rider Hunters, of course.

Explosion and torrents of energy filled the sky where these individuals were fighting. Jack assumed Fear must have mobilized all his minions here. Otherwise, they wouldn't have been able to push the Council of Virtus to this extent.

"Do you think Fear is here?" Jack asked Peniel. This faction would have little chance of winning if that God was here, because their patron, the God of Courage, didn't exist anymore.

"I don't think so, if he is here, the other Gods would interfere," Peniel said.

Hearing her words, Jack uttered, "Wait! This is one of the good God's factions, right? Why the other Gods didn't come and help?"

"Although we consider them as the God's factions, the Gods themselves simply consider these factions as common mortals. The one that has affection for this faction is the patron God who was watching over this faction's direction. In this case, the God of Courage. The other Gods won't bat an eye unless another God was directly involved in the battle."

"Crap! What a bunch of a*sholes! Uh... Except for Lady Serenity, of course," Jack hurriedly corrected.

"What if we ask for her help? Do you know of a way to contact her? I believe she would come if we ask nicely."

"I don't," Peniel replied. "Maybe you can try looking for an Eternal grade enemy and put yourself in harm's way. She would sense it from the mark she put on you."

Jack rolled his eyes at her remark. If he did that, he might actually get one-hit-killed before Serenity appeared. He turned to Paytowin, "Hey, George! Does this faction have a way to contact the other good God's divine factions?"

Paytowin answered without slowing down, "No. But even if there is, the people in this faction won't ask for help."

"Huh? Why?"

"I've asked them about asking for help when the fighting got alarming. Callan said that requesting aid is an act of cowardice. Even if we fall here, we will fall with honor."

"What a load of shit! Damn, they are taking this courage thing a bit too far," Jack commented.

"My feeling as well. I bet I will get scolded if they know I call you for help, but I don't care. They will have to survive this first if they want to scold me."

As they talked, a large shadow covered the sky. Jack looked up and froze when he saw the largest lion he had ever laid eyes on. It was the size of a cargo plane. It had crimson fur and a fiery mane. It had two bat-like wings with wingspans of almost one hundred meters.

The gargantuan lion flew away and crashed into something that was equally titanic. A five-headed dragon. The two behemoths fought fiercely, causing dust clouds and hurricanes with each of their movements.

"Bro, hurry!" Paytowin called when he looked back and saw Jack stop.

Jack resumed his running after Paytowin's call. He asked Peniel, "Is that...?"

"Yes, that lion is the guardian of the Council of Virtus," Peniel answered.

Jack remembered Peniel mentioned every divine faction had an eternal-grade guardian, which meant that the titanic crimson lion was of the eternal grade.

"The hydra it is fighting against is Fear's pet, the guardian of the Cult of Phobos," Peniel informed.

"They can send their guardian here?"

"This just shows that the Cult of Phobos is serious about this attack. You better be careful here. There should be many other powerful individuals. Don't go joining a fight you can't win."

"You don't need to tell me, sister. This battle is totally out of my league... Hey, George, slow down! Hey...!"

Jack ran ahead and grabbed Paytowin who wasn't heeding his words. "There are enemies ahead! I bet they are guarding that shrine you want to enter."

"How many people?" Paytowin asked, finally stopping.

"Two players, five natives," Jack answered.

"How do they know we want to enter that shrine?"

"If it is Master, I bet he might even know more about this place compared to your faction. Why did they send your weak ass to activate the defensive mechanism anyway? If it is so important, why not send Mihos or Pallas?"

"Everyone is fighting. Pallas is the first one to charge toward the invaders when they first appeared. He should be at the frontline where the battle is the fiercest. I'm the only one that can be spared to carry out this task. So, what do you think? Can we make a jump on these enemies like before?"

Jack shook his head. "The ones we defeated must have sent a message to warn his friends about us. Most likely one of the two ahead also wore a God-eye monocle. My cloak's ability is only activated if I stay still. I can't catch them off guard if they stayed in their positions. Here, take this one."

Jack offered the monocle he got from GraphicZ. Paytowin didn't refuse. He wore the monocle on the spot. Soon, he also could see the enemy's position on his radar.

"So, what should we do now?" Paytowin asked.

"Since the two parties know each other positions, an ambush is off the table. Let's just storm through the front door," Jack said. He fed one hundred mana cores to his amulet and summoned the Ice Demon Fiend. His stock of mana cores was running low now. He had been limiting the use of this amulet in Greed's endless wave portal. If he summoned the Ice Demon Fiend on every entry, he would have run out of his mana cores long ago.

He also used his companion token and summoned Arlcard. The vampire was surprised to find the place he was summoned to.

"What's this place?" He asked. "It feels... thick?"

'Hm? Can he sense mana too?' Jack thought after hearing Arlcard's remark. He also checked Arlcard's level. The vampire was now at level 61. Jack was impressed by Arlcard's diligence. He thought he had caught up to his companion's level.

Arlcard couldn't inspect Jack, but since he was linked to Jack, he could also know Jack's level. He was astounded by Jack's improvement. Their level difference was almost ten levels in the past, but now it had shrunk. He had been grinding crazily to level up, what did Jack do to shorten the gap? He also knew about Jack's triple classes, this fact added to his astonishment.

Jack continued to summon Therras and his ten wolves.

"What's your level?" Paytowin asked. He couldn't inspect Jack but he could inspect Therras. Seeing Therras' level 57 made him wonder about Jack's level.

"Level 55," Jack answered.

"Which class?"

"All three."

Paytowin took in a deep breath. He himself was still at level 52 despite only having one class.

"All right, I am ready. You follow behind," Jack said to Paytowin. "We will clash with them directly. If you see a chance, enter the shrine."

Paytowin nodded.

"Let's hope their side is also short on manpower so they can only spare weak-level natives to guard that shrine," Jack said and led them onward.

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The one that was guarding the shrine was Gridhacker. He had also seen the blue dot on his radar. When GraphicZ informed that he wanted to check it out, Gridhacker didn't object. GraphicZ took Soundeffect and two natives. They chased until they were out of his radar's range, so he was not sure what had happened. He received a message soon, informing him that they had been ambushed by the man who had stolen the Lightning God Blessing.

He received notification of their demise soon after. He checked his party screen again to make sure. He knew Jack was formidable, but had their gap increased so much now that Jack could take down the two in such a short time? In the past, they could still resist somewhat.

Never mind, he had five natives with him. One of them was even that person from the cult. Then, there was also that guy.

He looked back at his comrade, who was sitting leisurely on the ground beside the shrine they were supposed to be guarding. He couldn't believe why Master put this guy in such high regard. Yes, his skill was real. But other than going out grinding and doing his own quests, he was practically lazy in doing all the other tasks given to him.

The guy noticed Gridhacker looking at him. He smiled and waved. Gridhacker looked away.

While Gridhacker was sighing, he noticed two black dots approaching on his radar.

The lightning boy had come. "Get ready, everyone! Enemies incoming," He announced. He took a glance again at his comrade. The guy was still sitting lazily as if he didn't hear anything.

Chapter 854: Weapons Festival

Gridhacker watched his radar. He was standing at the back with four natives at the front, forming a wall. These four were all level 55 special elites. The one remaining native was a distance away, he was standing on the roof of the shrine. That one native refused to follow any of Gridhacker's commands. He was here because his God ordered him to help Master, and Master told him to guard this place. So that's all he was doing, and he would do it his own way.

Gridhacker himself was a level 53 Archmage. He cast Barrier and Magic Field when he saw the two black dots were almost upon them. Rows of shrubs were in between them and these incoming players. So, they were not visible yet.

Perching on his shoulder was a black raven. It was his familiar. It was one of the rare familiar that could do standard attacks albeit very weak attacks. Its skills mostly enhanced its owner's offensive capability to allow it to deal better damage. Its passive boost increased the power of its owner's offensive spells by 10% and also increased the range of its owner's standard attacks by ten meters.

On his radar, several red dots suddenly appeared around the two black dots. 'Their number increased? Is one of the players a summoner?' He wondered.

"Get...," Gridhacker didn't manage to say 'ready' when one of the black dots and three red dots suddenly moved at a very high speed.

Those four had already burst out of the shrubs. It was the lightning boy as expected, although the gears he wore were now vastly different from the past, they looked like a set. Beside him was an ice-covered demon with skeletal wings, a large beast with horns and armor, and an elegant man with an aristocratic vest. The pale skin of this elegant man informed Gridhacker that the man was of the vampire race.

Gridhacker was not surprised by the colorful allies that Jack brought. What surprised him was the unnatural speed the four exhibited. It was as if the four moved at a different time stream compared to them. In just a short while, the four were already upon them.

Jack had cast Acceleration on Arlcard, Terras, Ice Demon Fiend, and himself before beginning his assault. That spell could now affect four targets, so he chose the most battle-capable ones in the group.

Terras activated his armor's supersonic mode, turning even faster than it already was. It also used Tyrannical Charge. The native who Terras was targeting didn't even have time to react when Terras headbutted its horns onto him.

It then zipped around the other natives with its supersonic speed enhanced by the acceleration spell. Its opponents didn't even manage to catch a glimpse of Terras as they kept on getting hit. Ice Demon Fiend and Jack each picked one native and focused their attacks on them. Arlcard cast his Perpetual

Sword of Death from the get-go. The dark energy swords produced by the spell flew around striking all enemies in the vicinity.

Within a few short seconds, the four natives had been battered by countless attacks. Gridhacker who stood further back was also struck by Arlcard's Perpetual Sword of Death. His Barrier didn't last long. He cast Magic Wall but that was soon shattered as well.

He ran out of defensive spells. When the next energy sword came at him, he felt himself getting pulled back. He fell backward as he saw the back of his comrade. His comrade's blue spear was shining with a radiant glow. The blue spear thrust forward and crashed with the dark energy sword. Multiple energy swords came again but the blue spears accurately struck each one. His comrade received small damage with each impact but they were too little to be of concern.

"You!" Jack uttered after seeing the one who saved Gridhacker.

"How are you doing? Domon doesn't come here as well?" Spring Crown replied with a smile. His spear never stopped striking Arlcard's energy swords that came at him and Gridhacker.

The 25 seconds duration of Acceleration had ended, but they had dealt much damage to the four natives in this initial clash. Two were even close to death. Jack left the four natives to his three minions and advanced towards Spring Crown. His wolves had also arrived and assisted in fighting the natives.

Spring Crown, who saw Jack drawing near, moved back. Arlcard's energy swords were too hectic. Even for his reading ability, dealing with Jack while paying attention to the energy swords was too much.

Gridhacker followed Spring Crown in retreating. At the same time, he cast Tracing Beams at Jack. Jack defended by casting Magic Wall. He then countered by casting the same spell, Tracing Beams.

Spring Crown took position near Gridhacker and activated Assaulting Frenzy, increasing his attack speed. His spear then turned into a blur as it struck each of Jack's ten beams. He was forced backward with every impact, but none of the beams scored a direct hit.

Gridhacker cast Mana Beam but Jack easily dodged this linear attack. Jack arrived before them soon. His sword clashed with Spring Crown's spear.

"I've told Domon that I wish to fight you someday. Seems like today is my lucky day," Spring Crown said, still smiling.

"Same here, number one gamer!" Jack replied. Four extra arms sprout from his back.

"Whoa! Six weapons against one. That is unfair!" Spring Crown uttered. "Let's even up the odds a bit, shall we?"

Eight different weapons materialized and floated around him. Each weapon was a different type of melee weapon. It was Weapon Master's level 50 skill, Weapons Festival.

Weapon Master possessed a special equipment interface that gave them nine equipment slots for each melee weapon type. When they changed their weapon, it was taken from one of these nine slots. Hence, they could change the weapon with speed instead of searching for the weapons inside their inventory.

When Weapons Festival was used, aside from the weapon the weapon master already had on hand. The other eight weapons were also summoned. Each weapon hovered around the weapon master and would strike any enemy in the vicinity, dealing 200% damage to the weapon's damage value. This skill lasted one minute at its first level. But knowing Spring Crown, Jack thought it's unlikely this skill was still at level one.

Spring Crown used Spirit Weapon as well, increasing the number of his weapons to ten.

Jack's six arms clashed with Spring Crown's ten weapons. Although Spring Crown's number of weapons was more, Jack's Asura skill also provided a boost in attacking speed and critical chance. Since Jack's base speed was already monstrous, the boost allowed him to easily cope with his adversary's superiority in terms of the number of weapons.

What troubled Jack was Spring Crown's degree of accuracy. The Weapons Festival was like the Spirit Weapon, it could be left to attack the enemies on its own or be controlled consciously. Spring Crown, of course, chose to control each one. Each weapon struck from different angles and with a different rhythm and style. They were also very attentive to any opening to Jack's stance. This made Jack feel as if he was fighting against ten experts instead of just one.

"... Did you cast a spell to lower my speed?" Spring Crown said amongst their clashes. "It's a very small change, but I'm certain I'm slower than usual."

"You can perceive it? As expected of the number one gamer," Jack replied. "It is not a spell, however. It is my passive ability."

"Damn! Then that means it will not end? Ain't that cheating?"

Jack felt mana build up underneath him. He used Whirlwind Slash and Ice Ring back-to-back, forcing Spring Crown and his nine weapons back. He then somersaulted back just as Gridhacker's spell that produced blue chains burst out of the ground attempting to capture him.

Spring Crown came at Jack again, his Weapons Festival had a shorter duration than Jack's Asura. He was not going to waste it.

As Spring Crown came, Jack also used his Spirit Weapon. His Storm Breaker's spirit weapon immediately went into melee mode and engaged Spring Crown.

"You can use Spirit Weapon as well? Do you have four classes now?" Spring Crown asked with surprise. "And what kind of Spirit Weapon is that? It looked more like a monster than a weapon. Man, do you hack this game world or something?"

"Or something," Jack uttered as he clashed with Spring Crown again.

With Jack's Spirit Weapon unleashing Formless Flowing Sword style together with Jack, it was Spring Crown's ten weapons who were pushed back in the direct clash.

There were commotions at the back at this time. Jack afforded a glance and saw two of the four natives had fallen. The remaining two were close to death as well. That was not the source of the commotion, the commotion happened because Arlcard's energy swords had somehow frozen in the air. They were then forcefully sucked into one spot before all the dark swords were broken apart.

Arlcard reeled back when his skill collapsed. He suffered damage to his HP and MP when that happened.

Their attention then went to a person in crimson vestment who was slowly floating down from the roof of the shrine. Jack recognized this native. It was Arlstraxx, the level 70 rare elite Cardinal of Phobos. The one who had possessed Winston in the past and also almost caught him during his first encounter with Fear.

Chapter 855: Entering the Shrine

The snake-headed long staff in Arlstraxx's hand emitted a dark glow, except for the snake head's two eyes, which shone an eerie red. Spell formation was formed before it exploded into countless bone arrows. The bone arrows rained on everyone.

Arlcard's rapier danced and destroyed all the bones that came at him. The Ice Demon Fiend did the same with his skeletal wings that revolved around and protected its body. Jack, who was gaining the upper hand against Spring Crown had to stop and deal with these bone attacks.

Therras and his ten wolves tried to dodge with their speed but the bone arrows were like homing missiles. They continued to chase after their targets. Therras didn't suffer much because of his high HP and defense. The wolves weren't so, their HP went down drastically.

Arlcard and Ice Demon Fiend lunged forward at the cardinal. The cardinal seemed to be a ranged magic type. They tried to bring him into melee. The Ice Demon Fiend threw several ice balls as it approached. Arlcard also threw darts that looked like shadow bats.

Arlstraxx's one arm extended forward. A round shield appeared and blocked all these attacks. Before Arlcard and Ice Demon Fiend arrived, Arlstraxx opened his mouth. A shrill cry was heard as a ring of dark aura radiated out. The dark aura hit his two advancing opponents and rooted them in place.

Spell formation appeared again before his snake-headed staff. Ten rays of thin lightning shot out with blinding speed. Two hit Arlcard and Ice Demon Fiend. The other eight targeted Therras and the wolves. Seven out of the ten wolves that were hit by this lightning ray were killed. Therras fared better as it never stopped moving, the lightning ray barely scrapped its body. It didn't receive the lightning ray's full damage.

Ice Demon Fiend received the full brunt of the damage. It lost massive HP. Not only that but its defense was also lowered and it was paralyzed. Arlcard, strangely, didn't show any loss of HP. However, his body suddenly broke apart into countless tiny bats.

The swarm of bats then rushed to Arlstraxx.

"Heh," Arlstraxx snickered. He cast another spell and a dark ball appeared in the swarm's path. The ball exploded before the explosion suddenly reversed and turned into an implosion. At the same time, it produced a strong sucking force in its vicinity. All the bats were sucked by the implosion.

"I don't have the time to play with you!" Jack said to Spring Crown. He used his sword style's burst attack. With six hands performing the martial art, it was not something a normal human could defend against. Spring Crown jumped away dragging Gridhacker as his eight melee weapons and spirit weapon defended against Jack's countless sword lights.

While turning away, Jack slashed and unleashed five wind energies.

"Max-level Wind Slash!" Spring Crown uttered.

Wind Slash attacks traveled at an arc and were extremely fast. It was an attack that was very difficult to be dodged. Yet, Spring Crown's eyes could pick up the trajectories of these wind energies.

His eight floating weapons crowded around the paths of three wind energies. The wind energies crashed into these collections of weapons. The weapons were blasted apart, but they successfully stopped two of the energies, while the third one had its trajectory altered, away from Spring Crown.

For the remaining two wind energies, Spring Crown jumped, letting one of the wind energies passed underneath him. At the same time, he pressed Gridhacker to the ground.

"Hey!" Gridhacker complained. But when he saw the wind energy pass by where he stood a second ago, he turned to Spring Crown with gratitude.

Jack was impressed. There were only two other persons who had managed to dodge his Wind Slash with only their precise body movements. His grandfather and Water Lily, one of Cipher Flight's top echelons. Spring Crown was now the third person to have achieved the same feat.

Still, Jack didn't have the time to admire the feat. He instructed his Spirit Weapon to change into ranged mode and fired its darts at Spring Crown and Gridhacker, keeping them busy. Jack used Charge and came behind Arlstraxx.

"Hey, bonehead. We meet again!" Jack uttered.

Arlstraxx turned around, surprised that someone dared to call him bonehead. When he saw the person who did, his surprise turned to displeasure.

"You! Meddlesome outworlder!" Arlstraxx's hand grabbed towards Jack as dark fog burst out following his grabbing motion.

However, Jack split into multiple shadows before Arlstraxx's dark fog touched him. The twenty shadows Jack had turned into came at Arlstraxx from multiple angles.

Seeing the attack, the dark fog came back swirling around Arlstraxx's body. Every time Jack's shadow was about to strike Arlstraxx, the dark fog cushioned the attack. The damage from Jack's Hundred Shadow Strikes was halved.

"Let me capture you again," Arlstraxx uttered.

Jack sensed mana gather underneath his feet when his twenty shadows coalesced back into himself. He used Roll and moved away just as the bone prison that had caged him in the past appeared where he stood. With his mana sense, it won't be so easy to catch him off guard again.

Arlstraxx cast a spell and a bone whip shot out from his free hand. Jack used Shooting Dash and evaded the whip as he moved away.

"Come back here!" Arlstraxx yelled. His body floated forward while his whip continued to lash and tried to catch Jack.

Gridhacker, who was busy defending against Jack's Spirit Weapon's dart, noticed the other blue dot on his radar started moving.

"No, don't move away from the shrine!" Gridhacker called Arlstraxx.

"Stay back! It's hard enough trying to keep you alive!" Spring Crown scolded and held Gridhacker back. Gridhacker had tried to advance just now. Spring Crown's spear had been busy hitting Jack's spirit weapon's small darts. His Weapons Festival had ended and he only relied on his spear and his own spirit weapon to block these fast-moving and relentless darts.

Arlstraxx didn't heed Gridhacker's call, he continued to chase after Jack. While Arlstraxx was occupied, Therras and Jack's remaining wolves had taken care of the other two natives that were near death. At this time, the front door to the shrine was unguarded.

Brave King burst out from nearby bushes. It was flying. There was a jet booster on its back, allowing it to shoot forward at high speed. It was an upgrade equipment part that Paytowin had installed on his techno golem. Clinging on Brave King's shoulder was Paytowin. The two shot straight towards the Shrine's entrance.

Arlstraxx realized he had been duped. He turned around, but a shadow suddenly enveloped him. Arlcard had been wounded after his bats form received Arlstraxx's gravity attack, but he was still fully able to fight. His shadow lock immobilized Arlstraxx when he was distracted.

"Don't think you can hold me!" Arlstraxx yelled. His body burst with dark fog and the fog negated Arlcard's shadow lock.

Ice Demon Fiend's thick ice beam came at this time, swallowing Arlstraxx and encasing him in a wall of ice.

Paytowin jumped down from Brave King after arriving in front of the shrine. He used his Beam Turret skill. The turret and Brave King shielded his back as he took out a key Myson had given him. It was the key to the shrine. He inserted the key and the shrine's door slowly turned transparent.

The ice wall which imprisoned Arlstraxx erupted with a loud sound. Pieces of ice were scattered everywhere.

"Impudent insects! Move away from that shrine!" Arlstraxx shouted as the black fog enshrouding him turned into tentacles and swatted everyone around him. He also cast the bone arrows spell again. Numerous bone arrows shot at Paytowin.

Paytowin's beam turret shot its beam at the incoming bone arrows but they were too many. Brave King rushed forward and used the new skill it got after Paytowin installed the unique-grade Power Core of Courage. Its body shone and then erupted with a powerful blast. All the bone arrows were disintegrated by the blast. Even Arlstraxx's fog tentacles dissolved when they were touched by the blast. Arlstraxx was unable to advance.

The delay allowed the shrine's door to completely become transparent. Paytowin lunged inside. Once he did. The door became solid again, blocking everyone else from entering.

"You cretins!" Arlstraxx shouted furiously. When Brave King's powerful blast subsided, Arlstraxx immediately rushed forwards. His fog tentacles knocked Brave King away and destroyed Paytowin's beam turret. He then hit the shrine's door again and again with his fog tentacles, but the door didn't budge.

He looked back with a savage face. "I will slay all you dogs here!" He uttered menacingly.

Jack stepped forward. Arlcard, Therras, and Ice Demon Fiend by his side. Brave King had also stood back up. Although Arlstraxx was at the same level and grade as Garland. Jack didn't think the cardinal was at the same power level as the lightning dude. Arlstraxx didn't exhibit any mana sense or mana manipulation ability. Furthermore, Jack and the others had all become stronger from the time they fought against Garland.

"Don't look down on us, you creepy f*ck! Who will slay who is not yet known," Jack shot back.

Chapter 856: The Defensive Mechanism

"It's coming! Move!" Spring Crown said as he pulled Gridhacker just as Jack's Spirit Weapon fired its offensive beam.

"It does that every one minute, pay attention!" Spring Crown told Gridhacker.

They had continued being kept in range by the darts from Jack's spirit weapon. Without his Weapons Festival, Spring Crown could only defend. He should have been able to approach the spirit weapon and go on the offensive if he didn't need to protect Gridhacker. But since he did, so he couldn't. The spirit weapon also fired a powerful beam in an interval.

The first time just before the Spirit Weapon fired its beam, Spring Crown noticed something was amiss with his astute perception. But since he didn't know the nature of this new attack, he failed to evade the attack properly. He instead used his Absorb Energy skill to block. He didn't suffer any damage and his spear was filled with enhanced energy. He still kept that added energy while waiting for an opportune moment to counterattack.

Gridhacker had been trying to send his raven familiar to sneak an attack on Jack's spirit weapon, but the poor raven was shredded by the weapon's fast-moving darts. The raven was now unavailable for a period of time.

"Damn it! That kid managed to enter the shrine," Gridhacker uttered.

"We have done all we can, no need to feel bad about it," Spring Crown said.

Gridhacker gave the guy an annoyed look. 'What all we can? You seem to do this half-heartedly!' He thought instead of saying it out loud. The guy had been keeping him alive all this time, it would sound ungrateful if he said it.

"We need to help Arlstraxx," Gridhacker said while looking at Arlstraxx who was being ganged upon by Jack's team. All the other remaining natives they brought were down already.

"I will be very impressed if they can cause a situation where that person needs our help," Spring Crown returned.

"We should still quickly end the enemies here and try to find a way to enter the shrine before the kid activates the defensive mechanism."

"What's the worry? Master still has that, doesn't he?"

"Yes, but it will be a waste to use it here. We might need it later for a more important matter."

"I can't think of a more important matter than winning against a divine faction."

"Just... do your best!" Gridhacker was running out of patience.

"Geez, fine! But if I do that, I can't protect you anymore. Are you ready to die? Do you wear an amulet of rebirth?" Spring Crown asked. He never stopped deflecting the attacking darts while speaking.

"I... Yes," Gridhacker said.

"Give me your God-eye monocle as well. You know that will drop even if you wear Amulet of Rebirth."

"... You talk like I'm sure to die," Gridhacker felt looked down upon.

"Let me put it this way then. Do you think you will still be alive now if not for me?"

Gridhacker made a scowl. He then reluctantly took off his monocle and gave it to Spring Crown.

"All right, I'm heading out now. You take care of yourself," Spring Crown said. He made quick swings, deflecting all the attacking darts one more time, before using Charge. His spirit weapon followed behind him.

Gridhacker cast Barrier again which had gone off-cooldown. He also readied his Magic Shield to defend.

Spring Crown's Charge left a trail of light. It was also three times faster than a normal Warrior's Charge. This was because Spring Crown had evolved the skill by using a seed.

The central eye orb of Jack's spirit weapon was glowing again. Spring Crown had memorized the beam's timing. He had known about the incoming attack. He canceled the Charge and ducked with uncanny timing, using Ki Wave at the same time. The beam rushed by above him while his Ki Wave struck the spirit weapon. The spirit weapon was unable to dodge because it was firing its core beam.

The Ki Wave carried the enhanced energy Spring Crown had received when he used Absorb Energy, so he dealt much more damage than usual. Spring Crown arrived before Jack's Spirit Weapon then.

Jack's spirit weapon immediately rearranged itself into melee mode and slashed at Spring Crown using dual swords.

Spring Crown disappeared and appeared behind Jack's spirit weapon with a Flash Slash, hitting it. At the same time, his own spirit weapon attacked from the other side. They were now flanking Jack's spirit weapon from two sides. Although Jack's spirit weapon used Formless Flowing Sword style, it was only an imitation. Against a real martial expert like Spring Crown, he easily found opportunities to strike among the slashes. Gridhacker also gave support by throwing range attacks.

While they were at an advantage, Jack's spirit weapon suddenly flew up.

"HP is low, automatically activate finishing mode," The spirit weapon uttered.

"Sweet Lord, it can even talk. Where did that Storm boy find this toy?" Spring Crown uttered. But when he saw the sword transformed into a gigantic sword, his intuition told him that it was not something to look down upon. His expression turned serious then.

"Gridhacker, see you back at the base!" Spring Crown uttered.

When Gridhacker was confused about what Spring Crown meant by that. He saw the guy suddenly shoot away, causing the air to explode as he did. It was a movement skill that Spring Crown had learned from a technique book, Propelling Dash. It was similar to Jack's Shooting Dash but traveled a much longer distance. It only dashed one time, though, as opposed to Jack's three-time dashes.

While Gridhacker was still wondering, Jack's spirit weapon stabbed onto the ground nearby and its energy core enlarged.

"Oh, shi..." Gridhacker didn't have the time to complete his curse as an enormous explosion erupted from the energy core and engulfed him. His HP zeroed instantly despite his Barrier still intact.

*

Jack left his spirit weapon to fight on its own while he and the others focused on Arlstraxx. The cardinal was just too dangerous. Arlstraxx had the fog tentacles that surrounded his body. They struck at anyone who came into melee range and protected Arlstraxx from all incoming attacks, reducing the damage the cardinal suffered.

At the same time, Arlstraxx continued to cast one spell after another. Despite being outnumbered, he was still at an advantage.

Arlcard took a chance when the cardinal was looking at him and used his mesmerizing stare. The stare could only paralyze someone as strong as Arlstraxx for a brief second, but during that small window, everyone sent their strongest attack.

Ice Demon Fiend used its ice spears. Therras was already in its sovereign mode because Jack used Ultimate Beast skill. It was now gathering Earth energy in its mouth to fire its earth core bomb. Brave King used Flame Burst which produced blue fire.

Arlcard didn't use his rune technique because it took too long a time. Instead, he used a new spell that he had received after increasing his level. It was another seven-runes spell. It created a gigantic image of a dark, ominous sword stabbing forward. Peniel informed Jack later that the spell was called Dark Lord's Sword. It was a single target spell that dealt huge darkness damage.

Jack didn't use his strongest skills but he used a decent one, Wings of Devastation. Everyone was using a ranged attack so his wide-area spell didn't hit friendlies. Before all the attacks hit, the fog around Arlstraxx coalesced into a thick dense ball, covering the native.

The combination attacks drowned Arlstraxx completely. When it was over, Arlstraxx's HP only went down by ten percent. However, the fog that always hovered around his body was no more.

Arlstraxx looked at his adversaries with a savage grin. "Good, good. You people have successfully enraged me." He cast a spell and multiple dark balls were thrown out. When it came close to a target, it exploded into a large gravity field. Ice Demon Fiend and Brave King were not fast enough and they got

caught by these bombs. Their bodies were sucked by the gravity field and received continuous damage each second.

Jack, Terras, and Arlcard used their speed to evade these bombs. Arlcard used another new skill, Shadow Clone. It produced a similar clone as the Assassin's skill, except this clone was completely black and dealt darkness damage.

While they continued to evade the gravity bombs, Jack sensed that his spirit weapon had exploded using its finishing mode. He glanced at his radar, trying to discern if his spirit weapon had managed to take out Spring Crown and Gridhacker on its own. If not, he would need to be cautious. He didn't want to get ambushed while fighting Arlstraxx.

He saw on his radar there was still one black dot. So, one enemy player was still in play. This black dot was coming from behind him. He immediately detached and moved away from Arlstraxx. He turned around swinging his swords, which then clashed with Spring Crown's blue spear. Arlcard and the others continued to battle against the cardinal.

"How about we have a rematch?" Spring Crown said. "I know you are still holding back."

"Yeah, I figure your boss is here too, right?" Jack asked.

The two resumed their match. Spring Crown used Assaulting Frenzy again, increasing his attack speed to catch up to Jack's speed. His weapons kept on changing as they kept on clashing with Jack's swords.

"Don't bother to look for him. You have better look for a way to escape," Spring Crown replied.

"You should be the one that flees with the rest of your friends. Paytowin is activating the defensive mechanism as we speak. You guys have failed."

"The defensive mechanism here doesn't truly matter. It won't change the outcome of this battle."

The ground suddenly shook heavily. They heard loud rumbling sounds from the distance. Jack then saw a colossal form rising in the distance. It was a humanoid golem. It rose and stood up straight. It was extremely gigantic. Jack estimated it was probably as tall as a twenty-storey building.

While he marveled at the sight, another similar golem stood up in a different direction. Then another. Jack then realized that he recognized the golem's head. It was the head of the stone statues placed around the edges of this Daminos Square Garden. The ones that he thought reminded him of the stone head statues from Easter Island.

"That... Those are the defense mechanism?" Jack asked.

Chapter 857: Another Encounter with Master

"Master has told us about this defensive mechanism, but it is still impressive to directly bear witness to it," Spring Crown said.

Jack had asked Paytowin during the world tournament what those stone face statues around this place were for. Paytowin said he didn't know. Jack then asked how many were these stone face statues as he

saw plenty of them while he was walking around the edges of this place. Paytowin informed that there were a total of twelve.

Jack could only see three colossal golems from where he was, but he had no doubt the other nine had also risen. The ones he could see started to look around, no doubt searching for enemies. Two were stomping at something on the ground, the other one was swatting around at those who flew in the sky. The eyes of this one suddenly shone. They then fired bright beams.

"Hah! That's what you called doesn't matter? You people are done for! You better pack up before you get squashed like a bug," Jack said to Spring Crown.

Instead of answering, Spring Crown pointed to the sky.

Jack was not a ten-year-old who turned his attention away when his opponent was pointing at something. He first moved away from Spring Crown at an angle where he could still see Spring Crown and the direction where Spring Crown was pointing at. Spring Crown stayed put and didn't show any intention to attack.

Jack caught something floating far away in the sky where Spring Crown had pointed. His superb eyesight allowed him to identify that floating thing. It was a person. It was Master!

Master was lifting his hand high. That hand was holding something. Jack had a bad feeling after seeing it.

The thing held by Master broke apart and released a blue shockwave. This shockwave radiated out an incredibly large distance. When this shockwave came to them, Jack cast Magic Shield and held it before him.

The shockwave passed him by but he didn't feel anything. No damage nor any impact force. When he was confused, he caught sight of Paytowin's Brave King. The techno golem had been damaged by Arlstraxx's gravity bombs, but it was not enough to destroy it. It had been moving again when the gravity field from the bomb ended, but after the shockwave passed. It dropped flat to the ground and stayed still.

"Don't... Don't tell me that shockwave is..."

The shockwave finally reached the colossal golems in the distance and confirmed Jack's fear. When the shockwave touched the colossal golems, each one of them shut down and became still.

"That was a legendary consumable item that Master had prepared for the contingency if those defensive statues were activated," Jack heard Spring Crown's words.

"The Anti-techno Pulse Bomb!" Peniel uttered. "How did Master get his hands on that legendary item?!"

"Why didn't they just give him the name for what it is? A bloody electromagnetic pulse bomb. Damn that Master, he is truly hell-bent on destroying this place?" Jack turned to Spring Crown. "What is Master's objective for invading the Council of Virtus?!"

Spring Crown shrugged. "I'm just a goon who carries out orders. I am not privy to such information."

Jack caught sight of something in the sky again. A very large runic symbol was forming above Master.

"Me... Mega spell!" Jack uttered after watching the scene.

In the meantime, with Brave King malfunctioned, Arlstraxx was more free. Arlcard and the others were having trouble. The situation was turning for the worst, Jack couldn't hold back anymore. He activated Life Burning Art and transformed into the supreme dragon. He was intent to finish off Spring Crown fast. But instead of facing him, Spring Crown had retreated far away using the Enhanced Charge.

"I'm not playing with you anymore. I can see that I'm not your opponent," Spring Crown said as he continued to flee. Jack was astounded again by Spring Crown's ability to read the situation.

Since Spring Crown was evading him, Jack didn't want to waste time chasing the guy around. He returned his attention to Arlstraxx, helping his minions. He still had one attention on the sky, though. Master's mega spell was cast at an incredible speed. Even faster than Duke Alfredo when Jack first saw such a mega spell in the past. Even if Jack used his dragon flight and flew to Master, he won't be in time to disrupt the spell casting.

One rune formed after another. When the spell formation continued after the sixth rune, Jack was astounded. Seven runes mega spell? It was the same level as Duke Alfredo's mega spell. Then another rune appeared.

'Ei-Eight runes...?'

"Master has learned an eight runes spell?" Jack uttered with disbelief.

"Impossible!" Peniel said. "Outworlder has a restriction. A spell with eight runes can only be learned after their levels reach level 70. No way he is level 70 already by now. He must be using a legendary-grade magic scroll!"

The eight runes mega spell formation above Master was completed. The sky above turned red and cloudy. A thunderstorm was heard from the gathering clouds.

"Peniel... What spell is that...?"

While Jack asked the question, many large fireballs shot out from the clouds in all directions. After the first wave, the next wave of fireballs came out again, and again.

"Me... Meteor Shower..., " Peniel answered after seeing the spell.

Waves after waves of meteors with blazing trails crashed to the ground and caused great explosions. The explosion covered a large area. Natives with basic grades below level 50 were obliterated immediately. Elites survived the explosion, but the meteors didn't fall in just one wave. The second wave came and bombarded the place again, taking out the surviving elites. Then the third and fourth waves came and reduced the special elites to a critical state. The fifth wave took them out.

A meteor fell not far away and hit a group of fighting natives. Peniel noticed the damage it inflicted was around 50,000. She said, "Magic scrolls usually contained spells of only the first level. His intelligence stat must be off the chart to produce such high damage."

With five classes and four that focused on magic-based classes, Jack wasn't surprised by this.

"Madman! Does he not worry about hitting his own people as well?" Jack uttered.

He then noticed one meteor coming their way.

"F*ck! Everyone, moved away!" Jack exclaimed.

They were still fighting Arlstraxx. It was not easy to disengage. He was about to cast Magic Wall again, but a golden figure suddenly shot at the incoming meteor. The resulting impact caused the meteor to explode in the air. The golden figure then landed near them.

"Mihos!" Jack called out.

Arlstraxx looked at this new arrival with wariness. Although Mihos was twenty-one levels below him, the golden champion was a mythical grade. He himself had dropped to almost 60% HP. After he lost the protective fog, he received full damage from all attacks. While for his opponents, he had only managed to kill that ice demon. The vampire and the brute beast still had half their HPs. The most annoying was that outworlder. Although that outworlder had the least HP, he was also the most difficult to hit. It was almost like the outworlder could detect where all his attacks were coming from.

Looking at the situation, if this new mythical-grade opponent joined the fight, even he would be in peril. The one outworlder that was supposed to be his ally had run away without any heads-up. Not that he had any expectation from that outworlder from the start, though.

Arlstraxx cast another torrent of bone arrows to beat everyone back before he floated up to flee.

"Wait!" Jack flew up chasing after him.

Arlstraxx was surprised. Was this outworlder so stupid that he dared to come after him alone?

"I have a message for Fear!" Jack uttered.

"How dare you say his name so casually!" Arlstraxx uttered with anger. His bone whip lashed out at the same time. Jack was ready, his Magic Wall appeared. Though the Magic Wall was destroyed with one hit, Jack was unhurt.

"Master has deceived your God! There is no real world other than this. Ask Fear to go look for Greed if he wants a better explanation!" Jack didn't think Arlstraxx would be peaceful enough for a long message, so he just said his piece in a hurry and then flew back down to where the others were. Arlstraxx looked at him with a contemplating expression before resuming his retreat.

After the enemies left, Mihos asked, "Where is Paytowin?"

Before anyone could answer, the door to the shrine turned intangible again. Paytowin walked out from there.

"Paytowin, Callan summons your presence!" Mihos uttered after seeing him.

"Me? What for?" Paytowin asked.

"I don't know. He sent me to pick you up with haste. His holiness is waiting in the main temple."

"All right," Paytowin nodded. He looked around and found Brave King who was motionless on the ground.

"Master used some kind of EMP tool. It disabled Brave King as well as the defensive giant statues you have activated," Jack informed.

"I know, I was controlling the defensive giant statues from inside the shrine. Damn that Master! He has a countermeasure for our defensive mechanism all along."

Paytowin accessed his techno golem interface and reverted Brave King to a small mechanical ball. He might need to bring it to a repair facility later. He suspected what happened to Brave King was the same as if it was destroyed.

While they prepared to leave, they saw several shadow portals appear out of thin air and more of Fear's cults came out of them. This batch must have been waiting until Master used his Meteor Shower scroll before they made their entrance.

At the same time, Master floated down and cast a spell. Jack's sharp eyes saw the spell formation numbered seven runes. Once the spell formation was completed, a gigantic dark portal appeared. As it did, innumerable shadow creatures poured out of it.

Chapter 858: Perpetual Lightning Judgement

"It is Shadow Army spell. A very rare non-standard Summoner's spell," Peniel informed after seeing the spell.

The shadow creatures mostly ran in one direction, they were heading to the main temple which was the seat of power of this divine faction. After further inspection, the new reinforcement from the cult also seemed to be headed in that direction.

"They are going for the main temple!" Jack said.

"The main temple is where the Altar of Courage is located. They must be looking to destroy it!" Mihos uttered.

"Altar of Courage?"

"It's the source of power for the Council of Virtus. The altar granted buffs to all members. If it is destroyed, not only will every member lose the buffs, they will also receive debuffs for a period," Paytowin explained.

"It's not just about the buffs. That altar is the representation of our devotion to our God. We cannot allow them to desecrate it!" Mihos exclaimed.

"Mihos, you bring Paytowin to the main temple. I'll join you after," Jack said.

"Where are you going?" Paytowin asked.

"I'm going to say hi," Jack said. He then turned to Arlcard. "Arlcard, please stay with them and protect my outworlder friend."

Arlcard simply nodded.

Jack unsummoned Therras. He then flapped his wings and shot up into the air.

He first flew towards the sea of darkness that was moving like a wave towards the main temple. These Shadow Army spell produced so many shadow creatures. There looked to be more than one hundred.

"Damn! That guy is much more powerful compared to the last time we met," Jack said. "A spell that summoned so many minions. He could be an army on his own."

"Don't sell yourself short. You are also more powerful than before," Peniel encouraged.

"Hehe, you are not wrong," Jack said. His left claw then started to form a spell formation. Seven runes were formed at the same time.

"Let's see if your seven-runes summoning spell can take on my seven-runes offensive spell," Jack said.

The spell formation was completed and a sphere materialized before his left claw. The sphere started to crackle with electricity as the surrounding lightning elements were absorbed. He could feel a large amount of lightning energy pouring out from his Lightning God Blessing. Aside from that, the Orb of Raijin in his left arm also released an incredible amount of electricity and fed it into the crackling sphere. Thunder returned to the cloud in the sky above and soon multiple lightning strikes shot down and converged onto the orb on Jack's left claw.

The phenomenon drew Master's attention who was floating not far away. "That's... the lightning boy...?" Master had heard the report about Jack gaining the dragon form. There was no report of others achieving this feat yet. Gridhacker had also sent a short message before he died informing Master that Jack was present in this place.

The lightning sphere in Jack's hand finally finished building up its power. This was the Perpetual Lightning Judgement he had learned from the technique book Garland dropped. He could choose to unleash this spell in the surrounding area or direct it to a fan-shaped area ahead of him. Unlike Garland whose mana manipulation had allowed him mastery over this spell so he could control it to only strike enemies and spare allies, Jack had no such control yet. Luckily, there was nobody else inside that sea of shadowy creatures before him. So, Jack released the pent-up lightning in their direction.

The sphere of lightning exploded and uncountable lightning snakes radiated in a fan-shaped outward. The lightning was so fast that in the second that Jack unleashed the spell, the entire view in front of him was filled with electricity.

The shadow creatures that were touched by these lightning snakes evaporated like burnt paper blown away by a strong gust of wind. Everywhere the lightning snakes passed through, the shadow burst into a puff of smoke. Jack didn't even see damage numbers pop up. The shadow creatures just ceased to exist after getting touched by the lightning.

When the lightning energies subsided, the entire area that was filled with wriggling black sea before, was now completely cleared.

"This is more than I expect...," Jack said.

"The Perpetual Lightning Judgement is unique that it can increase its power by incorporating the lightning element in the surrounding environment," Peniel explained. "By itself, it is already very powerful. But you also have the Lightning God Blessing. When Garland used the spell near you before, the spell only took a tiny portion of your divine power. But now when you cast it yourself, no barrier

prevents it from absorbing your divine power. Your Lightning God Blessing even feed it willingly. Not to mention you also have the unique weapon orb etched into your magic staff. The lightning power contained inside that Orb of Raijin is also nothing to scoff at. That's why your spell has transcended beyond normal. I must say this Perpetual Lightning Judgement spell fits you very well."

"Hehehe, that's right! Tremble before the mighty lightning god, hahaha!"

"That's a pretty bold statement," A voice drew Jack's attention. Master was now floating down towards him from up in the air. Jack flew up and met him in the middle.

When he was up high, he saw the situation more clearly. Fighting was all over the place. The twelve colossal statues were unmoving. The gargantuan winged lion was still fighting against the five-headed Hydra. The two eternal-grade titans were locked in fierce combat. Around them was clear space. None dare to come near these two creatures while they tussled.

There were a couple of other giant creatures seemingly battling golden-armored soldiers at different spots. Those must be monsters that World Maker had summoned using summoning crystals for this invasion. There were lots of players who were no doubt World Maker members. Lots of dark-robed figures were also in the fight, who Jack knew were Fear's acolytes. The Council of Virtus members was seriously outnumbered.

'I don't know Fear has so many underlings,' Jack said in his mind to Peniel. 'World Maker's side should have finished conquering Liguritutum if all these natives fight for him, right?'

'I don't think Fear let his cult go all out in aiding World Maker in the country conflict. They have their pride, after all. But it is different when attacking another divine faction. Fear had no reservation in this case. What I'm confused about is why Fear goes along with this invasion.'

'Master probably promises him that nonsense about helping him cross over into the real world again.'

"Enjoying the view?" Master finally spoke when Jack was silent for a while.

The two stared at one another. It had been some time since they last met. They were measuring each other's improvement.

Master tapped the monocle in his left eye. Some mana cores floated and seeped into the monocle and it glowed. "Level 55? How do you manage to get such a level so fast?"

"You can inspect my level?! Can this monocle be strengthened by using mana cores?" Jack tried taking out some mana cores and putting them closer to his monocle, but nothing happened.

"... mine is special," Master said.

Jack also scanned Master's level. Master was at level 52. He was at the average player's level. Jack could only check Master's first class, which was Warlock. He didn't know the level of Master's other classes, but he suspected they to be also at level 52. Considering Master had five classes, such a feat was very impressive even if he took advantage of the war situation in Liguritutum.

"What is the level of your other two classes?" Master asked.

"Level 55 as well," Jack answered truthfully. "What about your other four classes?"

"I've heard you joined the recent civil war in Themisphere and had control of the native army, but that still doesn't explain your express increase in levels. What did you do?"

'Damn it, this man just ignores my question,' Jack thought with annoyance. Since it was so, he responded in kind as well. "You villain, what is your plan attacking this divine faction? Is it because you are angry that they sent aid to Liguritudum?"

"Do you think I'm such a petty person? Well, if you don't want to answer, so be it. Time to capture you again," Master said.

Twenty earth pillars formed around Jack in the air.

"This again?!" Jack uttered. He didn't stay idle. He used the dragon form's wind jet and flew through the gap before the twenty earth pillars converged.

"Hah! Don't think I can be captured in the same way," Jack taunted.

"Ignorant," Master simply said.

"The earth god blessing's first skill is not done yet!" Peniel warned. As she spoke, the converged pillars fused into one and slowly transformed. It became a gigantic earth wyrm that was now soaring through the air magically.

The wyrm's large mouth aimed to devour Jack. Jack immediately flew away before the mouth clamped shut where he was a second ago.

"Don't get caught. You won't be able to move if you are caught. Even your race skill, Willpower won't free you from that stone prison."

Jack had experienced getting trapped by the stone prison before, he knew it was nothing simple. He didn't plan to experience it again. His body flew around as the earth wyrm trying to catch him.

As he did, he felt something in his flight path, he immediately changed direction as a ring of light appeared. It was the Magic Bind spell. But then, a few other similar rings of light appeared around him.

"What the...!"

The rings of light flew at him. Jack hurriedly cast Ice Ring. The ice energy hit all the rings of light and either froze or slowed them. Jack immediately flew away before the earth wyrm arrived.

"That was an evolved Magic Bind," Peniel informed.

They then heard a deep roar. They turned and saw a large tiger with feathery wings beside Master.

"That's Feral Tiger, Summoner level 50 spell," Peniel uttered. "But one evolved to have wings using a Flight Seed."

"Damn it! Where did he get so many evolve seeds?!" Jack complained as the winged feral tiger came pouncing at him.

Then he caught sight of Master casting a six-runes spell. With him busy dodging both the feral tiger and the winged wyrm, he could only shoot ranged attacks to disrupt Master. But Master had cast Barrier beforehand and it blocked the standard attacks.

The spell was completed and a lean dark figure with wide bat-like wings appeared.

"That is Warlock's level 50 spell, Summon Lesser Demon!" Peniel said.

Chapter 859: Third Battle Against Master

Jack was depressed. He had flown up to meet Master in the air instead of waiting for Master to land because he wanted to fight Master in the air while he was still in supreme dragon form. Master had many minions the last they fought, but most are land-based. He had hoped he could fight Master without the minions' disruption, but now two strong ones had appeared.

The winged feral tiger was a physical melee creature. It continued to come at Jack without fear. Jack would have happily engaged it in combat if not for the earth wyrm.

The lesser demon that Master had just summoned appeared to be a magic ranged creature. Dark beams shot from its eyes as its two hands conjured dark balls which it threw at Jack. These dark balls homed at Jack like homing missiles.

"Crap! I can't even get close to him," Jack complained. Master was already casting another spell. Another seven-runes spell.

Jack cast a spell as well. Three copies of him appeared and flew in different directions. The feral tiger paused a bit because of the copies, but the earth wyrm was not. It still chased after Jack's real body.

"Hmph, you are still using the same trick," Master remarked after seeing Jack cast Body Double. He completed his spell and another winged creature appeared beside him. This time, it was a woman with celestial beauty in a white robe. Two large feathery wings fluttered behind her.

"His fifth class is a Priest!" Peniel uttered. "That is a lesser angel, a summon from Priest's level 50 spell."

"Motherf*cker!" Jack cursed. An angel and a demon by his side. This Master seemed to enjoy the theatrics.

"That lesser angel does not just have powerful healing abilities, it is also capable of offense."

Just as Peniel's words ended, a white flame sword materialized beside the lesser angel. The lesser angel waved her arm forward and the white flaming sword flew forward. As Jack had expected, the sword came at him.

"Another homing attack, f*cking great!" Jack never stopped flying at his top speed. With so many attacks coming at him, he was having difficulty. Luckily he had cast Body Double, when he was cornered, he changed places with one of his copies.

He was very annoyed that all he could do was evasion. The small ranged attacks he threw at Master didn't seem to bother Master at all. He looked at his Acceleration spell, it was still on cooldown. If he

could use it now, he could evade the wyrm and approach Master at the same time before Master could react.

"How long does that earth wyrm last?!" Jack asked. He won't be able to do anything as long as that earth wyrm was still coming at him. That thing could incapacitate him simply by touching.

"It should run out of juice any second now," Peniel replied.

As if heeding Peniel's words, the earth wyrm started to slow down before it crumbled into small pieces of stones. When Jack was ready to counterattack after the earth wyrm was gone, he noticed Master had completed another six-runes spell.

Jack sensed the mana was boiling all around him. The spell Master had cast covered a very wide area. It even covered the areas where his other copies were located. He didn't have his copies fly farther enough. There was no place to run to!

Jack activated Gold Scale Armor just as his entire vision was covered by flame. He was at first worried that this was Hell Inferno, the ultimate fire spell that he had experienced inside the Ancient Battleground. But then he remembered this spell was produced by spell formation of only six runes.

With the Gold Scale Armor active, his HP went down but not alarming enough.

'This is Fire Storm,' Peniel explained. She had hidden inside her hidden dimension. 'It's Elementalist's level 50 spell. Like their level 45 spell, the elementalists can choose between the three elements for their new spell. Master has chosen the fire element.'

As he was still inside the sea of fire, he sensed another attack coming. He immediately changed place with his copy. He picked the one that was nearest to the edge of the firestorm. He then sensed another wave of attacks coming soon enough. He shot out of the firestorm area just as a torrent of attacks swept through.

Jack was not confused about how Master knew his position within the sea of fire. Master could easily know from his God-eye monocle. He, however, was puzzled by how Master knew which copy was his real body. Each copy should register as similar dots on the radar.

When he looked at Master again, he noticed an ominous third eye on Master's forehead.

"He... He has a demon bloodline!" Peniel uttered. She had come out of hiding and cast Fast Heal on Jack. She also noticed Master's third eye. "That is Demonic True Eye. It can see through illusion and invisibility shroud. If the eye placed a mark on you, the eye's bearer will also always know your position as long as you are within a certain distance."

"Ass...! So, I can't fool him anymore with my body double spell," Jack said dejectedly.

He originally planned to have all three copies approach Master and caused confusion. This tactic seemed pointless now since Master knew his real position at all times. But the spell was still good enough as a contingency for evasion. So, he now had the three copies flying in three different directions around Master. Lately, his Body Double spell had upgraded to five stars. He could now change position a total of five times. He had three chances left.

The winged feral tiger came again behind him. Now that he no longer worried about getting caught by the earth wyrm, Jack turned and used Flame Strike.

"F*ck off!" He uttered.

The winged beast was smacked aside, but Jack underestimated the tiger's ferocity. It was pushed back but immediately bounced back again with its maw opened wide, rows of intimidating sharp teeth ready to tear into Jack's flesh.

Jack changed position with a copy closest to Master. He then fired Tracing Beams and followed up with Mana Beam.

The tracing beams hit and pushed back the lesser angel and lesser demon, they also hit Master's Barrier. Jack's Mana Beam crashed into the barrier afterward. Master's five classes gave him tons of HP, which caused his Barrier to be able to withstand more hits, but it finally broke after receiving the mana beam. The beam triggered the chain lightning from Orb of Raijin and injured Master and his minions, but a healing light from the lesser Angel brought Master's HP back to full again.

Jack never expected his ranged spells to deal any significant damage, they were only for creating an opening. He used Wind Jet and dashed forward, arriving before Master in an instant. He activated Phantom Blade and used Devouring Cross, fully expecting his attack to hit. However, a prismatic wall appeared before him.

CLANK

His claws hit the wall and it was surprisingly hard.

"It is lesser angel's defensive spell, prismatic shield," Peniel informed.

Despite his claws failing to pass through the prismatic shield, his phantom claws phased through. They cut into Master's body and caused damage. Seeing that, he used the burst attack of his sword art. His claws struck the prismatic shield in rapid succession, while his phantom claws continued to pour past the shield.

Master, who had always worn a relaxed expression, suddenly turned alarmed when he was barraged by the countless phantom claws. His HP went down considerably.

Unfortunately, even though Phantom Blade was unblockable, it only delivered a small portion of the damage. Jack's phantom Blade had also upgraded to its second star recently, increasing the damage by another 2%. His phantom blade now delivered 34% damage.

Even if it was only the damage from the phantom blades, the burst attack of Jack's sword art should have been able to kill a normal magic player because of the bonus from the combo multiplier, but Master had a phenomenal pool of HP due to his five classes. Hence, he was still safe. He was incredibly surprised though to find himself suffering such high damage.

Jack also activated his magic staff's ability, Mana Steal Aura. The ability stole the opponent's MP by 20 points every second. But Master's MP was so high due to his four magic classes. His MP bar didn't appear to decrease at all.

The prismatic shield finally broke at the end of Jack's burst attack, but Master had cast another spell again, Full Heal. His HP bar had filled back up.

'Damn it! It is even harder now to kill him with his priest class,' Jack lamented.

Jack wanted to resume attacking but several dark chains suddenly came. Jack immediately flew back. The dark chains were from the lesser demon who had returned to Master's side.

"Impressive," Master remarked over the fact that Jack had managed to bring him close to danger. "But let's end this!"

Jack sensed powerful mana. He also felt strong gales forming. Twenty green blades swirled around Master.

"The Wind God Blades!" Peniel exclaimed.

The twenty wind blades slashed at Jack with incredible speed. Jack Gold Scale Armor was still active, but he didn't dare to gamble tanking through this divine skill with only that.

"Peniel!" He shouted.

Peniel used invulnerability just as the blades arrived. Twenty blades cut Jack's body but no damage was produced.

"What?" Master frowned. He wasn't aware of a game function that provided complete invincibility like this when he studied the game's program.

"I've been waiting for you to use that!" Jack uttered. "Now, let's see how you defend against mine with your two divine skills already used!"

Twenty large lightning balls appeared and hovered around Jack.

Seeing the lightning balls, Master was given another surprise. "The size of those lightning balls... You've already upgraded the Lightning God Blessing to level 2?"

Jack didn't bother to answer, he just directed the twenty lightning balls at his opponent.

Chapter 860: Ancestors of the divine factions

Jack was expecting the lesser demon and lesser angel to come forward and sacrifice themselves to block the twenty lightning balls, which wouldn't matter because the Lightning God Barrage dealt wide area damage. Surprisingly, though, they flew away.

The twenty lightning balls crashed into the target and created a large explosion.

Jack didn't bother to use his Soul Breath as well. Despite Master's unusually high HP, he was still a player. His HP couldn't be compared with a native. Jack was confident the Lightning God Barrage alone could devour Master's 19,000 HP. Even if Master cast a protective spell that reduced the damage, the combined damage should still be more than enough to end this battle.

However, when the lightning explosion receded, Master's falling body was not seen. Instead, an extremely large earth golem was there.

"Hahaha, you are not the only one who has upgraded the divine blessing to its second level," Jack heard Master's voice from inside the golem.

"That is the second skill of Earth God Blessing, Earth Titan," Peniel informed. "It created a protective earth suit around the user. He is practically unkillable while inside that suit."

"A suit? That is a f*cking mech! Crap, it can even still fly," Jack said. His Acceleration spell had just come off cooldown but it was no use to approach Master now if Master's whole body was protected.

"This suit is not only for protection," Master's voice was heard again from the Earth Titan. "You like close combat, don't you? How about I entertain you with one now?"

The Earth Titan suddenly shot forward. A wind explosion occurred behind the Earth Titan and propelled it forward.

'It's Wind Jet!' Jack recognized the spell. Master could still cast a spell while in that Earth Titan form.

The Earth Titan arrived and its hand swatted down. Jack was not going to stay around and let himself get hit, he had flown away before the hand came.

Master was casting a spell when he made his physical attack. While Jack flew away to dodge the swat, a giant earth hand appeared where he was flying to. Jack changed position again with his copy before the earth hand grabbed him. He could only change position one last time after this.

Master cast another spell and multiple magic homing arrows came at him. The lesser demon and lesser angel's homing attacks also chased him again, including the winged feral tiger.

"Damn it! I can't hit him while he is protected by that Earth Titan. How long is the duration?" Jack asked.

"Five minutes," Peniel answered.

"F*ck! That's too long. My dragon form would have ended then... Oh, shit!" Jack suddenly uttered.

"What is it?" Peniel asked.

"My dragon form is ending!" Jack said just as he reverted to his real body. He started falling after losing his flying ability.

"Hah! You don't even keep track of your own skill's duration," Master mocked. His large Earth Titan's hand came and attempted to catch Jack.

"Screw you!" Jack talked back while firing Mana Beam which was off cooldown.

'That staff...' Master uttered when he noticed Jack's staff which was casting the Mana Beam.

The thick beam came out from his unique-grade staff and hit the Earth Titan square on the face.

"My head is not there. You won't block my view even if you hit this titan's eyes," Master said. His titan's hand continued uninterrupted. But Jack vanished into a puff of smoke before he was grabbed. Master then looked down to the ground.

His third eye let him know Jack's location. Jack had sent one of his copies down to the ground as an escape option.

"Shit... I still can't beat him," Jack said disappointingly as he looked at Master high in the sky.

"Don't think that you can escape again!" Master exclaimed. All of a sudden, the huge body of the earth titan dropped down with great speed. It was as if Master had canceled his flying spell and the gravity was now exerting its full force on the titan's heaviness.

Jack was alarmed by how fast the titan dropped. It crashed into the ground close to him, causing tremors and a thick cloud of dust surged due to it. A flaming whip suddenly lashed out from the dust cloud.

Jack already sensed the attack. This was the combination spell between Fireball and Hell Whip that Master had used before. Jack's body shot away with Shooting Dash before the whip came.

At the end of his three dashes, he found a large symbolic rune on the ground underneath him. He immediately used Charge to increase his speed again. He ran past the symbol just as a lightning pillar came down and struck dead center at the symbol.

"That was Lightning Strike. Did he actually learn all the non-standard spells in existence?" Jack uttered. He continued to run away. He might not be able to defeat Master now, but with his speed, Master also couldn't hope to catch him.

He looked back and saw Master chase after him. The earth titan's running steps were wide, but Master's base movement speed was slow, so there was no way he could catch up to Jack.

Jack ran to the main temple with the giant statue depicting the God of Courage, where Mihos was supposed to take Paytowin. He saw many of the cultists were heading that way as well. The members of the Council of Virtus did their best to block their paths.

As Jack came near, he saw Mihos, Paytowin, and Arlcard were fighting against several high-level rare elite cultists near the temple's entrance. These cultists also wanted to gain access to the temple. Two council soldiers aided Mihos in repelling them.

The two opposing teams were hindering each other from going into the temple.

Paytowin, who was the weakest of the bunch, was supporting them from a distance with his gun. He had some sort of dark cloak clinging to him. The cloak appeared to be alive. It was a new spell called Shadow Veil that was cast by Arlcard to protect Paytowin. The veil had an HP bar, it absorbed all the damage that was directed at Paytowin, sort of like a Barrier that was cast on another person.

Jack analyzed the situation as he came near. He summoned Therras again and immediately used Combination Assault. He and Therras both shot forward like a meteor and slammed onto one of the cultists, disrupting the man. He then used Flame Strike, sending him away.

"This way!" Jack called Paytowin at the same time he cast Acceleration on himself, Paytowin, Arlcard, and Mihos. He had created a gap and with the added speed, he and Paytowin easily passed through.

Mihos didn't waste the chance that Jack had created. He used his Lion Roar, disorienting all the enemies while Paytowin rushed through. With the speed boost from Acceleration, he went on a rampage to keep the enemies distracted.

Jack and Paytowin arrived at the temple entrance. Arlcard followed them as well. Mihos made a super jump and arrived before them.

"Go! The holiness is waiting at the chancel. I will hold them!" He uttered.

Paytowin was confused about what was so important about getting him to the divine priest while all the rest of this place was falling apart, but he didn't have time to ponder about it. The two council soldiers couldn't block all the enemies. Many had come up the stairs towards where Mihos was standing.

"Let's go," Jack said.

Paytowin nodded. But before they turned around, one of the cultists stepped onto the landing of the temple entrance. As he did, a blinding light shot down and slammed into that cultist. That cultist's HP went down rapidly. When it was zeroed, his body melted under that scorching light.

An incredible strong pressure then came upon them all. The other cultists who were still climbing the stairs all stopped.

Mihos looked up and exclaimed, "ancestor!"

Jack looked up as well and saw an elderly ethereal with an ornate robe. The elder landed in front of Mihos. "No one else is allowed to step through," Odvah proclaimed.

Jack used Inspect on the ethereal.

*

Odvah (Eternal Ethereal, Divine Ancestor), level 90

HP: 4,700,000

*

While everyone was pressured into stasis by Odvah's aura. A large earth Titan ran forward, unaffected. This earth titan punched at Odvah, only to have its fist slammed into a wall of light. The wall then erupted and threw the titan far away.

Cracks spread on the titan before it crumbled, revealing Master.

"Heh, facing an eternal is still too much it seems," Master said.

"You are a very brazen outworlder. Let me punish you," Odvah said. Layers of aurora swept towards Master. But when it was still a few meters away from Master, a dark abyss appeared on the ground, sucking all the auroras. Then, a skeletal face person in a dark hooded robe rose from the abyss. He carried a black scythe in his hand.

Jack used his Inspect on this newcomer as well.

*

Vekja (Eternal Elf, Corrupted Ancestor), level 90

HP: 4,500,000

*

Odvah waved his hand. A dome of light encapsulated the entire temple. Vekja came forward and touched his scythe to the dome. It created a screeching sound as the dome resisted the scythe. The other cultists banged at the dome but their attacks were completely ineffective.

Without turning back, Odvah said to those behind him. "All of you go. Callan is waiting."

"Ancestor, I will fight together with you!" Mihos exclaimed.

"No. I said go. There is nothing that you can do here. Go!"

Odvah's voice was stern. Mihos didn't dare to disobey. He made a bow to the ancestor before turning around and saying to Paytowin, "Come!" He then led them into the temple.