

Second World - Chapter 8 - 8. Another Player -

He waited for a while after the knock, while paying attention to the blue dot on his radar. Before his knock, the blue dot was moving around, but after the knock, it became static. He assumed it must have heard his knock. He made another knock again on the door, heavier this time. The blue dot still stayed at its place.

Was it pretending to not hear my knock? Jack thought.

He lost patience and knocked for the third time while yelling, "Hey, I know you are inside! Open up!"

After a moment of silence, he heard footsteps rushing to the door. The blue dot was coming. Tense up, Jack jumped backward and took out his sword and magic staff.

After several clicks, the door opened.

A middle-aged man with casual attire was staring at him with a bewildered look. The look turned to joy but then replaced by a frightened look when the man noticed the sword at Jack's hand.

Realizing the man was not a menace, Jack stored his weapons. The man's expression now changed to relieve. When he scanned using his God-eye monocle, Jack could see descriptions floating above the man.

Master Chef (Ranger, level: 1)

HP: 110/110

He was a player as well, Jack thought. He didn't know if he should term himself and the man as players. For players were participants in a game, and he was not sure if this world they were in right now was a game or real.

"Yo- You are... a person!" The man stammered.

"That I am," Jack answered.

"Oh, really? Really?" The man advanced and grabbed Jack's shoulders. He grabbed them so hard as if afraid they were just his imagination.

"I haven't seen anybody since... since all this started! Do you know what happened?"

"No, I am equally confused as well," Jack said. "You were here all this time?"

"Yes, why would I be wandering around with all those things outside? Come, hurry! Before those things show up."

He must be referring to the monsters. He went back inside and beckoned me to enter. I complied and went inside. It was a neat interior inside the house, simple furniture decorated the house, no fancy stuff or ornaments. A sofa and a small coffee table were beside the boarded windows, opposite them was a small stand with a small clock and some family photos on it. He heard the clicks again and turned to see the man locked up the bolts and latches on the door.

"I was afraid I am the only one left," he said as he led me into the dining room. "Would you like something to drink?"

"Yes, please," Jack replied.

The man poured some water into a glass and brought it to him. Jack observed the glass.

Drinking water (Junk consumable)

Alleviate thirst

He drank it and asked, "you really haven't gone out at all?"

The man sat down opposite him. "I have, when it first happened. After the loud ringing stopped, I tried to find my wife. I thought she had gone out so I went to search for her. And that's when I saw those dead people on the street. One of them chase after me and I barely managed to run back to my house. That's when I started boarded the windows and added some more locks on the door. What was it? Was it a virus epidemic? Like ones of those apocalypse classic movies that you young folks like to see?"

"I don't think so," Jack said. He didn't think it would be a good idea to tell him about the Skeletal monster, that would blast away his theory on the apocalyptic epidemic. "you mentioned loud ringing? What about bright flash?"

"What bright flash?"

"... never mind."

"I just can't make heads or tails about it," the man continued. "After the loud ringing, there was this woman's voice. And then a black box appeared as if magic. Inside were a bunch of stuff. I tried to move away at first, but something was like holding me, I couldn't move away from that box. So I picked up this knife, figured I could at least use it for cooking. Afterward, there was the woman's voice again, saying some stuff which I don't understand. After all that, I started searching for my wife."

Jack was speechless. This guy had absolutely no idea what was happening. Not like he did either, but at least he had grasped the class, level, and combat mechanics. This guy just stayed at level 1 all this time. Wait a minute, this meant what happened here was not limited to gamers. This guy doesn't look like he had played any games in his entire life.

"Forgive me, I was so excited to see another person that I forget my manners. My name is Bill," the man extended his hand.

Jack accepted the shake. "Jack," he gave his real name since the other guy did the same.

"So, you have been roaming outside since yesterday? How did you avoid those things outside?"

"I don't," he replied.

"You don't?" The man was confused. "You haven't been roaming? Are you a nearby resident then?"

"No, I mean I don't avoid them," Jack took out his sword. "I killed them."

The man was flabbergasted. "With a knife?"

"Dude, this is a sword..."

"Young man, this is not the time to be joking around. Unless you have a gun, don't think about confronting those things outside."

Jack just nodded silently. He was already wasted after a full day of journey, he was not going to waste his resting time trying to argue with this uncle.

"Are you hungry? Why don't I make you something to eat?" The uncle offered.

"I don't want to be a bother."

"No, no bother at all. I enjoy cooking. It helps me ease my nervous mind." By the time he finished speaking, he had scrambled into the kitchen. Jack could hear the sound of cooking not long after.

Guess there was a reason he chose that alias of his.

While he was waiting, he reviewed his status window. He had 1 free attribute point and 1 free skill point for Fighter class and 1 free skill point for Magician class. After some contemplation, he still kept the free skill points but use his 1 free attribute point again on Dexterity again. His Strength was already 28, but his Dexterity was slacking behind at 25. After adding this 1 point he had 26 Dexterity.

The sound of cooking subsided, he closed his status window. There was a good smell coming from the kitchen. Not long after, Bill came out carrying a dish. He put it on the table. It was simple fried rice, but the smell was rich, and the color and appearance were very enticing. Some texts appeared above the dish.

Egg Fried Rice (Food, Apprentice grade)

Recover 50 HP

Increase stamina and mana recovery by 50% for the next 3 hours

Ingredients: 1 Rice, 1 Egg

Apprentice grade? What was this? It had a different classification from the normal consumable items he had gotten till now. Never mind, let's enjoy a good meal first. He had been eating bread since yesterday, a well-cooked meal was much welcomed. After giving thanks to his host, he dined on the fried rice. The taste was delicious, the man well deserved his alias!

"This is very good," he said to Bill while still munching. "If I can cook a fine meal such as this, it would be great."

"Well, young man. This is my simplest dish. If you want to learn, I can share the recipe with you. Here, take this. I used to always write down my recipe, but I don't need it anymore. I can make this fried rice with my eyes closed."

He took the offered piece of paper, some words were scribbled on the paper. After reviewing it, he realized it was the recipe for this fried rice.

Suddenly, he heard the mechanical notification again, "you have learned Cooking recipe: Simple Fried Rice."

"Congratulations, you have unlocked the Auxiliary Skill page, you can review the skills inside the Status window."

