

Chapter 2401 – Alba Gray’s Reward

An S-rank rating? Shi Feng was astonished when he saw the outcome of his quest.

He’d thought that he had barely passed with a C-rank rating. His team had spent nine days collecting the 1,000 Mana strands. He had never dreamed that he would earn an S-rank rating after taking so long.

Receiving an S-rank rating for high-ranked quests with completion rate indicators was incredibly difficult in God’s Domain. The quests themselves were typically challenging, and players had to complete the quest to near-perfection to achieve such a high result.

However, if players could earn an S-rank rating, the original rewards would be improved slightly. Although the bonus wouldn’t be very high, the additional rewards for an Epic ranked or higher quest would be extremely valuable.

A player had a 20% chance of earning an Epic item as their reward for completing an Epic quest, but if they gained the bonus from an S-rank rating, their chances of earning an Epic item would increase to 30% or even 40%.

When completing an Inferior Legendary Quest, an S-rank rating could lead to a Fragmented Legendary item as a reward, which was normally impossible.

Although Zero Wing had plenty of Fragmented Legendary items, every Fragmented Legendary item could enable a player to become a peak or apex expert in the future. Thus, every Fragmented Legendary item was a welcome addition.

After the system had notified Shi Feng of his results, Alba Gray approached him.

“Fellow adventurers, thank you for saving me from that curse. I owe you all a big favor. Although my Knight Division is no more, I will do my best to assist you with one matter,” Alba Gray gratefully offered, showing none of the arrogance Tier 5 powerhouses usually possessed.

System: You have obtained Alba Gray’s trust. Alba Gray’s Favorability of you has increased by 80 points. You have obtained Alba Gray’s Communication Crystal.

Alba Gray’s statement and the system notification excited every member of the team.

They had already witnessed the Hero’s power, and now, they could reach out to Alba Gray and ask him for a favor. None of them had expected to receive this kind of reward.

Guild Leader, with Alba Gray’s help, we can destroy one of Starlink’s cities! I can’t wait to see their faces!” Cola said, his eyes glowing as he gazed at Alba Gray.

“That’s right! Let’s destroy Starlink’s new city! I want to see how they intend to duke it out with us after that!” Blackie exclaimed, nodding.

Starlink had persistently caused trouble for Zero Wing, especially with its newest city. That city had claimed a ton of Zero Wing's potential profit. If they destroyed it, not only would Stone Forest City regain its unique status as the only city in a Level 100 neutral map, but they could also deal a heavy blow to their enemy, killing two birds with one stone.

"No, we no longer need to resort to such a tactic," Shi Feng said, shaking his head.

Starlink had constructed a city near a Level 100 neutral map, but even if Alba Gray destroyed it, there was no guarantee that Starlink couldn't construct a new city. Moreover, other superpowers would soon have cities of their own in Level 100 neutral maps.

The various superpowers' experts had already reached Level 100 and begun to challenge their Tier 3 Promotion Quests. Constructing a new city near a Level 100 neutral map wouldn't be difficult before long.

Moreover, Alba Gray's favor was incomparably valuable, especially now that he had become a Sword Saint. Even emperors would struggle to earn a favor from this Hero. Asking Alba Gray to attack a mere Guild City was like killing a mosquito with a bazooka.

Shi Feng then walked up to the freed Hero.

"Lord Hero, I am a forger and have always been passionate about my craft. I am particularly interested in Mana Forging, and I have heard that your research on the subject is unparalleled on the continent. I'd like to study your notes, if you'll allow it," Shi Feng stated his request after taking a deep breath.

A Tier 5 Sword Saint could even destroy a kingdom with ease, much less a city, but destroying a kingdom was nothing compared to the value of a Famed Smith's knowledge.

Due to Alba Gray's status as a Famed Smith, even Demigods treated him with respect.

Of the many things this NPC was known for, the most famous was his Mana Forging Notes. It was the capital Alba Gray had relied on to become a Famed Smith in the first place.

In fact, his Mana Forging Notes were one of the reasons that the Ten Saints Empire had become as powerful as it was now.

The various superpowers had fought tooth and nail for a single leaf of Alba Gray's Mana Forging Notes. Some had even offered to trade Fragmented Legendary items for the pages.

With Alba Gray standing before him and offering him a favor, Shi Feng had to secure the very item that made the NPC so famous.

The Hero took a long look at Shi Feng, and the silence stretched until it felt awkward.

"Is the request too much?" Shi Feng anxiously asked.

You have a very good eye, young adventurer. You know what is most valuable," Alba Gray praised. "Unfortunately, I've stored my Mana Forging Notes in the Ten Saints Empire's imperial library. Not even I have the authority to retrieve them, and unfortunately, the materials I would need to create a copy no longer exist in this world."

Sure enough.

Although Shi Feng was disappointed, he wasn't surprised. The Ten Saints Empire treated Alba Gray's Mana Forging Notes as a national treasure. The notes were even more valuable than a Legendary item.

Just as Shi Feng was about to give up and wondered if he should ask the Famed Smith to craft him a custom-made Fragmented Legendary Item, Alba Gary opened his mouth to speak again.

"But don't be too disappointed. Before I penned the official Mana Forging Notes, I created a few drafts. Although I have lost many of them, I do have one volume of my drafts with me. If you don't mind, I can gift you this volume," Alba Gray informed Shi Feng as he retrieved an ancient booklet that radiated faint traces of Mana.

The booklet was old and tattered, but it felt somehow timeless, as if very few things in this world could destroy it.

"Thank you, Lord Hero. I will take good care of it," Shi Feng said as he accepted the booklet. He was still disheartened that he couldn't obtain the full compilation of the Mana Forging Notes, he was surprised and pleased that he could obtain one of the notes' volumes.

Alba Gray had relied on his Mana Forging Notes to become a Famed smith. A single volume could easily rival the value of a Legendary item.

"There's no need to thank me. If you need help in the future, you may contact me through my Communication Crystal," Alba Gray said, smiling. He then transformed into a streak of light and disappeared from everyone's vision.

System: You have earned Alba Gray's Admiration. Alba Gray's Favorability of you has increased by 10 points.

System: Alba Gray's Favorability of you has reached 100 points. You have become Alba Gray's friend.

Blackie and the others were confused as they watched the exchange. They didn't understand why Shi Feng had asked the Hero for a tattered notebook, and based on their Guild Leader's expression, he seemed ecstatic about it.

As Shi Feng stored the Mana Forging Notes' draft volume in his bag, Yan Tianxing approached with a white energy crystal in hand.

"Guild Leader, this crystal Ulunium dropped is very strange. Even with my Master Appraisal skill, I couldn't appraise it," Yan Tianxing said, a hint of excitement flashing in his eyes as he gazed at the energy crystal.

Chapter 2402 – Sacred Magic Temple

"You couldn't appraise it?" Yan Tianxing's words piqued Shi Feng's interest. Immediately, the Swordsman used Omniscient Eyes on the crystal.

In God's Domain, very few things defied Appraisal at the Master rank. Only special items could not be appraised by a Master Appraiser.

Generally, these special items were of extraordinary quality, and even the most inferior among them should be at the Epic rank.

Three seconds... Six seconds... Ten seconds...

Even after 15 seconds had passed, Omniscient Eyes still hadn't fully analyzed the crystal.

What is this item? At this point, even Shi Feng could not help but be surprised. When appraising items using Omniscient Eyes, 15

seconds were more than enough to analyze an Epic item. Now, however, the loading bar was still a long way from full.

Finally, when a total of 22 seconds had passed, the white energy crystal's information appeared before Shi Feng.

[Magic Key] (Epic Rank)

A key that can open the second floor of the Sacred Magic Temples found in lost ruins.

Cooldown: 1 natural day

Upon seeing the appraisal results, Shi Feng was dumbfounded.

"Guild Leader, what is it?" Yan Tianxing asked curiously upon seeing Shi Feng's surprised expression.

"A Magic Key! A secret key that can open the Sacred Magic Temple's second floor!" Shi Feng said, a hint of excitement flashing across his eyes as he gazed at the white crystal in his hand. For a moment, he even wondered if the reward for achieving an S-rank rating in

the quest wasn't Alba Gray's favor, but this Magic Key instead.

The Sacred Magic Temple?" Everyone was confused at Shi Feng's words.

They could be considered very knowledgeable

regarding God's Domain, but this was the first time they

had heard the term "Sacred Magic Temple." Judging by Shi Feng's expression and manner of speaking, they concluded that it should be a very amazing place, yet

they actually had never heard of it before.

"It's an excellent place to learn Skills, Spells, and magic arrays. The learning efficiency in the Sacred Magic Temple is at least double that in the outside

world,” Shi Feng explained excitedly.

The Sacred Magic Temple was a relic of ancient times, which normally only appeared in ancient ruins or Lost Towns.

The location of the Magic Gate Shi Feng was

aiming for this time was one of these ancient ruins.

This ancient ruin housed not only a Magic Gate that led

to the western continent but also a Sacred Magic Temple. This Sacred Magic Temple was another

reason why the various superpowers had grown extremely envious of the dark power that ruled over the

Demonwolf Mountain Range in his previous life.

While inside the Sacred Magic Temple, players could freely learn the information stored there so long they had access. The information contained within the

Sacred Magic Temple was generally related to Skills, Spells, and magic arrays used during ancient times. While this information was outdated, it was of great help to players.

Since these Skills, Spells, and magic arrays were

the original forms of present versions, studying them

would allow players to improve their control over

current Skills, Spells, and magic arrays significantly.

Hence, the Sacred Magic Temple was a place many players sought to visit.

Meanwhile, every Sacred Magic Temple had a total of three floors, with the quality and quantity of information stored within each subsequent floor superior to the previous one. However, seals restricted access to the upper floors. Decoding these seals was beyond even a Grandmaster Magician. To enter these

restricted floors, one needed to have the corresponding

key to do so.

Shi Feng never thought that Ulunium would actually drop such a treasure.

This was simply unbelievable!

“Guild Leader, can we learn Tier 3 Spells from the Sacred Magic Temple?” Blackie asked eagerly when he heard Shi Feng’s words.

Tier 3 Skills and Spells were exceedingly rare. Despite grinding in the Demonwolf Mountain Range for so many days, they had yet to come across even one Tier 3 Skill Book or Spell Book. The Tier 3 Skills and Spells they possessed thus far were obtained through

Legacy Skill Points. If they wished to learn more, they would have to find other ways to do so.

If he could freely learn as many Tier 3 Spells as possible, then his strength would definitely skyrocket.

“Learning Tier 3 Spells? Dream on,” Shi Feng retorted, rolling his eyes at Blackie.

If it were possible to learn Tier 3 Skills and Spells

from the Sacred Magic Temple, there wouldn’t have been so many Tier 3 players in the past that had failed to learn all of the standard Tier 3 Skills and Spells for their class.

Having identified the Magic Key, Shi Feng had everyone search for the remains of the Magic Gate.

At this point, everyone was mostly of the same level as the monsters roaming the Demonwolf Mountain Range’s outer area, so scouring it became a lot easier. After spending just half a day exploring, they located a hidden cave below the frozen lake.

After bypassing a Magic Trap, the team arrived before a ruin that had been abandoned ages ago.

Sure enough, this place matches the information. When Shi Feng saw the tightly shut silver gate and the three-story Sacred Magic Temple, he inwardly breathed out a sigh of relief.

Due to his reincarnation, the development of the current God’s Domain had greatly deviated from his previous life’s version. Hence, he hadn’t been confident that the Demonwolf Mountain Range’s Magic Gate still existed in this life.

“Guild Leader, quick, look! It’s the Magic Gate!”

Blackie exclaimed in excitement, pointing at the silver gate. “With this, our Guild will also be able to travel between the two main continents!”

Blackie had never imagined that they would actually find a Magic Gate leading to the western continent. Moreover, even if he wasn’t an expert in magic arrays, he could tell by the looks of the gate’s shape and the magic arrays engraved on it that the

gate was not a one-time-use tool but one that allowed players to freely travel between the two main continents.

Now that Zero Wing had access to the resources of both continents, there was no doubt that the Guild would develop into a superpower.

“It seems the gate has been preserved quite well.

The restrictions aren’t that significant,” Shi Feng said calmly as he inspected the silver gate.

In its current state, the Magic Gate before him could be used only once a week, and each use allowed up to 10 players to be teleported, with each person costing 2,000 Magic Crystals.

Shi Feng was relatively satisfied with this outcome. It was much better than some of the other Magic Gates he knew of that teleported only three to five people at a time. The only troublesome aspect about the gate before him was its long Cooldown. However, now that he had activated the gate, he just needed to wait a few more days to travel to the western continent and start raking in a ton of resources and Credits.

After inspecting the Magic Gate, he shifted his sights to the Sacred Magic Temple.

During his previous life, despite having access only to the Sacred Magic Temple’s first floor, he had reaped a significant harvest, especially regarding his Mana control and Skill Completion Rate.

As for the Sacred Magic Temple’s second floor, all he had was hearsay. He had never personally visited it before.

As for the third floor, he had never even heard of anyone reaching it, much less information about it.

While everyone else was perusing the information available on the Sacred Magic Temple’s first floor, Shi Feng went to access the second floor. He took out the Magic Key and started chanting the incantation.

The activation chant was very short, and he completed it in four seconds. Suddenly, he felt the Mana around him roil. Immediately afterward, he

received a system notification.

System: Do you wish to enter the Sacred Magic Temple's second floor?

Chapter 2403 – Reaching the Realm of Masters

Looking at the system notification, Shi Feng immediately chose to enter the Sacred Magic Temple's second floor.

Immediately, a threefold magic array appeared beneath Shi Feng's feet, and his body instantly turned into a streak of light that shot through the corridor

heavily studded with magic arrays.

When Shi Feng opened his eyes again, he was standing inside a majestic hall.

The hall looked grand and dazzling, with 12

statues of Gods supporting its ceiling. As if they were alive, these statues radiated a boundless life aura as well as a faint trace of Divine Might that felt as if a boulder was weighing down on Shi Feng.

What a powerful Divine Might! If a Tier 2 player

were to come here, they wouldn't even be able to move. Shi Feng was astonished as he looked at the statues inside the hall. Just walking was already extremely taxing for him. A Tier 2 player would most likely collapse as soon as they arrived in the hall.

Subjected to the Divine Might here, he could feel his Concentration getting depleted. Players wouldn't be able to remain in this place for long periods.

Just as Shi Feng was wondering why there was such a setup in the Sacred Magic Temple's second floor, the walls around him started parting, revealing a total of three corridors. Every one of these corridors led toward a separate hall filled with various scrolls. At the center of each of these separate halls was a tome

made entirely out of gold.

Magic array designs! Shi Feng's breathing accelerated when he saw the golden tomes.

These magic array designs weren't just any ordinary designs but Advanced Magic Array Designs, something rarely found even in the various kingdoms and empires of God's Domain.

It should be known that even the Divine Beast's

Descent Magic Array-one of Zero Wing's current trump cards-was only an Intermediate Magic Array. An Advanced Magic Array would be a treasure that could

protect the Guild from imminent peril. Meanwhile,

based on the Mana the golden tomes radiated, Shi Feng was certain that they were Advanced Magic Array

Designs. However, due to his distance from the tomes,

he couldn't tell what kind of Advanced Magic Array the

designs were for.

The moment Shi Feng started toward one of the three corridors, nine magic arrays suddenly appeared in each of them. A test?

After seeing these magic arrays, Shi Feng more or

less understood how the Sacred Magic Temple's

second floor operated.

Of the nine magic arrays that had appeared in each

corridor, each one was stronger than the one before.

Moreover, the magic arrays in each corridor differed in strength.

The first magic array set up in the easiest corridor

was an Intermediate Magic Array, while the more

difficult corridor had an Advanced Magic Array, and the most difficult corridor had a Master Magic Array. Players were most likely required to decode these magic arrays in order to reach the hall at the end of

each corridor.

However, since just being in the hall sapped a player's Concentration. Shi Feng estimated that he could remain here for only six or seven hours-and this

was because he possessed an Advanced Bloodline. An

ordinary Tier 3 player would last four or five hours at

best.

In other words, Shi Feng had to decode the magic arrays within seven hours. Otherwise, he wouldn't be

able to reach the hall at the end of the corridor.

As for destroying the magic arrays, that was utterly impossible.

Due to the pressure from the 12 statues, even a Tier 4 player couldn't exert sufficient strength to destroy the magic arrays protecting the corridors, much less a Tier 3 player like Shi Feng. Only Tier 5 players

would be capable of such a feat. However, it would still be a long time before Tier 5 players started appearing in the game.

Shi Feng couldn't rely on external tools, either. The moment he entered the hall, only his Epic Spatial Bag remained usable. The system had locked everything else.

My time is limited, so I have no choice but to take the simplest path. After giving the matter some thought, Shi Feng decided to go for the corridor protected by the Intermediate Magic Array.

However, despite the easiest corridor starting with only an Intermediate Magic Array, the first magic array itself was by no means simple. It definitely ranked above average among Intermediate Magic Arrays. Even an ordinary Intermediate Magician would need a lot of time to decode it.

However, for Shi Feng, who was only half a step from becoming a Master Magician, decoding it was a simple task. In the end, he spent only two minutes on

The second magic array was at least 20% more complex than the first. Shi Feng spent three minutes on

The third magic array was similarly an Intermediate Magic Array, but it ranked at the top among Intermediate Magic Arrays. Shi Feng required nearly five minutes to decode it.

Upon reaching the fourth magic array, he could not help but frown.

The fourth is already an Advanced Magic Array? Shi Feng was startled as he studied the Advanced Magic Array

Although the Advanced Magic Array before him was a very simple one, even the simplest of Advanced Magic Arrays was a lot more complex than the

strongest Intermediate Magic Array. Meanwhile, if the fourth magic array in his path was already an Advanced

Magic Array, he did not dare imagine what kind of magic array awaited him further on.

However, despite his thoughts, Shi Feng did not stop decoding the magic array and succeeded 12 minutes later.

Fortunately, the fifth magic array was not as

difficult as he imagined it would be. It was still an

ordinary Advanced Magic Array, only slightly more complex. He spent 15 minutes decoding this magic array.

The sixth magic array reached the standard of

mid-level Advanced Magic Arrays, requiring nearly 20 minutes to decode it.

The seventh magic array was an upper-level

Advanced Magic Array. At this standard, a newly

minted Advanced Magician would need one or two

hours to decode it. Shi Feng, though, spent only 30

minutes.

The difficulty increased to the peak-level standard

by the eighth magic array. Shi Feng found this

Advanced Magic Array a little tricky. However, after

struggling for an hour, he still managed to decode it.

A Master Magic Array?! When Shi Feng arrived

before the ninth magic array and sensed the

concentration of Mana within it, he felt the urge to

curse out loud.

There was a qualitative difference between Master

Magic Arrays and Advanced Magic Arrays. Not only was a Master Magic Array far more complex, but decoding it also required multitasking. Specifically, one would have to control multiple streams of Mana simultaneously; players needed to have extraordinary control over Mana to accomplish this feat.

However, as only one magic array remained between him and the hall, Shi Feng still decided to give decoding the Master Magic Array a try.

The Master Magic Array before him was very basic. Hence, it was not entirely impossible for a half-step Master Magician like Shi Feng to challenge it.

He merely needed to control three separate flows of Mana simultaneously. The difficult part was that he had

to control each Mana flow at a different speed in order to decode the magic array's three sections simultaneously. If he failed to do so, then the decoding process would miscarry.

After taking a deep breath, Shi Feng started carefully controlling the Mana flow of the three sections, making sure that the output was neither too strong nor too weak. This level of Mana control was definitely beyond Tier 2 players.

On his first attempt, the decoding process failed because the output for two sections was too high. His second attempt went awry, as he had lowered the output for the two aforementioned sections by too

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much. The difficulty of adjusting the output to a suitable level was many times greater than trying to thread a needle.

However, after repeated attempts, Shi Feng started to grasp the appropriate way of manipulating the Master Magic Array's Mana. The method was similar to

how he controlled the Mana inside his Mana Body. In

fact, as he tried to decode the Master Magic Array, he

also learned to exert greater control over the Mana flow inside his Mana Body, thereby increasing the efficiency

of his Mana usage.

Following which, time passed by rapidly. Shi Feng's spirit weakened. Contrary to expectations, however, his focus did not falter in the slightest but grew

increasingly more acute. His brain activity also

continuously increased. He even forgot how to control his own body, his mind treating the Mana inside the Master Magic Array as his own limbs instead.

In the next moment, three streams of Mana flowed across the Master Magic Array at three different speeds. The stream that had moved too quickly on Shi

Feng's last attempt was a touch slower now, while the stream that had moved too slowly had accelerated

slightly

When the three streams of Mana had filled up the final pattern in their respective sections of the magic array, all three actually arrived at the magic array's

center at exactly the same time.

"I did it!" Shi Feng could not help shouting in excitement

The moment all three streams of Mana came into contact with each other, the magic array before him released a dazzling light.

A moment later, the sound of a system notification entered Shi Feng's ears.

System: Congratulations! You have become a Master Magician.

Chapter 2404 – Frightening Treasury System: You have become a Master Magician.

Rewarding the "Great Magician" title.

The system notification repeated three times.

However, Shi Feng paid no attention to it whatsoever.

Instead, he shut his eyes and focused on the Mana flow of his Mana Body. He then unsheathed Killing Ray

and executed a slash.

Secret Technique, Lightning Flash!

With just a swing of the sword, 17 sword lights

crisscrossed and cut through the empty space before Shi Feng, the attack creating a sonic boom that echoed down the corridor.

No wonder the magician class is labeled the number one subclass. So, this is why. Shi Feng was a little surprised by the effects of his technique.

Magic arrays were the foundation for controlling Mana. Many items could not exist without magic arrays. Hence, many players in God's Domain would pick up the magician class as a subclass. This was especially true for forgers and alchemists, who would not be able to tread far on their path without the magician class.

However, Shi Feng had never thought that becoming a Master Magician would raise his control over his Mana Body to a whole new realm. Now, not only could he simultaneously control multiple streams of Mana much more quickly, but his body also became much more agile. The power of his combat techniques also improved considerably.

Although his proficiency at multitasking with Mana still was not particularly high, which prevented him from fully leveraging these new advantages, he just needed time. Once he familiarized himself with this process, his utilization of it in combat would improve.

Moreover, the Great Magician title increased his maximum Concentration by 10% and improved his Mana control by 10%, which made controlling his Mana Body easier.

At this moment, Shi Feng more or less understood why players who had become Master Magicians in the past were usually very powerful.

Just the minor improvement toward the Mana Body would allow players to exhibit much greater power with their combat techniques, Skills, and Spells. Not to mention, a Master Magician could construct

Basic Magic Arrays without the assistance of materials and use these magic arrays as a tool for support or

interference. The benefits of becoming a Master

Magician were massive.

Now, if he could get Aqua Rose, Violet Cloud, and

the other magical class experts of Zero Wing to

become Master Magicians within a short period, the Guild's overall strength would definitely increase substantially.

Thinking up to this point, Shi Feng shifted his gaze to the center of the nearby hall.

Now that he had decoded the last magic array, the Advanced Magic Array Design was already within his

reach. So long as he could obtain it, helping Zero Wing's members get promoted to the Advanced Magician rank and, subsequently, the Master Magician rank would be much easier.

When Shi Feng stepped into the hall, the contents of the hall entered his view.

The hall was not particularly large, only the size of about three basketball courts. However, many magic array scrolls were displayed all over the hall. These magic array scrolls, ranging from Intermediate Magic Arrays to Advanced Magic Arrays, all came in complete sets. Every one of these magic arrays was of the barrier-type. Shi Feng was dumbfounded upon seeing

this scene.

Barrier-type magic arrays were things that the current powers of God's Domain urgently needed, especially Intermediate Barrier-type Magic Arrays.

Past Level 100, monsters at the Grand Lord rank or

above would be immune to the effects of Basic

Barrier-type Magic Arrays. One needed Intermediate Barrier-type Magic Arrays or better to suppress them. However, Intermediate Barrier-type Magic Arrays were incredibly rare; even Zero Wing had only a few complete sets.

Inside this hall, however, there were over 100 sets of Intermediate Barrier-type Magic Arrays and as many as 12 sets of Advanced Barrier-type Magic Arrays. This

was practically a treasury of magic arrays.

No wonder nobody was willing to reveal any concrete information about the Sacred Magic Temple's second floor.

When Shi Feng looked at the treasure trove before him, he understood why there had been so little information regarding the Sacred Magic Temple's

second floor in his previous life.

One could make a fortune just selling the magic array scrolls here since the various major powers were willing to pay over a thousand Gold to purchase a set of Intermediate Barrier-type Magic Arrays.

After all, not all Guilds possessed as many Fine-Gold Guards as Zero Wing did. Meanwhile, without the help of powerful Personal Guards, raiding a Level 100-plus Grand Lord was an extremely difficult and costly task.

However, with the suppression effects of an Intermediate Barrier, the raid difficulty would instantly decrease by a large margin. The expert teams of Guilds would then have the ability to raid Level 100-plus Grand Lords. With the scrolls for an Intermediate Barrier at hand, teams could also start exploring Level 100 neutral maps much more boldly, as they no longer had to fear Level 100-plus Grand Lords.

While Shi Feng was thinking of sweeping these magic array scrolls into his bag, his gaze still drifted to the golden tome hovering in the middle of the hall.

Previously, as he had been too far from the tome, he could only tell that the magic array design was of the Advanced standard. Now that he was standing so close to it, he discovered that it wasn't just an ordinary Advanced Magic Array Design.

Not only was the golden tome enveloped by a dense layer of Mana, but it also radiated a faint trace of Divine Might.

Although the power of this Divine Might was negligible and would have no effect on a player's performance, it still signified that the tome was once the possession of a God. Otherwise, it wouldn't have absorbed a God's aura.

Following which, Shi Feng walked up to the tome to inspect it.

This is...an Ancient Magic Array Design! Shi Feng's breathing accelerated when he read the tome's statistics.

[Twelve Elemental Pillars] (Ancient Magic, Advanced Magic Array)

Requires at least 12 Tier 2 magical classes to cast.

Places a seal on all enemies within a 200-yard radius. Effects will improve by one grade with every additional 12 casters added. The magic array can be cast by up to 36 casters.

Required materials: 1 Mana Stone, 12 Elemental Crystals, 12 Magic Scrolls, and 1 Advanced Magic Scroll.

Ancient Magic had been lost after the Great Destruction. Although humans had researched new forms of magic after the Great Destruction, the

performance of current Spells and magic arrays was

still greatly inferior to that of Ancient Spells and Ancient Magic Arrays. This was because Ancient Magic was taught to humans by the Gods. It was not only much more refined but also much closer to the essence of magic.

Any player that successfully learned Ancient Magic

would be much stronger than players of the same tier. Magic arrays that applied the principles of Ancient Magic were also much stronger than those that did

not.

Only, very few Ancient Magic Arrays had been passed down in God's Domain. Hence, every Ancient Magic Array was incredibly valuable, and their designs all the more so.

The value of an Intermediate Magic Array Design that applied Ancient Magic principles could rival that of Fragmented Legendary items. Needless to say,

Advanced versions would be even more valuable.

Now that such a design had appeared before Shi

Feng, how could he not be surprised?

For a moment, Shi Feng even entertained the

thought of attempting the other two corridors and securing the Magic Array Designs housed in the halls beyond them. Fortunately, though, his rationality prevented him from doing so.

The reason for this was very simple. If even the easiest corridor required a Master Magician to break through, then the other two corridors would definitely demand an even higher standard. At least, those two corridors were not challenges that a newly minted Master Magician like himself could break through for now. He would merely waste his time trying.

The materials needed for the Twelve Elemental Pillars are relatively easy to procure. Even the Mana Stone, which is the most troublesome material to get, is no problem for me. So long as I can mass-produce this magic array, I can definitely raise the performance of the Guild's teams by a large margin. At that time, even the superpowers' expert teams won't be a match for Zero Wing's when it comes to raiding Field Bosses. Shi Feng grew excited as he looked at the design in his hands.

In his opinion, even the combined value of 10 Fragmented Legendary items could not match the value of the Twelve Elemental Pillars Design.

"Guild Leader, we're done setting up a teleportation point here. All we need to do is set up a teleportation

device in the Ten Saints Empire, and we can teleport

here anytime we want," Blackie reported excitedly after contacting Shi Feng.

"Alright. Have everyone get ready. It's time we headed home," Shi Feng said, nodding, and started collecting all of the magic array scrolls inside the hall.

In less than 10 minutes, he had cleared out the entire hall. He then returned to White River City together with Blackie and the others.

Chapter 2405 – Changes to the Gravity Mountain Range White River City, Zero Wing's Residence

When Shi Feng and the others returned to the Guild Residence, an unusually depressing atmosphere greeted them. Now, less than 100 players stood in line to take the recruitment test to join Zero Wing.

The Guild members in the Residence only seemed to reanimate as Shi Feng and his companions entered the Guild Hall; they were all excited for their Guild Leader's return.

"It's the Guild Leader! The Guild Leader is back!"

"This is wonderful! Boss Blackie and the others have returned as well!"

The several hundred players in the hall ran up to Shi Feng and his team to welcome them back. When Liang Jing, who was working in the lobby, saw the group, she ran over, just as elated.

"Guild Leader, you've finally decided to come back!" Liang Jing breathed a sigh of relief. "I didn't know what I was going to do if you hadn't returned soon."

"Why does the Guild suddenly seem so disheartened? What happened while we were gone? Did we not earn enough Coins from leasing Stone Forest City's private houses?" Shi Feng asked, curious.

He had spoken with Liang Jing half a day ago about accepting Coins as rent for Stone Forest City's private houses. Even in the worst-case scenario, the auction should've earned the Guild around 20,000 Gold, which would be more than enough to support Zero Wing for half a day. Zero Wing had other income sources, after all. Even if the Guild were restricted in the Dark Night Empire, Zero Wing shouldn't have had a problem holding on for another five or six days.

"We still have enough Coins, but we recently learned that someone discovered a special ruin in the Gravity Mountain Range and within it, a Horned Eagle Egg. Moreover, the power discovered more than one egg. This has caused an uproar on Dragonheart Island. Now, the various superpowers are rushing to the ruin to search for more Horned Eagle eggs. We've partnered with Phoenix Rain to take part in the hunt," Liang Jing said. Anxiously, she continued, "However, War Blood and Starlink have begun to cause more trouble. They're doing all they can to hinder our progress in the ruin. We thought it best to send Fire Dance and the other recently promoted Tier 3 players to lead the Guild's Level 100-plus experts to the Gravity Mountain Range as reinforcements. Unfortunately, Starlink started to target our players in the neutral maps around Star-Moon Kingdom, and we don't have anyone left to stop it."

Horned Eagle Eggs? Liang Jing's report left Shi Feng a little confused.

He had never considered that the Gravity Mountain Range would be home to Horned Eagle Eggs. He certainly hadn't heard of such a thing in his previous life.

Horned Eagles were one of God's Domain's Flying Mounts. They were only Intermediate Common rank, but they were still Flying Mounts, and as long as players obtained their eggs and hatched them, they could take the Horned Eagle hatchling to a tamer, where it would become a true Flying Mount.

The very idea of Flying Mounts had driven the various superpowers to the brink of madness, but aside from Zero Wing, the number of superpowers on the eastern continent with Flying Mounts could be counted on one hand.

Flying Mounts were the future of God's Domain. Whoever had the most would have a massive advantage.

It was easy to imagine the various superpowers' reactions to the news that someone had found Horned Eagle Eggs in the Gravity Mountain Range. Meanwhile, to prevent Zero Wing from exploring the ruin, Starlink would do all it could to limit Zero Wing's movement to the Star-Moon Kingdom.

"Based on what we've learned from the Secret Pavilion, Demon Palace has secretly sent over a dozen Tier 3 experts to the Gravity Mountain Range to help Starlink and War Blood against us. I'm afraid Fire Dance's group is in grave danger," Liang Jing said worriedly.

By now, some of the various superpowers' experts had completed their Tier 3 Promotion Quests, and although Zero Wing had the most right now, it couldn't take on multiple superpowers at once.

"In that case, let's split up into two groups," Shi Feng said as he turned to Cola and the others. "Cola, Turtledove, Shadow Sword, you three will follow me to the Gravity Mountain Range. Tianxing, you'll lead the rest of the team to deal with those bastards hunting our players in the neutral maps nearby."

"It's too dangerous for just the four of you, Guild Leader. You should take more people with you. Starlink isn't the only power in the ruin. Many superpowers are heading there as we speak," Liang Jing hurriedly advised Shi Feng.

Shi Feng was the Guild's symbol. They couldn't afford for something to happen to him, and at this point, he no longer had the advantage of being the game's only Tier 3 player. Zero Wing couldn't afford to be as relaxed as it had been.

"Relax. No player should even dream of getting near the Guild Leader with the three of us around!" Cola declared, grinning as he patted his chest.

"But..." Liang Jing gave Cola and the other two a worried look. Times had changed. Cola and his team had been busy on a quest, so they had no idea how much God's Domain had changed while they've been gone.

"Rest assured, Big Sis Jing. We've grown a lot stronger," Shadow Sword said, nodding his agreement with Cola's statement.

They had not just been wasting time in the Demonwolf Mountain Range. They might not be a match for a monster like Ulunium, but they were definitely strong enough to deal with new Tier 3 players.

"Alright, enough chatting. Everyone, let's get to work," Shi Feng said. He could not help but shake his head and chuckle at Cola and Shadow Sword's confidence. He then turned back to Liang Jing, saying, "I need you to purchase Elemental Crystals and Magic Cores in bulk. I have an important use for them. If you don't have enough money, sell these Intermediate Magic Array Scrolls. I'm sure they'll fetch a high price."

As he spoke, Shi Feng retrieved the 100-plus sets of Intermediate Magic Array Scrolls he had obtained from the Sacred Magic Temple and handed them to Liang Jing.

Although the Guild had quite a few Elemental Crystals and Magic Cores in stock, it didn't have nearly enough for him to exploit the Twelve Elemental Pillars Design.

When she saw the scrolls, Liang Jing was stupefied.

"Do you really want me to sell all of these Intermediate Barrier Scrolls, Guild Leader?" Liang Jing had to ask.

At this stage of the game, there were very few Tier 3 players in God's Domain. Most of the players in Level 100 neutral maps were still at Tier 2.

However, exploring Level 100 neutral maps was a major challenge for Tier 2 players, especially when it came to Grand Lord ranked Bosses.

Unfortunately, players needed to hunt these Grand Lords to obtain better equipment. Without strong enough equipment, players would have no hope of completing their Tier 3 Promotion Quests. Hence, the various powers had turned to magic arrays to suppress these Bosses, increasing their chances of acquiring better weapons and equipment for their Tier 2 members.

Because of this, Intermediate Barrier Scrolls were incredibly popular right now, especially when sold in complete sets. A full set of Intermediate Barrier Scrolls could easily fetch 800 Gold or more.

"Mhm. I've obtained an Advanced Barrier-type Magic Array Design, so we don't need these anymore, but don't sell too many at once. Post them for sale one by one," Shi Feng said.

Intermediate Barriers were valuable, but they couldn't compare to the Twelve Elemental Pillars. Furthermore, this was the best time to sell Intermediate Barrier Scrolls. As more players reached Tier 3, these scrolls would become less valuable. Since Shi Feng didn't need to keep them for his Guild, selling them for materials to craft Advanced Magic Array Scrolls would only benefit Zero Wing as a whole.

"I understand. I'll start posting them in the various kingdoms and empires' Auction Houses," Liang Jing said, her eyes glowing with excitement. She hadn't expected Shi Feng to return with such an abundant harvest.

An Advanced Barrier-type Magic Array Design!

With such a design, Zero Wing could produce as many Advanced Barrier Scrolls as it wanted. With an Advanced Barrier, a team of Tier 2 players would even have a chance of defeating a Level 100-plus Grand Lord ranked Archaic Species.

Liang Jing left to carry out Shi Feng's orders. Shi Feng, on the other hand, hurried toward the Gravity Mountain Range with Cola, Turtledove, and Shadow Sword.

The Molten Canyon, located within the Gravity Mountain Range's core region, was crowded with players. Most of them were from the various superpowers and top adventurer teams, and every one of these players had reached Level 100 or higher.

Several players wearing the Heaven's Blade adventurer team emblem fought desperately to escape the Molten Canyon. However, several hundred Level 100-plus experts, led by a Tier 3 player, stood between them and the canyon's exit.

"Leader, what should we do? They have a Tier 3 expert on their side. We've already used up all our Instantaneous Movement Magic Scrolls," a Level 101 Assassin from Heaven's Blade said, watching the Tier 3 Berserker King a short distance away with an anxious expression.

"I'll hold them off while the rest of you get out of here! If you don't make it out, Blood Oath will kill the commander!" the Level 102 female Guardian Knight leading the team growled through gritted teeth.

"We've sealed the area off already. Do you really believe you can escape? Even if you guys get past us, no one can save you. No one can stop War Blood in the Gravity Mountain Range!" the Tier 3 Berserker King shouted, sneering at Heaven's Blade's members.

The Heaven's Blade's players despaired. The Berserker King had only spoken the truth. The War Blood adventurer team had evolved. With the help of Starlink and Demon Palace, War Blood had become Dragonheart Island's number one adventurer team. Even if they managed to break past War Blood's blockade and got far enough to ask for help, no one would help them.

However, the moment the Berserker King finished his gloating, everyone in the area heard a deep voice.

"Is that so? And what if Zero Wing gets involved?"

Chapter 2406 – Shock

As the question echoed throughout the canyon's exit, everyone fell silent. None of them had ever thought someone would willingly stand against War Blood, and they all spun toward the origin of the voice.

Four figures, three men and a woman, entered the canyon. They had all hidden their information under Black Cloaks, and the group's leader, a man who looked to be around 30-years-old, walked into the canyon as if he hadn't sensed the tense atmosphere surrounding the adventurer team groups.

"Zero Wing?" "Four players? Are these people tired of living?"

"Zero Wing's members must be insane. Shouldn't they be mindful of the time and place if they want to challenge War Blood? War Blood might be helpless against Zero Wing in the northern region, but we're in the Gravity Mountain Range's southern region. More than half of War Blood's members are in the area."

Players from various major powers were watching the situation at the canyon's exit, and they were surprised and confused as they watched four Zero Wing members interfere in the fight between War Blood and Heaven's Blade.

War Blood's members might have been afraid of the declaration if this were taking place in the Gravity Mountain Range's northern region.

However, in the Molten Canyon, even the various superpowers had to consider their options carefully before provoking War Blood. War Blood was the official number one adventurer team on Dragonheart Island, after all.

Even if Zero Wing's members were hellbent to poke their nose into the matter between War Blood and Heaven's Blade, they should at least compare the two sides' numbers

A total of 600 War Blood members blocked the canyon's exit, and every one of them was Level 100 or higher. In contrast, Zero Wing had only sent four players to interfere.

Zero Wing's audacity even rendered Heaven's Blade's members speechless, not to mention the spectators from the various major powers. Everyone thought Zero Wing was playing with fire. Although they were grateful that Zero Wing's members had stepped in, those four players really should have considered how outmatched they were before they had interrupted.

"You Zero Wing players sure are bold! You dare spout such nonsense before our team leader, Remnant?! You must be tired of living!" a Level 102, Tier 2 Ranger mocked, sneering at Shi Feng's group.

Their commander had long since ordered all of the adventurer team's members to kill any Zero Wing members on sight. Unfortunately, since Zero Wing held the Northern Fortress and could use Return Scrolls to teleport to it, War Blood's members had found their targets difficult to ambush in the fields.

However, War Blood's team had sealed off the Molten Canyon. Not only was communication with the outside world impossible, but they had also rendered teleportation tools, such as Return Scrolls, unusable. Killing any Zero Wing members they encountered would be a piece of cake.

"Remnant! We are your targets! There's no need to involve outsiders! If you think you can take me, let's fight! I want to see how strong you've grown after becoming a Berserker King for myself!" Cleansing Flame, the female Guardian Knight leading Heaven's Blade's team, shouted to Remnant Snow, the Berserker King leading War Blood's team.

She knew that escape was no longer possible for her team.

Aside from how badly outnumbered they were, Remnant Snow was more than powerful enough to annihilate her entire team. She had already witnessed the strength of Tier 3 players, and she knew that Tier 2 players had no hope against them.

She was grateful that Zero Wing's members were so willing to help her, but she couldn't let them die for their good intentions.

"You actually think you qualify to challenge our leader to a one-on-one match, Flame?" the Level 102 Ranger from War Blood disdainfully asked Cleansing Flame. "You might be strong, but our leader has already reached Tier 3. Even your vice commanders would have to think twice before challenging him. There's only one way we'll let your team leave in peace; you just have to hand over all of your weapons and equipment. If you do, we might reconsider cursing you with double the death penalty and sending you all back to Level 99!"

As the Tier 2 Ranger ended his threat, the various major powers' spectators turned to Remnant Snow in awe.

More players had begun to reach Tier 3, but most of them were peak experts from the various superpowers. Ordinary experts simply weren't strong enough to complete their Tier 3 Promotion Quests this soon. In fact, many players might never reach Tier 3.

Tier 3 players were on an entirely different level compared to Tier 2 players. Even superpowers' upper echelons had to treat Tier 3 players respectfully.

"Cleansing Flame might be one of the top-ranked team leaders from Heaven's Blade, but she doesn't qualify to challenge Remnant Snow. I wonder when I'll finally reach Tier 3, too?"

"Reaching Tier 3 isn't so easy. Remnant Snow just got lucky. It's a pity that Cleansing Flame had chosen such a high difficulty for her Promotion Quest. If she had chosen a lower difficulty, she'd probably be a Tier 3 player right now."

"Cleansing Flame and those four Zero Wing members are dead for sure, against a Tier 3 Berserker King, even a 100-man team of Tier 2 experts is nothing but cannon fodder."

The various major powers' experts couldn't help their rueful sighs as they watched Cleansing Flame and her team.

Times had changed, and it was no longer the era of Tier 2 players. The time of quantity over quality had ended. This era belonged to Tier 3 players, and before them, Tier 2 players were nothing. A Tier 3 expert could even take out Tier 2 apex experts in just a few moves.

As Cleansing Flame waited for Remnant Snow's reply, she noticed that the Berserker was staring at the leader of Zero Wing's small group with a foreboding look on his face. It piqued her curiosity.

"Is something wrong, leader?" the Tier 2 Ranger asked, giving Remnant Snow a strange look.

Normally, Remnant Snow was quite outspoken. He had recently been promoted to team leader in War Blood, in addition to reaching Tier 3. He was now one of the candidates to become one of the adventurer team's new vice commanders. This was the prime of his life. Why else would he have been so arrogant in his exchange with Cleansing Flame?

However, before the Tier 2 Ranger could continue, Remnant Snow pulled away from his team and approached Zero Wing's players.

"Zero Wing's members are doomed now."

"It seems Remnant Snow intends to take care of those Zero Wing fools himself."

The various major powers' experts gave Shi Feng's group pitying glances as Remnant Snow made his move. Cleansing Flame, on the other hand, paled. She wanted to stop the man, but with several hundred War Blood members in her way, rushing forward would accomplish nothing.

Just as the spectators expected Remnant Snow to attack, the man in question expressed his respect for Shi Feng as he reached Zero Wing's four players.

"Guild Leader Black Flame, you jest. How could I show such disrespect to your request? We'll allow them to leave," Remnant Snow said. He then barked an order for War Blood's members to open a path for Cleansing Flame and her team to leave the Molten Canyon unhindered.

Chapter 2407 – Hidden Terror

When Remnant Snow commanded his team to give way, both the spectating experts and Heaven's Blade's members were stupefied.

What was going on? Had Remnant Snow hit his head at some point?

Even War Blood's members gaped at Remnant Snow. They even wondered if this were some imposter. Why else would he show respect to Zero Wing's Guild Leader?

War Blood had an irreconcilable feud with Zero Wing, and the two organizations frequently clashed in the Gravity Mountain Range.

Although Zero Wing's Guild Leader was a Tier 3 player, Remnant Snow was a Tier 3 Berserker King. He shouldn't have any reason to treat Shi Feng respectfully.

Not a single player watching the scene could understand why Remnant Snow behaved as he did.

"Are you deaf?! Why aren't you moving?!" Remnant Snow snarled as his team members stared at him.

Seeing his rage, War Blood's members followed their orders and opened a path for Cleansing Flame's team, regardless of how confused they were.

When the watching experts saw this, they were utterly flabbergasted.

At first, they had wondered if they had misheard Remnant Snow, but after watching War Blood's members move aside and let Cleansing Flame's team pass, they had to accept the odd situation as fact.

"I'll thank you in their place then, Team Leader Remnant. I still have other matters to deal with, so I'll be heading out," Shi Feng said. Remnant Snow's behavior had surprised him, too, but since the man had taken a step back, it'd be in poor taste if Shi Feng escalated the situation. Thus, he decided to continue on his way into the Molten Canyon after a polite response.

Remnant Snow couldn't help but breathe a deep sigh of relief as he watched Shi Feng's group walk off.

Others might not realize how powerful Shi Feng was, but he had experienced the Swordsman's astonishing might for himself.

Shi Feng had caused a huge scene on Tranquil Mine Island even before he had reached Tier 3. He had then slain Blood Oath, who had been protected by several of his bodyguards and one of the adventurer team's vice commanders, within the Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion's Residence. And yet, Shi Feng had still slain Blood Oath. The Swordsman was inhumanly strong.

Now that Shi Feng had reached Tier 3, he had undoubtedly become even more terrifying.

Remnant Snow had no wish to provoke such a monster. Even among Tier 3 players, there were still differences. Reaching Tier 3 did not grant invincibility.

“Are we really letting them go, leader? The higher-ups have made it clear that we are under no circumstances allowed to let Cleansing Flame’s team leave the Molten Canyon,” the Tier 2 Ranger whispered to his team leader. “Even if Black Flame is Tier 3, there are plenty of us here, and we have a battle array. Do we really have to fear Black Flame?”

Tier 3 players were powerful, but that did not mean that Tier 2 players had no way to retaliate.

Even if they couldn’t defeat a Tier 3 expert, they could put up a good fight with their 100-man, large-scale battle array. If Remnant Snow joined the fray, it wouldn’t be impossible to defeat Shi Feng.

Yet, Remnant Snow had ordered them to allow Cleansing Flame’s team to leave without a fight. War Blood’s upper echelons definitely wouldn’t tolerate this insubordination.

“That is true. I am confident that I could hold my ground against Black Flame with the help of a battle array, but do you truly believe that he’s only a Tier 3 player?” Remnant Snow said as he rolled his eyes at his vice team leader. “Didn’t you see the three players behind him?”

“Even if they are all Tier 3 players, we can buy enough time for our other Tier 3 experts and Starlink’s Tier 3 experts to arrive. Winning that battle isn’t necessarily impossible,” the Ranger insisted.

Although Tier 3 players were still rare at this stage, War Blood and Starlink had a few. Surrendering without a fight would tarnish War Blood’s reputation.

“So what if they make it here?” Remnant Snow shot back, chuckling. “You’re aware that I learned a special Skill after I completed my Tier 3 promotion, right? With this Skill, I can see through Black Cloaks’ concealment effects. Do you know what those players’ levels and equipment standards are?”

“How strong could they possibly be? Are they Level 105 players in Level 100 Dark-Gold Set Equipment?” the Tier 2 Ranger offhandedly mocked the notion. He knew about Remnant Snow’s Identification Skill. That Skill was the reason War Blood had ordered the Berserker King to guard the Molten Canyon’s exit in the first place. With him running the show, Heaven’s Blade’s members wouldn’t be able to sneak out of the Molten Canyon with Black Cloaks.

At this point, Tier 3 experts’ equipment standards weren’t much higher than Tier 2 players’. Most Tier 3 experts were still wearing Level 100 Epic Equipment. A player would only have a distinct advantage if they equipped Level 100 Dark- Gold Set Equipment, but obtaining that kind of equipment was nigh-impossible for current players.

More experts were reaching Tier 3, but not a single power had enough Tier 3 players to raid Level 100 Team Dungeons, and because of that, obtaining Level 100-plus top-tier equipment was still extremely difficult. Players could grind Level 100-plus Grand Lords, but the best equipment those Field Bosses would drop would be Fine-Gold rank.

“Bingo,” Remnant Snow said, chuckling. “Not only have they reached Level 105, but they’re even wearing Dark-Gold Set Equipment.”

“Level 105? Level 100 Dark-Gold Set Equipment? How is that possible?!” the Tier 2 Ranger exclaimed, astonished.

“Level 100 Dark-Gold Set Equipment?” Shaking his head, Remnant Snow revealed an envious expression as he said, They’re not wearing Level 100 Dark-Gold Set Equipment; they’re wearing Level 105 Dark-Gold Set Equipment!”

“Impossible! How can they have possibly acquired such items?!” Stupefied, the Ranger refused to believe his leader’s claim.

Obtaining Level 100 Dark-Gold Set Equipment was an unbelievable feat at the moment, and obtaining Level 105 Dark- Gold Set Equipment was an utter joke.

Yet, that was what Remnant Snow had seen after using his special Identification Skill, so it must be absolute truth. Furthermore, the Ranger had no reason to doubt his leader. Remnant Snow was fighting to become a vice

commander. He wouldn’t benefit in the least from I

Flame’s team

go.

As Remnant Snow had said, even if War Blood and Starlink sent Tier 3 experts as reinforcements, they’d be nothing but a joke against those four Zero Wing members.

“Why else would I have let Cleansing Flame’s team leave without a fuss?” Remnant Snow asked, rolling his eyes. As he stared at Shi Feng’s departing figure, a trace of fear flashed in his eyes.

There was one bit of information he hadn’t revealed: the fact that he hadn’t gleaned the slightest detail regarding Shi Feng. When he had stood before the Swordsman, it had felt as if he were trying to stare down a Tyrannosaurus-rex.

Honestly, the Tier 2 Ranger silently celebrated his leader’s wisdom. Had they started a fight with those players, they all would’ve died.

As Shi Feng’s group passed, delving deeper into the Molten Canyon unhindered, the various experts in the area gaped in shock.

“Leader, is Zero Wing’s Black Flame really that powerful of a player? Remnant Snow actually stepped aside out of respect for him,” the Level 101 female Cleric beside Cleansing Flame asked, confused and stunned.

Even the various superpowers feared Tier 3 players, yet Remnant Snow had conceded after a few words from Shi Feng.

It was utterly unbelievable!

“I don’t know exactly how powerful Guild Leader Black Flame is, but I know that this is an opportunity for us,” Cleansing Flame said, excitement flashing in her eyes after seeing Remnant Snow’s

extraordinarily respectful display before Shi Feng. She immediately tried to catch up with the small Zero Wing group.

None of Heaven's Blade's members knew what she was up to.

"Guild Leader Black Flame, I am Cleansing Flame, one of Heaven's Blade's team leaders. Thank you for saving us. If you hadn't come along, we would've died here," Cleansing Flame sincerely thanked Shi Feng.

"It was just a small effort on my part. There's no need to be so polite, Team Leader Flame," Shi Feng said.

Shi Feng hadn't intended to save Cleansing Flame's team. He had just wanted to spoil War Blood's fun. He had hoped that Remnant Snow would attack him, and he could use the chance to wipe out some of War Blood's members. He certainly hadn't expected the Berserker King to concede. It had left him with no choice but to abandon his original plan.

"Guild Leader Black Flame, may I request your help in saving our trapped commander? If you're willing to save our commander and her team, Heaven's Blade will offer this item as compensation," Cleansing Flame said as she revealed an ancient, withered tree branch.

The branch didn't look like anything special, but it radiated a timeless aura. Moreover, it contained a powerful life force.

"The Tree of Life!"

When he saw that special tree branch, Shi Feng couldn't help his shock.

Chapter 2408 – Elven Race's Divine Artifact

"You really are amazing, Guild Leader Black Flame. You recognized it at a glance," Cleansing Flame praised the Swordsman, a little surprised when Shi Feng identified the tree branch.

Heaven's Blade had tried all sorts of methods to appraise the branch but failed to learn anything. In the end, they had only discovered the tree branch's identity after using an Ancient Appraisal Scroll.

And yet, Shi Feng had known what the branch was after a quick glance. It was unbelievable.

Everyone in God's Domain knew about the Tree of Life, the Elves' Divine Artifact, but there was very little information available about the tree itself.

The most the average player knew about the Tree of Life was that it produced the Fruit of Life.

The Fruit of Life was a sacred item that could resurrect NPCs, as well as a treasure that could drastically improve a living creature's potentials. Even kings and emperors coveted the Fruit of Life.

"It's no wonder why War Blood is out to get you and willing to go as far as to seal off the Molten Canyon." Shi Feng realized what the previous encounter had been about when he saw the tree branch in Cleansing Flame's hand.

“That’s right. War Blood found out about the tree branch and is doing everything it can to target us in the ancient ruin. Unfortunately, our commander is still trapped in the ruin, and we aren’t strong enough to save her,” Cleansing Flame said, clenching her teeth.

“However, that branch isn’t one of the Tree of Life’s main branches, just a side branch,” Shi Feng calmly deduced. “Moreover, I’m guessing that you have more than two or three side branches on your hands. I suspect you also have a main branch.”

“How did you know?” Cleansing Flame was flabbergasted.

Only a handful of people in Heaven’s Blade knew how many branches the adventurer team had and what kind they were.

“Although the Tree of Life’s branches are precious, they’re not valuable enough to push War Blood to such drastic measures. Besides, your willingness to offer a side branch as payment tells me that you have many more,” Shi Feng explained.

At this point, no player in God’s Domain knew more about the Tree of Life than Shi Feng.

The Tree of Life’s side branches were valuable treasures, each worth multiple pieces of Level 100-plus Epic Equipment.

These side branches could be cultivated to grow into a Tree of Life, and as long as they did, it would produce Water of Life. The tree wouldn’t produce much Water of Life, and it would take a long time, but the liquid was immensely valuable. It was, after all, one of the few items in God’s Domain that could resurrect an NPC. It was even effective on Tier 5 NPCs.

However, cultivating a Tree of Life from a side branch wasn’t easy, not to mention producing Water of Life. One would need to sacrifice astronomical resources to accomplish the feat. Even if War Blood wanted the side branch, it wouldn’t be desperate enough to seal off the Molten Canyon to get it.

The only explanation was that Heaven’s Blade had acquired one of the Tree of Life’s main branches.

The main branches were extraordinary and even more valuable than ordinary Legendary items. As long as one cultivated a Tree of Life from a main branch, the tree would be capable of producing Fruit of Life!

Fruits of Life were just as valuable as Fragmented Legendary items. Thus, it was easy to imagine how valuable a Tree of Life, which could produce an endless supply of the fruit, would be.

Even Super Guilds would sacrifice everything to get their hands on a main branch.

Hearing Shi Feng’s explanation, realization dawned on Cleansing Flame.

Shi Feng’s deduction was correct. War Blood had discovered that Heaven’s Blade had a main branch from the Tree of Life, which was why it so furiously targeted Heaven’s Blade.

With no other choice, her commander, Zwei, had sent her with the side branch to find outside help. These branches weren't ordinary items, and they were guaranteed to drop on death. Her commander wouldn't have been in such a precarious position otherwise.

"If you're hoping that Zero Wing will save your commander just for a side branch, I'm afraid that I have to refuse. I'm sure you're aware of how crazy and powerful War Blood is, not to mention its partnership with Starlink. I doubt any superpower would be willing to offend War Blood. Even if you offered me two or three side branches, I'd have to refuse," Shi Feng told Cleansing Flame with a serious look. "However, it's not impossible to afford Zero Wing's help. We want one of the main branches; that's the bottom line to purchase Zero Wing's help in rescuing your commander."

He did not particularly care about the Tree of Life's side branches. He could easily find replacements for the Water of Life. The main branch, however, was a different story. Not only could the main branch provide Fruits of Life, but it could also yield Nuclei of Life.

The Nucleus of Life was one of the required materials to produce the Broken Steel Set Equipment. It was also the most difficult material to acquire. If he could secure a source of Nuclei of Life, he could forge his class set equipment.

An Epic Class-specific Set Equipment!

Even during his previous life, very few of the various superpowers' experts had obtained Epic Set Equipment. Most had only worn an assortment of Epic Equipment.

With the Broken Steel Set Equipment, he could roam through the truly dangerous areas of God's Domain and hunt down the three remaining fragments of Solomon's Sword. With his current strength, he only had a 10% chance of surviving in these locations, and that was only because he had the Disintegration Armor, which could temporarily elevate him into a Tier 4 Sword Emperor. Without the Disintegration Armor, he had no chance of surviving whatsoever.

Only an Epic Set Equipment could increase his survival chances. Only the extremely lucky could find enough Fragmented Legendary items for the task, and he couldn't afford to rely on luck.

"A main branch?" Cleansing Flame hesitated after hearing Shi Feng's demand.

As a mere team leader, she didn't have the authority to make that decision. Heaven's Blade had only secured one main branch, and if they gave it to Zero Wing, the adventurer team would suffer a huge loss.

Furthermore, protecting the main branch in their possession was the very reason that her commander was struggling so desperately. She would've already offered the side branches to appease War Blood otherwise.

However, Cleansing Flame couldn't deny what Shi Feng had said.

Not only was War Blood Dragonheart Island's number one adventurer team, but it also had Starlink's support. No superpower on the island would be willing to offend War Blood for a mere side branch from the Tree of Life.

“Guild Leader Black Flame, I’m afraid I can’t agree to that. I need to discuss the matter with my commander,” Cleansing Flame said after giving the matter some thought. Rather than rejecting Shi Feng’s demand outright, she felt it was wisest to speak with her commander first.

“I understand,” Shi Feng said, not particularly surprised by Cleansing Flame’s response. Cleansing Flame was only a team leader. How could someone of that rank possibly have the authority to make such an important decision?

With Shi Feng’s agreement, Cleansing Flame logged out of God’s Domain to contact her commander offline. The offline messenger was the only way to communicate within Heaven’s Blade now that War Blood had sealed off the Molten Canyon.

Chapter 2409 – Thunder Eagle Reappears

Molten Ruin, inner corridor:

A team with fewer than 50 members fended off two Level 106 Grand Lord ranked Guardian Knights while desperately trying to retreat toward the Molten Ruin’s inner corridor.

Although the team had so few members, as many as eight of them were Tier 3 experts, including the female Guardian Knight that stood 1.9 meters tall and single-handedly held her ground against the two Grand Lords. She wore black and white runic armor, carried a shield engraved with dark runes in one hand, and wielded a two-handed sword in the other.

This female Guardian Knight’s outstanding performance was the only reason that the other Tier 3 players on the team could focus on stopping the dozen or so Great Lord ranked Mechanical Puppets, allowing the rest of the team to pull back safely.

The Guardian Knight was none other than Zwei, Heaven’s Blade’s famous commander and the very soul of the adventurer team.

Suddenly, a Level 101, Tier 3 Assassin appeared beside Zwei, reporting, “Commander, I’ve just received an offline message from Cleansing Flame. She says that she ran into Zero Wing’s Guild Leader, Black Flame. After negotiations, Black Flame stated that his price for rescuing us is one of the Tree of Life’s main branches.”

The team members fell silent when they heard the Assassin’s statement.

“What a big appetite!” a Level 102, Tier 3 Berserker snarled. “We’re fighting so desperately to survive in the main corridor to protect the main branch, yet Zero Wing wants it in exchange for saving us? If we just give it to Zero Wing, we’ll have wasted all of our efforts!”

“That’s right! We might as well offer it to War Blood or some other superpower. At least they’ll have a better chance of saving us,” a Tier 3 Elementalist said, nodding in agreement.

The rest of the team expressed their disapproval, as well.

They had gone to great lengths to protect the main branch. There was no way they'd hand it over to Zero Wing. If they had to give it away in exchange for their safety, they'd be better off making a trade with a true superpower. They'd be far more confident of a superpower saving them than Zero Wing.

"Shadow, what do you think of this?" Zwei asked the Tier 3 Assassin next to her.

When she spoke, Zwei's voice sounded sacred, and the entire team quieted down. Everyone perked up and waited to hear their vice commander's opinion on the matter.

"I'm afraid that keeping the Tree of Life's main branch will be too much of a challenge for us, commander, and the side branches aren't nearly attractive enough to the various superpowers. No one will offend War Blood for a few side branches," Divine Shadow, the Tier 3 Assassin, said. "However, I think we'll have more options if we use the main branch as a bargaining chip."

"What do you suggest we do?" Zwei asked calmly.

"We definitely cannot allow War Blood to benefit from our work. Zero Wing's help is negligible, as well, and we can't rely on most superpowers. I've just received an offline message from Thirteen Thrones. I don't know how they found out, but they know we have the Tree of Life's main branch. They're willing to help us. Not only will they send reinforcements to get us out of here, but they'll also provide protection and conveniences on Dragonheart Island in the future as long as we give them the main branch," Divine Shadow said.

No one was happy with it, but they understood Divine Shadow's reasoning.

The Molten Ruin was extremely dangerous. Although Dragonheart Island's various superpowers were here to find Horned Eagle Eggs, most of them couldn't get past the ruin's outer region. Very few superpowers were strong enough to explore the inner region. Heaven's Blade's team had only managed to make it that far by relying on special means.

Although Zero Wing's peak combatants were no weaker than those from the various superpowers, if the superpowers couldn't set foot in the inner region, Zero Wing's experts wouldn't be able to either. Thirteen Thrones was their only reliable option now.

After listening to her vice commander's view, Zwei fell silent as she considered her options.

Her team waited silently for her decision, but they wouldn't hesitate to follow their commander's orders, regardless of what she decided.

"Alright, let's go with your suggestion," Zwei said.

"I'll notify Thirteen Thrones, then," Divine Shadow said as he prepared to back out of the game.

“Notify Cleansing Flame as well. Tell her that if Zero Wing can reach us first, Heaven’s Blade will offer Zero Wing the main branch. Tell Thirteen Thrones the same thing,” Zwei said after giving the matter some thought.

“Understood.” Divine Shadow nodded before disappearing from the corridor.

War Blood was persistent in chasing their team in the inner corridor, and as they delved deeper into the Molten Ruin, they’d encounter more danger. Their team could only survive for a short time. They couldn’t just rely on Thirteen Thrones’ promise to save them.

Moreover, Zero Wing had done the adventurer team a favor when it had saved Cleansing Flame’s team. Outright refusing the Guild wouldn’t be wise. Although Zero Wing had a slim chance of reaching their team, at least it had a chance to compete against Thirteen Thrones with equal conditions.

Once Divine Shadow had logged out, he notified Cleansing Flame and Thirteen Thrones’ representative of Zwei’s decision. Whichever Guild reached Zwei’s team first would become Heaven’s Blade’s business partner.

Meanwhile, Shi Feng and his entourage rested in a dense forest within the Molten Canyon while they waited for Cleansing Flame to log back into God’s Domain.

“Guild Leader Black Flame, if you can reach our commander before Thirteen Thrones, she’ll agree to your demands. I hope you can understand,” Cleansing Flame apologized after returning to the game.

Naturally, Thirteen Thrones had more members in the Molten Ruin than Zero Wing. The superpower had long since dispatched a large force of experts to the ruin to search for Homed Eagle Eggs. In fact, it had been the first Guild to send experts into the Molten Ruin’s inner region.

Ordinary expert teams had no place in the Molten Ruin’s inner region. Even with more than 20 Tier 3 experts leading its team, Thirteen Thrones had taken nearly three hours to reach the inner corridor. The monsters that guarded the path to the inner region were immensely powerful, and ordinary superpowers were utterly powerless against them. Heaven’s Blade’s team had only reached the inner region by relying on special means.

In contrast to Thirteen Thrones’ team, which was already in the area, Zero Wing’s main force hadn’t even gathered in the Molten Canyon yet. By the time the team arrived, Thirteen Thrones would’ve secured her commander’s team.

Shi Feng had saved her team, but Cleansing Flame knew she couldn’t change her commander’s mind. This concerned the adventurer team’s survival, after all.

“I understand. The survival of your adventurer team comes first. Commander Zwei has made a wise decision,” Shi Feng said, chuckling. He knew what Heaven’s Blade was trying to pull. “I just want to clarify You’re saying that if Zero Wing’s members reach your commander and rescue her first, she’ll hand us the Tree of Life’s main branch, right?”

“I believe that’s the case.” The question confused Cleansing Flame a little, but she nodded after finding no flaws in Shi Feng’s statement.

“That will make things simple,” Shi Feng said, smiling. “Would you be willing to sign a contract with Zero Wing regarding this matter?”

“Simple?” Cleansing Flame was even more confused, but she agreed to sign the contract. Her commander had already agreed to the conditions, and there was no harm in her representing her commander and adventurer team on the contract.

Cleansing Flame and Shi Feng signed a contract while one of her subordinates reported back to Heaven’s Blade’s commander.

“Since that’s taken care of, let’s go,” Shi Feng said, satisfied with the contract.

“Go? Go where?”

“To save your commander, of course,” Shi Feng said, smiling. He then took out the Thunder Eagle’s Summoning Flute and summoned the Flying Mount. A gigantic eagle with a wingspan of over 20 meters appeared above the forest with a deafening screech that echoed throughout the Molten Canyon.

Chapter 2410 – Rescue Team?

The surrounding players immediately noticed the Thunder Eagle’s appearance.

“A Flying Mount!”

“What a powerful Flying Mount! Based on its aura, it’s as strong as a Level 100 Great Lord!”

“Too cool! When will I get to ride a Flying Mount like that?”

The various major powers fell into a heated discussion when they noticed the Thunder Eagle, visibly envious. If not for the fact that Summoning Flutes occupied a bag space and had an abysmally low chance of dropping, they would’ve charged forth to try to steal the Flying Mount.

“So, this is the rumored Thunder Eagle?” Cleansing Flame stared at the massive bird of prey as it descended.

Although the various superpowers, Heaven’s Blade included, were searching for Homed Eagle Eggs in the Molten Ruin, none of them had a clear idea of what a Flying Mount was. They had only ever seen the creature on a video.

Seeing the Thunder Eagle in person, Cleansing Flame thought it was even more majestic than a private plane.

“Hop on. There are too many monsters on the way. We’ll get there faster by air,” Shi Feng invited Cleansing Flame on the Thunder Eagle’s back after jumping on himself.

Although the Molten Canyon was a dangerous area, players could fly if they had the means. Shi Feng had only refrained from using his Flying Mount because of how incredibly conspicuous it was. If he had flown into the Molten Canyon, everyone would've immediately realized that Zero Wing's Guild Leader was in the area.

But he no longer cared about hiding his identity. The Tree of Life's main branch was of utmost importance, and the only way his small team would reach the Molten Ruin quickly was by flying on the Thunder Eagle. Moreover, since War Blood had sealed off the Molten Canyon, players within the canyon couldn't use their in-game communication system, which made it easier for Shi Feng to hide his tracks.

With Shi Feng's invite, Cleansing Flame and the few surviving members of her team climbed aboard the magnificent Thunder Eagle. Once everyone was on its back, the Thunder Eagle flapped its wings and swiftly ascended several hundred meters into the air. It then flew straight toward the Molten Ruin.

"This Flying Mount is amazing, leader! If we could get a few for ourselves, our leveling speed would skyrocket!" a Level 101 Assassin beside Cleansing Flame exclaimed as he watched the scenery pass below him.

"Indeed. With this Movement Speed and maneuverability, reaching distant Level 100-plus maps would be a lot easier,"

Cleansing Flame agreed, nodding. As she glanced down at the Level 100-plus monsters roaming the forest below, she, more or less, understood how beneficial a Flying Mount could be. It also explained how Zero Wing had become so powerful.

If they had the help of a Flying Mount, they could explore and grind in a Level 100 neutral map twice per day. They could spend nearly double the time grinding than if they traveled via Land Mounts. It was no wonder how Zero Wing had nurtured so many Tier 3 players so quickly.

On the Thunder Eagle's back, the trip that should've taken them two hours was over in a dozen minutes or so. During that time, Cleansing Flame and her teammates had felt as if they were dreaming.

It had taken them a lot of effort and plenty of sacrifice to fight their way from the Molten Ruin to the Molten Canyon's exit, yet without enduring a single battle, they returned to the ruin. They had even recovered some of their Stamina during the trip as if their earlier battles had been nothing more than a passing dream...

"Guild Leader Black Flame, our adventurer team has thoroughly explored the Molten Ruin's outer region, so we know the path to the inner area. We can guide you there. We also have plenty of members stationed on the path to the inner area, so they should be able to help," Cleansing Flame suggested.

Shi Feng had saved her team, so she owed him a big favor. Since he intended to race Thirteen Thrones to her commander, she would help him in whatever way she could. Moreover, they'd have a greater chance of victory with more players if they stumbled across War Blood's members.

"I'll have to trouble you, then," Shi Feng said.

“I’ll contact them now. They should be assembled by the time we reach the cavern that leads to the inner region,” Cleansing Flame replied. She then instructed one of her team members to log off and notify Heaven’s Blade’s other members within the Molten Ruin’s outer region.

Cleansing Flame then directed Shi Feng and his entourage to the entrance of the Molten Ruin’s inner region.

In the Molten Ruin, even full teams of Level 100-plus experts in Level 100 Mysterious Iron Equipment risked a team- wipe.

The outer area was crawling with Level 100 Great Lord ranked Blue-eyed Spiders. A team would occasionally come across Level 100 Grand Lord ranked Demonic Flame Spiders, as well. These monsters were a major challenge for Tier 2 players. The Blue-eyed Spiders weren’t a big issue, but only death awaited them if they ran into the Demonic Flame Spiders.

Fortunately, Cleansing Flame’s team had long since familiarized themselves with the outer region, and they guided Shi Feng’s team around the Grand Lords. At most, the group dealt with a few Blue-eyed Spiders on the way. Shi Feng’s group hadn’t even needed to lift a finger throughout the journey. Cleansing Flame and her team members used traps to slow the Blue-eyed Spiders down, which allowed the group to escape the monsters’ pursuit.

After just half an hour, Shi Feng and the others arrived in a town-sized cavern. Azure crystals decorated the cavern ceiling, radiating a blinding light that illuminated the cavern.

A steel tunnel that was more than a dozen meters across let out of one corner of the cavern. A frightening aura seeped from the tunnel, and Shi Feng and his companions could even sense it from several hundred yards away.

The aura was extraordinary. A Tier 1 player wouldn’t even be able to approach the tunnel, and Tier 2 players would feel extremely uncomfortable as they got near, with the aura partially restricting their movements.

However, quite a few players had gathered at the mouth of the tunnel. Shi Feng counted more than 10,000 players with a rough glance, all of which were from the various superpowers’ expert teams. These players were high-leveled and well-equipped. Quite a few of them were even peak experts, wearing multiple pieces of Epic Equipment. Shi Feng also spotted several dozen Tier 3 experts.

Among the players, Shi Feng noticed a team wearing capes with Heaven’s Blade’s emblem. The team wasn’t particularly large, with only a little over 100 members, but their equipment standards were very high. Many of the team members were experts in Level 100 Secret-Silver Equipment. The team was also one of the more eye-catching groups standing near the tunnel.

Yu Luo! You guys sure got here quickly! We’ve rushed here as fast as we could, yet you still beat us,” Cleansing Flame said to the Tier 3 female Cleric leading Heaven’s Blade’s team in greeting.

The female Cleric was delicate and pretty. Although she had a small frame and looked harmless, none of Heaven’s Blade’s experts dared to look down on her. Rather, traces of fear and reverence flashed in their eyes when they looked at her.

You're finally here. If you'd taken any longer, I would've challenged the path already," the female Cleric named Yu Luo said cheerfully when she saw Cleansing Flame.

"Guild Leader Black Flame, let me introduce you. This is Yu Luo, Heaven's Blade's Chief Cleric. She is one of the top five Clerics on Dragonheart Island," Cleansing Flame introduced. "Yu Luo, this is Guild Leader Black Flame. Guild Leader Black Flame is amazing. He even convinced Remnant Snow to spare us with just a few words."

"Greetings, Guild Leader Black Flame," Yu Luo said. After hearing Cleansing Flame's introduction, she gave Shi Feng a careful, evaluating look. A moment passed, and she got straight to the point, asking, "May I know when your team will arrive? Our commander's situation isn't looking good. I'm not sure how much longer they can evade War Blood's pursuit. I'd like to move out as soon as possible."

In consideration for the team in the Molten Ruin's outer region, Zwei had instructed Yu Luo to remain in that area. As a result, Yu Luo hadn't been able to help her comrades when War Blood's experts had attacked. If the inner corridor hadn't been so dangerous, even for the various superpowers' main forces, she would've long since rushed to her commander's aid.

commander's aid.

My team's here already. We can get moving when you're ready."

Chapter 2411 – Commotion at the Molten Ruin

Shi Feng's statement stunned Heaven's Blade's members.

Even Cleansing Flame and her team, who had led Shi Feng to the cavern, stared at him in shock, not to mention Yu Luo and her people.

The passage to the Molten Ruin's inner area was incredibly dangerous. Even superpowers sent teams of several hundred main force members to ensure the team survived the path, and their survival still wasn't certain. The superpowers' teams that had made it through the path had merely gotten lucky.

Cleansing Flame had assumed Shi Feng must've notified Zero Wing's members within the Molten Ruin to join them. She had never thought that he intended to enter the ruin's inner region with just his three companions. It was utterly insane!

"Do you know how dangerous this passage is, Guild Leader Black Flame?" Yu Luo asked after taking a moment to calm down. Seeing his serious expression, she continued, "Even the superpowers' teams, which have 400 main force members, have less than a 50% chance of surviving the trip through the passage. If you really intend to go in there with just four people, I'm afraid that I cannot accompany you."

If Shi Feng hadn't done Heaven's Blade a favor by saving Cleansing Flame, Yu Luo would've likely erupted at him. Because of War Blood, her team was already in a tight spot. She had only agreed to take the risk

of returning to the passage because she had heard that Zero Wing's Guild Leader was willing to save her commander. Due to that decision, her team had suffered several dozen casualties.

And now, Shi Feng insisted that he only intended to rescue her commander with four players as if the Molten Ruin were his own backyard.

"It's a pity that Team Leader Yu Luo isn't willing to come with us. Cola, get ready. We're heading in," Shi Feng said, unfazed by Yu Luo's response.

"Understood!"

Cola was excited to head out, and without hesitation, he approached the tunnel's entrance. Helplessly, Turtledove, and Shadow Sword followed after him.

Heaven's Blade's members were again dumbfounded as they watched Zero Wing's members. They hadn't actually thought Shi Feng was serious about going in with just four players.

"Yu Luo, you went too far. Guild Leader Black Flame is only entering the inner area to save our commander," Cleansing Flame hissed. "Moreover, he's only recently arrived in the Molten Ruin. He doesn't know much about the ruin yet."

This disagreement didn't bode well for either side.

Yu Luo wanted to rescue her commander as quickly as possible, and that would be easier with more allies, especially if those allies were Tier 3 experts like Shi Feng and his comrades.

However, since Yu Luo had taken her stance, Shi Feng's group wouldn't want to work with her team.

"I understand what you're trying to say, but you know that reaching the inner area is impossible with four players. It'd be better for us to look for other options, rather than waste our time trying," Yu Luo growled back as she watched Shi Feng's departing figure. Sneering, she continued, "I know a little about Black Flame, too. He has relied on his advantage as a Tier 3 player to suppress the various superpowers, but times have changed. Not a single superpower doesn't have a Tier 3 player now, yet most of them still can't get through that tunnel.

"Since Black Flame is so insistent, we should let him find out how dangerous that tunnel is. Once he hits a wall, he'll realize that he has to cooperate. If we don't, and he still insists on taking the lead, we'd be lucky if Zero Wing's members aren't just extra baggage."

Yu Luo acknowledged that Shi Feng was a powerful individual, but they were talking about venturing deeper into the Molten Ruin, which was even more dangerous than Level 100 neutral maps.

If Shi Feng had shown up with a large number of Zero Wing's main force members, there wouldn't have been an issue, but he had only arrived with three companions, and Yu Luo refused to let him take charge. When her commander's team had entered the inner region, War Blood hadn't sealed off the

Molten Canyon yet, and she had received plenty of information about what to expect in that area. She wouldn't allow Shi Feng to lead her team blindly.

"Alright, stay here then. I'll lead the way for them," Cleansing Flame said, sighing. Although Yu Luo had a point, she was responsible for asking Shi Feng to save their commander. She couldn't abandon Zero Wing. She walked away from her fellow team leader and followed Shi Feng's group to the tunnel.

"Cleansing Flame is too soft. How are those four from Zero Wing going to listen to us if we don't let them suffer a little?" Yu Luo shook her head in exasperation as she watched Cleansing Flame walk off. She then turned to her two vice team leaders and said, "Speak with the superpowers in the area. Tell them that Heaven's Blade will offer information about the passage, and we're willing to work with them to get to the inner corridor."

Yu Luo had no hopes for Zero Wing's four players. As far as she was concerned, their only hope for reaching their commander was to cooperate with the other superpowers in the cavern. She'd let Shi Feng know how laughable his 4-man rescue attempt was.

Having received their orders, Yu Luo's two vice team leaders got to work and began to speak with other superpowers. Meanwhile, a team of several hundred players emerged from the tunnel, and they were all in miserable shape.

"What?! Even the Flame Hammer adventurer team failed?!"

The players waiting outside of the passage began to despair when they saw the players return to the cavern.

Flame Hammer was the third-ranked adventurer team on Dragonheart Island, and it had sent 14 of its Tier 3 players to fight through the passage, yet even their powerful team had failed to reach the inner corridor. The team had gone in with 500 members, but only returned with 300. In addition, only 8 of the Tier 3 experts had survived the expedition. The loss was devastating for Flame Hammer.

Look at them and realize how immature you're being, Yu Luo thought, chuckling as she glanced back at Shi Feng.

However, Shi Feng reacted as if he didn't see Flame Hammer's team and continued toward the tunnel without any hesitation.

As he and his three comrades approached the tunnel with Cleansing Flame in tow, a commotion broke out in the cavern.

"They're entering the passage with just five players? Are they insane?"

"Who are they? Didn't they see that even Flame Hammer's team failed to make it through?"

"Isn't that female Guardian Knight Heaven's Blade's Cleansing Flame?"

"I heard that War Blood is going all-out to hunt down Heaven's Blade's commander in the inner corridor. They must be going in to save her."

"But with just five people? Are they suicidal? I bet they won't even get past the first guardian. I guess Heaven's Blade is really doomed."

The various superpowers' experts discussed Shi Feng and his small party, mocking Heaven's Blade. Overhearing it, Yu Luo's complexion turned ashen.

While everyone badmouthed her adventurer team, a giant statue, which had stood 100 yards in the tunnel, began to move.

[Primordial Guard] (Elemental Creature, Archaic Species, Grand Lord) Level 105

HP 2,400,000,000/2,400,000,000

When the various superpowers' experts noticed the Primordial Guard, they were overcome with dread.

A Level 105 Grand Lord was already a very powerful foe. Even a Tier 3 MT would struggle to tank a Level 105 Grand Lord, and to make matters worse, the Primordial Guard was an Archaic Species. It had such overpowered strength that it could easily send a Tier 3 MT flying with an ordinary punch. Moreover, players couldn't use Berserk Skills while inside the tunnel. Even if they activated their Lifesaving Skills, Tier 3 MTs would barely be able to tank the Grand Lord.

Many teams had ventured into the tunnel, and every one of them had made plenty of sacrifices to hold the Primordial Guard, allowing the rest of the team to pass.

Fortunately, the Primordial Guard only prevented players from entering the tunnel; it didn't prevent players from leaving. Otherwise, teams that retreated from the passage halfway through would've been in for another beating.

"I wonder if the five of them can last more than 20 seconds?"

"Twenty? Are you kidding me? That's the Primordial Guard we're talking about. Not even Tier 3 MTs with active Lifesaving Skills last more than a few hits. I bet they'll survive for 10 seconds at best."

"I agree."

While the players within the canyon chatted about how quickly they thought Shi Feng's party would fall, the Primordial Guard had already reached the players in question. It was easily faster than a Tier 3 Assassin.

The Primordial Guard immediately raised a foot and kicked at Shi Feng's party.

The Grand Lord was a twelve-meter-tall giant, and the foot it thrust at Shi Feng's party was as large as a small house. Dodging the attack would be impossible for Tier 3 players that didn't focus on Agility builds.

Boom!

When the kick struck Shi Feng's party, the very ground shook.

Contrary to everyone's expectations, however, Shi Feng and his companions didn't fly through the air. To the various superpowers' experts shock, the Primordial Guard's foot had stopped just before it had reached Shi Feng and the others. Cola, the reason the kick had failed, remained steady in his original position...

2412 Frostwolf Set's Migh

"This... Impossible!"

"Is that Guardian Knight a monster?"

"Who are they? Not even Zwei, Heaven's Blade's strongest MT, is that powerful!"

The various superpowers' experts were indescribably shocked as they watched Cola stop the Primordial Guard's attack without stumbling back in the slightest. For a moment, they even wondered if they were hallucinating, but no matter how they rubbed their eyes, the scene before them remained the same. Realizing that this was real, they all wondered about Cola's identity.

All of these players had personally experienced the Primordial Guard's strength. The Grand Lord's raw power was unstoppable. Only by rotating three or four Tier 3 MTs could a team hold the monster off long enough for the rest of the team to slip by the Primordial Guard.

And yet, Cola single-handedly stopped the Primordial Guard's attack, and he did so without relying on a Lifesaving Skill. Why wouldn't they be shocked?

Among the spectating players, no one was more shocked than Yu Luo.

How is this possible?! Yu Luo stared at Cola, unable to believe her eyes.

She hadn't thought that Zero Wing's MT would be this powerful!

Heaven's Blade's commander, Zwei, had fought with everything she had to tank the Primordial Guard, and she was one of the top three MTs on Dragonheart Island. Her astonishing strength was the reason that so many prideful independent experts were willing to submit to her commands.

Before anyone could overcome their shock, the Primordial Guard, seeing that its first attack had failed, thrust its golden spear at Cola with enough power to make space itself tremble.

"What?! It's using its spear already?! I thought it only used its spear once players had crossed the halfway mark?!"

All of the players in the cavern were surprised by the Primordial Guard's second attack. They couldn't help the fear they felt when they saw the golden weapon.

That golden spear had claimed many Tier 3 MTs' lives thus far, giving those players no chance to retaliate. That spear was also the reason that so many superpowers' teams had failed to pass the tunnel's first checkpoint. Those that had had only done so after suffering tremendous casualties.

“Come!”

In contrast, Cola was excited to see the weapon. He immediately raised his Titan Guard to greet the spear in battle. Boom!

When the golden spear and Titan Guard collided, the resulting impact stirred an intense storm that spanned over several hundred yards.

Cola stumbled back a step as a damage exceeding -30,000 appeared above his head.

To Tier 3 MTs, who possessed nearly 1,000,000 HP, -30,000 was practically negligible, especially for Cola, who had 1,540,000 HP thanks to his Frostwolf Set and Titan Guard.

Seeing Cola block the Primordial Guard’s spear, a deathly silence descended on the crowd watching from the tunnel’s entrance.

“Is that Guardian Knight even human?”

“Could he be a Tier 3 NPC?”

Cola had nullified the Primordial Guard’s full-powered attack so easily, and he had only lost a little over 30,000 HP in the process. His performance shattered everyone’s understanding of Tier 3 MTs.

Even the best Tier 3 MTs from the various superpowers could only tank Level 100 Grand Lords. Tanking a Level 105 Grand Lord would be a major challenge. Every five levels in God’s Domain was a minor turning point, after all, even for monsters.

Yet, Cola had successfully stopped a Level 105 Grand Lord ranked Archaic Species’ full-powered attack without using a single Skill. He was definitely stronger than the best Tier 3 MTs the various superpowers currently possessed.

Meanwhile, Yu Luo was utterly flabbergasted. The biggest challenge in reaching the inner area was the Primordial Guard’s golden spear, but Cola had blocked it and only taken negligible damage.

Compared to Yu Luo, however, Cleansing Flame, who acted as Shi Feng’s guide, was shocked senseless.

Is this how Zero Wing was able to establish itself in a Level 100 neutral map?

Although Cleansing Flame knew that Shi Feng and the others were very strong, she had never dreamed that they’d be this strong!

“Cola, stop fooling around. We’re in a rush,” Shi Feng admonished, sending Cola, who was deliberately playing with the Primordial Guard to test the Frostwolf Set’s effects, a reproachful glance.

Shi Feng wasn’t surprised in the slightest to see Cola stop the Primordial Guard so effortlessly. In fact, he would’ve been surprised if Cola hadn’t stopped the Grand Lord’s attacks.

During Shi Feng’s past life, the Frostwolf Set had been publicly acknowledged as a top 10 Level 120 Dark-Gold Set Equipment in God’s Domain. Even the various superpowers’ old monsters had coveted the set. With this set, defeating a Grand Lord ranked Archaic Species of the same level would be child’s play.

Hearing Shi Feng scold his MT, Cleansing Flame wanted to cry.

If Cola's frightening performance was just him fooling around, what did that make Heaven's Blade's attempts to stop the Grand Lord?

Cola only nodded and suppressed his excitement. He began to block the Primordial Guard's attacks seriously, employing techniques instead of relying on brute strength.

The Primordial Guard attacked with its golden spear again, and in response, Cola accurately timed his counter and smashed his shield into the side of the weapon, diverting the spear into a nearby wall. This time, Cola didn't lose a single point of HP after blocking the attack.

Cola then jumped up to the Primordial Guard's knee and slashed his saber twice.

Combat technique, Strength Combination!

The two rapid strikes merged and bit into the Grand Lord's joint.

Boom!

The powerful attack brought the Primordial Guard to its knees and opened a path that was large enough for a dozen players to pass side-by-side.

"Let's go," Shi Feng said once the Primordial Guard was temporarily immobilized.

Meanwhile, Cola raised his Titan Guard and slammed it down on the Primordial Guard as the Grand Lord was about to stand.

Tier 3 Legacy Skill, Dragon Strike!

The phantom of a crimson dragon's claw struck down the guardian monster.

Boom!

The sound of an explosion echoed throughout the passage as the impact drove the Primordial Guard into the ground...

The spectating crowd was speechless. They merely watched, silent, as Shi Feng's party walked past the Grand Lord ranked Archaic Species unhindered, eventually disappearing into the tunnel.

Chapter 2413 – Pray for Themselves

"This..."

"Isn't that Guardian Knight a little too strong? Who is that guy?"

"Where did Heaven's Blade find such a capable MT? With him in the lead, getting to the inner corridor will be at least 20% easier."

As the various superpowers' experts watched Shi Feng's party disappear into the passage, envy welled up within them. Some even took the initiative to chat up Yu Luo's team in hopes of working with Cola.

In God's Domain, MTs were the core of a team. With a powerful enough MT, a team would have a much higher chance of successfully raiding Dungeons and exploring ruins. As long as a team could tank a monster, it could kill it.

The various teams had already found quite a few Horned Eagle Eggs in the Molten Ruin's outer region already.

Needless to say, the min's inner region would hold even greater treasure. If their teams had an amazing MT like Cola, the team's overall strength would reach a new level, and they'd definitely be able to reach the inner corridor, gaining a massive advantage.

Meanwhile, Yu Luo and her team stared at the tunnel in stunned silence. Yu Luo's expression was particularly gloomy. She had never thought Shi Feng's party would be so strong. After Cola's display, she had to reevaluate what she thought she had known about Tier 3 MTs.

"They've already gone into the tunnel, leader. What should we do?" a Level 102 Shield Warrior quietly asked.

They had run all the way here for the sole purpose of entering the inner corridor and rescuing their commander, and they had just missed their best opportunity to do so.

Even if they worked with another superpower to get through the tunnel, they wouldn't have more than a 50% chance of success. Even if they made it to the other side, they'd suffer severe losses.

The Shield Warrior's question made Yu Luo regret her earlier decision a little. She now knew she had been too impulsive. Had she followed Shi Feng's party, her team would've already cleared the first checkpoint and had a much higher chance of reaching their commander. However, all they could do now was stand on this end of the tunnel and watch.

But who would've expected Cola to be so powerful?

"So what if they've entered the passage? I refuse to believe that we can't reach the inner corridor without them!" Yu Luo snarled after snapping out of her daze.

Reaching the inner corridor was difficult, but it wasn't impossible. Moreover, her team also had the information her commander's team had collected. Avoiding the traps and monsters in the tunnel would be far easier for them, and they had much higher chances of success than any other superpowers' team.

Yu Luo's statement ignited the rest of her team's fighting spirit. They, too, wanted to prove to Shi Feng's party that they were capable of reaching the inner corridor without Zero Wing's help.

After Yu Luo had negotiated with two superpowers and prepared to enter the tunnel, another team entered the cavern. Although this team only consisted of 50 members, it drew the attention of the various superpowers' experts, who stared with serious expressions.

The new arrival's collective aura was just too powerful.

Of the 50 players on the team, 16 had reached Tier 3. The Tier 2 players had all reached Level 102 and wore Level 100 Secret-Silver and pre-Level 100 Epic Equipment. The team members' equipment standards were off the charts.

"Demon Palace! They're going in, too?" Yu Luo's expression became grim when she saw the team.

By now, every player on Dragonheart Island knew about Demon Palace. Aside from Super Guilds, Demon Palace feared no one.

War Blood's current strength was the reason the various superpowers were so afraid of the Guild.

War Blood only used to be Dragonheart Island's third-ranked adventurer team, but after allying with Demon Palace, it had become the island's uncontested top adventurer team.

War Blood's rise had been due to the Demonic Hell World's special Legacy. At Tier 2, the special Legacy provided incredible power, but after reaching Tier 3, experts with the Legacy gained even more strength, becoming far more powerful than ordinary Tier 3 classes. After witnessing this, none of the superpowers wanted to provoke Demon Palace.

Since War Blood had learned about the Tree of Life's main branch in Heaven's Blade's possession, it was likely that Demon Palace knew of it.

While Yu Luo was lost in thought, Demon Palace's team approached her. A robust, middle-aged man, who was 2.3 meters tall, stepped forward, smirking at Yu Luo.

"You're Heaven's Blade's Yu Luo, right? I've heard that you're one of the top five healers on Dragonheart Island. That's certainly an impressive feat. Might I ask you to relay a message to your commander?" Evil Qilin, the middle-aged man, said, chuckling.

"What do you want me to tell her?" Yu Luo asked. She had a bad feeling about this.

"Let her know that it's not too late to surrender. But if she continues to refuse until we reach her, it will be too late,"

Evil Qilin said before turning and leading his team toward the tunnel. He didn't even bother to wait for a reply.

As Evil Qilin's team walked away, Heaven's Blade's members fell silent. His tone had been amicable, but they had all sensed the killing intent in his words.

"Leader, what should we do now that Demon Palace's members have gone in? Zero Wing's members and Team Leader Flame aren't far ahead of them," the Level 102 Shield Warrior asked from beside Yu Luo.

Evidently, the Demon Palace wanted to join the fray, and Evil Qilin's team wouldn't spare a single Heaven's Blade member they encountered in the inner corridor. The man's request had merely been a warning of their imminent deaths.

The Demon Palace had sent 16 Tier 3 experts into the ruin's inner region, and 34 of the 50 team members were Refinement Realm or greater experts. Moreover, every member of the team possessed the Demonic Hell World's special Legacy. If Demon Palace's team ran into Shi Feng and Cleansing Flame's party, they'd be slaughtered.

"We can't contact Cleansing Flame to warn her. Zero Wing's members can only pray for their Guild Leader," Yu Luo said helplessly. "Log out immediately and notify the commander of the situation. As for the rest of you, get ready. We're entering the passage!"

With Yu Luo's command, Heaven's Blade's members joined up with the two superpower teams they had partnered with and entered the tunnel.

Meanwhile, Demon Palace's team effortlessly pushed through the monsters that had given the various superpowers' experts headaches, arriving at the final gate leading to the inner corridor in less than 20 minutes.

A magic array sealed the final gate, and players would only obtain the key to remove it by defeating the Guardian Boss.

"It looks like someone's just killed the Boss, commander!" a Tier 3 Ranger reported as he gestured to the steel gate enveloped in fog.

The Grand Lord ranked Guardian Boss lay before the gate, and a single player was busy looting the Boss while four others rested nearby.

That saves us a lot of trouble. You two, get rid of them and get me that key," Evil Qilin ordered as he glanced at the two Tier 3 Assassins behind him.

"Understood!"

The Assassins licked their lips in anticipation and entered Stealth.

Chapter 2414 – Tough Opponent

As the two Tier 3 Assassins vanished, the other Demon Palace members sat on the ground and rested while watching Shi Feng's party in the distance.

"These players really have some bad luck. They must've gone to great lengths to defeat the Guardian Boss, yet they have to deal with Gull and Rainbow right after their raid."

"We should've just charged over and gotten rid of them."

"Gull and Rainbow have just reached Tier 3 and unlocked more of their Legacies' potential. My guess is that the commander wants to give them a chance to get used to their new bodies. Their Basic Attributes are on an entirely different level than when they were still Tier 2, after all."

Many of the Tier 3 experts from Demon Palace watched the two Assassins in envy.

Their strength had substantially increased after reaching Tier 3, and getting used to it was proving difficult. Although they often sparred with each other, a sparring match couldn't compare to true battle.

However, they also knew that Evil Qilin wanted to prioritize Wind Gull and White Rainbow's growth. Both Assassins had incredible potential for growth. Despite the fact that he was only 27, Wind Gull had already reached the Void Realm. White Rainbow, who was the same age as Wind Gull, had reached the Half-step Void Realm standard.

Since they had completed their Tier 3 Promotion Quests so soon, their future was limitless.

There would be a massive difference between reaching Tier 3 now and completing the Tier 3 Promotion Quest in the next two weeks. Players would encounter completely different opportunities.

This was precisely why Evil Qilin prioritized the two Assassins. Someday, they might become Domain Realm experts and true pillars of the Guild.

Meanwhile, Wind Gull and White Rainbow used a footwork technique that allowed them to get within 30 yards of Shi Feng and his four companions without the slightest sound.

"Rainbow, you take care of that Tier 2 female Guardian Knight. I'll distract the other two MTs. Once you get rid of the female Guardian Knight, we'll take our time and play with the others. But you'd better not kill the Tier 3 Berserker beside the woman," Wind Gull whispered as he watched Cleansing Flame rest.

He didn't care about a Tier 2 player like Cleansing Flame, but to ensure that their training went smoothly, they'd get rid of the miscellaneous target first.

"Relax. How could I waste an opportunity like this? Hopefully, they're not so weak that they die too quickly," White Rainbow whispered back, excitement flashing in his eyes.

Opportunities to fight Tier 3 experts were extremely rare right now. Although they could spar in the Battle Arenas around God's Domain, it was impossible to push themselves without the threat of the system's death penalty.

Moreover, every player had their own combat style, and they could only rapidly improve by fighting different opponents.

"Let's begin!" Wind Gull declared. He started to sneak toward the two resting Tier 3 MTs and waited for White Rainbow to make his move.

White Rainbow adjusted his footwork and dashed toward Cleansing Flame like a cooling breeze. He had integrated with his environment; not even Tier 3 players with sharp perception would detect him, let alone a Tier 2 player like Cleansing Flame.

Twenty-five yards...

Twenty yards...

Fifteen yards...

As White Rainbow inched closer to Cleansing Flame, he took more care with his movements. When only 10 yards remained between him and his target, the Assassin unsheathed his daggers.

Just as White Rainbow was about to attack, Shadow Sword, who had been relaxing with his eyes shut, opened them. Without warning, he swung his greatsword, sending an energy blade toward Cleansing Flame. It startled the exhausted Guardian Knight.

Shadow Sword's energy blade was so sharp that it sliced through the air cleanly, and his execution was so fast that Cleansing Flame had no time to react. Just as she thought she was about to die, however, she heard a metallic clang beside her.

Peng!

The attack had revealed a hidden figure behind her, and when she saw him, she broke out in a cold sweat. Cleansing Flame had never thought that she'd fail to notice someone creeping up to her.

Fortunately, Cleansing Flame was a peak expert. Reacting quickly, she leaped forward, creating some distance between her and the nefarious stranger. If an Assassin was able to get so close to her undetected, she knew he'd be extraordinarily powerful, and she didn't bother with an offensive or defensive maneuver. Furthermore, the Assassin was a Tier 3 player, and she knew she would be no match for him.

"You discovered me? It seems you're not such a weakling, after all," White Rainbow said, unfazed by the fact that Cleansing Flame had escaped his grasp. He ignored Cleansing Flame and focused his attention on Shadow Sword with an ecstatic expression as he said, "It seems I can take this seriously now."

Although his footwork wasn't as masterful as Wind Gull's, detecting him from farther than 7 or 8 yards should be very difficult for ordinary Tier 3 experts. Shadow Sword, however, had noticed him from a little over 10 yards, which proved that the man's combat standards were considerably high. At the very least, Shadow Sword had better perception than an ordinary Tier 3 player.

Meanwhile, Wind Gull, who had watched this play out from a short distance away, became just as excited.

Rainbow sure is lucky. I knew I should've started the attack instead, Wind Gull thought, regretting his strategy as he watched Shadow Sword.

As he finished that thought, however, another energy blade flew toward him, forcing him to evade and expose himself.

Wind Gull spun toward the attack's origin, astonished when he saw who had launched the energy blade. The attack had come from the five-man party's Tier 3 male Guardian Knight, and based on his accuracy, this Guardian Knight had long since noticed him.

Moreover, the Tier 3 female Shield Warrior had clearly sensed him as well.

Who are these people? Wind Gull stared at Cola and his comrades, surprised.

Wind Gull was already amazed that Shadow Sword had discovered White Rainbow, but he found it unbelievable that the party's two Tier 3 MTs had discovered him while Stealthed as well. When he was in Stealth, only his commander and vice commander could sense his presence from 10 yards away, yet these two MTs could do the same. For a moment, Wind Gull even wondered if he had really activated Stealth.

When Cleansing Flame saw White Rainbow and Wind Gull, she paled.

Demon Palace members?! Why are they here?! Cleansing Flame had a bad feeling when she saw the two Tier 3 Assassins' Guild Emblems.

"Oh? You guys are from Heaven's Blade?" Wind Gull sneered when he saw Heaven's Blade's logo engraved on Cleansing Flame's armor. "This is a good opportunity to get rid of you, then. Rainbow, ignore that female Knight! Target their Tier 3s first!"

"Got it!" White Rainbow became serious about this battle and prepared to meld with the shadows once more.

"Don't think you can hide from us so easily!" Shadow Sword bellowed as he charged at White Rainbow, hacking at the Assassin with his greatsword.

Shadow Sword's attack was simple, but White Rainbow couldn't dodge the strike due to the man's high Attack Speed. Realizing this, the Assassin raised his daggers to block the attack.

Peng!

A loud, metallic clang echoed throughout the tunnel, and the impact threw White Rainbow nearly 6 yards back as he instantly lost more than 20,000 HP. When he landed, he nearly lost his footing, as well.

How is this possible? Seeing the Berserker throw White Rainbow with a single swing confused Wind Gull.

White Gull was familiar with White Rainbow's Strength. Not even Tier 3 Berserkers would necessarily be a match for him, yet Shadow Sword had sent the Assassin flying with a normal attack. It was simply unbelievable!

By the time Wind Gull snapped out of his daze, Turtledove was already using Shield Bash against him.

Not daring to be careless, Wind Gull used his short sword and activated his Block Skill.

The moment short sword and shield collided, Wind Gull felt his hand go numb, and he stumbled four steps back.

How is her Strength so high, too? The situation confused Wind Gull further.

He understood how Shadow Sword had overpowered White Rainbow. The man was a Tier 3 Berserker, after all, but despite being a Tier 3 Shield Warrior, Turtledove's Strength was on par with Shadow Sword's. Wind Gull began to wonder if this small party had suppressed his Basic Attributes somehow.

Naturally, neither Shadow Sword nor Turtledove gave their opponents any room to breathe. They both launched fierce assaults, forcing White Rainbow and Wind Gull to defend themselves, and the two Assassins fought desperately as they continued to lose HP.

The other Demon Palace members, who watched from a safe distance, were stunned.

“What? They’re actually pushing Rainbow and Gull back?”

“Who are these people?”

They all knew how powerful the two Assassins were. Both could effortlessly overpower ordinary Tier 3 players, and yet, White Rainbow and Wind Gull were clearly at a disadvantage. At this rate, they’d both die within a minute.

“Commander, I’m afraid that Rainbow and Gull won’t last long,” a handsome, white-haired youth surmised to Evil Qilin when the two Tier 3 Assassins had lost more than one-third of their HPs. “If we let them die, they’ll need a long time to recover.”

“I suppose we’ll have to call off this training session,” Evil Qilin said as he nodded in agreement with his vice commander, Dark Scorpion’s, statement. “Take a group and save them.”

Every Tier 3 player was a precious combatant for Demon Palace. He couldn’t afford to let the two Assassins lose a level during their training.

Dark Scorpion grabbed six of the team’s Tier 3 experts and hurried toward White Rainbow and Wind Gull.

When Cleansing Flame noticed seven more Tier 3 players approach, she felt her scalp tingle, particularly when she saw Dark Scorpion among them.

Dark Scorpion was famous on Dragonheart Island. Once, he had killed the commanders from two of Dragonheart Island’s top 10 adventurer teams, instantly becoming one of the most famous players on the island. Individually, he was even stronger than Heaven’s Blade’s commander, Zwei.

If Dark Scorpion’s group joined the fray, their party would be doomed.

Suddenly, however, a blue lightning bolt arced toward Dark Scorpion and his minions. Seeing this, Dark Scorpion and his allies slid to a halt and attempted to evade the attack.

After dodging the lightning bolt, Dark Scorpion’s group turned toward the Tier 3 Sword King that had launched the attack.

“Who are you? Are you trying to make Demon Palace your enemy?” Dark Scorpion hissed coldly, glaring at Shi Feng’s cloaked figure.

That lightning bolt had felt lethal to Dark Scorpion, and it was the first time he had felt such a threat since he had reached Tier 3. He didn’t dare take this mysterious Swordsman lightly.

“This is a fair, one-on-one match. You can’t blame me for trying to stop you if you plan on interfering,” Shi Feng threatened as he returned Killing Ray to its sheath.

Since Shi Feng wore a Black Cloak to conceal his appearance, a dark shadow hid his face. Combined with the Nightwalker's Cape, no player could see his features.

However, Dark Scorpion and his six teammates couldn't help but stare at Shi Feng in astonishment after hearing his threat. They even wondered if they had misheard him.

Cleansing Flame, on the other hand, nearly choked when she heard Shi Feng's statement. She felt he had gone too far with his latest joke.

He had practically asked Demon Palace to attack, throwing oil to the fire.

Every member of Demon Palace was a battle maniac that had engaged in constant conflict in the Demonic Hell World. Nobody dared to provoke Demon Palace on Dragonheart Island, not even experts from Super Guilds.

You really are something, kid! You actually dare to speak like that to our vice commander!"

"Bold! You really are bold!"

"This guy must think he's invincible since he's a Tier 3 player."

The six Demon Palace members beside Dark Scorpion looked at Shi Feng as if he were a fool. They had very nearly laughed at his statement. It was the funniest thing they had heard since joining God's Domain.

Dark Scorpion was a god of death in the Demon Palace. To get used to his Tier 3 form, he had killed over 30 Tier 3 experts after arriving on Dragonheart Island. Not even the various superpowers' old monsters had escaped his grasp and ended up dying.

Not even superpowers' Vice Guild Leaders had the courage to speak so boldly to Dark Scorpion, much less Heaven's Blade's commander.

"Interesting. You're the first person to stand against me since I've come to Dragonheart Island." Contrary to expectations, Dark Scorpion didn't explode in a rage. Rather, he smiled and said, "I want to see if you're so brave once we meet in battle!"

"Weeping, Seizing, get him!"

Without hesitation, a Shield Warrior and a Berserker charged toward Shi Feng. The two were well-coordinated, and their movements were far more refined than Wind Gull and White Rainbow.

As Weeping Soul and Seizing Soul moved, they left numerous afterimages in their wake. The afterimages continued to crisscross, making it difficult to determine where the two players were. If a player attacked the duo and missed, they'd face a ruthless counterattack.

Dread filled Cleansing Flame as she watched from afar.

The two Tier 3 Assassins had already revealed their very high combat standards, but compared to this Shield Warrior and Berserker, they were children. Cleansing Flame knew she wouldn't be a match for either of them, even after reaching Tier 3.

How does the Demon Palace have so many powerful experts? Cleansing Flame couldn't pinpoint where Weeping Soul and Seizing Soul were. She could only watch as the duo darted toward Shi Feng.

Once the duo was within 20 yards of Shi Feng, however, the Swordsman moved.

A resplendent arc of lightning flew toward the Berserker and Shield Warrior.

Secret Technique, Lightning Flash!

Shi Feng had merged all 17 sword lights perfectly.

Weeping Soul and Seizing Soul instinctively knew that they couldn't evade the incoming lightning arch, and they both activated a Tier 3 Skill to block the attack.

Boom!

A deafening boom echoed throughout the passage, and both Weeping Soul and Seizing Soul shot backward like bullets, their arms and weapons violently vibrating. Both players were covered in scorch marks and had lost more than half of their HPs. Seizing Soul, the Tier 3 Berserker King, in particular, was an inch from death's door. A random strike would be enough to send him to his grave.

The duo crashed to the ground, and silence filled the passage. Demon Palace's members stared with grim expressions.

Weeping Soul and Seizing Soul were veteran peak experts. Their strength ranked among the top 10 of the 50 players on their team. If they hadn't been so powerful, Dark Scorpion wouldn't have sent them to attack someone who could even threaten him.

And yet, not only had Shi Feng repelled the duo with one attack, but he had also devoured most of their HPs. His strength could definitely be described as 'horrifying.' Not even Dark Scorpion could accomplish such a feat.

Meanwhile, the Demon Palace members watching from a distance stared at Shi Feng with dropped jaws. They had never thought the Swordsman would be powerful enough to suppress two veteran peak experts.

"Who is this guy? He tossed two Tier 3 peak experts away with a single move. He can likely even rival Thirteen Thrones' Crazy Sword."

"Could he be Thirteen Thrones' Crazy Sword?"

Demon Palace's members were overcome with confusion and surprise as they looked at Shi Feng. This was the first time since the duo had reached Tier 3 that they had seen anyone defeat Weeping Soul and Seizing Soul so thoroughly.

When those two worked together, they could even force a Tier 3 Domain Realm expert into a corner. Shi Feng, however, had overwhelmed both of them. Even on Dragonheart Island, there were very few with Shi Feng's strength.

Based on their information, it seemed that Thirteen Thrones intended to offer its help to Heaven's Blade. With a Sword King like Shi Feng before them, they assumed he was the Super Guild's Crazy Sword.

"Crazy Sword, huh?" Even Evil Qilin knew he had to take the situation seriously.

If their opponent really was Thirteen Thrones' Crazy Sword, they'd have to be careful. Crazy Sword wasn't just incredibly powerful; he also represented Thirteen Thrones.

Demon Palace might be able to ignore the various super-first-rate Guilds on Dragonheart Island, but it could not do the same with Super Guilds. A confrontation with such powerful Guilds wouldn't be easy for Demon Palace.

"It's no wonder why you're so brave. With this kind of strength, you are certainly capable of ranking among the top 20 on Dragonheart Island, but I don't care if you're Thirteen Thrones' Crazy Sword or not. No matter what, I will interfere!" Dark Scorpion snarled as he watched Wind Gull and White Rainbow's HPs fall to a critical low. He immediately removed the two greatswords from his back and brandished them at Shi Feng.

Dark Scorpion's two greatswords radiated a dismal glow as they absorbed Mana from his surroundings. The weapons also exerted a weak force on all players in the vicinity, pulling them towards the blades.

"The vice commander is finally making a move."

"With his strength as a Tier 3 Demonic Fighter, not even Thirteen Thrones' Crazy Sword is his match!"

When Dark Scorpion appeared above Shi Feng like a phantom, merging his greatswords into one, gigantic blade, his comrades' eyes glowed with excitement.

Dark Scorpion's greatswords were the Netherblades, an Epic Weapon Set, and that move was his trademark. Dark Scorpion had used the move to severely injure a Grand Lord of the same level. If players received this attack, only death awaited them. Moreover, the attack was impossible to dodge since it covered an AOE of 15*50 yards. Not even a Domain Realm expert could evade his attack.

"Die!"

Looking down at Shi Feng, Dark Scorpion swung the gigantic blade.

In response, Shi Feng unsheathed Killing Ray and countered the descending weapon with a light slash.

Although Shi Feng's counter-attack seemed gentle, everyone saw space split around the weapon. A lightning bolt then toward the gigantic blade among the gloomy, blue flames, and a pitch-black tear followed it.

Lightning Slash!

Against the brilliant lightning bolt, Dark Scorpion's merged weapons were as flimsy as paper, and Shi Feng's counter strike sundered the gigantic blade in half as it passed through the weapon.

Before anyone could react, Dark Scorpion's blade began to disintegrate, and a fine cut and scorch marks appeared on his body.

Like a puppet with cut strings, Dark Scorpion, who still hung in the air, tumbled gracelessly to the ground, an item appearing beside his corpse.

"He died?!"

"The vice commander's dead?!"

"Impossible!"

Demon Palace's members panicked, unable to pull their astonished gazes away from Dark Scorpion's corpse. They couldn't believe that someone had killed him with a single hit.

Everyone turned toward Shi Feng, overwhelmed by fear and curiosity.

Suddenly, Evil Qilin realized something. With a grim expression, he turned to Shi Feng and asked, "Sword King, Black Flame?"

Chapter 2416 – One Axe, One Sword

As Evil Qilin's question hung in the air, Demon Palace's members fell silent. Their jaws hung open, and they couldn't process the possibility.

They had heard Black Flame's name before. Not long ago, their Vice Guild Leader had tried to secure Zero Wing's Stone Forest City to help the Guild's peak experts develop rapidly. Naturally, as members of Demon Palace's main force, they had heard about the situation.

However, they had never thought that Black Flame would be this strong!

Black Flame's ability to instant-kill Dark Scorpion, the vice commander of Demon Palace's main force, was unbelievable.

Even Evil Qilin could hardly believe the notion, but he had earnestly researched the Swordsman and studied his battle videos. The lightning bolt that had killed Dark Scorpion was one of Black Flame's trademark moves, Lightning Slash, and had claimed many experts' lives.

Although he hadn't thought it important before, Evil Qilin had heard that Zero Wing was one of the powers trying to rescue Heaven's Blade's commander.

Seeing Lightning Slash and the Swordsman's obvious relation to Heaven's Blade, Evil Qilin could only think of Zero Wing's Black Flame.

"That's right. We meet again, Elder Qilin," Shi Feng said, chuckling as he sheathed Killing Ray. He did not bother to hide his identity.

Hearing Shi Feng acknowledge his identity, Demon Palace's members gasped.

“Zero Wing’s Black Flame is this strong?”

They considered Zero Wing to be a mere upstart Guild that was lucky enough to secure a treasure trove like Stone Forest City, which, in turn, allowed the Guild to nurture Tier 3 players sooner than other powers.

Although Zero Wing’s Guild Leader was the first player to reach Tier 3, they thought he had lost his advantage now that the various superpowers had Tier 3 experts of their own. As for Shi Feng’s identity as the 30th ranked player on the God’s Domain Experts List, that was of no concern.

The various superpowers had an agreement with the Secret Pavilion that it would only display information about a small number of their experts. No one wanted to reveal all of their cards. If not for this agreement, the various superpowers would’ve ganged up on the Secret Pavilion and removed it from the virtual gaming world. To put it simply, the God’s Domain Experts List wasn’t a reliable way to determine an expert’s strength.

And yet, Shi Feng had instant-killed Dark Scorpion, who ranked among the top 30 on Dragonheart Island. The situation destroyed everything they thought they knew about Shi Feng.

This Swordsman was clearly powerful enough to rank among the top 10 experts on Dragonheart Island. With such strength, they couldn’t afford to take him lightly.

Numerous superpowers operated on Dragonheart Island, and quite a few of them were Super Guilds. Even the weakest power on the island was on par with a first-rate Guild. Dragonheart Island was a hub for peak experts, and not a single individual who could rank among the island’s top 10 experts should be underestimated.

Of course, that did not mean that Demon Palace feared Shi Feng. Evil Qilin could also rank among the top 10 experts on Dragonheart Island. If it came down to an actual fight, Shi Feng’s victory wasn’t guaranteed.

Furthermore, they had far more Tier 3 experts than Shi Feng’s little group of five.

“Guild Leader Black Flame, my subordinates behaved rashly. May I request that you spare them? Then we can go our separate ways,” Evil Qilin asked as he gestured to Wind Gull and White Rainbow.

Hearing the request, Cleansing Flame breathed a sigh of relief. If Evil Qilin wanted a fight, the outcome wouldn’t be in their favor. Even if Zero Wing’s members were far stronger than expected, Demon Palace still had 15 combat-ready Tier 3 players on its team.

Moreover, team battles weren’t like one-on-one fights. Evil Qilin had two Tier 3 healers with him, whereas they didn’t have a single healer, and would have to rely on potions and items with Healing Skills.

“I’ve already said that this is a fair, one-on-one match. I don’t care if they acted rashly or not. If they want to leave, all they have to do is die once,” Shi Feng refused, chuckling.

As he did, a chilling atmosphere enveloped the area.

“Are you so unwilling to give the matter a little consideration on behalf of this old man, Guild Leader Black Flame?” Evil Qilin’s question was laced with killing intent, and he watched Shi Feng with narrowed eyes.

Shi Feng was stronger than he had expected, and Evil Qilin had to admit that the Swordsman qualified to be treated as an equal. But that was all. At most, Shi Feng was only his equal.

“Do you think you can just come and go as you wish? You think too highly of yourself, Elder Qilin,” Shi Feng responded, unfazed by the other man’s hostility. “I’ll repeat myself. I won’t just sit by and watch you interfere.”

“Good! Very good! I see you’re willing to fight, Guild Leader Black Flame!” Evil Qilin’s expression darkened. Suddenly, he radiated dense Mana as if the Demon God had just arrived. Evil Qilin was a much stronger Demonic Fighter than Dark Scorpion.

“Commander, we shouldn’t waste words on him! If we don’t teach him a lesson, he’ll think that he can provoke Demon Palace with impunity just because he’s strong enough to rank among the top 10 experts on Dragonheart Island!” a tall, beautiful woman, another Demonic Fighter, hissed coldly.

The rest of the team’s Tier 3 players nodded in agreement.

Shi Feng was simply too arrogant.

Aside from Super Guilds, no power on Dragonheart Island dared to disrespect Demon Palace. Shi Feng was clearly tired of living by refusing to show Evil Qilin the respect he deserved.

“Since you insist, show me your moves, Guild Leader Black Flame!”

Evil Qilin then pulled the two-handed war axe from his back. The weapon was nearly as long as Evil Qilin was tall, and when he held it in his grip, emerald flames ignited on the axe’s blade, radiating an intense heat. The flames were so hot that space around the war axe blurred.

A Legacy Weapon? Shi Feng was a little surprised to see how perfectly Evil Qilin integrated his strength with the crimson axe.

Legacy Weapons were very rare and usually stronger than ordinary Epic Weapons. Aqua Rose’s Sea Dragon’s Staff was one such example. Although Evil Qilin’s axe wasn’t as powerful as Aqua Rose’s Legacy Staff, it should still be a top-tier Epic Weapon.

Combined with his special Legacy, Evil Qilin’s Strength could likely rival that of a Grand Lord of the same level.

Evil Qilin then transformed into a blazing meteor as he charged at Shi Feng. The older man was even faster than Tier 3 Assassins.

Before anyone could react, Evil Qilin was within 10 yards of Shi Feng, leaving a blazing trail behind him.

So strong! Is he really just a Tier 3 player? Cleansing Flame could not help but gasp when she saw the attack.

Evil Qilin's aura was even more intense than her commander's. She couldn't even muster the courage to resist him as his aura washed over her.

Once he had reached Shi Feng, Evil Qilin raised his axe and swung. The weapon transformed into seven flame serpents, assaulting Shi Feng from multiple directions.

Bronze Combat Technique, Flame Serpent!

As if the seven flame serpents were alive, they each traveled along a unique trajectory. They contained enough Strength that space around them trembled. It was no exaggeration to say that every one of these flame serpents rivaled Dark Scorpion's prior full-powered blow.

Even Demon Palace's Tier 3 experts were surprised, not to mention Cleansing Flame. None of them had realized how powerful their commander truly was.

However, Shi Feng did not panic as the seven flame serpents flew toward him. Rather, he leisurely unsheathed the Abyssal Blade and Killing Array, casually swinging the weapons. Immediately, a galaxy of stars manifested around him.

Sword's Orbit!

Boom... Boom... Boom...

The sounds of one explosion after another echoed throughout the passage. In the end, Shi Feng used Sword's Orbit to strike down all seven flame serpents. Not only hadn't the flame serpents reached Shi Feng, but the resulting impacts had forced Evil Qilin to stumble half a step backward.

"Since you've finished your attack, it's my turn!"

Seizing the moment after Evil Qilin's attack, Shi Feng executed Lightning Flash. Unlike earlier, he now executed the technique with both of his swords, so he could focus more of his strength into the attack than his speed.

Seventeen sword lights flashed toward Evil Qilin, transforming into arcs of lightning.

Evil Qilin's heart skipped a beat as he stood against the attack. He could sense that every arch of lightning was more powerful than his flame serpents.

He gripped his axe tightly and swung it in a horizontal arc, activating his Tier 3 Legacy Skill, Demonic Gale. A pitch-black storm formed before him, clashing with the blue lightning.

Boom!

When the two collided, Evil Qilin's storm dissipated instantly. Although he had done his best to evade and deflect Shi Feng's attack, one of the lightning strikes had brushed past his shoulder, leaving a scorch mark and taking one-quarter of his HP. The difference between their strengths was clear...

Chapter 2417 – Overwhelming Tier 3s

Demon Palace's members were stunned when they saw how much HP Evil Qilin had lost. They had never dreamed that their commander would be at a disadvantage against Shi Feng.

“Not even the commander is a match for him?! How high are Black Flame's Attributes?!”

Shocked, Demon Palace's members turned toward Shi Feng.

They were Demon Palace's main force members, experts among experts in their Guild. Even the weakest of them had reached the peak of the Refinement Realm. They could all recognize the difference between two fighting players' strength.

In terms of combat standards, Evil Qilin and Shi Feng were matched; both were Domain Realm experts. Their physical control was exceptional, and they could make the best judgments based on their surroundings. Their combat standards were nearly impossible to beat.

However, Shi Feng was considerably faster and had much higher Strength than Evil Qilin. Despite sharing the same standard of Skills and combat techniques, the combat power those two had displayed thus far was on completely different levels. The difference between their reaction speed was glaringly noticeable, which was precisely the reason that Evil Qilin had failed to dodge all of Shi Feng's lightning arcs.

The members of Demon Palace's main force knew exactly how high Evil Qilin's Basic Attributes were. Even at Tier 2, his Attributes had been high enough to rival that of ordinary Tier 3 players. Naturally, his Basic Attributes had reached even greater highs now that he had reached Tier 3. It was no exaggeration to call him a humanoid monster.

And yet, Evil Qilin's Basic Attributes were no match for Shi Feng's. They couldn't fathom how Shi Feng had obtained such inhuman Attributes.

Meanwhile, Cleansing Flame, who watched from afar, could do nothing but gape.

Is this Guild Leader Black Flame's true strength?

Evil Qilin was one of the top 10 experts on Dragonheart Island. Not even Zwei was his match, yet Shi Feng had overwhelmed such an expert.

That Swordsman might even be able to contend with the peerless monsters that ranked among Dragonheart Island's top three experts.

Even superpowers' Guild Leaders were afraid of the top three monsters on the island. All three were capable of destroying a superpower's expert legion by themselves. They were practically invincible on Dragonheart Island.

At that moment, Cleansing Flame finally realized why Shi Feng had dared to mount a rescue mission with only four people. With his strength, he certainly was capable of rescuing her commander.

After stumbling back half a step, Evil Qilin stared at Shi Feng in astonishment.

How are his Basic Attributes higher than mine? Confusion overwhelmed Evil Qilin as he looked at Shi Feng. He currently wore the Level 100 Legacy Set Equipment for the Demonic Fighter Class, and combined with his Legacy's effects, he had the Strength to rival Grand Lords of the same level. Still, he could only surpass the power in Shi Feng's normal attacks by using a Tier 3 Skill. Moreover, he wasn't nearly as fast as Shi Feng, which had resulted in him taking a hit.

However, Shi Feng didn't stop after pushing Evil Qilin back. He immediately thrust the Abyssal Blade at the Demonic Fighter.

Tier 2 Skill, Shadow Blade!

Ten phantom swords flew toward Evil Qilin from all directions, leaving him no room to retreat.

Realizing that he couldn't evade the phantom swords, Evil Qilin swung his war axe in a horizontal slash and activated the Demonic Fighter class's Defensive Skill, Iron Wall. At his command, four magic barriers appeared around him, each twice as large as an MT's shield. Evil Qilin controlled the barriers to circle him in a unique trajectory.

Advanced Defensive Combat Technique, Firm Wall!

The 10 phantom swords slammed into the magic barriers, which trembled violently from the impact. The blows even forced Evil Qilin to stumble backward again.

One hit... Two hits... Three hits...

Each hit felt like the blow of a massive hammer, and the barrier's Mana density steadily drained.

On the ninth attack, two of the phantom swords merged, thrusting at one of the magic barriers.

Boom!

With the sound of an explosion, the magic barrier shattered.

It broke? Evil Qilin watched one of his barriers shatter with wide eyes.

Not even the Primordial Guard's golden spear had been able to break through the magic barriers he summoned with his Legacy Defensive Skill, but Shi Feng had shattered it with one hit. It was simply unbelievable!

That blow had also forced Evil Qilin to stumble another two steps back, but this time, he failed to maintain his stance. Not only did he reveal holes in his defense, but the impact had also made his Defensive Skill unstable.

Taking advantage of the opportunity, Shi Feng thrust Killing Ray at his opponent, and the Sacred Sword slid through Evil Qilin's weak point, heading straight for the Demonic Fighter's forehead.

Shi Feng's attack was far too fast for Evil Qilin to evade or defend, and as a result, he could only take the direct hit.

If Killing Ray found its mark, the attack would be fatal.

God's Domain had undergone so many updates, and now, injuries would affect players' performance in battle. If players injured their arm, for example, the limb would be difficult to control for a while. If players received a head injury, their perception and total physical control would suffer.

Evil Qilin was no match for Shi Feng's reaction speed in the first place. If he lost even more reaction speed, he'd be a lamb for the slaughter.

Just as Killing Ray's tip was about to slice into Evil Qilin's forehead, an icy greatsword enveloped in azure flames descended from above and landed between Shi Feng and his opponent. The interruption halted Killing Ray's advance, giving Evil Qilin room to breathe.

Mana control? When Shi Feng saw the disintegrating greatsword, he couldn't help but glance at the female Demonic Fighter that was walking toward him.

Demonic Fighters in God's Domain fell into two main categories. The first type of Demonic Fighter used Mana to amplify their Strength, while the second type wielded Mana as a weapon.

Both Dark Scorpion and Evil Qilin were Strength-type Demonic Fighters. This female Demonic Fighter, however, was a control-type.

The icy greatsword reappeared in the female Demonic Fighter's hand, radiating a bone-chilling cold that plummeted the temperature in the tunnel.

"I'm coming, commander! Let's see if he can stop us together!" Twilight Dawn, another vice commander from Demon Palace's main force, shouted as she began to manipulate her icy greatsword again.

The weapon split into six smaller swords of ice that spun around Shi Feng.

Advanced Combat Technique, Windwheel.

Evil Qilin did not reject Twilight Dawn's help. He now knew that he couldn't defeat Shi Feng on his own, and defeating this Swordsman was of the utmost importance. If they lost here, the prestige Demon Palace had earned on Dragonheart Island would vanish.

Following which, Evil Qilin raised his war axe and leaped into the air. He then smashed the axe down on Shi Feng, transforming the weapon into a blazing meteor mid-swing. The meteor carried so much power that space around it began to fragment.

Tier 3 Legacy Skill, Falling Strike!

"With the commander and vice commander working together, Black Flame is dead for sure!"

Demon Palace's members regained their confidence and excitement as they watched the blazing meteor and ice swords fly toward Shi Feng.

Twilight Dawn might not have as much combat power as Dark Scorpion, but her coordination with Evil Qilin was far better. With attacks coming at him from all directions, Shi Feng wouldn't come out unscathed.

"Not bad!" Shi Feng praised as he watched the 8-meter-radius meteor and six ice swords. His gaze hardening, Shi Feng slashed Killing Ray at the axe-turned-meteor while he swung Abyssal Blade to counter the icy swords around him.

Dragon Breath!

Nine Dragons Slash!

A brilliant beam of white light shot through the air, crashing into the descending meteor. When the two attacks collided, bright light illuminated the tunnel as if the sun had just appeared.

After a brief moment, the white beam devoured the blazing meteor. A black figure shot back from the beam like a bullet, crashing into the tunnel's wall and cracking the stone. The figure was none other than Evil Qilin, and after that blow, his HP had dropped to a critical low, leaving the man hovering between life and death.

Meanwhile, 21 Abyssal Blade phantoms created a massive cluster of stars as Shi Feng used Sword's Orbit to stop Twilight Dawn's Windwheel. None of her icy swords could get within 10 yards of Shi Feng. Furthermore, Shi Feng controlled three of the phantoms in an attack against Twilight Dawn. Despite her attempts to dodge and block the weapons, her HP plummeted throughout the fight.

Seeing this, Demon Palace's members fell deathly silent.

Not only had their commander and vice commander failed to suppress Shi Feng, despite working together, but the Swordsman also had turned the tables and suppressed them both.

"Just how strong is he?"

"So, this is the Sword King?"

Demon Palace's members shuddered as they watched Shi Feng. Not even Dragonheart Island's top three monsters could overwhelm Evil Qilin and Twilight Dawn to this extent.

"This won't do. At this rate, those two are going to die."

"It seems we have no choice but to attack as a group. He may be a monster, but we have so many Tier 3 players on our side. How many Skills can he possibly have?"

"That's right. If we let him kill our commander and vice commander, the reputation we've built on Dragonheart Island will be in tatters."

Shi Feng's performance scared Demon Palace's members, but quite a few of them were peak Tier 3 experts. If they worked together, whittling Shi Feng down and killing him was entirely possible. Fights between Tier 3 players largely relied on Tier 3 Skills and Spells, and they had healers on their team, whereas Shi Feng didn't.

When she saw the rest of Demon Palace's team rush toward the fight, Cleansing Flame paled.

Are they really going to fight to the end? As she watched Demon Palace's healers restore Evil Qilin and Twilight Dawn's HP, Cleansing Flame desperately wished she was a healer herself.

Despite the rest of Demon Palace's members dashing toward him, Shi Feng retained his composure. He simply sent them an uninterested glance.

Very good!" A grin spread across Shi Feng's face as he replaced Killing Ray with the Twilight Blade. "It seems that you think I'll be a pushover if you can outnumber me."

Shi Feng then activated Twilight's Shadow and Twilight of the Gods.

Shi Feng suddenly split into eight physical copies, and they all quietly watched Demon Palace's members.

"Let's begin the third round, then!"

Chapter 2418 – Soloing a Team

Demon Palace's members froze, shocked when they saw Shi Feng split into eight clones of himself.

"Im-Impossible! This can't be real!"

"That's right! This must be a trick! These doppelgangers must be fake!"

The Demon Palace members felt stifled as they stared at Shi Feng's doppelgangers. One of him had already been more than enough to suppress Evil Qilin and Twilight Dawn. Seeing eight copies of the Swordsman was enough to push them to the brink of madness.

Demon Palace's members couldn't believe their eyes.

They only had 15 Tier 3 players left standing, and two of them were tied up with Zero Wing's members. That left them with only 13 Tier 3 players.

Against eight monsters like Shi Feng, they wouldn't even have a chance with 30 Tier 3 players, much less 13.

"Don't let him mislead you!" Twilight Dawn shouted at her team members. "He may have split into eight, but his doppelgangers' Basic Attributes can't be as high as his normal body's! Besides, he's controlling all eight doppelgangers by himself! Their combat standards will be limited, and we have healers on our side! We can outlast him!"

Twilight Dawn could sense that the doppelgangers were physical, and the development had dealt a massive mental blow.

However, she could also sense that the doppelgangers' auras were weaker than Shi Feng's normal aura, which proved that their Basic Attributes weren't as high.

At the end of the day, Shi Feng was still human. Controlling all eight clones perfectly was impossible. Even as a Domain Realm expert, at most, he should be able to control three doppelgangers at the Void Realm standard. He'd be fortunate if he could get the remaining doppelgangers to the Refinement Realm.

On average, Shi Feng's eight clones could fight at the Flowing Water Realm standard and only the initial stages.

Tier 3 experts had no reason to fear these significantly weaker versions of Shi Feng.

Hearing Twilight Dawn's encouragement, the Demon Palace players snapped out of their dazes and mustered their courage once more.

They had been so shocked to see Shi Feng's eight clones that they had forgotten that players weren't like NPCs. No player could perfectly control so many doppelgangers.

"Is that so?" Shi Feng chuckled when he heard Twilight Dawn's deduction, and all eight of him charged at Demon Palace's members.

They were experts among experts, and as such, Demon Palace's members didn't panic, despite facing the doppelganger's sudden assault. They retaliated with everything they had, with the Tier 3 melee players rushing to meet the doppelgangers in battle while the Tier 2 MTs formed a defensive line to protect their healers and long-range players.

Meanwhile, Twilight Dawn went all-out against the doppelganger before her. While manipulating the six ice swords to attack, she cast her Tier 3 Legacy Spell, Demonic Fall.

"Let's see how long you last!"

The six icy swords radiated a frightening amount of Mana as the intensity of their auras doubled. These weapons then attacked as one, each one locked onto the doppelganger's vital points.

This move was even stronger than Evil Qilin's Flame Serpent, and controlled by a Half-step Domain Realm expert, they could even give Tier 3 Domain Realm experts a run for their money.

Shi Feng was controlling his doppelgangers in the fight against Demon Palace's other Tier 3 experts. If she could force him to focus most of his attention on the doppelganger she fought, the other doppelganger's combat standards would suffer. This would make it easier for the other Demon Palace members to kill off Shi Feng's doppelgangers.

However, Shi Feng remained unfazed as he faced Twilight Dawn's all-out attack. His doppelganger merely executed Sword's Orbit and created a barrier of stars around itself.

Boom... Boom... Boom...

Metallic clangs echoed throughout the tunnel as the ice swords bounced off the glittering stars. None of the weapons were able to reach the doppelganger, which continued to approach Twilight Dawn.

How is this possible?! Twilight Dawn was shocked as Shi Feng's doppelganger so effortlessly deflected her attacks.

She could see the flaws in the doppelganger's offense and defense and knew it was only at the Flowing Water Realm standard, yet Shi Feng relied on his doppelganger's powerful Basic Attributes to bridge the gap.

However, Twilight Dawn didn't know that Shi Feng's Basic Attributes were even higher than a Grand Lord's of the same level. Moreover, Shi Feng had already reached Level 107. Even if his doppelgangers only had 85% of his Basic Attributes, they were still as powerful as a Level 105 Grand Lord.

While Twilight Dawn tried to fight through her shock, Demon Palace's Tier 3 experts were at a complete disadvantage against Shi Feng's doppelgangers, and they continued to lose HP. Many of them couldn't even hold their ground, and the doppelgangers sent them flying with a single hit. If not for the rear line healers' diligent healing, they would've long since fallen.

Even Evil Qilin, who had just recovered to full HP, failed to secure an advantage against the doppelganger he fought. Of course, that doppelganger was also the strongest of Shi Feng's clones, with combat standards to rival veteran peak experts.

For a time, Shi Feng's eight clones thoroughly suppressed Demon Palace's 40-plus experts, repeatedly pushing them back and away from Wind Gull's and White Rainbow's fights.

Is he even human? Twilight Dawn began to panic as Shi Feng suppressed her team all by himself.

Their team was the main force of Demon Palace's third trump card legion. Almost no one was strong enough to threaten them.

And yet, Shi Feng single-handedly pushed their team to the brink of annihilation. Surviving was enough of a problem right now, let alone saving their two Assassins. This was an utter nightmare.

"Everyone, hold on for a little longer! Black Flame's doppelgangers can't last that long! Once the doppelgangers are gone, his time will be up!" Evil Qilin shouted, seeing his teammates lose their confidence. Shi Feng's performance had exceeded his expectations, but Doppelganger Skills typically had a short duration. Once Shi Feng lost his doppelgangers, ending his life would be easy.

"I'm afraid that you don't have that luxury!" Shi Feng quipped, activating his Disintegration Armor's Disintegration Field.

Suddenly, Demon Palace's members felt an indescribably powerful pressure, and their Basic Attributes and physiques rapidly began to weaken. The Tier 2 players' Attributes, in particular, fell by 30%. Now, even ordinary Level 100, Tier 2 experts would be a match for them.

Demon Palace's Tier 3 experts didn't fare much better. Both their Basic Attributes and physiques fell by 20%, causing their combat power to plummet.

Because of the Disintegration Field, the gap between Shi Feng's doppelgangers and Demon Palace's members widened even further.

Now, even Evil Qilin slid back as he fought Shi Feng's doppelganger. He was no longer a match for the clone head-on.

The other Tier 3 experts from Demon Palace couldn't even put up a fight. Shi Feng's doppelgangers sent them flying with every swing of their swords, forcing them to reveal weaknesses for the doppelgangers to exploit. The Tier 3 healers couldn't keep up with the doppelganger's damage.

After five seconds, one of the Tier 3 peak experts fell. Another followed a few seconds later.

This battle was no longer a fight. It was a slaughter.

In the 20 seconds after Shi Feng had activated Disintegration Field, 5 of the 13 Tier 3 players from Demon Palace had died.

The remaining Demon Palace members were terrified. At this rate, Shi Feng would eliminate them all in less than a minute.

"Retreat! Everyone retreat!" Evil Qilin shouted, gritting his teeth. He couldn't continue watching Shi Feng massacre his team.

Chapter 2419 – Evil Qilin Terrified

"We've won?"

Hearing Evil Qilin's order to retreat, Cleansing Flame's jaw hit the floor.

When Demon Palace had first arrived on Dragonheart Island, it had caused a huge sensation, and many of the superpowers had quickly learned to fear it. Of all the feats Demon Palace had accomplished on the island, the most amazing was its achievement of elevating War Blood to the number one adventurer team on Dragonheart Island.

Meanwhile, Evil Qilin's team had beaten the various superpowers' main forces into submission, ensuring that no one dared to oppose his Guild. Aside from a few Super Guilds' main forces, not a soul on Dragonheart Island could contend with Evil Qilin's team.

When Cleansing Flame had learned that Demon Palace had sent Evil Qilin's team to hunt down her commander, she had nearly fallen to despair. Heaven's Blade had the power, more or less, to resist War Blood, but against Demon Palace, it would be utterly helpless.

And yet, not only could Shi Feng contend with the main force from one of Demon Palace's trump card legions, but he had also defeated that team. It was unbelievable!

Although Dragonheart Island's top three experts could defeat Evil Qilin's team, they'd have to rely on guerilla warfare in the fields to pick off the team members. Defeating the team head-on was practically impossible. Evil Qilin, Dark Scorpion, and Twilight Dawn were no ordinary experts. Evil Qilin, in particular, was one of the top 10 experts on Dragonheart Island and fully capable of annihilating Heaven's Blade's main force by himself.

Meanwhile, Demon Palace's members felt bitter about their commander's order to flee.

Normally, they were the ones that terrified their opponents, but Shi Feng had single-handedly forced them to run with their tails tucked between their legs.

If they told this story to the people waiting outside the tunnel, those players would assume they were joking. This situation was simply impossible.

They were all extremely strong, and 16 of their 50 members were Tier 3 experts. Moreover, two of them ranked among the top 20 of Dragonheart Island's experts. Twilight Dawn might not rank among the top 20, but she definitely ranked among the top 30. Not even Super Guilds could afford to dispatch such a powerful team without limiting its operations. Even if a Super Guilds sent such a team against them, they wouldn't suffer such a devastating loss.

However, this impossibility had happened, and their opponent wasn't a trump card legion from some Super Guild. They merely faced a pseudo-superpower, and to make matters worse, Zero Wing's Guild Leader, Shi Feng, had defeated them without help...

If word of this spread, Demon Palace's reputation on Dragonheart Island would be ruined.

But despite their bitterness, Demon Palace's members didn't hesitate to follow Evil Qilin's orders. They immediately scattered and fled, ignoring Shi Feng's doppelgangers. Their retreat was so decisive that even Shi Feng was stunned by their abrupt response.

He wouldn't have been surprised if ordinary players were fleeing from him, but such a retreat was humiliating for experts like those from Demon Palace. The stronger an expert was, the more prideful they'd be. Many experts would be more willing to die standing, rather than live on their knees. Furthermore, they'd only die once. With the support of a powerful Guild like Demon Palace, recovering that level would be a piece of cake.

What Shi Feng didn't know was that Demon Palace wasn't like other superpowers. The Guild hailed from the Demonic Hell World, where competition was far more intense than anywhere on the main continent. Losing a level and a piece of equipment could result in losing their positions as upper echelons in the Guild.

Why?

Because opportunities were so hard to come by!

Only with high levels and great strength could one find fortuitous opportunities, especially when one was a frontline expert. Losing their chance to reach greater heights because of a single death was entirely possible.

The various superpowers generally had a cold, realistic attitude regarding their expert members. If players could rank at the top in a superpower, they'd receive more resources than their weaker comrades, but if they fell from that rank, they'd lose some of those resources and benefits.

Unless it was an order from the Guild, Demon Palace's members wouldn't sacrifice themselves for their own pride.

Demon Palace had no qualms about abandoning its peak experts without a second thought, with the exception of Domain Realm experts. Given enough time, talent, and resources, the Guild could nurture more Void Realm experts. Reaching the Domain Realm, on the other hand, required more than just those three factors. Luck was also necessary. Otherwise, the various superpowers wouldn't shower Domain Realm experts with such respect, going so far as to offer them positions as Grand Elders without hesitation.

Shi Feng didn't bother to chase after Demon Palace's fleeing members after recovering from his shock. He simply stood there and watched them run.

"Are we just letting them go, Guild Leader?" Shadow Sword asked after finishing White Rainbow off. As far as he was concerned, it was only natural to annihilate Demon Palace's team and teach them about Zero Wing's strength since the team had dared to ambush them.

"We've already obtained the key. We don't have the time to waste on them," Shi Feng said nonchalantly. He then turned to unlock the steel gate.

Shi Feng's goal wasn't to annihilate Demon Palace's members. It was to save Heaven's Blade's commander as quickly as possible. He was satisfied enough with teaching Demon Palace a lesson and letting Shadow Sword and the others get some training in. There was no reason to engage Demon Palace in a meaningless battle.

Besides, even with his doppelgangers, hunting down every one of Demon Palace's fleeing members would take a very long time. By the time he finished, War Blood or Thirteen Thrones would've reached Zwei. He'd only lose his chance to acquire one of the Tree of Life's main branches. He wouldn't let a small skirmish with Demon Palace ruin his plans.

Shi Feng's decision reminded Shadow Sword and his companions that they were here to save people, and they followed Shi Feng into the inner corridor.

After putting some distance between them and that monster of a Swordsman, Demon Palace's members realized that Shi Feng's party hadn't chased after them, and they breathed a sigh of relief. They all knew that if Shi Feng intended to chase after them with his doppelgangers, very few of them would make it out of the tunnel alive.

"Damn it! Black Flame is ignoring us!" Twilight Dawn cursed and slammed her fist into the wall beside her when she realized that no one had run after them, her expression shifting through a series of complex emotions.

While she was glad that they hadn't lost a level, they were the creme de la creme of Demon Palace's third trump card legion. And Shi Feng obviously considered them negligible, too lazy to bother hunting them down. It was humiliating!

"He's not coming after us?" Evil Qilin frowned deeply when he saw the steel gate at the end of the tunnel disappear. "It seems we have severely underestimated Zero Wing. We need to leave and meet with the Vice Guild Leader!"

If Shi Feng had continued after them, he would've, at most, acknowledged that Shi Feng was very strong, but since the Swordsman ignored them, he couldn't help the terror he felt.

Since the very beginning, Shi Feng hadn't considered them equals. He didn't even consider them a threat to Zero Wing. Thus, it didn't matter if they escaped or died. Neither outcome would affect Shi Feng's Guild.

As for the idea that Shi Feng had let them go out of respect, that was a joke. Shi Feng had killed Dark Scorpion and more than half of their team's Tier 3 experts. How could that be interpreted as respect?

Twilight Dawn nodded reluctantly and started to organize the team to head back to the tunnel entrance.

Ten minutes into their return trip, Evil Qilin's team encountered a small army of several hundred players. The team leader was none other than Yu Luo, who had temporarily allied with two other superpowers.

Chapter 2420 – Powerful Backer?

"There's a team ahead of us, Team Leader Yu Luo!" a Level 102, Tier 2 Ranger reported when he noticed blurry figures in the dimly lit passage about 400 yards ahead.

As one ventured closer to the inner corridor, they'd have less visibility. At their current location, not even Tier 3 players could see more than 300 yards ahead of them. Only a few classes, such as the Ranger class, would be able to see a little farther.

"A returning team?" By the time Yu Luo heard the Ranger's report, she, too, spotted a slowly approaching team of players. She immediately shouted a warning in the team chat, "Everyone, be careful! Maintain some distance! We want to avoid any misunderstandings! We're not here to fight!"

There was only one path leading into the Molten Ruin's inner corridor, and no one, aside from Shi Feng's group and Demon Palace's team, had entered the tunnel ahead of them.

They had already made it past the most difficult parts of the tunnel and were almost guaranteed to reach the inner corridor. Any other team that had gotten this far should be able to get into the corridor, as well.

Hence, any returning team they encountered had to have already visited the inner corridor.

Any team that could reach the inner corridor was extraordinary. They must've also obtained some treasure and were likely wary of other players. If they had a misunderstanding with this team, unnecessary conflict could easily break out.

When the other two superpowers' team members heard Yu Luo's warning, they nodded and moved toward the left side of the passage. They were careful to show no signs of hostility or intentions to plunder the stranger's loot. Nobody wanted an unnecessary fight this far in the tunnel. A large number of treasures and opportunities waited for them in the inner corridor, which was even more dangerous than the Molten Ruin's outer region. Conserving as much strength as possible would be best.

However, as the two teams grew closer to each other, Yu Luo and the others revealed shock and confusion, getting a better look at the team leaving the tunnel.

They were quite familiar with the returning team's members.

Demon Palace!

Practically every power had been afraid when they had seen Demon Palace's team enter the tunnel. Even Yu Luo had rushed to band together with other superpowers because of their presence.

And now, Demon Palace's members were returning to the ruin's outer area. Moreover, they were all in a miserable state, and more than half of the team's Tier 3 players were missing.

"How is this possible?!"

"Why are they returning?"

"Did something prevent them from completing their mission?"

The various superpowers' members stared at Evil Qilin and his comrades in astonishment as their anxiety spiked.

They knew how strong Evil Qilin's team was, with a total of 16 Tier 3 experts. Evil Qilin was even one of the top 10 experts on Dragonheart Island. Overall, the man's team was even stronger than theirs, which included players from three superpowers.

However, Evil Qilin's team was retreating with severe losses. For a moment, the various superpowers' members even wondered if they would make it to the inner corridor.

The two superpowers' team leaders glanced at Yu Luo, questions and doubt flashing in their eyes. She had assured them that once they reached this point, they would have cleared the passage; they shouldn't encounter any challenges from this point on and would be able to enter the inner corridor to search for treasure and opportunity.

Has the latter half of the tunnel's difficulty changed? The situation confused Yu Luo, as well.

Based on the information from her commander, the latter half of the passage should only have a few monsters and a Guardian Boss. Once they slew the Guardian Boss, they'd obtain the key to enter the inner corridor.

The Guardian Boss was merely a Level 105 Grand Lord. Although casualties were unavoidable, killing it shouldn't be a problem for their team. Defeating the Guardian Boss should be child's play for Demon Palace's team. What could have happened to them to leave them in such a pitiful state?

While everyone was confused, Evil Qilin had noticed Yu Luo. Suddenly, a frightening aura washed over her team, and Demon Palace's remaining Tier 3 experts glared at Yu Luo. An intense pressure bore down on everyone in the tunnel.

"Excellent! You Heaven's Blade members are quite impressive!" Evil Qilin coldly hissed. "I've truly underestimated you! I had never realized that you had such a backer! Demon Palace acknowledges this defeat, but don't you dare think that they can protect you for long! We'll see who gets the last laugh!"

With that comment, Evil Qilin brushed past Yu Luo's team. The rest of Demon Palace's members followed, glaring at Yu Luo and her companions from Heaven's Blade.

Once Demon Palace's members were out of sight, the two superpowers' members turned to Yu Luo, curious. Evil Qilin hadn't said much, but what he had said was shocking. None of them had thought that Heaven's Blade had support from an entity that could defeat Demon Palace's members so grievously that they had to retreat. If news of this spread, it would cause a sensation across Dragonheart Island.

Not even the various superpowers dared to offend Demon Palace, yet Heaven's Blade's backer was capable of contending with the Guild's experts. This proved that Heaven's Blade had the support of a horrifying entity.

"How could you hide this from us, Team Leader Yu Luo? I hadn't thought that Heaven's Blade had hidden so much strength. It's no wonder how Commander Zwei was able to reach the inner corridor while the rest of us could only stare at the tunnel's entrance."

Your people must be amazing to make Demon Palace's members suffer like that. Would you introduce us to this backer of yours? Even a little information will be satisfactory. We might have an opportunity to cooperate again in the future."

The team leaders from the two superpowers amicably approached Yu Luo, asking questions. They spoke as if they were addressing a family member.

They were both eager to know more about the power that was powerful enough to contend with Demon Palace. They also wanted to avoid accidentally offending this power. If this power had beaten Demon Palace's team so badly, they'd meet an even more miserable end if they offended it.

"This... I'm not sure what he's talking about," Yu Luo replied, confused. She had never heard of Heaven's Blade working with a power that was a match for Demon Palace on Dragonheart Island.

Both team leaders glanced at Yu Luo, skeptical.

An act!

This was clearly an act!

Evil Qilin, one of Demon Palace's Elders, had clearly stated that his team had encountered Heaven's Blade's backer, and as one of the adventurer team's Tier 3 experts and Chief Healer, there was no way Yu Luo didn't know who it was.

"It's true! I don't know what he was talking about!" Yu Luo insisted when she saw the two team leader's dubious looks.

If Heaven's Blade had the support of such a powerful entity, why would she go to so much trouble to save her commander?

The team leaders said nothing more to Yu Luo's denial, but they ordered one of their subordinates to log out of the game and notify their superiors.

The message was simple. Demon Palace has encountered a mysterious power in the Molten Ruin that had defeated them and forced them to flee. Meanwhile, this mysterious power supported Heaven's Blade.

They also suggested that their superiors launch a thorough investigation on this mysterious power as soon as possible.

While the subordinates related the message, Heaven's Blade's members wracked their minds to figure out when their adventurer team had allied with such an amazing power.

As for the possibility of Evil Qilin lying to them....

That was impossible. Evil Qilin had no reason to lie.

Unless Evil Qilin was suicidal, he wouldn't broadcast his defeat and tarnish Demon Palace's reputation and prestige.

Could it be Thirteen Thrones' doing? After pondering the matter, the only Super Guild Yu Luo could think of that had any relationship with Heaven's Blade was Thirteen Thrones. That would explain Demon Palace's injuries, but considering the situation further, something felt amiss to her. I should notify the commander. She should know something about this.

Yu Luo sent one of her Assassins to log out of the game and notify their commander. Demon Palace's retreat, after all, was wonderful news for their adventurer team.