

Strongest

Chapter 1101: Benefits after a Great War

The dissipation of the Evil Energy quickly attracted the attention of the independent players outside Stone Forest Town.

“What? Didn’t they say that Evil Energy won’t ever dissipate?”

“Based on the information I found, in order to remove Evil Energy, one needs to sever the source. Could Zero Wing have secretly dealt with the source already?”

“That’s not right. The Evil Energy this time should have originated from Black Ridge Town. However, Black Ridge Town is still the same right now.”

“How did Zero Wing do it, then?”

Everyone was discussing this development. Very quickly, word of this situation spread throughout the entire Star-Moon Kingdom.

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Star-Moon City, Blackwater’s Residence:

“Impossible! How did they manage to remove the Evil Energy?!” Abandoned Wave practically screamed when he read the report he just received shortly after resurrecting. “Zero Wing must be faking this information! I can guarantee that the Evil Energy is impossible to remove!”

Unlike curses, Evil Energy could not be cleansed. It was a kind of chaotic energy. Like a contagious virus, it would automatically transform other forms of energy into Evil Energy. Without eliminating the source, removing the Evil Energy polluting Stone Forest Town was simply impossible. However, removing the source was easier said than done. Even he did not know the source’s exact location. If it was really located in Black Ridge Town, the monster-infested town was not a place current players could approach.

Moreover, Evil Energy was extremely harmful to players. If players immersed themselves in Evil Energy for long periods, they would get infected and fall into a Weakened state. Players exposed to Evil Energy for too long would even turn into monsters. If that happened, they would be barred from logging into God’s Domain for a considerable amount of time. Due to these dire consequences, cleaning out the monsters in Black Ridge Town was extremely difficult.

Hence, he firmly believed that Zero Wing could not remove the Evil Energy polluting Stone Forest Town.

The only possibility was that Zero Wing was releasing fake news.

After all, Zero Wing had previously registered plenty of members at the Battle Arena they constructed, collecting a hefty sum in membership fees. If the Battle Arena was gone, those members could seek compensation for their losses. Therefore, the intention behind the release of this fake news was undoubtedly the appeasement of those members.

“Guild Leader, it’s true. Our spies in Zero Wing have already confirmed this fact. The Evil Energy inside the town is indeed gradually dissipating. At this rate, it will take less than five days for all the Evil Energy in the town to disappear completely. By then, Stone Forest Town will be able to resume its operations,” Qin Muyun said, an ugly expression on her face as she took out another document.

Not only had the Blackwater Guild lost a considerable number of elite members, but the Guild's prestige in Star-Moon Kingdom had also fallen to rock bottom. Members were withdrawing from the Guild every minute.

Most likely, they would have to recuperate for a long time in order to return to their previous state.

Originally, with Zero Wing having lost Stone Forest Town, Blackwater would've been able to leverage its funds and background to quickly surpass Zero Wing. However, now that Stone Forest Town was alright, whether Blackwater could even surpass Zero Wing's development speed was in question.

This was not an outcome that the upper echelon of the Blackwater Corporation was willing to see.

"This won't do! I cannot let Stone Forest Town continue existing in this world!" Although Abandoned Wave was unwilling to accept the truth of this matter, the facts were already before him. In that case, he needed to take action right away. "Notify that man immediately! Tell him I'll try to provide him with the players he needs. However, I want him to have his monster army thoroughly obliterate Stone Forest Town within five days!"

Qin Muyun could not help but frown at these words.

She never imagined that Abandoned Wave had already lost his prudence to such a degree.

Nurturing all those monsters was not easy. Any players sacrificed to them would be unable to log into God's Domain for several days. Blackwater's elite and expert players had already lost a level from this war. If they were sacrificed again...

“What are you still standing there for?” Abandoned Wave glared at Qin Muyun. “Don’t forget that I am still the Guild Leader right now!”

Helpless to do anything about the situation, Qin Muyun had no choice but to contact the bandaged man.

“Black Flame! Just you wait! This time, I will definitely make you pay a heavy price!” Abandoned Wave laughed coldly as he looked out his window, his eyes staring in Stone Forest Town’s direction.

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Inside Stone Forest Town, Zero Wing had also begun cleaning up the battlefield.

This war had been considerably intense. Over half of Stone Forest Town’s buildings lay in ruins. The Guild Residence was an irreparable mess. Even the Battle Arena had received significant damages and would take a considerable sum of money to repair.

However, their gains far exceeded their losses.

Although the army of 200,000 monsters had not dropped any weapons or equipment, they had dropped plenty of monster materials. The drops from Lord rank monsters were rare materials that could be used to make weapons and equipment. In addition, monsters at the Chieftain rank or above had a fixed chance of dropping a kind of gray crystal called the Evil Energy Crystal.

To ordinary players, this item would be garbage that they would sell to NPC merchants for spare change. However, Shi Feng knew the real use of the Evil Energy Crystals.

This was something a Master Forger had discovered in the past.

If one added Evil Energy Crystals or Magic Crystals during the forging of weapons or equipment, there was a certain probability these crystals would give rise to magic patterns on the items produced. However, the enhancement effect was random. The enhancement might be to the item's Basic Attributes, its Attack Power or Defense, or even its Hidden Attributes or Additional Skills. Hence, the Evil Energy Crystal was highly sought-after by forgers in the past.

In Shi Feng's previous life, there was even a case where a Dark-Gold Weapon produced using Evil Energy Crystals received Attributes nearly rivaling that of Epic Weapons.

Compared to Epic items, Dark-Gold items were much easier to produce.

Hence, in the past, a single Evil Energy Crystal could easily sell for 10 Gold Coins. Even at this price, obtaining one was extremely difficult because after reaching the mid-late stage of the game, many players no longer equipped the weapons and equipment they got from monsters. Instead, they would use items tailor-made for them by forgers. Players would naturally hope that the weapons and equipment produced would be strong. Consequently, players swarmed to whichever kingdom the Evil God's Temple appeared in.

Meanwhile, among the 200,000 monsters that assaulted Stone Forest Town, many were at Chieftain rank or above. As a result, Zero Wing raked in a hefty profit, gathering 2,428 Evil Energy Crystals in all. That was 24,280 Gold Coins at the very least. After including the other materials dropped by the monsters, they had earned more than enough money to repair Stone Forest Town.

Not to mention, even after taking into account the weapons and equipment Zero Wing's members lost in the war, they had netted an additional 114,633 pieces of weapons and equipment from the combined

army of Blackwater, Heaven's Burial, and Pantheon. The most inferior items were Level 35 Bronze Equipment with even Level 40 Dark-Gold Equipment in the mix.

Even after giving out spoils as compensation and rewards to Guild members, the amount left was still staggering.

After Shi Feng read the statistics reports Aqua Rose and Gentle Snow gave him, he fell into a daze for a long time.

Although he had experienced plenty of large wars in the past, none of them had been as profitable as this one.

"Guild Leader, people from the Secret Pavilion are asking to meet you."

Chapter 1102: Constructing a Holy Land

Chapter 1102 – Constructing a Holy Land

"They're looking for me?" Shi Feng could not help but recall the offer Yuan Tiexin had made him before. He then continued, "Have them wait at Candlelight's main headquarters for now. I'll head over shortly."

This war had damaged Stone Forest Town beyond recognition.

Most likely, the town would not be able to resume normal operations for a considerable amount of time. In other words, Zero Wing would lose a major source of income.

Meanwhile, reconstruction would cost a lot of Coins. However, selling the Evil Energy Crystals would undoubtedly be a very foolish move. Moreover, the function of the crystals was still unknown to everyone but himself. How could he possibly reveal it to others? Yet, just the income from the Candlelight Trading Firm was not enough to fund the reconstruction. Not to mention, he also required money to build his city.

There was indeed a need to have a proper chat with the Secret Pavilion.

Among the superpowers in God's Domain, the Secret Pavilion was undoubtedly the richest.

Just the income from the Expert Lists it released every week was an astronomical amount. There were also the consultation fees it earned from selling information.

It would be foolish of him not to take advantage of the situation when such a wealthy client delivered himself up to his doorstep.

Just as Aqua Rose was notifying the Secret Pavilion about the meeting place, Gentle Snow walked over and reported, "Guild Leader, many independent players are currently voicing their wishes for us to reopen Stone Forest Town right away, particularly the players that are members of the Battle Arena. They are asking for us to immediately reopen the town's Battle Arena. Otherwise, they are going to ask for their Magic Crystals back. Should we prioritize the repairs of the Battle Arena first to appease these members? If they continue making a fuss, there will most likely be many players seeking to withdraw their membership."

As the Vice Guild Leader of Zero Wing, Gentle Snow had some detailed information regarding Zero Wing. So, she was very clear just how poor Zero Wing currently was.

In the past, she had always thought that Zero Wing was definitely the wealthiest Guild in Star-Moon Kingdom.

After all, it had the Candlelight Trading Firm and Stone Forest Town providing it with income. The amount of Coins these two places raked in each day could make even the Guild Leaders of first-rate Guilds envious. However, when she took a look at Zero Wing's accounts, they might as well be a blank sheet of paper.

It really made her wonder just where the money Zero Wing earned was going.

Gentle Snow had no idea that while Zero Wing was indeed earning a lot of Coins, it was spending even more—the expenditure of Gold Coins was in the tens of thousands.

“Are they in such a hurry?” After giving the situation some thought, Shi Feng chuckled and said, “Alright, then. Tell them that they may withdraw if they want to. However, once the town is reconstructed, the membership fee for the Battle Arena will be increased to 1,200 Magic Crystals. Moreover, rental for the combat rooms will be doubled. If they wish to withdraw their membership, I very much welcome them to do so.”

“This...” Gentle Snow could not help but stare at Shi Feng, stunned.

They would practically be chasing away their customers if they did so.

Previously, the membership they charged was already out of reach for most independent players. Only a fool would be willing to pay 1,200 Magic Crystals. Not to mention, if they doubled the rent of the combat rooms, it might even affect business at the Battle Arena.

“Relax. Just tell them as is.” Shi Feng waved his hand, not bothering with additional explanations.

Previously, he had focused on running Stone Forest Town as a small town that even ordinary players could enjoy. Now, however, he had changed his mind.

He intended to turn Stone Forest Town into a holy land for PvP!

Now that there were three Magic Towers in Stone Forest Town, the ambient Mana density was much higher than before. Just the cost of maintaining the three towers was extremely high. Retaining the current prices was simply impossible if Zero Wing wished to keep the three towers in operation.

Most importantly, he now had a Town Promotion Order in his hands.

Shi Feng never dreamed that Lancelot would actually drop such an item.

Although this Town Promotion Order was only Secret-Silver rank, it was enough to promote a Basic Town directly into an Intermediate Town.

This was a treasure that many Guilds dreamed of obtaining. No Guild would be willing to trade it away even for 20 Epic items.

Getting a town promoted was a challenging proposition in God's Domain. It was also very time-consuming. Any slight instability or security problem might cause several days' worth of effort to go to waste.

With the Town Promotion Order, however, Shi Feng would be able to promote Stone Forest Town into an Intermediate Town, bypassing the NPC population requirement altogether. He would also be able to hire up to 2,000 NPC guards. At the same time, he could construct real defensive structures instead of basic ones like the Defense Turret. The size of the town would also increase by multiple times. With this, Stone Forest Town would be able to accommodate many more players instead of having players squeeze against each other as they walked through the streets.

A larger town would definitely attract more players. He was not worried about losing visitors at all.

Once Stone Forest Town was promoted, he could also level up all the structures inside it, expanding them significantly. Take the Battle Arena for example. Currently, it was only a five-story building. Once the town was promoted, however, the Battle Arena could have up to eight floors. After including the underground level, the Battle Arena would have nine floors in total. With this, the number of customers they could receive each day would increase substantially.

By then, Stone Forest Town would become a true money-making machine.

However, there was a prerequisite to all of this.

And that was money!

Moreover, it had to be a considerable sum!

Upon hearing Shi Feng's response, Gentle Snow helplessly informed everyone of the new rules in Stone Forest Town. As for Shi Feng himself, he used a Return Scroll to travel to White River City.

The new rules immediately enraged many independent players.

"Zero Wing is simply going overboard! Who would be willing to pay a membership fee of 1,200 Magic Crystals?!"

"They are even doubling the rent now! Do they think our money grows on trees?!"

"I'm going to get a refund! Only a fool would visit Stone Forest Town in the future! If I had that kind of money, I might as well spend it at the Divine Colosseum!"

The spies Blackwater planted in Stone Forest Town began making a ruckus over the new rules, though many independent players did find their words reasonable.

Although the Mana density in Stone Forest Town had indeed increased slightly and would be beneficial for improving their strength, the new prices were simply beyond the reach of ordinary players. Even elite players would not be able to afford to train in the Battle Arena for long periods.

For a time, many Battle Arena members requested refunds, feeling that Zero Wing was trying to cheat them out of their money.

While Aqua Rose and Gentle Snow were grappling with this matter, Shi Feng was seated on a sofa inside a VIP room on the second floor of White River City's Adventurer's Association, leisurely browsing through the designs of Intermediate Towns.

Players had many templates of Intermediate Towns to choose from, and each template had their strong points.

Likewise, different templates had different prices.

Some templates were more suited to economic development through NPCs. Such templates allowed the town's Popularity to increase much more rapidly. Similarly, there were templates geared towards economic development through players. In addition, some templates facilitated the hiring of powerful NPC guards. In any case, many kinds of templates were available depending on the kind of a town that players wished to construct.

Unlike capturing a town, promoting a town cost much less. Moreover, as Shi Feng was using a Promotion Order, the expense was even lower. He only needed to spend 3,000 Gold to promote Stone Forest Town to Intermediate Town status. After applying his identity as a City Protector, he would receive a 20% discount and need to pay only 2,400 Gold in total.

This savings freed up more money, which would allow him to choose better templates.

Sure enough, the templates available here are quite inferior when compared to the one dropped by Lancelot. Taking a careful look, Shi Feng noticed some templates that were only made available to him due to his City Protector title. Even so, none of them could match the Town Design dropped by Lancelot. Shi Feng then turned to the NPC beauty standing at a side and took out an ancient design from his bag. Softly, he asked, "If I wish to use this design here, how much will it cost?"

Chapter 1103: Grandmaster Design

Chapter 1103 – Grandmaster Design

Taking a look at the design Shi Feng revealed, the NPC beauty's eyes widened as the design demanded her full attention. Only after some time did she open her mouth and say, "Lord Protector, the quality of these construction materials and level of skill required are extremely high for this design. I cannot provide an immediate answer. I will have to ask the Association Leader to appraise the design. Would my lord be willing to wait here for a short moment?"

"Even you can't give an exact price?" Shi Feng asked the female senior administrator.

This was the first time he had encountered such a situation.

In the Adventurer's Association, NPCs were categorized into ordinary staff member, administrator, senior administrator, Vice Association Master, and Association Master, each catering to adventurers from one-star to five-star status. Anyone capable of becoming a senior administrator even had the insight and knowledge to rival NPC Lifestyle Masters'.

"Although this design is tattered, I am certain that a Grandmaster produced it. A Grandmaster's Town Design is outside of the scope of my appraising abilities. In our branch, only the Association Master can appraise this," the senior administrator explained, smiling bitterly.

“Alright, let the Association Master appraise it, then.” Shi Feng nodded.

When promoting a town in God’s Domain, choosing the design was only one part of the process, while using the design to construct the town was another. The promotion process was not as simple as capturing a Basic Town. One could say that a town only truly began its operation after becoming an Intermediate Town.

The Adventurer’s Association normally provided players with many template designs to choose from, their prices usually ranging from 1,000 to 3,000 Gold. The Adventurer’s Association would only offer several Master Designs to someone who enjoyed the status of a four-star adventurer, such as himself. These templates could cost anywhere from 4,000 to 5,000 Gold.

Master Designs were roughly 15% better than those of normal designs. Although 15% seemed like a small difference, it would be massively effective in an Intermediate Town.

For example, when that bonus was used to increase the town’s Popularity among NPCs, a town which could originally gain 100 Popularity Points each day would gain 115 points with a Master Design. Normally, a lot of manpower and resources were required to gain that additional 15 points. In addition, Master Designs attracted more quests and events that would raise the town’s Popularity, allowing the town to reach the next rank far more quickly.

Of course, players could opt to produce their own Town Designs. Only, the majority of players’ designs wouldn’t come close to the Adventurer’s Association’s ordinary templates. Extremely few lucky players or genius designers could draft a Town Design better than the available templates.

If a player created such a design, the various large Guilds in God’s Domain would fight over purchasing it, offering roughly 3,000 Gold. If the design reached the Master standard, the minimum price would be 5,000 Gold. However, extremely few players could create designs of such standards. These people were even rarer than Master Forgers.

Among the 28 items Lancelot had dropped, twenty were Epic materials. Of the remaining eight, three were Epic Weapons and pieces of Equipment: a cloth armor headdress, a staff, and a pair of plate armor bracers.

The bracers were the best among them in Shi Feng's opinion.

[Angry Tyrant] (Plate Armor, Bracers, Epic Rank)

Level 40 – Level 100

Equipment Requirement: Strength 1,200

Defense +755 (Level 40)

Strength +60, Agility +32, Endurance +35

Ignore Levels +5

Ignore 20% of the target's Defense.

Increase the effect of Strength by 15%.

Additional Passive Skill 1-

Blood Frenzy: When the wielder's HP falls below 50%, Strength increases by 20%, Attack Speed increases by 30%, and damage received increases by 20%.

Additional Passive Skill 2-

Angry Blow: When attacking, there is a certain chance to increase Strength by 100%.

The bracers were a collection of violence. The increase to the effect of Strength, in particular, was rare even on Epic Weapons and Equipment. Without hesitation, Shi Feng took the bracers for himself.

With this, he had a total of five Epic items and one Fragmented Legendary item on his person. After including the Level 50 Magic Light Set Equipment, his Strength was even higher than a Tier 2 Berserker of the same level. Only his physique and Skills were still somewhat inferior.

As for the five remaining items, two were Tier 4 Magic Scrolls, two were designs, and the last one was the Town Promotion Order.

When Shi Feng had discovered that one of the two designs was a Town Design, he had been ecstatic.

Normally, Town Designs dropped in the field came from Masters. That was the equivalent of saving 5,000 Gold. Moreover, Shi Feng very much preferred this Town Design's heavy emphasis on transportation.

Transportation might not seem very important, but it had a considerably special town effect.

Once the town was complete, as long as the town spent a sufficient amount of money, it would unlock the transport carriages between towns. Not only could these carriages transport players, but they could also allow NPC merchants to reach the town more quickly. It was a design capable of enhancing the town's popularity among both players and NPCs.

Now that he had confirmed that this was a Grandmaster Design, Shi Feng felt the holy land for players beckoning him.

A Grandmaster Design was 30% stronger than normal templates. In the past, even an ordinary Grandmaster Design could sell for tens of thousands of Gold, much less these designs at this stage of the game. Right now, Shi Feng wouldn't sell the design even if he were offered one million Gold.

When Shi Feng thought about the carriages that would soon travel back and forth from Stone Forest Town, his heart beat madly.

At this stage of the game, Mounts were extremely rare. The carriages could save players a lot of time when traveling to Stone Forest Town. Players would be far more willing to stay in Stone Forest Town.

Even when Mounts became popular in the future, how could a Common Mount compete with a carriage?

Moreover, the carriages' speed was not always the same. Once Stone Forest Town became an Advanced Town, the carriages would upgrade to advanced carriages. Only with a Mysterious-Iron Mount could one match the speed of an advanced carriage.

Once transportation was no longer a barrier, what player wouldn't want to visit Stone Forest Town?

Setting aside the Battle Arena, now that Stone Forest Town had three Magic Towers, independent players could enjoy double the benefit of resting in a hotel. Right now, the town's hotels were only slightly less effective than Private Rooms in a Guild Residence. Normally, independent players could only dream of having this effect.

With these three major conditions, Stone Forest Town would undoubtedly become a holy land for players.

After Shi Feng waited in the room for a short while, the NPC administrator returned to the room with his Town Design.

"Lord Protector, our Association Master has appraised your design and confirmed it to be a Grandmaster Design. However, as the requirements for this Grandmaster Design are extremely high, the construction fee will be many times more expensive than usual. Including all of the required materials, it will cost 30,000 Gold. Moreover, this price cannot be discounted. May I know if Lord Protector still wishes to use this design to construct your town?"

"Thirty thousand Gold?!"

Shi Feng frowned. He had thought the price might be quite high, but he hadn't expected it to be *this* high.

That was 30,000 Gold!

He could build five towns with a Master Design with that kind of money...

Chapter 1104: Intermediate Town

Chapter 1104 – Intermediate Town

Shi Feng felt his head ache when he heard the administrator's price.

In reality, this was considered cheap. An Intermediate Town shouldn't have appeared at this stage of the game.

In the past, the first Intermediate Town had only appeared after mainstream players had reached Level 60. During that time, Tier 2 expert players were commonplace. Right now, however, mainstream players weren't even Level 40.

Guild mainstream players could earn money far more quickly at Level 60 than Level 40.

Following which, Shi Feng gave up on constructing his town and stored his Grandmaster Town Design before leaving the VIP room.

Town reconstruction was only one of the benefits of an Intermediate Town. Reconstructing the town was not necessary to reopen it to the public.

Currently, Shi Feng lacked Coins. Hence, he could set this matter aside for now. In any case, Stone Forest Town had already been successfully promoted to an Intermediate Town. The Grandmaster Design wasn't going anywhere. He could simply operate Stone Forest Town as usual. It would not be too late to reconstruct the town after a few more days of earning money.

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In the Candlelight Trading Firm's second-floor lounge...

Yuan Tiexin and Purple Jade both sat quietly inside the lounge.

"Uncle Yuan, I'm afraid that we'll have trouble completing this trade. For some reason, the Evil Energy in Stone Forest Town is gradually dissipating. It is only a matter of time before Stone Forest Town recovers. Zero Wing won't be interested in our conditions," Purple Jade said after she finished reading the information the Secret Pavilion had sent her. Smiling, she said, "Blackwater, Heaven's Burial, and Pantheon have suffered greatly. Not only have they failed to obtain Stone Forest Town, but they have also lost all of the members that they had dispatched. This is the first time Pantheon has suffered such a massive loss since joining God's Domain. They definitely have a mess to clean up."

The relationship between the virtual gaming world's super powers was not as peaceful as everyone thought. If given the opportunity, these powers would be more than willing to choke their rivals to death. After all, every game's resources were finite. If they had one less competitor, they could claim far more resources for themselves.

Pantheon had lost one trump card legion and two core legions in this war; that was a total of 3,000 experts. This would be a significant blow to any Super Guild. The loss of the trump card legion was particularly severe.

Any player capable of joining a Super Guild's trump card legion could reach the Trial Tower's sixth floor at the very minimum. Such experts were considerably rare in first-rate Guilds. In the eyes of ordinary players, those who reached the fifth floor were already considered experts, much less the sixth floor.

"Zero Wing is truly unpredictable." Yuan Tiexin shook his head and laughed. "No wonder they aren't afraid of mutual destruction with Blackwater. However, this doesn't affect our plans in any way. Even if Stone Forest Town recovers, it will take a considerable amount of time and resources. Meanwhile, Candlelight Trading Firm cannot wait that long. It is even more so for Zero Wing."

He had not talked through his hat.

Currently, both the Blackwater and Heavenly Trading Firms were pressuring the Candlelight Trading Firm. Although Candlelight still held considerable influence in Star-Moon Kingdom's market and maintained its daily traffic, how long would that last?

Both the Blackwater and Heavenly Trading Firms were marking down their prices and selling their items at a loss. They could also keep this up for a considerable amount of time due to their abundant funds and powerful connections.

However, what about the Candlelight Trading Firm?

The Candlelight Trading Firm had neither abundant funds nor powerful connections. It's only capital was Stone Forest Town. There was no way Candlelight could win a price war against the Blackwater and Heavenly Trading Firms.

Moreover, without sufficient Coins, Zero Wing could not continue to develop.

Now that Zero Wing was in the limelight, this was the perfect opportunity for the Guild to develop and widen the gap between itself and Blackwater. If Zero Wing only continued its development after Blackwater recovered, the Guild would be in big trouble. If Blackwater decided to take action against Zero Wing again, it would take more precautions and would not be caught off guard as it had been in this war.

Furthermore, Zero Wing currently had an agreement with the Secret Pavilion to hand over the Bronze Mounts and Strengthening Devices. These items were considerably expensive; obtaining them would not be that easy.

If Zero Wing wished to earn more Coins, working with the Secret Pavilion was undoubtedly the best decision.

Just as Yuan Tiexin and Purple Jade were quietly discussing Zero Wing's situation, Shi Feng, currently disguised as Black Flame, entered the lounge.

"What a powerful mental oppression!" Yuan Tiexin was shocked when he laid eyes on Shi Feng. Meeting the man in person felt massively different than watching Shi Feng on the screen.

Although Shi Feng had hidden his weapons and equipment's glow effects and sheathed his aura, Yuan Tiexin, with his bountiful experience, immediately sensed the dangerous atmosphere coming from Shi Feng. This Swordsman felt like a dragon lurking in the water.

“Six Epic items...?” Upon closer inspection, Yuan Tiexin’s lips involuntarily twitched.

In God’s Domain, the difference between Epic items and Dark-Gold items wasn’t limited to their aura effects. There was also a huge difference in the materials used to produce them. Even if Shi Feng tried to hide his items’ glow effects, players who were familiar with the materials could easily recognize the items’ quality.

Yuan Tiexin had researched the various materials available in God’s Domain precisely to gauge others’ strength.

After all, there were too many experts who preferred to keep a low-profile in God’s Domain. If he knew how to determine equipment quality, should he come across an independent expert, he might be able to recruit them into the Secret Pavilion. As for his enemies, he could use this knowledge to gauge their strength and respond appropriately.

“Uncle Yuan, are you sure?” Purple Jade was slightly doubtful when she heard Yuan Tiexin’s words.

Even their Guild Leader did not have as many as six Epic items on him. At most, he had around three...

Epic items were simply too rare. Even Grand Lords rarely dropped them.

Hence, even now, she only had two Epic items. Even so, many of the Guild’s upper echelons were incredibly jealous of her. Of the two Epic items, one was a weapon while the other was a pair of shoes. She had obtained the shoes during a fortuitous encounter. However, that encounter had cost her a level and plenty of effort. As for the weapon, the Guild had given it to her due to her status as the Guild’s top genius. Even a genius like Cold Autumn had not received an Epic item.

Yet, Shi Feng had six Epic items. Anyone would question this matter.

“Do you doubt this old man’s judgment?” Yuan Tiexin could not help but roll his eyes at Purple Jade. Although he was no match for the little girl in terms of potential, he could rank among the top five in the Guild when it came to judging item quality.

“Six Epic items... Is this the secret to Black Flame’s strength?” As Purple Jade quietly watched Shi Feng approach, her will to challenge the man to a fight was immediately extinguished.

Only those who used Epic items knew their strength.

If two combatants had roughly equal combat standards, the one with six Epic items would trample over the one with only two. Furthermore, her standards were weaker than Shi Feng’s. By challenging him right now, she’d only ask for a beating.

After Shi Feng took his seat and before Yuan Tiexin spoke, he received a message from his Guild—Stone Forest Town has been promoted to an Intermediate Town!

Chapter 1105: Golden Cities

Chapter 1105 – Golden Cities

Yuan Tiexin fell into a daze after he read the message.

An Intermediate Town!

Although the Secret Pavilion had captured many towns, they were all still far from becoming Intermediate Towns.

“Uncle Yuan, what happened?” Purple Jade asked curiously when she noticed Yuan Tiexin long stretch of silence despite Shi Feng’s arrival.

Yuan Tiexin finally reacted, returning his gaze to Shi Feng with a perplexed look. Just when he thought that he had uncovered all of Zero Wing’s secrets, he felt as if he knew nothing about the Guild once again.

Did Zero Wing truly lack a background as he had thought?

Yuan Tiexin did not respond to Purple Jade’s question. Instead, he smiled at Shi Feng and said, “I really must congratulate you, Guild Leader Black Flame. Not only did you defeat Blackwater, but you’ve also promoted Stone Forest Town to an Intermediate Town.”

Although Yuan Tiexin smiled, inwardly, he was extremely frustrated.

Now that Zero Wing ruled over an Intermediate Town, he had no choice but to place greater importance on the Guild.

An Intermediate Town occupied far more land than a Basic Town. It also had more features.

If one called Stone Forest Town a mountain of gold when it had been a Basic Town, then as an Intermediate Town, it was a diamond mountain.

Setting aside Stone Forest Town's proximity to the Stoneclaw Mountains, its Battle Arena alone could earn Zero Wing a fortune. Furthermore, plenty of companies would want to open their own virtual shops in the town.

Previously, Stone Forest Town was as valuable as four or five Basic Towns. The town attracted many companies. Unfortunately, Zero Wing's asking price had been too high, causing many of these companies to shy away. However, now that Stone Forest Town had become an Intermediate Town, even a fool could see its value. Most likely, Zero Wing's previous conditions would no longer deter companies' investments. Tons of companies would definitely be willing to invest in the town regardless of the cost.

Right now, Zero Wing did not lack Coins, Credits, or players. It had even earned its prestige. Zero Wing's future was limitless at this point.

The conditions he had prepared to offer Zero Wing would most likely be of little interest to the Guild now.

“Thank you,” Shi Feng replied politely. He then smiled and continued, “If you have come to purchase the Magic Tower Design, I’m sorry to say that Zero Wing has no intentions of selling it.”

“Guild Leader Black Flame, you jest. The Secret Pavilion has already given up on purchasing the design. Instead, in exchange for constructing one Magic Tower for us, we would like to offer you high-potential Lands in five major cities, each with player populations in the millions. How about it?” Yuan Tiexin asked. After giving the situation some thought, rather than trying to obtain the Magic Tower Design, he would opt for the next best thing.

However, when Purple Jade heard this, she was shocked.

How valuable were major cities’ high-potential Lands, exactly?

The various large Guilds had already bought out these Lands. They were impossible to purchase for a reasonable price, yet Yuan Tiexin had just offered five of the Lands for one Magic Tower.

“Your offer is quite tempting. However, I have to refuse,” Shi Feng responded, shaking his head.

These five plots of Land were easily worth thirty or forty thousand Gold in total at the moment. Moreover, their value would undoubtedly rise as time passed. Even if he rented these Lands out, rather than use them himself, he could earn a hefty sum.

However, his Magic Tower Design only had two uses left. Among them, he had agreed to reserve one for the Town of Beginnings. Even if he traded the remaining Magic Tower for five high-potential Lands, the trade wouldn’t profit the Candlelight Trading Firm overmuch.

Shi Feng’s straightforward rejection stunned both Yuan Tiexin and Purple Jade.

Obtaining these five plots of Land was the equivalent of gaining an additional five million customers. Even a Super Guild's Guild Leader would pause to consider such an offer, yet Shi Feng had rejected it without blinking...

Purple Jade even began to wonder if Shi Feng truly understood these Lands' value. Why else would he refuse the offer so decisively?

"May I know how much Guild Leader Black Flame wants for a tower?" Yuan Tiexin asked, gritting his teeth.

The Secret Pavilion was determined to obtain the Magic Tower. The Guild Leader had specifically reiterated this in their conversations.

"I want Lands in these cities. There are a total of twenty locations. I believe the Secret Pavilion should be capable of obtaining them."

Shi Feng then revealed a list of several minor NPC cities. Most of these cities had populations below 100,000, with some as low as 30,000. These cities were also spread out, covering eleven kingdoms and two empires.

"This..." When Yuan Tiexin heard that Shi Feng wanted twenty plots of Land, he nearly cursed at the man. However, when he read the list and noticed that all of the names belonged to minor cities, he was stupefied.

Even if he added all of the cities' player populations, the total was less than two million. Moreover, the Lands in these locations did not have much potential. He could not fathom what was going through Shi Feng's mind.

However, this was good news for the Secret Pavilion.

"Guild Leader Black Flame, is this all that you want?" Yuan Tiexin asked. He doubted that Shi Feng was so generous.

"Of course not. I still want a 20,000-Gold construction fee." Seeing Yuan Tiexin's skepticism, Shi Feng had no choice but to state a more 'reasonable' price.

Truthfully, his price was quite high. Even Shi Feng thought that he was ripping off the Secret Pavilion.

Although these twenty plots of Land were not particularly expensive, they served a great purpose. However, even if he wanted to buy these Lands himself, he could not. Other large and small Guilds already occupied them. These Guilds would only part with the Lands at a reasonable price if an existence like the Secret Pavilion took action.

In the past, these Lands' cities had been known as 'Golden Cities.'

These cities had earned that name due to their proximity to high-level maps that provided Diamond Wood.

Diamond Wood was a rare type of wood in God's Domain. It was specifically used to produce high-ranking boats. Even if Diamond Wood were used to produce a Common Speedboat, that boat's

standards would almost be on the same level as Bronze Speedboats. Hence, Diamond Wood had been incredibly popular among the various large Guilds and seafaring adventurer teams.

Unfortunately, Diamond Wood was extremely rare. Many kingdoms and empires lacked maps that provided the wood, including Star-Moon Kingdom.

Now that he had his own Medium Shipyard, he had to prepare.

In the past, he hadn't had this opportunity. Now that the chance was before him, how could he miss it?

Lands in these cities had sold for astronomical prices during his previous life. Back then, 50,000 Gold had been the bare minimum to purchase one plot of Land.

Unlike ordinary materials, players could not store the wood meant for crafting boats in their bag space. Rather, players had to transport the wood at its full size. Moreover, even when the wood reached an NPC town or city, it was still considerably troublesome to transport the wood to its final destination.

Of course, players could utilize teleportation arrays to transport the wood. Only, the price of teleporting a single log was far higher than teleporting a player. In the past, the most common transportation method had been transport carriages. However, it would be foolish to transport a single log each trip. Hence, players usually stockpiled the wood before hauling it all at once.

However, NPC towns and cities did not permit players to leave piles of items on the streets. If anyone dared to do so, their items would be confiscated immediately.

Due to this, the various large Guilds had needed warehouses to store the materials.

To put it simply, Guilds in the past had spent 50,000 Gold to purchase warehouses for their Diamond Wood.

Chapter 1106: Advanced Transport Carriage

Chapter 1106 – Advanced Transport Carriage

“An additional 20,000 Gold?” For a moment, Yuan Tiexin fell into deep thought. “Fine. However, once we make the payment, you need to begin the Magic Tower’s construction immediately.”

Although the minor cities’ twenty plots of Land and the 20,000 Gold was slightly more expensive than the five high-potential Lands in major cities, the latter’s value had far more space to grow.

“That’s fine. When the deeds for those twenty plots of Land and the 20,000 Gold arrive, we will begin the tower’s construction.” Shi Feng hadn’t expected Yuan Tiexin to agree to his demands so quickly.

Although obtaining those Lands was a simple task for a Super Guild, collecting the 20,000 Gold was not.

Yuan Tiexin's ability to agree so readily showed that 20,000 Gold was nothing to the Secret Pavilion right now.

This caused Shi Feng some regret. If he had known, he would've asked for 30,000 Gold.

After all, Super Guilds would undoubtedly invest more than 20,000 gold into a town's defenses. A single Defense Turret already cost 7,000 Gold, roughly the same price of constructing a Magic Tower if it were built by a Master Lifestyle player. Meanwhile, a Guild would need at least four Defense Turrets to defend a town adequately. Unfortunately, four Defense Turrets weren't as capable as a single Magic Tower.

Following which, Shi Feng and Yuan Tiexin signed an agreement stating that the Secret Pavilion would complete its part of the deal within two days. At that point, Zero Wing would be required to construct a Magic Tower in Ice Crystal Town within two days.

Shi Feng was surprised when he saw Ice Crystal Town's name.

He had never imagined that the Secret Pavilion would capture the town.

Ice Crystal Town was a border town in the Fire Wing Empire's southwestern region. The town had originally belonged to a dark force, and the majority of the town's NPCs were Tier 2. There were even several Tier 3 NPCs in charge of the town. Even the Fire Wing Empire had to consider actions against the town carefully. However, this town was precisely the reason that the Fire Wing Empire had given up on evicting the dark forces in the area. One could just imagine how difficult it would be for players to raid the town.

Although Ice Crystal Town appeared ordinary, it was the closest town to the neutral map, Sunset Mountain Range.

As a neutral map, the Sunset Mountain Range did not fall under the influence of any kingdom or empire. The map was also roughly half the size of a kingdom. As no kingdom or empire had ever developed the map, it had far more resources than the various kingdoms and empires.

Moreover, many races lived in that map. Without the many restrictions that were usually found in kingdoms and empires, many dark forces often operated in the map. Players could also find items there that were not available in kingdoms and empires.

Sadly, players couldn't teleport there. They could only travel to the map on their own power.

Ice Crystal Town's popularity among players would undoubtedly surpass Stone Forest Town if someone could obtain it. Pioneering the Sunset Mountain Range would be considerably convenient for a Guild.

As expected of the Secret Pavilion. It actually managed to secure Ice Crystal Town so early in the game. Shi Feng was fairly envious.

The Fire Wing Empire's player population exceeded Star-Moon Kingdom's by many times. For players, Stone Forest Town's sole attraction was the Stoneclaw Mountains. However, the Regional Dungeon had a Level 50 limit. Once mainstream players exceeded that limit, the town would lose its appeal.

On the other hand, the Sunset Mountain Range's limit ranged between Level 50 and 120. Ice Crystal Town would be popular in the Fire Wing Empire for a long time. If a Magic Tower were built in the town, it could easily garner three to five times more players than Stone Forest Town.

However, Shi Feng gave the matter little thought.

Zero Wing was only starting to get on the right track. How could it possibly compete with a well-established Guild like the Secret Pavilion?

Moreover, he had earned a fortune through this transaction. Only, he wouldn't see the profits immediately. Once his Shipyard officially opened for business, those twenty plots of Land would begin to show their true value.

The high-level maps near those minor cities had yet to be developed. No one had noticed the benefit of constructing boats with rare wood yet, either. Now was the perfect time to purchase Diamond Wood in bulk. Once he had trained enough Lifestyle players, he would've collected enough Diamond Wood to mass-produce boats.

Following which, Shi Feng bade Yuan Tiexin and Purple Jade farewell.

...

White River City's Teleportation Hall:

A constant stream of independent players teleported into White River City. Among them, many immediately set out to inquire about Zero Wing's Residence, all of them wishing to join the popular Guild.

"Big Sis Rain, is this really White River City?" Blue Phoenix, who wore a Black Cloak, asked as she observed her surroundings.

Elite players wandered throughout the Teleportation Hall. There were also the members of many large Guilds. Among them, there was no lack of Level 39 and Level 40 experts. Meanwhile, outside the Teleportation Hall, many players hawked their goods, and their items were just as astonishing.

“Selling a Level 35 Secret-Silver plate armor chest piece! Find me for a private chat if interested!”

“Selling a Level 40 Mysterious-Iron Weapon! Only Magic Crystals accepted as payment!”

...

Watching the players sell weapons and equipment on the street, Blue Phoenix wondered if they had teleported to the wrong place.

At this stage of the game, both Level 35 Secret-Silver Equipment and Level 40 Mysterious-Iron Weapons were considered high-quality items. Even in empires, very few players would willingly sell them, yet so many players did just that in White River City. It was simply inconceivable.

Meanwhile, the various adventurer teams present were the most shocking. Many adventurer teams recruited members to head to the Twin Towers Kingdom.

The minimum requirements to join these teams were to be Level 39 and a full set of Level 35 Secret-Silver Equipment. Applicants also had to be capable of reaching the Trial Tower’s fourth floor. Players who met these criteria would be considered experts in a large Guild.

Phoenix Rain was also somewhat surprised.

Even in Star-Moon City, she hadn't encountered such a busy scene.

This was the first time she had heard or seen one of a kingdom's major cities surpass the capital.

After leaving the Teleportation Hall, Phoenix Rain quickly noticed a large number of advanced carriages moving about the streets. Hailing a carriage wasn't easy due to so many players fighting for their own.

"Why is Yuan Tiexin here?"

Just as Phoenix Rain was about to climb into an advanced carriage and head to the Candlelight Trading Firm, she discovered two players atop Mounts stopped before the Teleportation Hall's entrance. Both the man and the woman wore Black Cloaks. Although the cloaks prevented others from seeing their IDs and levels, as the two did not hide their appearances, those who knew them could recognize them easily. This was especially true for Phoenix Rain.

When Phoenix Rain saw Yuan Tiexin enter the Teleportation Hall in such a hurry, her expression shifted.

Yuan Tiexin was one of the Secret Pavilion's upper echelons. He was even one of the Guild Leader's closest confidants. Very few matters warranted a personal visit from him.

The only reason she could think of that would demand Yuan Tiexin's attention was Zero Wing.

How many secrets does Zero Wing have? Phoenix Rain could not help but reveal a bitter smile.

Following which, Phoenix Rain dispelled the thought as she made her way to the Candlelight Trading Firm.

...

Shortly after Yuan Tiexin left, Shi Feng called Melancholic Smile to meet him.

Of the two designs Lancelot had dropped, one was a Town Design, while the other was for a Transport Carriage Design.

Chapter 1107: New Product Launch

Chapter 1107 – New Product Launch

Over twenty Advanced Forgers and Engineers stood inside one of Candlelight's Special Forging Rooms.

These Advanced Lifestyle players had come at Shi Feng's call.

As Advanced Lifestyle players, they were highly valued and had high statuses in any Guild.

However, when these twenty-plus Advanced Lifestyle players entered the room, they all fell silent, fully focused on the ancient design spread out on the table.

“Guild Leader, this is...” Melancholic Smile rubbed her eyes, not daring to believe what she saw.

The Advanced Transport Carriage!

Ordinary players might not have much use for this item, but to a manager of a trading firm, it was incredibly important.

To her, the Advanced Transport Carriage was worth far more than the Bronze Engineering Locomotive.

Not only could the Advanced Transport Carriage transport a large group of players, but it could also transport more goods than the ordinary carriages that NPCs sold.

Many important items in God’s Domain couldn’t be stored in a player’s bag space. Players were required to carry such items by themselves.

The carriages NPCs sold or rented out could only support a few players. Even a Bronze Carriage could only carry five people at a time. And while a Bronze Carriage could carry plenty of items in its bag space, it could only carry a maximum of ten items that couldn’t be stored in a bag space. Most importantly, these carriages could only travel on official trade routes, which greatly limited their uses.

Transport Carriages, however, were different. As player-crafted items, they did not have many road restrictions.

The Basic Transport Carriage could already hold up to 10 players. In addition, its bag space was larger than NPC Bronze Carriages, and it could carry up to 30 non-bag items. It was also faster.

Normally, non-bag items were very valuable, regardless of whether the items were for an NPC or to sell to other players elsewhere. Delivering such goods was the easiest way to make a profit.

Merchant players would even fight over Basic Transport Carriages if they were available on the market, much less Advanced Transport Carriages.

The Advanced Transport Carriage could carry up to twenty people. Needless to say, its bag space was leaps and bounds larger than the Bronze Carriage. It could also carry up to 60 non-bag items. As for its speed, it could compete with Mysterious-Iron Mounts.

If the Candlelight Trading Firm could use Advanced Transport Carriages, even if they didn't sell products and focused on logistics, they could make a fortune.

Hence, how could Melancholic Smile contain her excitement?

"You've seen the design for yourselves. I hope that you start producing them quickly. As for the key material, I'll try to think of a way to obtain what you need. For now, start producing whichever parts you can," Shi Feng instructed, chuckling at everyone's dumbfounded expressions.

While the Advanced Transport Carriage was amazing, its required materials were extremely rare.

The Candlelight Trading Firm might be able to procure most of the required materials, but the main material, Green Ebony, was extremely difficult to acquire. Even Shi Feng could only think of a few places that produced this wood. Moreover, these locations were all very high-level maps. Even the lowest leveled location was a Level 60 map called Crying Ghost Ridge. Unfortunately, it was a neutral map, a forbidden land for current players.

Only Tier 2 players would dare to grind there.

However, for the Advanced Transport Carriages, Shi Feng intended to make the trip.

If he had Transport Carriages, he could open trade routes from Stone Forest Town to other NPC towns sooner than he had planned.

Following which, Shi Feng had the Advanced Lifestyle players research the Advanced Transport Carriage's components, while he instructed Melancholic Smile to stay behind.

After the others left, Shi Feng looked to Melancholic Smile and asked, "What's the situation with the Blackwater and Heavenly Trading Firms?"

Before the war, both the Blackwater and Heavenly Trading Firms had waged a crazy price war with the Candlelight, hoping to push Candlelight out of Star-Moon Kingdom's market while they whittle down Zero Wing's financial strength.

Now that Blackwater and Heaven's Burial had suffered such a massive defeat, the two Guilds would take some sort of action.

This was especially true since Zero Wing urgently needed money.

"As you've guessed, they have reduced their prices again. They've dropped their Light Stone's prices in particular. Right now, they're selling each Light Stone for only 30 Copper. They aren't even trying to cover their production cost now," Melancholic Smile slowly reported.

For current players, Light Stones were a must-have item. They were also the Candlelight Trading Firm's most competitive product.

Now that the Blackwater and Heavenly Trading Firms have lowered their prices to 30 Copper, one could see how much the two trading firms hated Candlelight.

At 30 Copper, Blackwater and Heavenly couldn't even cover their production costs. Candlelight Trading Firm, however, could still make a profit due to their many Advanced Forgers. In addition, due to the Special Forging Rooms, powerful flames, and other support tools, Candlelight's production cost for Light Stones was only 20 Copper.

"Since they want to play, let's humor them until the end. Sell the Light Stones for 25 Copper each. We'll also start selling the Exotic Stamina Potions." Shi Feng did not feel anything in particular about this situation. He had long since prepared for the day when the Light Stones would no longer be profitable. After all, the Light Stones were a common product in God's Domain. He was satisfied with the fortune he had already made off of them.

Meanwhile, the Exotic Stamina Potion he was about to launch was different.

Candlelight had exclusive rights over the Exotic Stamina Potion's recipe. Its price was also within ordinary players' budgets. This was definitely a must-have potion. Most importantly, this potion would become popular among gathering players.

One of players' main sources of income in God's Domain was gathering raw materials.

However, players consumed far more Stamina when gathering materials than in Boss battles. Moreover, the rarer a material was, the more Stamina players would consume. This resulted in frequent forced breaks and limited gathering times.

Once they released the Exotic Stamina Potion, Shi Feng refused to believe that players, who preferred to gather materials rather than fight monsters, would pass this new product by.

"I'll get it done right away." Melancholic Smile nodded excitedly.

The Blackwater and Heavenly Trading Firm's actions had irritated her. Now that they were about to launch the Exotic Stamina Potion, she wanted to see how those two trading firms planned to compete with Candlelight.

Following which, Melancholic Smile reorganized the layout of the Candlelight Trading Firm's first-floor hall, setting up a counter specifically for the Exotic Stamina Potion.

The new counter immediately garnered the attention of many players.

"Leader, look over there. Candlelight seems to have launched a new product."

“Let’s head over and take a look.”

Immediately, a large crowd gathered around the first-floor’s new counter.

“Crap! Isn’t this potion a little too amazing?! It can actually recover Stamina!”

Chapter 1108: Ten People

Chapter 1108 – Ten People

When the crowd read the Exotic Stamina Potion’s description, excitement shone in their eyes.

As one of the major Hidden Attributes, Stamina played a massive large role in players’ everyday lives. However, it was very limited.

“Leader, we hit the jackpot this time! This Stamina Potion is perfect for the Silent Swamp! With this potion, we won’t have any problems reaching the swamp’s core!” a Level 38 Berserker exclaimed through his team chat.

“Why are you in such a hurry? Let’s take a look at the price first. If it’s too expensive, I’d rather stick to grinding in the swamp’s outer region,” a Level 39 Shield Warrior replied. However, although his tone was indifferent, anticipation flashed in his eyes. Inwardly, he hoped that the Exotic Stamina Potion was too expensive.

The Silent Swamp was a Level 40 to Level 50 high-resource map. However, as this map was a swamp, players consumed a lot of Stamina while moving through it. Moreover, the deeper one ventured into the swamp, the more Stamina they consumed. Hence, the various large Guilds had avoided sending members there to level up. This provided an excellent opportunity for independent players like themselves to make money and level up quickly.

Previously, on their team’s first trip to the Silent Swamp, they discovered that the map was a land of treasures. They frequently came across rare minerals and herbs. Although there were a lot of monsters there, if one were careful, they could walk away with a significant harvest.

Unfortunately, during this period, more players headed to the Silent Swamp, causing their income from the swamp’s outer area to plummet, yet they couldn’t venture into the inner and core regions as their Stamina consumption would be too severe. If they encountered monsters with nearly depleted Stamina, they would undoubtedly suffer a team-wipe. However, if they took too many breaks, they wouldn’t get far, and their harvest would be quite small.

If they could use this Exotic Stamina Potion, they could reach the swamp’s core and its abundant resources. At that time, their daily income would skyrocket.

Their team would also be able to gather enough money to equip everyone with Mounts. By then, they would earn the other adventurer teams’ envy.

As this Level 39 Shield Warrior was occupied with his thoughts, the other independent players surrounding the counter calculated their own potential gains and losses.

“Quickly look! The pre-sale price is out!”

“Did Candlelight list the wrong price?”

“There must be a mistake! How can the Exotic Stamina Potion be this cheap!?”

The players in the hall cried out in shock when they saw the pre-sale price.

The Mana Mixture the Blackwater and Heavenly Trading Firms sold only had a duration of two hours. The Exotic Stamina Potion, on the other hand, lasted ten hours. Moreover, unlike the Mana Mixture, which only increased the user’s maximum Mana by 10%, the Exotic Stamina Potion increased the user’s maximum Stamina by 10% and increased Stamina recovery rate by 80%. One Exotic Stamina Potion was roughly the equivalent of five Mana Mixtures, yet it only cost 10 Silver Coins per bottle. It was much cheaper than the Mana Mixture. How could they believe this?

However, even after some time, the NPC manning the counter did not change the price. This situation drove everyone crazy as they panted and stared at the Exotic Stamina Potion’s sales timer.

There were 30 minutes until the Exotic Stamina Potion went on sale.

However, none of these players showed any indication of stepping away from the counter. They lined up and waited for the potion’s sale. They also contacted their party and team members in secret to gather more money.

As players continued to notify others about the Exotic Stamina Potion, news of the potion quickly spread like wildfire. Immediately, it caused a commotion in White River City. To gathering players and players who spent a long time in the fields adventuring, the Exotic Stamina Potion was a godsend.

“The Exotic Stamina Potion? I never expected Candlelight to sell something like this. With this, we won’t have any problems in the ancient ruins in the Twin Towers Kingdom. Send someone to buy the potions immediately. Buy as many as you can.”

The various Guild elite teams preparing to head to the Twin Towers Kingdom promptly made their way to the Candlelight Trading Firm after receiving the news.

The relatively calm Candlelight Trading Firm instantly boomed with business.

Meanwhile, sitting in the Candlelight Trading Firm’s second-floor lounge, Phoenix Rain and Blue Phoenix were shocked over this situation.

“Big Sis Rain, Zero Wing is amazing. Despite all the effort we’ve put into gathering information, we have yet to find any items capable of Stamina recovery, yet Zero Wing is about to put one up for sale. Moreover, it’s so cheap. With this, Blackwater and Heaven’s Burial must be growling in frustration,” Blue Phoenix said, giggling as she watched the players line up in the first-floor hall.

One could purchase an Exotic Stamina Potion that lasted for ten hours for just 10 Silver Coins. That was the equivalent of paying 1 Silver per hour. Even ordinary players could afford this.

Ordinary players earned a limited income. Aside from spending their money on necessary items, if ordinary players wished to level up quickly or gather more herbs and minerals, they could buy the Exotic Stamina Potion.

However, if these players bought the Exotic Stamina Potion, they wouldn't have any money to spend elsewhere for a while.

With this, Blackwater and Heaven's Burial's price reductions to attract more customers were now useless...

Nodding in agreement, Phoenix Rain said, "Zero Wing has indeed grown a lot stronger. It's a pity that we don't have much time left. Otherwise, they could help me win the battle on Thunder Island."

She had two matters to discuss with Zero Wing this time.

The first regarded the Dark Arena. The Asura Battle Team's next match had been decided, and it would be held tomorrow afternoon. Once the match was over, the Dark Arena would host a large-scale auction. Based on what she had heard so far, all sorts of precious and valuable items would be up for sale.

The second matter regarded Thunder Island.

Currently, the competition over Thunder Island grew more intense with each passing day. More Guilds were starting to reach for Thunder Island. In fact, Nine Dragons Emperor had even employed his family's influence for this matter. Although she, too, had used her family's influence, she still faced many difficulties regarding the island. Hence, she planned to borrow some of Zero Wing's members to assist her.

As Phoenix Rain and Blue Phoenix conversed, Shi Feng entered the lounge.

What a powerful mental oppression! Blue Phoenix was shocked when Shi Feng joined them.

She had always been curious about the strength of Zero Wing's Guild Leader. Now that she was meeting the man in person, it would seem that the rumors about him were true.

The powerful mental oppression she felt from Shi Feng made her feel somewhat strangled. Rather than a player, Shi Feng felt like a humanoid monster.

Phoenix Rain, however, was not particularly surprised.

She had watched the video of Shi Feng's battle in Stone Forest Town. Otherwise, she wouldn't have bothered with a personal trip to the Candlelight Trading Firm.

"May I know why the Phoenix Pavilion Master suddenly requests my attention? Have they announced the competition's official date?" Shi Feng asked after taking his seat, smiling at Phoenix Rain.

Although the Asura Battle Team's opponents had been decided some time ago, the competition's date had been a mystery.

This competition in the Dark Arena was incredibly important to him.

As more major corporations took part in the Dark Arena, the bets on each match would increase. At this point, it shouldn't be difficult for a winning team to walk away with twenty or thirty thousand Gold.

To Zero Wing, which urgently needed funds, the Dark Arena was an invaluable source of income.

“You’re half correct. The competition will take place at 10 p.m. tomorrow in the Flame Dragon Empire’s imperial capital,” Phoenix Rain said, chuckling. “I’m also here to borrow ten players from Zero Wing.”

Chapter 1109: Holy Land at Sea

Chapter 1109 – Holy Land at Sea

“Borrow some of our players?”

Shi Feng gave Phoenix Rain.

The Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion was a super-first-rate Guild. The Pavilion recruited a large number of members each year, and they had tons of Guild-nurtured experts.

Yet, that same Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion had sought him out to borrow manpower. This was inconceivable.

“That’s right. I wish to borrow ten people to help me with a task. Once the task is complete, I will pay you 5,000 Magic Crystals. If the task fails, I will pay 1,000 crystals. Of course, I will offer additional

compensation should any deaths occur during my loan,” Phoenix Rain said, smiling as she nodded. “May I know what Guild Leader Black Flame thinks of this?”

Normally, when hiring experts to help with a quest, payment was in the form of either Credits or Coins. An ordinary expert would only cost several Gold to hire, while even apex experts only cost around 100 Gold. Meanwhile, she had offered Magic Crystals as payment. Magic Crystals were far more valuable than Coins. It was a hard currency.

The various large Guilds already treated Magic Crystals as a strategic resource. They might be able to purchase ten or twenty Magic Crystals from independent adventurer teams or small Workshops, but when the numbers climbed into the triple digits, it was practically impossible to find enough on the market.

Five thousand Magic Crystals was a considerable sum for any large Guild. Some large Guilds didn’t even have so many Magic Crystals in their warehouses.

Now, by loaning ten of its experts, Zero Wing could potentially earn 5,000 Magic Crystals. This was definitely a tempting offer.

“Phoenix Pavilion Master, can you reveal the details of the task?” Shi Feng was indeed tempted after listening to the offer.

Aside from running a Guild, his goal in establishing the Zero Wing Workshop was to accept commissions.

However, requests like Phoenix Rain’s were rare.

“That’s fine. The task is very simple. I just need Zero Wing’s members to defend an ancient tower on Thunder Island, preventing anyone else from capturing it. As Thunder Island is a very special place, only a very limited number of players can be there at a time. When the time comes, our enemies won’t be able to dispatch much manpower. It would be a miracle if they could send twenty or thirty players. As long as Zero Wing’s members defend their assigned tower until the Pavilion’s main force captures a monster encampment, the task will be a success,” Phoenix Rain explained after giving the matter some thought.

News of Thunder Island had long since been spread among God’s Domain’s superpowers. It was no big secret.

Currently, to secure a larger share of Thunder Island, the various superpowers were recruiting helpers from all over the place. Some had even hired extremely powerful independent players.

This was all due to the unique conditions to capture Thunder Island. It was not an issue that could be resolved with a large army. Rather than quantity, one needed quality.

Hence, she was asking for Zero Wing’s help.

Zero Wing had performed magnificently in the Dark Arena. Its members definitely qualified to take part in the battle on Thunder Island.

In addition, she had found plenty of apex experts elsewhere. Although she might not occupy Thunder Island exclusively, she should have no problems taking control of a small portion. When the initial skirmish was over, her next step would be to fight the other Super Guilds slowly.

“Thunder Island?” Information about Thunder Island immediately surfaced in Shi Feng’s mind.

Thunder Island was in an extremely dangerous sea zone. That zone was known as the Sea of Death. One could find plenty of treasures and fortuitous encounters in the Sea of Death. There were even numerous ancient ruins in the zone. The abundant resources in the sea zone surpassed imagination. Thus, many maritime adventurer teams often explored the Sea of Death.

Meanwhile, the only location in the Sea of Death that players could reside in was Thunder Island. As for the other islands in the sea zone, players couldn't survive on them for long periods. Once the night sky covered the Sea of Death, a large number of underwater monsters appeared. There were simply too many of these monsters for players to contend with.

Thunder Island was only an exception because the island received thunder and lightning all year round. Even after night arrived, sea monsters couldn't reach the island. Thunder Island became a safe haven of sorts in the Sea of Death.

As a result, bloodbaths had been a constant on Thunder Island in the past. The various superpowers in God's Domain all wanted Thunder Island for themselves.

However, it was not that easy to occupy Thunder Island. In the past, not one of these superpowers had controlled the entire island. In the end, various superpowers jointly operated the holy land at sea.

Shi Feng had visited the island many times in the past. Unfortunately, as his Guild had been too weak, they had never qualified to establish a small base in this holy land. He had been forced to travel to Thunder Island by boat each time he visited.

Shi Feng had not expected the war over Thunder Island to begin so soon in this life.

"This task won't last very long. It'll be over in a day or so," Phoenix Rain added after Shi Feng had remained silent.

Capturing Thunder Island was different from ordinary towns, where things would end once the target town was captured. In order to gain authority over the town on Thunder Island, one needed to capture monster encampments. The more encampments one captured, the more authority one could utilize. If one captured all of the monster encampments on Thunder Island, they would obtain the highest authority on the island.

Meanwhile, this authority contest occurred once a month, with each contest lasting eight hours. Moreover, during the day of the contest, Thunder Island would be enveloped in an ancient magic array. If one wished to set foot on the island during that time, they needed an entry pass. Without the entry pass, players would be automatically transported off of Thunder Island. Each entry pass allowed up to ten people to enter the island and could be obtained by killing Bosses in the Sea of Death.

The Sea of Death was already an extremely dangerous sea zone. It was home to plenty of sea monsters, and these monsters were much stronger than the monsters found on land. The chances of a team-wipe were even highly likely when sailing through the Sea of Death, not to mention when hunting Bosses in the zone.

Currently, the various superpowers were doing their best to find and kill Bosses. They had suffered immense losses as a result. The Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion was no exception.

Thus, the entry passes were exceedingly precious. These superpowers could not invite ordinary experts to take part in the contest. They would take as many apex experts to the island as they could. Only by doing so could they utilize the entry passes to their fullest potential.

After pondering the situation for some time, Shi Feng looked at Phoenix Rain and asked, "May I know how many entry passes Phoenix Pavilion Master has right now?"

Hearing Shi Feng's question, both Phoenix Rain and Blue Phoenix were stunned.

The various superpowers were keeping a tight lid on the entry passes. They had never imagined that Zero Wing would know about this as well.

However, when Phoenix Rain thought back to her encounter with Yuan Tiexin, she understood. Although the Secret Pavilion was not one of the superpowers contesting over Thunder Island, the latter possessed a powerful information network. It was not all that surprising that Shi Feng knew about the entry passes.

“Your information network cannot be underestimated. I won’t hide it from you. I currently have slightly over twenty passes. In other words, I can bring over 200 people to compete for prominence on the island,” Phoenix Rain said, smiling. “Are you interested in a piece of this pie as well?”

Although she would not underestimate Zero Wing, those involved were God’s Domain’s superpowers. They were on an entirely different level compared to Zero Wing. With how few experts Zero Wing employed, the Guild would not survive long on Thunder Island.

Chapter 1110: Contesting over Monster Encampments

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Shi Feng shook his head when he heard Phoenix Rain’s question. Contrary to Phoenix Rain’s assumption, he was not particularly interested in Thunder Island.

Phoenix Rain found Shi Feng's response reasonable.

If Shi Feng truly understood the situation on Thunder Island, then he knew how fierce the upcoming contest would be.

There were already three Super Guilds participating in the contest, not to mention super-first-rate Guilds. Moreover, the upcoming fights wouldn't be minor. These Guilds were dispatching all of their top players. Every one of these existences wanted authority over Thunder Island. This way, they could temporarily establish a Guild transfer point and set up a foundation to explore the Sea of Death.

After all, the Sea of Death was quite far from the main continent. Even if players traveled from the nearest coastal town on a speedboat, they would have to sail for over a day to reach the Sea of Death. On their way to Thunder Island, players would also have to venture through a dangerous sea zone.

One also needed a sufficiently powerful naval fleet to participate in the contest.

Sea monsters were more powerful than land monsters, not to mention Boss-ranked sea monsters. Even the Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion had to sacrifice a large number of elites and experts to kill one such Boss. They could easily lose up to 30 ships during one of these raids. Even first-rate Guilds could not afford such a loss, yet even after so many sacrifices, they would only obtain one or two entry passes.

To Zero Wing, which didn't have a naval foundation, it would likely lose far more than the Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion if it tried to join this contest.

"Give me twenty slots. I can help you defend two ancient towers. My price is 20,000 Magic Crystals and one temporary transfer point. If we fail, I won't charge a single Coin. I also won't require any compensation for deaths," Shi Feng said after giving the matter some thought.

It was very difficult to occupy the monster encampments on Thunder Island. The monsters in these encampments depended on the players on the island. These monsters were generally Chieftain rank and above. Before players reached Tier 2, the Bosses defending these encampments would be fixed as Grand Lords. Including the risk of ambushes by other Guilds, the difficulty of capturing an encampment was obvious at a glance.

Most importantly, the monsters in these encampments had extremely high Defense and Magic Resistance. It was not possible to raid these encampments normally. One needed the ancient towers' buffs to lower the difficulty.

Meanwhile, the more ancient towers one occupied, the easier it would become to deal with these monsters.

However, Thunder Island had a limited number of ancient towers. The various large Guilds would definitely dispatch their men to take these towers over, although they would only send a small number of players to do so. After all, the monster encampments were the most important targets.

To secure an ancient tower, one would generally dispatch 15 to 20 players, and these Guilds usually attempted to occupy three or four towers. Once they did, with their experts' strength, they could take down a monster encampment with roughly one hundred players.

His offer to defend two ancient towers would undoubtedly relieve some of the burden on Phoenix Rain. She would have an additional 10 players to help her occupy a monster encampment.

"You'll secure two ancient towers?" Phoenix Rain fell into deep thought.

To solidify their hold on the ancient towers, she had previously decided to dispatch 20 players to each tower. Her plan was to send 60 players to capture three ancient towers. The other 100-plus players she had would be more than enough to capture an encampment. This was her most conservative plan. Ideally, she wanted to capture two encampments. However, this was simply too difficult.

If what Shi Feng said was true and he could maintain two ancient towers with just 20 players, she could save an additional 20 players for herself. If she put more efforts into expanding her fleet, she might even obtain two or three more entry passes before the day of the contest. By then, she would have a chance of obtaining two monster encampments.

Only, Shi Feng's transfer point condition was somewhat difficult to agree to.

For each monster encampment one captured on Thunder Island, they would earn two temporary Guild transfer points in the town. She had already promised one transfer point to another large Guild that had agreed to assist her. If not for said large Guild, she would not have obtained so many entry passes in the first place.

If she accepted Shi Feng's offer, she had to secure two monster encampments.

However, there were too many uncertainties.

Moreover, Phoenix Rain found it hard to believe that Zero Wing had so many powerful experts capable of defending two ancient towers with just a team of twenty.

"Is there some issue?" Shi Feng could not help but ask as he watched Phoenix Rain ponder his offer.

“Guild Leader Black Flame, to tell you the truth, each captured monster encampment only provides two temporary Guild transfer points. Among them, I have already promised one to the Firmament Guild. Although Firmament is only a first-rate Guild, the Guild has been developing its maritime strength. Currently, its navy is even stronger than many super-first-rate Guilds. If not for them, I wouldn’t have obtained so many entry passes, to begin with,” Phoenix Rain explained.

“Firmament?” Shi Feng recalled the Guild from his past.

The Firmament Guild was indeed an overlord at sea. Firmament had occupied two coastal NPC cities, which had populations in the millions, very early in the game. These two cities served as the foundation for the Guild to develop its maritime strength. In addition, Firmament had focused on developing its navy. Although overall, it was significantly weaker than super-first-rate Guilds, battles at sea did not rely on Guild experts. The quantity and quality of the Guild’s ships also played a major role. In the past, even some Super Guilds had not been a match for Firmament’s combat power at sea.

It was no wonder why the Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion had managed to obtain so many entry passes, despite having recently begun its naval development.

“When will Thunder Island’s contest begin?” Shi Feng asked.

“The contest will begin in seven days. However, traveling to the island takes a full day, so we only have six days to prepare,” Phoenix Rain replied as she gave Shi Feng a quizzical look. She didn’t understand why Shi Feng had asked such a question.

“Seven days should be enough,” Shi Feng said, laughing. “Phoenix Pavilion Master, how about I make you another offer? Give me 60 slots. As long as your side can hold three ancient towers, my side will capture a monster encampment for you. In return, I want 100,000 Magic Crystals or Lands of equivalent value in addition to one temporary transfer point. What do you think?”

When Phoenix Rain and Blue Phoenix heard Shi Feng’s new proposal, they stared at him in shock.

They both believed that Shi Feng was insane.

While 100,000 Magic Crystals was not a problem for them, they simply did not understand where Shi Feng found his confidence to make such a bold claim.

Based on her estimation, under the assumption that they could capture three ancient towers as planned, capturing a monster encampment required at least 100 apex experts.

Although the Guild seemed full of experts to ordinary players, in the eyes of superpowers, Zero Wing only had around ten truly capable experts. How was Shi Feng going to fill the 50 remaining slots?

Even if he could dispatch another 50 capable experts, it was impossible to capture a monster encampment with just 60 players.

“Phoenix Pavilion Master, you originally planned to capture only one encampment, right? You should know that the likelihood of capturing a second is quite low. Even if you allow Zero Wing to fight for the second encampment, I’m sure you won’t suffer much loss. If you are still not sure, I can sign an agreement. If Zero Wing fails to secure the second encampment, we will pay 100,000 Magic Crystals. How about it?”