

Strongest

Chapter 1961 – Slaughtering Time

Icy-blue frost covered the Ice Jade Forest's trees. From afar, it looked like a crystal forest.

Since the monsters in the area had a chance of dropping Ice Crystal Fragments, which could be refined into Ice Resistance Potions, many powers came here to grind. Moreover, as the monsters in the Ice Jade Forest were not skilled with magic and had no ranged attacks, they were relatively easy to kill. Because of these factors, the Ice Jade Forest had become one of the most important resource maps within the Lake Heart City region.

A 3,000-man expert team from the Tier 2 Guild, Eternal Undead, currently raided the Eight-eyed Frost Spider, a Level 62 Specialized Grand Lord. The team had split into three groups of 1,000 and took turns tanking the Grand Lord and its 100- plus Guardian Frost Spiders. When a group was near its breaking point, it would swiftly retreat, switching places with one of the other two groups and ensuring that only 1,000 players remained within the Boss's sphere of influence. This prevented the Boss from receiving an Attribute boost.

"The Boss is going to enter its berserk state soon! MTs, use your Lifesaving Skills! Healer unit, switch with the reserve unit!" Miserly Wind, one of Eternal Undead's Vice Guild Leaders, hurriedly ordered as the Eight-eyed Frost Spider's HP was about to fall to 30%.

The Guild's members followed the orders seamlessly as the MTs activated their Lifesaving Skills and the healers gradually retreated from the battlefield. At the same time, the waiting healers switched places with their comrades before they ran out of Mana.

When the Eight-eyed Frost Spider went berserk, the team's Level 58, Tier 2 MTs rapidly lost HP. Seeing this, the rear line healers cast one Healing Spell after another without paying heed to their Mana consumption. This prevented the MTs' HPs from falling below a safe limit. In the meantime, the Eight-eyed Frost Spider's HP steadily dropped.

“Boss Wind, this place is awesome. Not only is our leveling speed here so fast, but we’ve also collected a ton of Ice Resistance resources. We should’ve partnered with Miracle sooner. The Guild might have given us a spot in the inner region,” a Level 58, Tier 2 Oracle said excitedly as he watched the near-dead Eight-eyed Frost Spider.

“The Guild Leader has his own concerns. We weren’t sure how serious Miracle was about eliminating Zero Wing, and we couldn’t recklessly provoke Zero Wing,” Miserly Wind said, smiling. “But now that we know how furious Miracle is with the Guild and that it fully intends to annihilate Zero Wing, we don’t have to worry about them. Even if we are bait, Zero Wing won’t dare to attack us, and we can grind in such a resource-rich area in return.”

“I actually hope that Zero Wing comes looking for a fight. If they do, we’ll be able to earn some extra income,” the Tier 2 Oracle said as he licked his lips in anticipation.

“That isn’t likely. Zero Wing should know that it has no place in the Ice Jade Forest anymore. Of course, Miracle has cut the Guild off from every map in the Lake Heart City region, not just the Ice Jade Forest. If Zero Wing dares to dispatch a force to any of these maps, Miracle will destroy it. However, Zero Wing will crumble, sooner or later, regardless of what it does. Now that the various large Guilds are provoking Zero Wing on the official forums, its reputation will suffer if it refuses to respond. If the situation drags on, no player will want to be a member of the Guild,” Miserly Wind said, chuckling. “Once Zero Wing is gone, our Guild can garrison in Lake Heart City and enjoy a share of the Ice Crystal World’s profits.”

Just as the Eight-eyed Frost Spider was about to die, Shi Feng’s 1,000-man team had sneaked within 2,000 yards of Eternal Undead’s army. The team’s 200 Tier 2 experts led the charge against Eternal Undead on their Mounts, while the remaining 800 experts followed on foot.

Eternal Undead’s scouting Rangers immediately noticed the commotion and reported back to the team.

“Boss Wind, we found Zero Wing’s members! They’re charging toward our team!” the Oracle beside Miserly Wind exclaimed as he read the scouts’ message.

“What? Have Zero Wing’s members lost their minds?” The news confused Miserly Wind. “How many are there?”

“It’s a 1,000-man team,” the Tier 2 Oracle said.

“A 1,000-man team?” Miserly Wind chuckled. “Zero Wing sorely overestimates itself. It dares to charge at us with just 1,000 players? Do they think that Eternal Undead is a Guild of pushovers? Tell our players to finish the Boss quickly and prepare to greet Zero Wing’s team. This is our Guild’s chance to bolster our fame in the Black Dragon Empire! We mustn’t let Miracle’s members take it from us!”

Among his 3,000 players, 1,500 were experts and 40-plus were Tier 2 players. Miserly Wind was not worried about Zero Wing’s assault at all.

When Zero Wing’s 1,000-man team was less than 500 yards away from Eternal Undead’s, the latter finally defeated the Eight-eyed Frost Spider. Under Miserly Wind’s command, Eternal Undead’s members then fell into a defensive formation to greet the enemy Guild.

“Attack! Our chance to get rich has come!” Miserly Wind shouted when less than 100 yards separated the two forces.

The battlefield glowed with countless lights as Spells and arrows flew to meet Zero Wing’s Tier 2 experts as they led the charge.

“Kill them!”

Fierce Snake bellowed when he saw the incoming attacks. He brandished his battle axe, slamming it on the ground before him. The earth split, and walls of rock and dirt rose up before Fierce Snake, stopping the Spells and arrows that targeted his players.

Zero Wing's other Tier 2 players didn't bother to dodge the incoming attacks, either. Like Fierce Snake, they blocked every attack without fail.

Although some of the incoming attacks included Tier 2 Spells and Skills, they posed no threat to Zero Wing's Tier 2 players due to the Basic Combat Devices' effects. With little-to-no effort, Zero Wing's Tier 2 players stopped one wave of attacks after another, soon reaching Eternal Undead's defensive wall.

The defensive wall Eternal Undead's MTs had formed was practically non-existent to Fierce Snake and his comrades. With a single attack, each of Zero Wing's Tier 2 melee players sent multiple MTs flying. In the blink of an eye, Fierce Snake and the others broke through Eternal Undead's defensive wall and pounced on the ranged players like hungry lions pouncing on a flock of sheep.

Eternal Undead's Tier 1 players lasted no more than a handful of hits before Zero Wing's enhanced Tier 2 experts, and the enemy Guild's Tier 2 experts were no exception. The difference between their Basic Attributes was already massive, and after including physique, reaction speed, and several other aspects, Eternal Undead's members stood no chance against these Zero Wing experts. Even though Eternal Undead's healers frantically cast their Healing Spells, they couldn't stop the rapid drain on their allies' HPs.

After a brief moment, over 500 of Eternal Undead's players were dead, their bodies transforming into streaks of light and fading from the Ice Jade Forest.

“How is this possible?!” Miserly Wind's eyes widened in shock, paling as he watched his Guild's experts die, one after another. He had never dreamed that his Guild's experts would be so weak against Zero

Wing's Tier 2 experts. In fact, not even Eternal Undead's Tier 2 players survived more than a few hits from Fierce Snake and his friends...

However, Miserly Wind didn't know that Fierce Snake and his team had the combat power to rival peak experts. Naturally, 200 peak experts would have no trouble slaughtering 3,000 ordinary experts, and only half of Eternal Undead's team consisted of expert players.

Upon seeing Zero Wing's remaining 800 players draw near, fear overwhelmed Miserly Wind.

Two hundred of these players had already devastated his team. If another 800 players joined the fray...

"Retreat! Everyone retreat to Miracle's teams! We'll be safe once we meet up with them!" Miserly Wind shouted in a panic.

Chapter 1962 – Bait?

As soon as Miserly Wind gave the command to retreat, Eternal Undead's panicking members calmed down and ran towards Miracle's last-known grinding spot.

Although Zero Wing's members were strong, Miracle was a veteran super-first-rate Guild that rivaled Super Guilds. Not only did the Guild have its fair share of experts, but those experts were also far superior to those in Eternal Undead in terms of weapons, equipment, and combat standards.

Most importantly, Zero Wing would not dare to fight Miracle in a large-scale battle.

As long as they met up with one of Miracle's 1,000-man teams, they'd have protection from Zero Wing.

Like madmen, Eternal Undead's remaining 2,000-plus members split up and ran for Miracle's teams.

Fierce Snake and his companions were momentarily stunned as they watched their enemies flee. The battle hadn't even started ten seconds ago, yet their opponents were already running for their lives.

"Boss Wind, I've contacted Miracle! It's sending its teams to our location now!" the Tier 2 Oracle informed Miserly Wind, who wore a twisted expression.

He could empathize with his leader. Of the 3,000 players their Guild had dispatched, half were expert players, yet the moment they collided with Zero Wing, they had lost more than 300 of those experts. The Guild only had a little over 4,000 expert players in total, and nearly 10% had died in the blink of an eye. This was a heavy blow to their Guild.

"Notify everyone and tell them to lure as many Zero Wing members to Miracle's forces as possible! We cannot let Zero Wing off the hook after killing so many of our Guild's experts!" Miserly Wind growled as he glanced at the enemy players chasing him and his teammates. "We'll meet up with Miracle and surround Zero Wing's team, slaughtering every one of its players!"

Their Guild had lost too much in this battle, but the lost levels were only secondary. The lost weapons and equipment was far more important. The Guild had used a lot of resources to acquire these items for their experts. Meanwhile, before they had collected a notable harvest from the Ice Jade Forest, they had lost so many assets. They had to get pay-back.

“Understood! I’ll have the others maintain their distance from Zero Wing’s members,” the Tier 2 Oracle said, nodding. When he glanced back at Fierce Snake and the others, who still pursued Eternal Undead’s players, he thought this was a good opportunity to recoup their losses. “Let’s see if Zero Wing can deal with a stronger force!”

Zero Wing was famed for its wealth. Its members were all very well-equipped. Since Zero Wing’s members here had such high Attributes, they definitely wore top-tier weapons and equipment.

Although Miserly Wind’s plan would increase the team’s casualty count, it would be worth it if they could claim some of Zero Wing’s weapons and equipment, bolstering their Guild’s main force.

After saying so, the Tier 2 Oracle informed his teammates to slow down deliberately. By doing so, they would ensure that Zero Wing’s members, who were forced to stop whenever they killed someone, could catch up. This would create the illusion that Zero Wing’s members would eventually catch and kill every Eternal Undead member, encouraging Fierce Snake and his team to continue the chase.

After another thousand yards or so, Eternal Undead had a little more than 1,600 surviving members. Miserly Wind’s face contorted’ he hadn’t expected Zero Wing’s members to be so ferocious.

“Boss Wind, look!” the Tier 2 Oracle shouted excitedly as he pointed toward the large group of players in the forest ahead.

“Good! Have everyone get ready!” When Miserly Wind saw the Miracle’s mounted members, the sight rekindled his hope. “This moment will determine whether or not our Guild can progress in the Black Dragon Empire!”

When Eternal Undead’s members saw Miracle’s players, they stopped holding back and ran toward Miracle’s forces at full power. As if they had prepared for this moment, Miracle’s 2,000-man team split into two groups, one moving towards Fierce Snake and his companions, while the other moved to intercept Shi Feng’s 800 players.

“Guild Leader, Miracle’s members have arrived,” Fierce Snake, who led the charge, informed Shi Feng when he saw Miracle’s members emerge from the forest ahead.

“They’re finally here?” Calmly, Shi Feng ordered, “In that case, let’s get started!”

“We can finally get to work?” Fierce Snake’s eyes glowed with excitement. He then shouted through the team chat, “Brothers, it’s time to earn our keep!”

“Wonderful! I can finally get serious!”

“This game of cat and mouse is over.”

“Hey, leave some for me! I want to experiment with some Basic Combat Techniques!”

Excitement shot through Zero Wing’s members as they watched the fleeing Eternal Undead team. Suddenly, their Movement Speeds skyrocketed, and they instantly closed the distance between them and their prey. They then used one Skill after another.

For a time, bright lights and explosions filled the forest.

Zero Wing’s Tier 2 experts instantly slew the enemy Tier 1 experts that had lasted a few moves against them previously. Two hundred of the 1,600-plus fleeing players fell in the blink of an eye. Despite fleeing

with all of their power, Fierce Snake's team caught up with Eternal Undead's players in seconds. Following which, Eternal Undead's team member count decreased with lightning speed.

After a short moment, less than 100 players remained alive from Eternal Undead.

Due to this abrupt change, Miserly Wind, who had prepared to celebrate his plan's success, was dazed.

However, Miserly Wind didn't know that Fierce Snake and his men had nearly as much combat power as peak experts because of their extraordinary Basic Attributes and physiques. Killing inferior players was a piece of cake.

Fierce Snake and his team were even more efficient at hunting down and killing ordinary experts than true peak experts.

How is this possible? How are they suddenly so strong?

Miserly Wind was bewildered as he watched his Guildmates fall, one after another, behind him. He didn't understand what was happening. Fierce Snake's team was superior to his in terms of combat methods, Attack power, and Movement Speed. They fought like completely different people than they had in the earlier battle.

As Miracle's members drew nearer, Miserly Wind thought of a possibility.

Could it be... Have they been using us as bait to lure Miracle's members all this time?

Chapter 1963 – The Might of the Magicbreaking Crossbows Miserly Wind shuddered as he considered the possibility.

He had never thought that Zero Wing was crazy enough to face Miracle head-on.

But with another glance at the enemy players, he couldn't care less whether or not he and his team had been bait. All Miserly Wind could think of was escaping.

At his level, he'd need several days of hard work to recover from a single death. Moreover, he wore higher quality weapons and equipment than the Guild's other experts. If he lost one of his items, who knew how long it would take to find a replacement?

Miracle's team was only a hundred yards away now. As long as he met up with the approaching force, the fight would go on for some time, giving him the opportunity to get away, even if Miracle's army was no match for Fierce Snake and his monstrous players.

As Miracle's forces drew closer, they spotted Eternal Undead's surviving members.

"Damn it! Zero Wing's team actually has the guts to kill our allies right before our eyes!"

Miracle's members wore sour expressions as they watched Eternal Undead's players die. They immediately increased their speed.

“Finally.” Once Miracle’s members were within his attack range, Fierce Snake used Charge, reaching the enemy MTs instantly. He tightened his grip on his battle axe and swept the weapon in a horizontal arc.

Tier 2 Skill, Bladestorm!

With Fierce Snake as the center, a powerful storm brewed, enveloping a 20-yard radius and sending over a dozen MTs airborne. The attack interrupted Miracle’s offensive charge on the spot

Zero Wing’s other Tier 2 experts joined the fray without hesitation. Like a sharpened blade, they pierced Miracle’s formation, diving for the team’s core. With their advantage in Basic Attributes and physique, Miracle’s 1,000-man team had no hope of stopping their advance. Only Miracle’s Tier 2 experts were able to put up a fight, although barely. Zero Wing slaughtered their Tier 1 experts with very little effort.

Meanwhile, Zero Wing’s Tier 2 ranged players bombarded Miracle’s rear line, preventing the enemy DPS from providing their comrades any support.

After a brief moment, Zero Wing’s 200-man team gained the upper hand. Although Miracle’s team was not as easy to defeat as Eternal Undead’s, it didn’t fare much better.

As for the Miracle team that had charged for Shi Feng’s 800-man party, Shi Feng waved a hand and cast Flame Domain once it was within 50 yards and prepared to attack. At the same time, Zhao Yueru cast Frostflame Hell.

Two towering pillars of fire enveloped Miracle’s members. The players caught within the AOE turned to ash instantly, vanishing from the battlefield.

This Miracle team suffered a far more tragic fate than the one facing Fierce Snake's party...

"How is this..." Miserly Wind slid to a halt, staring at the flaming pillars with a stupid expression.

A single round of attacks had wiped out nearly half of Miracle's 1,000-man team. If they hadn't spread out, the two Spells would've had no trouble eliminating the majority of Miracle's force.

Miserly Wind felt as if Eternal Undead's desperate fight against Zero Wing had been little more than a warm-up for his adversaries.

As everyone was in shock over witnessing the power of the two large-scale destruction Spells...

"Crossbow unit, get ready!" Shi Feng shouted. He then pointed at the remaining Miracle members and commanded, "Fire!" Immediately, the 60 Tier 1 Rangers at the front of the team released the Magicbreaking Crossbows' bolts.

Xiu! Xiu! Xiu!

The Magicbreaking Crossbows had an attack range of 70 yards, even longer than that of Tier 2 Rangers. At this point, the entirety of Miracle's force was within range.

When the 60 Magicbreaking Bolts were released, they flew through the air so fast that even Tier 2 Assassins would have trouble dodging them. Furthermore, Miracle's members were still in shock.

The Magicbreaking Crossbows instantly claimed 60 Miracle lives. The rest of the force only returned to their senses after watching their allies die beside them. When Miracle's members realized that even Tier 2 experts had fallen, a chilling thought crept into their minds.

The moment after the first bolts found their marks, the Magicbreaking Crossbows launched a second volley.

Although many of Miracle's members had noticed the attacks, the Magicbreaking Bolts were just too fast. Miracle's Tier 1 players had no hope of dodging the attacks and died instantly; only the force's Tier 2 players had managed to evade the incoming bolts.

After two volleys, Miracle's 1,000-man team had lost more than 100 players. The 60 Magicbreaking Crossbows ended their lives even faster than Fierce Snake and his friends.

"Retreat! Everyone retreat!" The Tier 2 player leading the assault on Shi Feng's 800-man team shouted, fear gripping his heart as he gazed at the corpse pinned to the ground beside him.

The 60 Magicbreaking Crossbows were far more frightening than the earlier large-scale destruction Spells. The Spells had long Cooldowns and couldn't be used once the two forces met in melee combat, but the crossbows' Cooldowns were quite short and easily landed attacks in close quarters. Most importantly, the crossbows could kill a player with full HP in a single attack, and not even the Tier 2 MTs were an exception. How were they supposed to fight such a weapon?

After issuing the command to retreat, Miserly Wind, who rested a long distance away, was dumbfounded.

He had thought that Miracle would last against Zero Wing, but the fight that he had just witnessed couldn't even be called a battle. It had been a one-sided massacre.

Although Miracle's leader had ordered a retreat, even he, a Tier 2 Refinement Realm expert, had died after becoming a target for more than ten Magicbreaking Crossbows. The leader hadn't been able to resist as Zero Wing turned him into a human pin-cushion.

These Magicbreaking Crossbows are amazing! Gentle Snow watched Zero Wing devastate the remnants of Miracle's 1,000- man team with wide, shocked eyes.

She had recognized the Tier 2 team leader as a Refinement Realm expert, yet he had fallen after taking ten or so Magicbreaking Bolts. The Magicbreaking Crossbow was truly an amazing weapon in a frontal confrontation.

Now, she, more or less, realized why Shi Feng had dared to take so few players to Ice Jade Forest.

Although the Magicbreaking Crossbow was a Consumable, it could fire 300 Magicbreaking Bolts, which had been formed with Mana, before breaking. With the 60 Magicbreaking Crossbows they had, they had enough firepower to survive a large- scale battle involving tens of thousands of players. Although more than 100,000 enemies resided in the Ice Jade Forest, less than 30,000 were from Miracle. As long as they picked their fights carefully and only took on several thousand Miracle members at a time, they could end Miracle's tyranny in this map.

Meanwhile, Fierce Snake and his companions chased down Miracle's fleeing members on the other side of the battlefield. Although Miracle's members desperately fled, Zero Wing's Tier 2 players held an absolute advantage in terms of speed. Miracle's members didn't get far before they died. Aside from a few players that had used Instantaneous Movement Magic Scrolls, none escaped death.

"How'd it go?" Shi Feng asked Fierce Snake as he watched the rest of the team loot the battlefield.

“Unfortunately, a dozen or so got away, but we haven’t had any casualties,” Fierce Snake reported.

“Good. Publish the video of the battle with Eternal Undead and Miracle on the official forums. Let’s show the other Guilds that if they want to kick us while we’re down, Miracle won’t be able to protect them!” Shi Feng said.

“Understood!” Fierce Snake nodded.

Chapter 1964 – Black Dragon Empire Shaken

The war between Miracle and Zero Wing was no longer a secret in the Black Dragon Empire. Almost every player in the empire knew about it, and everyone had assumed that Zero Wing was doomed.

Until now, no large Guild in God’s Domain had survived a serious confrontation with a superpower. All of the lesser Guilds had fallen in a short time, and Miracle had already placed a bounty on Zero Wing’s experts and upper echelons. The offer was high enough to tempt many of the empire’s experts, and countless players had secretly taken action.

Miracle had even recruited the Black Dragon Empire’s various large Guilds in its war with Zero Wing, and despite the public provocations on the forums each day, the Guild hadn’t responded, and Zero Wing’s reputation in the empire had plummeted. At this point, many of Zero Wing’s members had considered withdrawing from the Guild.

After all, players joined Guilds to ease the burden of leveling up and share in the Guild’s glory. Nobody would join a cowardly Guild that the public ridiculed.

Meanwhile, the empire's various large Guilds spent their time preparing. The moment Zero Wing withdrew from the Black Dragon Empire, they would swoop in to take over its abandoned territories.

However, an uproar shook the forums shortly after Fierce Snake uploaded the battle videos he and his teammates had recorded.

The forum post's title was particularly eye-catching.

Death to those who support Miracle!

He had published the post under Zero Wing's name, and the imposing response was hard to ignore.

Less than a minute after the post went live, it had become the most popular of the day with over a million views.

"Amazing! Zero Wing is simply amazing! Eternal Undead's members died right in front of Miracle's members, yet Miracle couldn't do anything about it!"

"I wonder how the various large Guilds feel now? Zero Wing is obviously showing them that even if they have Miracle's support, the Guild can't protect them."

"Zero Wing is so arrogant. It's just one Guild. Does Zero Wing really think it can survive if so many Guilds band together? This warning will only enrage its enemies and make Zero Wing's situation worse."

“That might not be the case. Did you see how Eternal Undead’s members died? They were fish on the chopping board in front of Zero Wing’s team. Although Eternal Undead is only an average second-rate Guild, it is still a bona fide second-rate Guild, yet Zero Wing slaughtered its members. The other Guilds will only suffer the same fate.”

“That’s right This 1,000-man team from Zero Wing is simply ferocious. It almost annihilated Miracle’s 2,000-man army. If such a team targets other Guilds’ expert teams, the outcome will likely be the same.”

“Zero Wing is really a Guild of experts. I think I’ll stick with joining Zero Wing.”

The empire’s players had a heated discussion over the battle videos Fierce Snake had published. They had never thought that the moment Zero Wing took action, the Guild would make such a terrifying move. With a single battle, it had deterred other Guilds from trying to take advantage of the war and humiliated Miracle.

Zero Wing hadn’t suffered a single casualty in this latest battle, while Eternal Undead and Miracle’s teams had been almost extinguished. Despite the two Guilds having five-times as many players, their defeat had still been miserable. This proved to everyone in the empire that Zero Wing’s strength wasn’t superficial.

When Zero Wing’s members saw the post, however, their passion and enthusiasm rekindled. They all wished they had taken part in the battle and given Miracle a good beating. At the same time, many Zero Wing members aspired to become expert members more than ever. They hoped that they could one day fight overwhelming odds, securing an absolute victory like Fierce Snake and the others.

Just the idea was exhilarating.

“Hahaha! Let’s see if those Guilds dare to act so arrogantly before us again!”

“All hail Zero Wing! All hail the Guild Leader!”

When the various superpowers’ upper echelons received news of the battle, an indescribable shock overwhelmed them.

The battle’s outcome had a greater impact on them than it had on the general public. Ordinary players might not be able to determine Fierce Snake and his team’s exact strength, but they could.

“How has Zero Wing secured so many experts with the combat power to rival peak experts?” Yuan Tiexin read the latest report with furrowed brows.

Peak experts were a Guild’s core combatants. Not even the various superpowers had many peak experts, yet Zero Wing had just revealed a force of 200 seemingly out of nowhere. A team of 200 peak experts would be an absolute nightmare out in the fields. Destroying such a force would require an army of tens of thousands of elite and expert players as well the use of magic arrays.

“Miracle likely has quite the headache over this situation right now. It had probably never considered that the little bug it was trying to crush would turn out to be a steel spike,” Purple Jade said, giggling.

Miracle had always been overbearing. Normally, even Super Guilds avoided clashing with the Guild, whereas super-first-rate Guilds were often oppressed by it. However, she also had to admit that Miracle had the strength to do so. Seeing the Guild suffer such devastating, repeated losses was extremely rare.

Meanwhile, in Miracle’s Residence in Lake Heart City...

The room's atmosphere was intensely chilly. Many of the empire's large Guilds had given up on provoking Zero Wing due to its recent demonstration. After all, the Guild had proven that Miracle couldn't guarantee their safety in the fields. No matter how one looked at it, letting a large number of Guild experts die just to grind in a better resource map wasn't worthwhile.

"Damn it! How did Zero Wing suddenly obtain so many experts?!" Thousand Miles paled as he watched the battle video before him. "I thought Zero Wing could only produce a small number of those Basic Combat Devices?!"

After Fierce Snake's team had displayed their strength at Blue Wave Rock, Miracle had sent spies to investigate the source of their power. With Zero Wing's current standards, gaining so many peak experts so quickly was impossible. The only explanation was that the Guild had acquired a special tool.

Based on those investigations, they had learned that Fierce Snake and his companions had become so powerful through a tool known as the Basic Combat Device. However, while this tool was very powerful, it had a limited duration, and only a small number could be crafted each day. At most, Zero Wing could supply a 100-man team for a full day. Fortunately, once these players scattered across the empire, they'd no longer pose much of a threat.

But Zero Wing had revealed 200 of these experts in the latest confrontation. Thousand Miles could not figure out how Zero Wing had managed to craft so many more Basic Combat Devices. If Zero Wing could truly maintain a 200-man team of these experts at all times, it would impact the current war's status quo.

Moreover, they had discovered that Zero Wing had a powerful collection of heavy crossbows during the battle. Not only did the crossbows' attacks contain immense Strength, but they were also impressively fast. If ten or so Magicbreaking Crossbows attacked together, even a Tier 2 Refinement Realm expert would fall without the use of an Invulnerability Skill.

“Vice Guild Leader Shredded, should we dispatch our peak experts to reinforce the Ice Jade Forest?” Miracle Dragon asked as he turned to Shredded Soul.

“Forget it. Order a retreat,” Shredded Soul said, shaking his head.

“Retreat?” Confused, Thousand Miles asked, “Are we just letting Zero Wing off the hook?”

“Do you plan to order our forces to continue the fight?” Shredded Soul glared at Thousand Miles. Coldly, he continued, “Zero Wing has proven that it has the strength to fight us toe-to-toe in the Black Dragon Empire. We might win if we continue fighting, but we’ll pay a heavy price and fulfill the other superpowers’ long-held wish! If we have to pay such a price for defeating Zero Wing in the empire, what will we gain?”

“How would we have lost so many elite and expert players if not for your stupidity? Had you investigated Zero Wing properly before taking action, I wouldn’t have had to come here and clean up your mess! I’ll deliver a report to the Guild Leader personally, so I suggest you cool down in the meantime!”

Shredded Soul’s reprimand left Thousand Miles speechless, but he still felt wronged. Who would’ve thought that an up-and-coming Guild like Zero Wing, which wasn’t backed by any corporation, was so powerful?

“I will return to the western continent. I’ll leave the clean-up to you,” Shredded Soul added as he stared at Thousand Miles. He then used a Guild Transfer Scroll and vanished from the meeting room.

Chapter 1965 – Quasi-super-first-rate Guild Black Dragon Empire, Ice Jade Forest

Despite Thousand Miles's reluctance, he had no choice but to follow Shredded Soul's command and recall the Guild members from the Ice Jade Forest.

Meanwhile, Miracle's retreat caused a sensation throughout the Black Dragon Empire.

"What's going on?"

"Miracle's retreating?"

"That's not possible, right? Miracle is a super-first-rate Guild, yet it's actually giving up on Zero Wing?"

The sudden turn of events stupefied the empire's players. They simply could not figure out what had caused Miracle to turn away from Zero Wing so abruptly. The two Guilds had only engaged in a single battle involving several thousand players. To both, such a small battle wasn't even a warm-up.

Thus far, all of Miracle's actions had displayed its intention to annihilate Zero Wing's Branch Guild in the Black Dragon Empire, yet they had fled from their prey. It was as if everything had just been an act.

"How disappointing! Miracle retreated after such a minor battle! And here I thought it was some amazing Guild. In the end, it is no different than the empire's other Guilds!"

"All hail Zero Wing! Even Miracle can't take down Zero Wing!"

Varied opinions of Miracle's withdrawal split the empire's players. Some players felt that Miracle didn't deserve its title as a super-first-rate Guild since it couldn't even take out a non-superpower like Zero Wing, and others assumed Miracle had given up because Zero Wing truly was powerful.

"That cowardly Shredded Soul! He hasn't even started the war, yet he's already given up! I even ensured that he had all the information he needed!" Nine Dragons Emperor slammed his fist into his desk when he read the report on Miracle's withdrawal from the Black Dragon Empire.

He had hoped to use Miracle to wound Zero Wing. He had never expected the superpower to pack up and leave so soon.

Meanwhile, in one of Lake Heart City's high-class restaurants...

"Uncle Yuan, look! Shredded Soul has returned to the western continent to take charge of things there! By the looks of it, he's really given up on Zero Wing," Purple Jade exclaimed, surprised.

She had investigated Shredded Soul personally and had concluded that the man was truly ruthless. Once he set out to do something, he never gave up, yet he had decisively pulled his forces away from the conflict with Zero Wing. This was unbelievable.

"It's not that unusual. After all, there is no benefit in continuing the war with Zero Wing. At most, Miracle will restore some of its damaged reputation. With 200 experts that possess the combat power to rival peak experts and those heavy crossbows, Zero Wing qualified to contend with a superpower. Unless Miracle decides to go all-out, it'll be helpless against the smaller Guild. Moreover, Miracle is fighting a remote war; it already has to expend a lot of resources to engage in this war. Miracle's position will only become more of a disadvantage as the war drags on," Yuan Tiexin said, chuckling. Taking a sip from the cup of icy-blue wine in his hand, he continued, "At the end of the day, Miracle is a massive organization set out to make money. There's no way it would abandon everything it has built for its reputation. Since Zero Wing has proven that it has the strength to protect itself for some time, and the other superpowers know Miracle's strength, Miracle has no reason to continue fighting."

“That makes sense.” Purple Jade nodded. “However, Zero Wing is pretty impressive. It’s always has a surprise up its sleeve. I had thought the Guild was doomed this time; I hadn’t expected it to reveal such a trump card. It’s no wonder why Zero Wing dared to compete with the various superpowers over the Ore Empire’s resources.”

In God’s Domain, might was right.

Provoking Miracle wasn’t a problem as long as Zero Wing could endure the larger Guild’s wrath. If Zero Wing couldn’t do that, Miracle would destroy the Guild. If it could, it would survive. It was just that simple. The various superpowers would not ridicule Miracle for being weak because it failed to destroy a Guild that merely rivaled first-rate Guilds. They would only take joy in the fact that Miracle had accidentally tugged on a tiger’s tail.

“However, it’s too early for Zero Wing to celebrate. The Guild still has a bumpy road ahead. Furthermore, Miracle will definitely strike if given the chance in the future,” Yuan Tiexin said.

Miracle had only given up on dealing with Zero Wing this time because the losses outweighed the gains. Even if it defeated Zero Wing, all it would gain was reputation. While reputation was important for a Guild’s development, it was not particularly important to a veteran super-first-rate Guild like Miracle.

However, it was a different story for the various superpowers operating in the Ore Empire. These superpowers were there to obtain resources for their development. It was entirely possible for these organizations to use everything they had to remove Zero Wing. They wouldn’t give up as easily as Miracle. Now that Zero Wing had exposed two more trump cards, its development in the Ore Empire would be at risk.

While Yuan Tiexin and Purple Jade conversed, the various superpowers expressed their astonishment over Zero Wing’s

performance. They had never dreamed that a Guild with no background was capable of forging such a sturdy foundation.

They all ordered further investigations on Zero Wing, desperate to know more about the Basic Combat Devices and Magicbreaking Crossbows.

Due to this latest battle, the various superpowers realized that while Guild experts were important, God's Domain's tools were just as crucial. Zero Wing's success in fending off Miracle was the best proof of this.

The Black Dragon Empire's large Guilds, in particular, feared for their survival after watching Zero Wing slaughter Eternal Undead's 3,000-man force. When they heard that Miracle had withdrawn its players from the war, they immediately recalled their forces from the Ice Jade Forest and reached out to butter up to Zero Wing.

If even a super-first-rate Guild like Miracle was powerless against Zero Wing, what hope did their Guilds have?

Zero Wing had proven its strength to everyone in the Black Dragon Empire with the battle in the Ice Jade Forest. Although it was not a super-first-rate Guild, it had the power to stand against one.

Zero Wing was now only second to the Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion in the hearts of the empire's players. To be precise, the Black Dragon Empire's general populace recognized Zero Wing as a quasi-super-first-rate Guild and that it was only a matter of time before it became a true super-first-rate Guild.

Meanwhile, the various large Guilds that had previously provoked Zero Wing or taken delight in the Guild's misfortune were now quite nervous, especially the Guilds that had openly antagonized Zero

wing. These Guilds were terrified that Zero Wing would seek retribution. With Zero Wing's strength, it would have no trouble removing their Guilds from the Black Dragon Empire; all it would need was time and resources.

"Guild Leader, more than a dozen Guilds are trying to cozy up to us. Each Guild is offering Magic Crystals and rare materials as compensation. Should we meet with their representatives?" Gentle Snow asked Shi Feng.

Before she had time to recover from her shock over Miracle's abrupt retreat, a large number of Guilds had contacted her, wanting to repair their relationship with Zero Wing. They were even willing to make reparations. She hadn't expected this development.

Chapter 1966 – Overnight Fortune

"Compensation?" Shi Feng chuckled at Gentle Snow's report. "These Guilds sure reacted quickly."

Now that Zero Wing's strength had been recognized, it was the perfect time to develop its influence in the Black Dragon Empire. However, since Zero Wing's development was currently limited by its resources, it had to claim other Guild's resources.

Fortunately, quite a few of the empire's Guilds had openly provoked Zero Wing, so it was well within its rights to eliminate these Guilds and take over their resources. No one would reprimand Zero Wing for doing so.

Naturally, these offending Guilds had considered the possibility of such an outcome. Although Zero Wing could only take on a few Guilds at a time, on the off chance that they were one of the unlucky few,

they'd be doomed. Hence, the various Guilds that had provoked Zero Wing tried desperately to repair their relationships with Zero Wing.

"Should I call in their representatives, then?" Gentle Snow understood the meaning behind Shi Feng's comment. While Zero Wing's reputation had improved, it would take some time to develop the Guild's strength. Moreover, doing so would require a lot of funds. Rather than waste resources on annihilating one or two large Guilds, they needed to use this opportunity to claim compensation from the dozen or so Guilds, making a fortune. This way, Zero Wing would gain both the money and the resources it needed for its development without lifting a finger.

"There's no need. Just tell them this; second-rate Guilds will compensate Zero Wing with 30,000 Magic Crystals and 50,000 Gold in rare materials or Lands in major NPC cities. Zero Wing requires 15,000 Magic Crystals and 30,000 Gold in rare materials or Lands from third-rate Guilds!" Shi Feng said. "If they don't pay up, they'll have to bear the consequences!"

While it seemed as though Zero Wing had easily defeated Miracle, Shi Feng knew how close his Guild had been to defeat.

In God's Domain, a war between Guilds was a competition of capital and expert players. When a Guild went to war, it had to spend money like there was no tomorrow. Meanwhile, Zero Wing's victory had been achieved through spending a massive number of Magic Crystals and resources.

The Magicbreaking Crossbows were worth the price since they could be reused; they would only disappear after their uses had been depleted. However, the Basic Combat Devices were different. Once they had been activated, they'd vanish after 12 hours; they could not be deactivated to save their remaining duration. Meanwhile, Shi Feng had invested more than 80,000 Magic Crystals into crafting the two tools. The rest of the materials had also cost a ton of money. In addition, the Guild had to compensate its members that had died in the fights.

After fighting Miracle for just a few short days, Zero Wing's pockets were almost empty...

Fortunately, Zero Wing had secured a Manatite vein. Otherwise, the Black Dragon Empire's Branch Guild would've been finished. He was also fortunate that Miracle didn't know the tools' production costs. Had Miracle known about the expenditures, it would have continued this war.

"This..." Hearing Shi Feng's demands, Gentle Snow asked worriedly, "Aren't these prices a little too high?"

Currently, the average second-rate Guild only occupied a few NPC cities, while the more powerful second-rate Guilds occupied a dozen or so. These Guilds' range of influence wasn't particularly vast. While 50,000 Gold in resources or Land was bearable for a second-rate Guild, 30,000 Magic Crystals definitely weren't. At this stage of the game, 30,000 Magic Crystals were roughly half of a second-rate Guild's stockpile.

Although it had become much easier to acquire Magic Crystals, players also needed to consume more of them, especially after the 'Return of the Survivors' expansion pack had been implemented.

"It's fine. Just inform them," Shi Feng said, chuckling.

While losing half of the Guild's Magic Crystal stockpile was a significant cost, it would not impede the Guild's normal operations. It would simply force the Guild into stagnation for a short time.

Moreover, he urgently needed Magic Crystals right now. He couldn't afford to be courteous with these Guilds.

Following which, Gentle Snow conveyed Shi Feng's price to the various large Guilds.

When they received Zero Wing's demands, all of these Guilds went into an uproar. The rare materials weren't an issue since every Guild had an extraordinary stock of resources by now, but Magic Crystals were crucial to a Guild's development

"Damn Zero Wing! It might as well rob us at this point!"

"Guild Leader, what should we do?"

"Pay the Guild! We can't afford to stand out right now. Although Miracle failed to destroy Zero Wing, Blackwater and Beast Emperor have still been eyeing the Guild in the Ore Empire. They won't let Zero Wing off the hook as easily as Miracle has."

The various large Guilds were enraged when they received Gentle Snow's message. They had barely claimed any resources in the high-resource maps Miracle had given them, yet they were now required to pay such expensive compensation. Their partnership with Miracle had been an utter mistake.

However, due to the threat Zero Wing posed, they had no choice but to grit their teeth and swallow the loss.

Within three hours after receiving Gentle Snow's message, the various large Guilds sent their representatives to deliver the requested resources to Zero Wing's Residence in Lake Heart City. When Gentle Snow and the Guild's other upper echelons received the payments, they were ecstatic.

"Snow! We're rich!" Zhao Yueru exclaimed as she gazed at the Magic Crystals and multiple resources in the Guild Warehouse.

They had received compensation from more than a dozen Guilds!

Among the Guilds that had paid their dues, five were second-rate Guilds, and eight were third-rate Guilds. In total, Zero Wing had received 270,000 Magic Crystals, a considerable amount even to the current superpowers. Furthermore, Zero Wing had gained 490,000 Gold in rare materials and Lands.

Not only had Zero Wing earned back the resources it had spent in the war, but it had also made a huge profit.

With this many resources, Zero Wing could afford to recruit tens of thousands of members in the Black Dragon Empire. It could also strengthen Hidden Fog Town's defenses and upgrade it to Intermediate rank.

I had expected it to take a few more days to collect 200,000 Magic Crystals, but I guess I don't have to worry about the deadline anymore. Shi Feng was just as excited to see the miniature mountain of Magic Crystals.

He didn't dare to take risks with the Inferior Legendary Quest from the Jealous Witch. The penalty for failing the quest was no laughing matter.

Moreover, he absolutely needed to the field magic array, Void Field.

Field magic arrays were extremely rare in God's Domain, and the only one he knew how to obtain was the one in the Witch's Hill. He'd just have to get lucky to secure another one.

Field magic arrays were so rare because of how powerful Advanced Field Magic Arrays were in wars and when plundering resources.

Once players reached Level 65 and beyond, resources would become significantly more difficult to acquire due to how dangerous the monsters were in the appropriately leveled maps. Although these monsters had higher Basic Attributes, they also have visibly stronger combat standards once they reached Level 65 and beyond. Moreover, the more resource-rich a map was, the more visible this improvement would be. In comparison, monsters below Level 60 had roughly the same combat standards regardless of what kind of map they occupied. At most, their Basic Attributes would differ slightly.

The weakest monsters in Level 65-plus maps had combat standards on par with the early stage of the Trial Tower's third floor, while the stronger monsters could reach the fifth floor's early stage. Most importantly, they would travel in larger numbers.

Against such an abrupt difference, one could imagine how the various large Guilds would fare.

Moreover, Guild experts had obviously lower Basic Attributes than monsters. If these Guild experts lost their combat standard advantage as well, they'd have a difficult time grinding.

Because of this, few large Guilds had taken advantage of Level 65-plus maps in his previous life since they weren't strong enough to grind the maps' monsters.

Hence, field magic arrays had become extremely important. A field magic array would provide a significant advantage over other Guilds when Guild members left to level up or grind for resources. And Void Field was an Advanced Field Magic Array.

Now that I've settled matters in the Black Dragon Empire, it's time to revisit the Witch's Hill. When Shi Feng saw that the Branch Guild's development was back on track, he took 200,000 Magic Crystals with him and teleported back to Zero Wing City.

Chapter 1967 – Candlelight Expands Star-Moon Kingdom, Zero Wing City:

In a seven-story, high-class restaurant a short distance away from Zero Wing's Residence, three cloaked players observed the Residence from a private room.

"Commander Cloud, the result of Miracle and Zero Wing's war is out. Here is all of the information we purchased from the Secret Pavilion regarding Zero Wing," a male Half-elf said as he handed the male Tigerkin before him a file. "The war in the Black Dragon Empire ended when Miracle retreated from the empire and announced its withdrawal from the war."

"What? Miracle was defeated?" Chopped Axe, the female Tigerkin beside the male Tigerkin, was slightly stunned. "How is that possible? That's Miracle we're talking about. The Guild is even stronger than it had been at its peak. How could it possibly lose?"

As a member of the famous Death God Workshop, she was quite familiar with the various superpowers, especially their territories and overall strength.

Miracle, in particular, was one of the superpowers the Death God Workshop watched closely.

Not only had Miracle recently expanded its influence in God's Domain, but it had also recruited plenty of well-known experts in the virtual gaming world. The Witch of the West, Alice, was one of the best examples. Recruiting Alice had significantly boosted the Guild's overall strength, and not long ago,

Miracle had secured a key resource point on the western continent. It only lacked a suitable opportunity to earn the public's recognition as a Super Guild.

If Miracle were granted the title of Super Guild, it would rank in the top half in terms of power. Miracle had a boundless future ahead of itself.

Hence, Chopped Axe couldn't believe that Zero Wing had actually defeated Miracle.

"Miracle has indeed lost. Everyone in the Black Dragon Empire is talking about it," the male Half-elf, Frost Rain, confirmed. "Miracle retreated because Zero Wing had dispatched 200 experts with combat power on par with peak experts, which caught Miracle completely off guard. Once Miracle realized that a protracted war would be a waste of time and resources, it decided to give up and return home."

"Two hundred experts with combat power that rivals peak experts?! This can't be true, can it?!" Chopped Axe instinctively refused to believe Frost Rain's claim.

Even an ordinary super-first-rate Guild only had that many experts, including Domain Realm experts and true peak experts.

"It's true," Light Cloud, the male Tigerkin, said suddenly. "According to the Secret Pavilion's report, Zero Wing has only accomplished this feat because it has used a tool called the Basic Combat Device. However, the Basic Combat Device has a relatively short duration. In addition, Zero Wing has the frightening Magicbreaking Crossbow. When a dozen or so of these crossbows are fired together, they can even instant-kill a Tier 2 Refinement Realm expert. If Zero Wing amasses a sufficient stock of these crossbows, its members will even be able to instant-kill peak experts."

"So, that's the case. I knew a new Guild like Zero Wing couldn't be that strong." Chopped Axe could not help but wipe the sweat from her forehead.

If Zero Wing truly had so many powerful expert players, it could easily deal with the Death God Workshop. All it would need was some time and resources. The various superpowers were inclined to overlook the Workshop's activities for this very reason.

"Even if these tools have a time limit, they still pose a great threat," Light Cloud said as he rolled his eyes at Chopped Axe. "Alright, we can return and report to the Chief Commander now. We'll let the Chief Commander decide how to deal with Zero Wing in the Fairy Country."

After saying so, Light Cloud took a Return Scroll from his bag. He had no intention of wasting any more time in Zero Wing City. Frost Rain and Chopped Axe nodded in agreement. They had never expected Ninth Heaven to secure such a powerful backer.

Meanwhile, the first thing Shi Feng did after returning to Zero Wing City was store the rare materials he had obtained in the Black Dragon Empire in Candlelight's warehouse. He then had Melancholic Smile ramp up Candlelight's recruitment for Lifestyle players and expand the firm's operations.

Although the Candlelight Trading Firm was developing nicely, it could only afford to nurture a limited number of Lifestyle players due to the lack of materials. As a result, Candlelight was restricted when recruiting Lifestyle players.

Fortunately, Zero Wing had secured 490,000 Gold in rare materials through the war in the Black Dragon Empire. With so many materials, Candlelight could easily afford to recruit several thousand more members. Moreover, if Candlelight wished to develop in the Black Dragon Empire and Fairy Country, it would need a lot of additional manpower.

As long as Candlelight established a foothold in these two countries, the trading firm's income would double at the very minimum. After all, both the Black Dragon Empire and the Fairy Country had far higher player populations than Star-Moon Kingdom. Naturally, the demand for items in these countries

would also be higher. Even if Candlelight did not become the number one trading firm in those countries, it would still earn a sizable income.

As for Candlelight's competitive edge, Shi Feng wasn't worried about that.

Due to the Philosopher's Hand, Candlelight had gained an additional five Master Lifestyle players despite the fact that Melancholic Smile had kept the item's usage to a minimum to keep it a secret. Among the five Master Lifestyle players nurtured, two were Master Alchemists, two were Master Forgers, and one was a Master Engineer. To Shi Feng's surprise,

Silent Wonder had successfully created an Advanced Alchemy Recipe as well, thanks to the assistance of Titan City and the Philosopher's Hand. Now, Silent Wonder only needed to create one more Advanced Alchemy Recipe to become an Intermediate Master Alchemist!

An Intermediate Master Alchemist was no less important than an Intermediate Master Forger. In fact, an Intermediate Master Alchemist played an even greater role in raiding Team Dungeons. Unlike Basic Master Alchemists, Intermediate Master Alchemists could craft Master Potions with a feasible success rate.

If a team had a full stock of Master ranked defensive or resistance potions, the raid would become much easier.

"Guild Leader, the auction for the virtual stores has concluded. Not a single corporation is willing to rent our stores. In contrast, the virtual stores in the two Guild Towns are selling like hotcakes..." Melancholic Smile said, visibly worried.

"Although we've earned some Credits through selling the weapons and equipment you gave me earlier, it's only enough to maintain the training ground for a short time."

“Nobody is willing to rent?” Shi Feng was slightly surprised as he examined the information on the nearby Guild Towns Melancholic Smile had given him. “These towns have certainly developed quickly. They’ve already ensnared over 40 corporations? At this rate, won’t they become Intermediate Towns in less than ten days?”

The Guild Towns’ development had exceeded Shi Feng’s expectations. Both had already invested in enough defensive structures to rival an Intermediate Town. Even more surprising was both towns’ defensive magic arrays, protecting the towns from monster assaults. These defensive magic arrays were the reason that the various corporations were so confident in investing in the towns.

“Guild Leader, you’re still in the mood to joke around? Now that we’ve moved to the new training ground, our daily expenditure has gone through the roof. With the Credits we currently have, we’ll only last another five or six days,” Melancholic Smile said, exasperated.

She had already seen Liang Jing’s financial report, and she had been horrified. The number of Credits the Guild spent each day was absurd.

“We’re burning through that much money?” Even Shi Feng was surprised when he saw the daily costs. He hadn’t realized that Ouroboros had spent such a frightening amount of Credits each day to maintain its training ground. The operational cost of Zero Wing’s training ground could already rival that of Shadow in the past. And this was only the beginning. As Zero Wing recruited more internal members, the costs would increase. However, Shi Feng revealed a faint smile after a moment and said, “Let’s see who can outlast who, then.”

Shi Feng instructed Melancholic Smile to sell some of the crafted Level 50 Bronze and Mysterious Iron Equipment for Credits. The Credits from these sales should help the Guild survive for a while longer.

Although Primordial Gas slowly spread throughout the Witch’s Hill, increasing the local monsters’ strength and weakening players’ combat power, monsters still needed time to evolve.

After Shi Feng settled his affairs with the Candlelight Trading Firm, he used the Seven Luminaries Ring to teleport to the Million Forest's teleportation array. He then spent one Magic Crystal to teleport to the Otherworld Gate.

The Jealous Witch appeared not long after Shi Feng had arrived. She quietly hovered in the air while looking down on Shi Feng.

"Young adventurer, why have you returned so soon?" the Jealous Witch demanded.

"Lady Witch, I have completed the task you gave me. Here are the 200,000 Magic Crystals you asked for," Shi Feng said as he removed 200,000 Magic Crystals from his bag, instantly forming a small mountain before him.

Once all 200,000 Magic Crystals were accounted for, the Jealous Witch waved her hand lightly, and every crystal vanished into thin air. At the same time, the gigantic Otherworld Gate released a dazzling glow. Primordial Gas surged out.

Then, a series of system notifications reached his ears.

Chapter 1968 – Divine Runic Armor

System: You have triggered the new expansion pack "Primordial Heart."

Star-Moon Kingdom Region System Announcement: Players have triggered the new expansion, "Primordial Heart." The Primordial Heart will descend in the Witch's Hill in three hours. Please prepare.

The system announcement echoed in every player's mind throughout Star-Moon Kingdom. When it finally ended, players fell into heated discussions over the new expansion.

"What's this Primordial Heart thing?"

"Has some major event occurred in the Witch's Hill?"

"This new expansion pack will definitely be a huge opportunity. I wonder how Witch's Hill will change this time?"

"I knew I should've gone to the Witch's Hill to develop."

Star-Moon Kingdom's players shifted their focus to the Witch's Hill the moment the system announced the new expansion pack. Previously, due to the map's strange phenomenon increasing monsters' strength and reducing players' combat power, only strong independent players had ventured to the Witch's Hill to level and grind. With the addition of the various large Guilds' competition over the region's resources, it had become nearly impossible for ordinary players to get a share of the area's benefits. Hence, the Witch's Hill's hadn't been very popular among independent players. Only the various large Guilds and adventurer teams still vied for the land.

Naturally, the kingdom's independent players weren't the only ones paying close attention to this new expansion. The various major powers in the Witch's Hill had launched fervent investigations to learn what changes this expansion pack would bring to the region.

“So, this is the Primordial Heart’s activation condition?” Surprise flashed in Shi Feng’s eyes as he read the system notification.

The Primordial Heart expansion pack had appeared during his previous life as well, but it hadn’t activated until long after the Otherworld Gate had been discovered. Now that he had triggered the expansion pack so early, Shi Feng did not know how to feel about it

In the past, the Witch’s Hill’s Otherworld Gate had been discovered far too late. A large number of players had already reached Tier 3, and as a result, the Otherworld Gate had only been considered a good area to grind for unique materials and for independent players to level up. It hadn’t been a particularly valuable map.

While it was true that the new expansion pack was an opportunity, the Primordial Heart expansion had hardly been any help to players in the past

When Shi Feng had sealed the Otherworld Gate, it had caused the Primordial Heart’s descent, increasing the Primordial Gas in the Witch’s Hill. The gas, in turn, increased the strength of the region’s monsters and decreased players’ combat power. Even the monsters’ levels had increased considerably, though the level cap was still Level 70.

As for the monsters that had come through the Otherworld Gate, not only were they quite powerful, but their bodies also contained dense Primordial Gas. When these monsters were killed, they had a certain drop-rate for Primordial Crystal Fragments, crystalized Primordial Gas that contained intense, turbulent energy. One could synthesize these fragments into Primordial Crystals, which contained even denser energy.

The Primordial Crystal was one of the best materials for nurturing living Mounts, even more effective than Energy Essence that dropped from the Eclipse Gate’s monsters. After all, all sorts of monsters had

ruled over God's Domain during the ancient era, and they had become so powerful due to Primordial Gas.

However, the Primordial Crystals had a drawback. Although they were far more efficient than Energy Essence when nurturing Mounts, they could only increase a Mount's rank to Bronze rank.

Hence, players in Shi Feng's previous life had considered the Primordial Heart expansion pack useless. The majority of large Guild members had already nurtured their Guild Mounts to Bronze rank by the time the expansion had taken effect, and ordinary players hadn't usually had Mounts that were capable of growth. Only Guild players that intended to replace their Guild Mounts had any use for the Primordial Crystals.

However, the Primordial Crystals were far more valuable to current large Guilds. God's Domain's Guilds had only started to acquire Stables and grow their Guild Mounts. If they could upgrade their members' Mounts to Bronze rank with the Primordial Crystals, they could significantly help their Guilds' development.

Mounts could provide some assistance in battle once they reached Bronze rank, and they were considerably faster than Common Mounts.

However, while the Primordial Heart expansion pack would benefit the various large Guilds, it also came with plenty of trouble.

Activating the Primordial Heart expansion pack would double the number of monsters in the Witch's Hill and increase the number of Field Bosses in the area by several-fold. Moreover, the Field Bosses' raid difficulty would increase, making survival far more difficult in the Witch's Hill for current players.

In addition, the monster sieges would occur far more frequently. Originally, Guild Towns and Cities' chances of being besieged by monsters had only been 10% to 20%. However, once the Primordial Heart expansion took effect, those chances would increase to 20% to 35%.

As Shi Feng pondered about how to deal with the Primordial Heart's descent, the Jealous Witch, who still hovered in the air, began to reclaim her youth.

In a matter of seconds, the old, hunchbacked lady transformed into a charming, middle-aged woman with fair, supple skin. Her black robe also transformed into a pitch-black, sleeveless dress. She now wore a black mage hat, as well, and her wooden staff had become one made of black jade. As she hovered, she radiated an indescribable charm that drew others' gaze.

"Excellent. Young adventurer, you have helped me seal the Otherworld Gate in time and avoided catastrophe for Star-Moon Kingdom. You have also helped lighten the curse I bear. Take this magic array design as a token of my gratitude," the Jealous Witch addressed Shi Feng. "This should've been the end of your job here, but sealing the Otherworld Gate had made the Witch's Hill unstable. I now need your help to collect 100,000 Primordial Crystals.

"If you collect the necessary Primordial Crystals successfully, I will give you this forging design I acquired from an ancient ruin after much difficulty!"

Saying so, the Jealous Witch waved a hand, and a tome of dragonskin parchment appeared in her grip. The Dragon Might the tome radiated was so powerful that Shi Feng even struggled to move. When he saw the large words on the cover, his eyes widened in shock.

The Divine Runic Armor Design!

That was an Epic Forging Design!

However, unlike ordinary Epic Equipment, the Divine Runic Armor was standard equipment, created during ancient times. It was similar to the standardized equipment design he had acquired from Titan City.

Although the Divine Runic Armor was standard equipment, it was still Epic Equipment, on a completely different level than Dark-Gold Equipment.

Chapter 1969 – Chamber of Commerce

As the Jealous Witch finished speaking, the sound of a system notification reached Shi Feng's ears.

System: Congratulations! You have accepted the Inferior Legendary Quest "Witch's Sin."

Quest content: Collect 100,000 Primordial Crystals in 30 days.

Quest reward: Divine Runic Armor Design.

After the system notification repeated three times, the Jealous Witch vanished without a trace. Now, only Shi Feng remained before the Otherworld Gate.

Collect 100,000 Primordial Crystals in 30 days? Shi Feng frowned as he fell deep into thought.

This Inferior Legendary Quest was simply ruthless!

Only Chieftain rank and above monsters dropped Primordial Crystal Fragments, and the drop rate for Chieftain monsters was only 3%. Furthermore, synthesizing a single Primordial Crystal required 10 fragments. He'd need 1,000,000 Primordial Crystal Fragments to complete the Jealous Witch's latest quest...

Completing the question wouldn't be that big of an issue if it didn't have a time limit, but there was a time limit.

There weren't even 100,000 Guild members operating in Zero Wing City right now. Trying to collect 100,000 Primordial Crystals in just 30 days would be a nightmare.

It seems I have no choice but to increase the Guild's strength and give it a try, Shi Feng thought to himself as he decided to recruit more players.

Fortunately, there was no penalty indicated for failing the quest this time. Thus, the penalty wouldn't be too severe if he failed. Even so, giving up now would be a waste.

Unlike standardized Fine-Gold and Dark-Gold equipment, standardized Epic Equipment was in no way inferior to ordinary Epic Equipment when it came to Basic Attributes. The only difference was the lack of additional Skills and effects, as standardized equipment didn't have as many to offer players as ordinary Epic Equipment. Even so, the various major powers would consider the equipment precious since Epic Equipment was still so rare in God's Domain.

Had the Divine Runic Armor been ordinary Epic Equipment, though, he wouldn't be able to mass-produce it due to the rarity of the required materials, and forging the equipment would've been far more difficult. Even an Intermediate Master Forger like himself would only have a small chance of success, and no first-rate Guild could afford the total production costs. Only a superpower would have any hope of mass-producing ordinary Epic Equipment at this stage of the game.

However, crafting standardized Epic Equipment was a different story. Standardized Epic Equipment had been designed with mass-production in mind, so it didn't have high material requirements. Most importantly, it wouldn't be as difficult to forge as ordinary Epic Equipment. Even an ordinary first-rate Guild could afford the production costs if it gave the design to an Intermediate Master Forger, not to mention Zero Wing.

Following which, Shi Feng took out a Guild Transfer Scroll and returned to Zero Wing City to prepare for his newest quest.

At this point, players from all over Star-Moon Kingdom had swarmed to Zero Wing City, skyrocketing the city's player population. As players wandered the city streets, an excited energy crackled between them as they waited for the Primordial Heart's descent. Many adventurer teams had even started to purchase useful Magic Scrolls and potions in bulk. As soon as the Witch's Hill began to change, they'd rush to take advantage of the opportunity the new expansion pack presented.

For a time, Zero Wing City became extraordinarily lively.

"Guild Leader, good news! Due to the new expansion pack, Zero Wing City's player population has finally exceeded 10,000,000!" Aqua Rose exclaimed when she noticed her Shi Feng's return. "Moreover, the Seventh Street Chamber of Commerce has invited us to join their merchant alliance."

Aside from Combat Guilds, God's Domain had Lifestyle Guilds, and unlike their combat-focused brethren, Lifestyle Guilds focused on developing Lifestyle players and producing a wide variety of products. Some of the larger Lifestyle Guilds generally allied to form Chambers of Commerce.

These Chambers of Commerce were not to be underestimated. They were only unknown to the general public due to their refusal to interfere with Combat Guilds' matters. However, they didn't lack influence in God's Domain. The Commerce's influence reached across more than a dozen kingdoms and empires, and they had even more wealth than some superpowers. In fact, many up-and-coming superpowers received funds and resources from some of these top Chambers of Commerce.

Meanwhile, the Seventh Street Chamber of Commerce was one of the most powerful in God's Domain.

Joining one of the top Chambers of Commerce was extremely difficult. Ordinary first-rate Guilds didn't qualify in the least. Normally, these Chambers only accepted superpowers or large Guilds with bountiful resources.

"What are their conditions?" Shi Feng asked.

He was very familiar with God's Domain's Chambers of Commerce. To join one, a Guild had to meet certain conditions and pay a certain price.

"The membership cost requires that we supply the alliance with Shops and virtual stores in all of our Guild Towns and Cities.

We will have to supply at least five Shops and two virtual stores in each, all of which have to be in different locations in the town or city. In addition, they require that our Guild sell the alliance 30% of the unique resources we obtain from the Otherworld Gate at market price," Aqua Rose said.

“That price a little high,” Shi Feng said, shaking his head. “Tell them that Zero Wing will only give them up to three Shops and one virtual store in every town and city. As for the Otherworld Gate’s unique resources, we’ll sell them 20% at most. Moreover, I require that they buy the resources at 30% above market price!”

If one wished to acquire the resources a Chamber of Commerce offered, they had to contribute to the alliance. However, Seventh Street’s asking price was simply too high. The potential benefits Zero Wing would gain weren’t worth the price.

The Otherworld Gate’s unique resources would become a massive source of income for Zero Wing in the future, and purchasing these resources on the market would become immensely difficult. Meanwhile, the fact that Zero Wing City was within the Witch’s Hill meant that Zero Wing would have a greater competitive edge than other Guilds when fighting for the Otherworld Gate’s resources. Hence, 30% of Zero Wing’s harvest was no trivial amount. Furthermore, Seventh Street wanted to purchase these resources at market value.

“This...” Shi Feng’s counteroffer clearly troubled Aqua Rose.

Joining Seventh Street wasn’t easy. It’s influence encompassed over a dozen kingdoms and three empires, after all. If Zero Wing joined Seventh Street, it would elevate the Candlelight Trading Firm’s income to a whole new level.

Yet, Shi Feng demanded far more than the Seventh Street’s offer...

However, seeing Shi Feng’s determination, Aqua Rose had no choice but to forward her Guild Leader’s reply to the Chamber of Commerce’s representative.

After dealing with the Seventh Street’s offer, Shi Feng instructed Aqua Rose to recruit players in Zero Wing City before he returned to his Special Forging Room in Candlelight, carefully retrieving the Void Field Design from his bag.

He then clicked on the design to learn it.

Chapter 1970 – Seventh Street Sea of Death, Thunder Island:

“Big Sis Rain, we’ve secured the Advanced Speedboat Design! Once we have the materials, we can begin production!” Blue Phoenix excitedly reported as she entered the room.

Although advanced speedboats were not particularly rare, they weren’t available in large quantities. The majority of the various superpowers’ armadas was still made up of ordinary speedboats; only the core fleets had a higher number of advanced speedboats.

Meanwhile, as players reached higher levels, the competition for resources on land grew increasingly intense. As a result, more Guilds shifted their focus to the sea every day. Since Thunder Island was the best locations to develop naval strength, new Guilds constantly arrived to take advantage of its resources. This increased competition on the island.

The Dragon-Phoenix had worried about the increasing competition, but now that it had acquired an Advanced Speedboat Design, it could further fortify its fleets’ strength by mass-producing the advanced speedboats, maintaining its lead on the island.

“It seems they completed the quest.” Phoenix Rain breathed a sigh of relief and smiled when she heard Blue Phoenix’s announcement. She then changed the topic and asked, “How are things with Seventh Street?”

“I’ve sent our nomination to the Chamber’s representative, and Seventh Street has accepted it. However, Zero Wing apparently thinks the Chamber’s asking price was too high. Unfortunately, Seventh Street has its own bottom line. Zero Wing doesn’t have claim to a lot of resources, and its territory isn’t that large. The only thing Zero Wing has going for it is its temporary victory over Miracle. Zero Wing still doesn’t qualify to join the alliance, and Seventh Street’s representative has stated that the Chamber only agrees with our nomination since you were the one who made it. Now that Zero Wing has rejected the offer, his hands are tied,” Blue Phoenix said.

“Zero Wing rejected Seventh Street?” Phoenix Rain blinked in surprise.

Seventh Street was one of the top Chambers of Commerce in God’s Domain with as many as three super-first-rate Guilds in its alliance. The alliance’s other Guilds also had the backing of powerful corporations. The Chamber had access to bountiful resources, as well. By joining the Chamber of Commerce, one would have access to a variety of conveniences, and as long as they had enough money, they could purchase rare materials in bulk. The alliance also sold valuable items that were almost never available to the public.

But Seventh Street’s connections were far more important. By joining Seventh Street, one could sell their products in the Chamber’s territories, and the Seventh Street only demanded a 15% service charge. If Zero Wing joined Seventh Street, it wouldn’t lack a market to sell its products.

Joining Seventh Street would be a golden opportunity for Zero Wing.

Yet, Zero Wing had rejected the offer...

“Mhm. Apparently, while he’s still willing to return the favor he owes us by helping in another way, he can’t do anything more about the situation.” Blue Phoenix nodded. She was just as frustrated about Zero Wing’s response.

“Alright, then. Since Zero Wing has its own plans, we’ll let the matter rest,” Phoenix Rain said, smiling bitterly. “It seems we’ll have to find some other way to pay Zero Wing back.”

She had nominating Zero Wing as a candidate for the Seventh Street’s alliance as a way of thanking the Guild for its help on Savage God Island, but the Chamber of Commerce had its own rules. She couldn’t possibly Seventh Street to accept Zero Wing.

Meanwhile, in Zero Wing City’s Candlelight Trading Firm, Shi Feng focused on learning the Void Field Magic Array’s drawing process.

Drawing Field Magic Arrays was incredibly difficult as, unlike other magic arrays, Field Magic Arrays consisted of multiple arrays. Even a Basic Field Magic Array involved two to five different magic arrays.

The Void Field, a large-scale Advanced Field Magic Array, consisted of twelve Advanced Magic Arrays, and all twelve had to be closely interlinked. The slightest mistake would render the link useless. The Void Field was several times more complex than ordinary Advanced Magic Arrays, as well, and even an Advanced Magician like Shi Feng was under immense pressure when attempting to draw the arrays. Just learning how to draw the twelve magic arrays individually had taken him nearly two hours.

Sure enough, this thing is amazing. It’s no wonder why it can rival Master Magic Arrays. Shi Feng took a deep breath as he examined the design in his hands.

In the past, the Void Field had even been effective against Mythic monsters.

Field magic arrays weren’t like arrays that summoned magic barriers. Magic barriers were mainly used to suppress Boss monsters, so they were even effective against high-ranked monsters. As long as one used an Advanced barrier, a team could suppress a Mythic monster. However, field magic arrays had to cover a larger area, thinning its energy distribution. Even suppressing Grand Lord ranked Archaic Species would be difficult, not to mention Mythic monsters.

Fortunately, the Void Field could manage it. Although it wasn't as effective as an Advanced Magic Array, it could suppress an ordinary Mythic monster's Attributes by 15% and Grand Lord ranked Archaic Species by 25%. Lower ranked monsters would be suppressed by at least 30% with a maximum of 40%, and the Void Field could cover a 3,000-yard radius.

Moreover, the Void Field could be useful in large-scale combat. Although the Void Field would be half as effective against players, a 15% to 20% Attribute reduction would be fatal, especially to expert players.

Now that he had an Inferior Legendary Quest and had to take down countless monsters that were strengthened by Primordial Gas, Void Field would be the best tool in his arsenal.

If he activated Void Field, even Tier 1 players could easily defeat Witch's Hill's strengthened monsters. Naturally, Tier 2 players would enjoy at least double the grinding speed.

Shi Feng then began to craft the Void Field Magic Arrays.

Void Field required incredibly precious materials, and chief among them was Void Blood. Each set of scrolls required twelve drops to produce, and only powerful Void Creatures had a chance of dropping Void Blood. These twelve drops of Void Blood would serve as the core that controlled Void Field's twelve magic arrays.

Fortunately, Shi Feng had acquired two bottles of Void Blood after killing the Void Serpent, with each bottle containing 100 drops. If he failed to produce the Void Field, all of the Void Blood he invested would be destroyed...

The rest of the materials for the Void Field cost over 500 Gold per set, making each attempt extremely expensive. However, money was not Shi Feng's main concern; the materials' rarity was far more important. Hence, he needed to be extremely careful with each set of materials.

During the production process, Shi Feng had activated Soul Fire to clear his mind. Each of his strokes on the blank Magic Array Scrolls was smooth, but just as he reached the final step and linked the twelve magic arrays together, something unexpected happened.

Boom!

After a bright flash from the magic arrays, the light faded to reveal an empty table. All of the materials Shi Feng had used had disappeared. Seeing this, Shi Feng sat back and fell deep in thought

Following which, Shi Feng attempted to produce the Void Field twice more but failed both times. He couldn't help the heartache he felt over losing 36 drops of Void Blood.

Sure enough, trying to draw the Void Field as an Advanced Magician is pushing it. After giving the matter some thought, Shi Feng took a Source of Void from his bag.

An Advanced Magician would only have a 50% success rate when drawing ordinary Advanced Magic Arrays, and a much lower success rate when attempting to craft top-ranked Advanced Magic Arrays like the Void Field. If he wanted to produce the Void Field successfully, he'd have to increase his success rate.

Fortunately, an Elemental Source could do more than improve a Magic Array's effects; it could also increase production success rate.

Everything happened as Shi Feng expected. His previous failures were due to his low success rate.

His fourth attempt to draw the Void Field was far more smooth, and the flow of Mana within the array had calmed.

After Shi Feng finished the twelve magic arrays, he began the final linking process. A short moment later, the twelve magic arrays released a dazzling light, illuminating the entire forging room.

“Was it a success?”

Chapter 1971 – Primordial Heart Descends

As the light in Special Forging Room faded, a brilliant magic array appeared on the table. The twelve arrays had combined perfectly to form a gigantic, silver magic array that caused the space inside the room to freeze.

As the silver magic array flowed into the twelve Magic Array Scrolls before Shi Feng, the room reverted to its original state. The twelve Magic Array Scrolls across the table then began to glow with a silvery light.

Wonderful! I’ve finally succeeded! Shi Feng was a little excited as he gazed at the scrolls on the table.

Although he had gone so far as to spend an Elemental Source, he had, at least, managed to produce one set of Void Field scrolls. With this, he could proceed with his plans.

Following which, Shi Feng inspected the Magic Array Scrolls.

“So strong!” Shi Feng was ecstatic when he saw the Attributes displayed.

The original Void Field only encompassed a 3,000-yard radius, but after Shi Feng had used the Source of Void, the radius had increased to 5,000 yards. Moreover, the strengthened Void Field could suppress a monsters’ Basic Attributes up to a maximum of 50%. It would also suppress Mythic monsters by up to 20% and Grand Lord ranked Archaic Species by up to 30%.

Most importantly, Void Field’s duration had increased from 12 hours to 24 hours.

Although a 24-hour duration seemed short, to Shi Feng, who was very familiar with the ins and outs of the Witch’s Hill, it was plenty of time, especially now that the Primordial Heart had descended and Witch’s Hill’s monsters had grown stronger and more numerous.

After the Primordial Heart had descended in the past, a forbidden land had appeared in the Witch’s Hill. To be precise, a crack in space-time had manifested, serving as the entrance to the forbidden land.

The place beyond the space-time crack was partly considered a forbidden land due to the space-time seal that had been placed on the map, preventing players from teleporting there. Moreover, all of the monsters beyond the crack originated from Otherworlds. Not only were they incomparably powerful, but their combat standards were also higher than monsters in the outside world. Including the randomly-appearing Boss monsters, players of the same level would struggle to survive in the forbidden land.

Fortunately, since mainstream players had already reached Level 100 by the time the forbidden land had manifested, its Level 70 monsters had been no threat. On the contrary, the forbidden land had become an excellent location to grind for equipment and materials.

As monsters originating from Otherworlds, they had a much higher drop-rate for weapons and equipment compared to monsters that were born on the continent of God's Domain. Many of the materials they dropped were also unique to Otherworlds, and they had a chance of dropping the Resuscitation Potion Recipe, which even Level 100-plus players coveted.

The Resuscitation Potion only had one function: resurrecting players.

However, unlike the healer classes' Resurrection Spells, a player wouldn't lose any EXP when resurrected with the Resuscitation Potion. Although they would have to endure a Weakened state for 12 hours. During that time, the resurrected player wouldn't be able to fight. Furthermore, the Resuscitation Potion could only be used once every 24 hours, and it couldn't be used on Tier 4 or above players.

In God's Domain, even if a healer resurrected a player, they'd still lose a considerable amount of EXP. When players were resurrected through the system, they'd lose an entire level of EXP. Regardless of how they returned to life, players would have to grind for several days to recover their losses.

Hence, the Resuscitation Potion had been extraordinarily popular among players in the past.

Only, the Resuscitation Potion Recipe was not easy to acquire. Normally, it only dropped in Otherworlds, and as a result, many players had fervently grinded in the Witch's Hill's forbidden land despite having already reached Level 100. Due to the recipe's rarity, players had even been able to sell it for several thousand Gold in a proper auction.

Demand for the Resuscitation Potion had also been relentless on the market. Despite the 20-Silver production cost, the potion had sold for 2 Gold per bottle. The Resuscitation Potion had even sold for 3 Gold per bottle at its peak. Many players had made a fortune through selling Resuscitation Potions.

Unfortunately, the Witch's Hill's forbidden land was extremely dangerous to Tier 2 players, but now that Shi Feng had the Void Field, he could lead his Guildmates to grind there. Not only would they level up quite fast, but they could also grind for the Resuscitation Potion Recipe and Primordial Crystal Fragments, killing three birds with one stone.

Now that Shi Feng had experienced successfully producing a Void Field, he continued to craft more.

He knew that he had made a mistake when combining the twelve magic arrays during his first three attempts, but after his success, he had a more accurate grasp of the arrays' flow of Mana.

Following which, Shi Feng attempted to produce the Void Field Magic Array four more times, resulting in two success. The outcome was barely tolerable.

Glancing at the bottle of Void Blood in his hand, Shi Feng noted that only four drops remained in the bottle. It wasn't enough for another attempt.

He had previously spent two bottles of Void Blood to activate the teleportation array to the Otherworld Gate. Hence, if he wanted to craft more Void Field Magic Array Scrolls, he'd have to collect more.

These three sets should last me quite some time. Taking a look at the three sets of scrolls in his hands, Shi Feng decided to travel to the forbidden land to grind. Once his Guildmates were settled in the area, he'd look for more ways to acquire Void Blood.

Following which, Shi Feng left the Candlelight Trading Firm and made his way to Zero Wing's Residence to prepare for his trip to the Witch's Hill's forbidden land.

The Primordial Heart had descended in the Witch's Hill some time ago. As a result, the number of players roaming the city streets had visibly decreased. The various adventurer teams and Guilds had long since left the city to explore this new expansion pack. The majority of the players still around were merchant players, including members from Chambers of Commerce. These players were currently purchasing monster loot or selling Consumable items.

"Purchasing Magic Grass in bulk! Three Silver per stalk! Buying as many as you have! Offer is available long-term!"

"Four Seasons Chamber of Commerce purchasing Primordial Crystal Fragments for 20 Silver per fragment! Twenty-one Silver for those selling more than ten fragments! Twenty-two Silver for those selling more than 100 fragments!"

"Selling Primordial Crystal Fragments for 25 Silver each! Only three fragments remaining! First come, first served!"

The voice of hawking players filled the street. The Shops on both sides of the street had also put out signs stating that they would purchase Primordial Crystal Fragments long-term. Everyone was going crazy over Primordial Crystal Fragments right now.

However, the situation didn't surprise Shi Feng in the slightest.

God's Domain had very few items that could be used to nurture Guild Mounts, and most of these items hadn't yet been discovered. Now that players had learned about the Primordial Crystals, it would cause a massive commotion.

Just before Shi Feng reached the Guild Residence, Aqua Rose contacted him.

“Guild Leader, the Secret Pavilion’s Yuan Tiexin and his entourage have come to meet you. Apparently, he has something important he wishes to discuss with you. Would you like to meet with him now?” Aqua Rose asked.

“The Secret Pavilion is looking for me?” Shi Feng could not help but smile upon hearing this. “Alright. Have them wait for me in the second floor’s reception room. I’ll head there immediately.”

Although he knew that the Primordial Heart’s appearance would cause quite a commotion, he hadn’t expected it to move the Secret Pavilion.

Shi Feng disconnected the call and made his way to the Residence’s second-floor reception room.

Chapter 1972 – Joining the Chamber of Commerce Zero Wing’s Residence, second-floor reception room:

As Shi Feng entered the room, Yuan Tiexin and Purple Jade, who softly chatted on the sofa, stood to greet him.

Both of them had already reached Level 59, and although they had hidden their weapons and equipment’s glow effects, Shi Feng could tell that they carried extraordinary items based on the faint pressure he felt from the two players. Purple Jade, in particular, felt like a sharp, unsheathed blade. She also felt quite dynamic.

So, this is a true genius? Shi Feng was inwardly shocked when he saw Purple Jade.

While he could not tell how much her Basic Attributes had improved, he could sense that Purple Jade had set foot in the Realms of Truth as someone who had done the same.

The Realms of Truth were different from the Realms of Refinement. The Realms of Refinement only focused on improving one's physical control, whereas the Realms of Truth focused on the application of strength. While better control could reduce players' shortcomings and increase their latent potential, better application allowed players to utilize more of their potential.

However, God's Domain's various large Guilds didn't have a method of nurturing players in the Realms of Truth yet.

Normally, players needed a wealth of combat experience and self-exploration to reach these realms. Even Shi Feng had only accomplished the feat after many fortuitous encounters, yet despite receiving no guidance and having far less combat experience, Purple Jade had entered the Realms of Truth. Even the word 'genius' was not sufficient to describe the young woman.

Shi Feng had spent plenty of time trying to guide Zero Wing's core upper echelons to these realms, but even now, not one of them had succeeded...

Meanwhile, when Purple Jade saw Shi Feng entering the room, her eyes glowed with fighting spirit. A hint of reverence for the man before her also flashed in her eyes.

Unbeknownst to Shi Feng, she had only reached the Realms of Truth because of him.

She had reached these realms recently and had only been able to do so after diligently studying Shi Feng's numerous battles in the Ore Empire. Once she had entered the Realms of Truth, she had challenged and defeated multiple peak experts from the various superpowers.

"Guild Leader Black Flame, congratulations. Due to the battle in the Ice Jade Forest, Zero Wing's reputation nearly rivals the Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion's now," Yuan Tiexin congratulated as he watched Shi Feng carefully.

"Thank you," Shi Feng said. Revealing a faint smile, he continued, "However, Elder Yuan, I'm sure you're not just here to congratulate Zero Wing, correct?"

"Indeed," Yuan Tiexin replied as he revealed an envelope. After handing the envelope to Shi Feng, he continued, "This is a report regarding Blackwater and Beast Emperor's latest movements. I believe it will be of some help to Zero Wing."

"You're providing information for free?" Shi Feng looked at the envelope in confusion.

He had to admit that both Blackwater and Beast Emperor posed a significant threat to his Guild. Examining their latest movements would indeed help Zero Wing quite a bit, but information like this was incredibly important. Normally, the Secret Pavilion might not even consider selling the information to Zero Wing.

"That's right. Consider it a gift to celebrate the partnership between the Secret Pavilion and Zero Wing," Yuan Tiexin said. "I believe you can guess the Pavilion's goal in this. Naturally, we're interested in the Primordial Crystals.

"The Primordial Crystals are even more effective in nurturing Guild Mounts than the Eclipse Gate's Energy Essence. They're also much easier to procure. Meanwhile, Zero Wing owns the only Guild City in Witch's Hill, so the Secret Pavilion wishes to cooperate with your Guild."

Yuan Tiexin's proclamation didn't surprise Shi Feng. The Primordial Crystals were indeed an excellent item for nurturing Guild Mounts. He then asked, "Cooperation? May I know how we are going to cooperate?"

"The Secret Pavilion wishes to invite the Candlelight Trading Firm into the Secret Chamber of Commerce. As for the entry conditions, Zero Wing will only have to sacrifice five Shops in different locations and a single virtual store in Zero Wing City. In addition, the Secret Chamber of Commerce requires a permanent reservation of 300,000 entry slots into Zero Wing City," Yuan Tiexin said, chuckling. "May I know if you are interested in this offer, Guild Leader Black Flame?"

"Joining the Secret Chamber of Commerce?!" When Yuan Tiexin finished speaking, Aqua Rose, who had accompanied Shi Feng, was stunned, flashing the Pavilion's representative an incredulous look.

The Secret Pavilion was a transcendental power in the virtual gaming world. The strength it wielded was simply unfathomable. The Secret Chamber of Commerce the Pavilion had developed was similarly unfathomable, as very few Chambers of Commerce could rival Secret's range of influence. Needless to say, Secret was far more powerful than Seventh Street.

Without a doubt, Secret was one of the best Chambers of Commerce in God's Domain right now. Many superpowers were desperate to join, but very few were actually invited into the alliance.

Yet, the Secret Pavilion had visited Zero Wing City to invite the Guild personally. Frankly, Aqua Rose didn't know what to say.

If Zero Wing joined the Secret Chamber of Commerce, the Candlelight Trading Firm's income could increase severa 1 fold as long as the firm offered sufficiently attractive products.

“I’m curious. Why Zero Wing?” Shi Feng asked the man before him. “There are two other Guild Towns in the Witch’s Hill, and both will soon be promoted to Intermediate rank. If the Secret Pavilion gives the word, both ruling Guilds will likely hand their towns over on a silver platter.”

“Naturally, we have considered that option, but the Primordial Heart’s descent has increased monsters’ strength in the Witch’s Hill. Monster raids also occur frequently at night. With the towns’ defenses, they’ll have a hard time coping with the map’s current monsters. Who knows how long they will last? However, Zero Wing City is different. Even if the Witch’s Hill’s monsters continue to grow stronger, Zero Wing City will likely remain unaffected. Moreover, Zero Wing City has an excellent environment, which will be of great help to the Guild members we send here,” Yuan Tiexin said. He withheld no information regarding the Secret Pavilion’s reasons for selecting Zero Wing for a partnership.

“I see.” Shi Feng could not help but admire the Secret Pavilion’s information network and decisiveness.

The Primordial Heart had only recently descended, so the monsters’ changes weren’t yet obvious, yet the Secret Pavilion had already considered various possibilities.

Shi Feng hadn’t expected the Pavilion to place so much importance in the Primordial Crystals that it would offer Zero Wing a seat in the Secret Chamber of Commerce, either.

To protect both parties’ interests, a Guild would offer 1% of its shares when attempting to join a Chamber of Commerce. Hence, the various Chambers of Commerce took member recruitment very seriously.

“Guild Leader Black Flame, if you are fine with these conditions, why don’t we sign the contract now?” Yuan Tiexin asked Shi Feng, who had maintained a calm composure throughout the conversation. “Once we sign, Zero Wing’s Candlelight Trading Firm will become a member of the Secret Chamber of Commerce and enjoy all of the connections the alliance possesses. You will find it far easier to sell and buy items.”

“Alright, I have no issues with the offer.” Shi Feng had no problems with accepting the mentioned conditions, and joining the Secret Chamber of Commerce would provide Zero Wing quite a bit of help, especially now that the Guild lacked materials.

The Magicbreaking Crossbows, Hell Tanks, and Basic Combat Devices all required a large number of rare materials to produce. If Zero Wing relied on its own strength, it would only be able to collect a limited supply of each material, but with the Secret Chamber of Commerce’s connections, it could easily build its stockpile in a short time.

After Shi Feng signed a contract with Yuan Tiexin, he handed over five Shops and one virtual store in Zero Wing City. In addition, he reserved 300,000 entry slots in Zero Wing City for the Secret Pavilion’s use. After all, a flood of players visited the city each day, and there was a limit to how many the city could accommodate at one time. If the Secret Pavilion did not have any reserve slots, its members would be forced to stand in line to enter Zero Wing City. Once the transaction was complete, the Candlelight Trading Firm joined the Secret Chamber of Commerce’s member list, and the two organizations exchanged 1% of their shares.

Shortly after Candlelight joined the Chamber of Commerce, news of it quickly spread to the various superpowers.

Chapter 1973 – Guild Potential

As news about Zero Wing’s Candlelight Trading Firm joining the Secret Chamber of Commerce spread, a commotion erupted among the various superpowers in God’s Domain.

“What’s going on? How did the Secret Chamber of Commerce accept a Guild like Zero Wing?”

“Zero Wing really is impressive. It has already proven its strength to contend with a superpower, and now, it has even joined the Secret Chamber of Commerce. The Guild’s financial strength will grow considerably, now. As long as Zero Wing solidifies its foundations, it definitely has the potential to become a super-first-rate Guild.”

“It seems that God’s Domain will soon have a new superpower.”

“Send someone to investigate Zero Wing immediately! From today on, I want a team stationed in Zero Wing City! I want to know the Guild’s every move!”

Many superpowers had no power to join the Secret Pavilion’s Chamber of Commerce regardless of how much they wanted to, yet a non-superpower like Zero Wing had done just that. This situation earned Zero Wing many superpowers’ envy.

In addition, this turn of events had forced the various superpowers to pay closer attention to Zero Wing. They no longer considered the smaller Guild insignificant, but one with the potential to become a competitor.

Sufficient financial strength was crucial to developing a Guild in God’s Domain.

Zero Wing might have repelled Miracle, but it had relied on various tools to do so. Meanwhile, as the various superpowers continued developing in God’s Domain, it was only a matter of time before they obtained such tools of their own. At that time, Zero Wing would lose its advantage. Hence, the various superpowers hadn’t truly considered the Guild a threat, but the situation had changed.

The Secret Chamber of Commerce was a goldmine. If a Guild joined the trade alliance and utilized its connections appropriately, it would generate a massive income and secure a large number of resources.

Even if the Guild failed to take advantage of Secret's connections, it could still increase its trading firm's income by a large margin through service charges from helping the alliance's other members sell their products. This increased income would greatly help the Guild's development, and these benefits would be available until the trade alliance crumbled.

Meanwhile, on one of the islands in the Sea of Death...

"Big Sis Rain, big news! Zero Wing's Candlelight Trading Firm has joined the Secret Chamber of Commerce!" Blue Phoenix reported as she ran up to Phoenix Rain, who currently commanded a battle.

"Joined the Secret Chamber of Commerce?" Phoenix Rain blinked in surprise. "How is that possible?! So many superpowers have tried to join Secret only to be rejected. Even Starlink only managed to join after purchasing the Magic Crystal vein at the Secret Pavilion's internal auction."

"It's true. News of this has already spread to the various superpowers. Everyone's saying that the Secret Pavilion has lost its mind to invite Zero Wing," Blue Phoenix said, grinning. "Big Sis Rain, now that Zero Wing has joined Secret, Nine Dragons Emperor won't be able to attack the Guild's financials even if we don't help out."

"That's right. Even if Nine Dragons Emperor uses everything he has to stop Zero Wing's sales, he can't cut off Secret's channels. Now, we can focus on that large-scale Team Quest," Phoenix Rain said, nodding.

She had nominated Zero Wing to Seventh Street because she had been worried that she couldn't stop Nine Dragons Emperor from moving against her ally once she left the continent of God's Domain. Now that Zero Wing had joined the Secret Chamber of Commerce, which was even more powerful than Seventh Street, the situation couldn't be any more favorable.

Similarly, news had reached the various top Chambers of Commerce.

“Zero Wing seems to be quite capable. Seventh Street rejected Zero Wing’s conditions, yet the Guild has joined Secret? I wonder how Seventh Street’s members will feel after hearing about this?”

“Zero Wing demanded less than half of what Seventh Street required. There’s nothing unusual about its refusal. As for Zero Wing’s membership with Secret, based on the Chamber’s focus on profits, I assume its entry conditions were quite strict.”

“Most likely. The Secret Chamber of Commerce’s greed is insatiable. Zero Wing must’ve suffered quite a loss to join Secret.”

While the various top Chambers of Commerce were surprised to hear that Zero Wing had joined the Secret Pavilion’s Chamber of Commerce, they did not consider the matter that important. After all, Zero Wing had no value in their opinions, nor did the Guild have the support of any corporations. It was a miracle that the Guild had risen to its current position without falling. Even if Zero Wing had a future in God’s Domain, it wouldn’t be very bright.

Since the Secret Pavilion had extended an invitation to Zero Wing, it must have demanded an absurd price.

However, when the Seventh Street Chamber of Commerce heard the news, its members simply smiled.

They didn’t share the other top Chambers’ opinions. Whether Zero Wing joined the Secret Chamber of Commerce or not, it had nothing to do with them. They only knew that Zero Wing wouldn’t have benefited their alliance even if it had joined.

Zero Wing wouldn't benefit Secret, either. This incident was nothing but a farce.

While God's Domain's various powers discussed the matter, Shi Feng had designated Aqua Rose and Melancholic Smile to handle matters regarding the Secret Chamber of Commerce. He then led a team of 10,000 elite and expert players out of Zero Wing City and to the Witch's Hill's forbidden land.

Zero Wing's members bounced with excitement during their journey.

They got to see a mythical player like Shi Feng up close, and he had even informed them that he would take them out to level up during their operation. This meant they would personally get to watch Shi Feng fight. Once they returned, they'd definitely boast about the trip to their friends.

But despite their enthusiasm, following Shi Feng wasn't easy. The Primordial Heart's descent had drastically changed the Witch's Hill. Now, large groups of monsters were a common sight. Moreover, not only did these monsters possess powerful Basic Attributes, but they also used strangely impressive combat standards.

They encountered a few powerful, 100-man adventurer teams that these monsters had nearly wiped out along their journey. As for the 20-man teams they stumbled upon, they had tread very carefully through the area unless they had a Tier 2 MT with them. The Witch's Hill was far more dangerous than anyone had expected. Only the various large Guilds' 1,000-man teams barely succeeded near the border of the Witch's Hill's inner region; these Guild teams did not dare to venture any farther.

As for the teams that operated in the Witch's Hill's inner area, they were either expert teams from the various large Guilds or 1,000-man teams from well-known adventurer teams. Only the teams of Tier 2 experts had any hope of surviving with 100 members.

The monsters in the inner area were simply too powerful. Even the weakest monster was a Level 61 Chieftain, and the Chieftains employed combat power that was on par with the late stage of the Trial Tower's second floor. Even an ordinary Tier 1 expert would die against such a monster in a one-on-one, not to mention ordinary players.

However, despite entering the Witch's Hill's inner region, Shi Feng showed no intention of letting his team fight here. Rather, he continued to lead his team deeper into the Witch's Hill.

As Zero Wing's members followed their Guild Leader, they couldn't help their growing nerves.

Although they had 10,000 elite and expert players, the majority of them had only reached Tier 1 and were Level 55 or 56. The team's ordinary experts were only Level 57, and the Tier 2 experts that accompanied them had only reached Level 58.

After following Shi Feng's lead for more than two hours, these players arrived before a gravel-filled gorge. Not only did this area drown in a deathly aura, but it was also within the Witch's Hill's core area. The weakest monster here was a Level 65 Chieftain, while most of these monsters were Level 66 and 67 Lords. There were also quite a few Level 69 Grand Lords around the gorge. At first glance, the gorge contained tens of thousands of monsters, and all of them were far closer to each other than the inner region's monsters.

Most importantly, a gigantic, Level 70 Mythic monster lay in the center of the gorge...

Chapter 1974 – Sacred Leveling Ground

A mountainous, scaled lizard lay in the center of the gorge, and a layer of poisonous, green fog covered a 50-yard radius around it. No life survived within this fog, and even the earth seemed dry beneath it as if the fog had devoured the ground's very life force.

Despite gazing at this lizard from afar, Zero Wing's members couldn't help but shudder.

A Level 70 Mythic monster!

Aside from the fact that it was more than ten levels higher than they were, the potent, poisonous fog around it made the monster impossible to approach. In addition, its gigantic body, over a hundred meters in length, could easily change the terrain with a casual move. A single claw swipe could likely eliminate dozens of them.

They hadn't even reached Level 60, but even if they were the same level as this monster, they'd likely be able to do little more than watch the giant lizard from afar. After all, the Mythic lizard wasn't alone. Tens of thousands of Lord and Great Lord monsters lingered around the Boss.

To make matters worse, Primordial Gas filled the gorge. It would likely take a Tier 2 party of the same level to defeat any of these Lords, while defeating each Great Lord would require a full, Tier 2 20-man team.

Even the Guild's Tier 2 MTs, Cola, Turtledove, and Ye Wumian, felt uneasy as they watched the forbidden land's monsters, much less the team's elite members.

With their current Attributes and combat standards, they shouldn't have any issue tanking one or two Level 67 or 68 Great Lords by themselves without activating a Berserk Skill. They could even tank one Level 69 Grand Lord, although they'd have to push their limits to do so. But more than 20 Grand Lords wandered the forbidden land, as well as plenty of Great Lords.

If all these monsters charged at them together, only death would await these players.

“Guild Leader, even Tier 2 players like us will have trouble grinding here. With the Tier 1 players’ strength, I’m afraid that...” Shadow Sword said worriedly as he eyed the gorge below him. Ignoring the Mythic monster in the center, he could feel the threat of death from several other areas. If he felt like this while subjected to such pressure, the Tier 1 team members would fare far worse.

It was safe to say that their team didn’t have the power to grind in this forbidden land right now.

“If we try to grind these monsters as they currently are, it is impossible, but if we halve their Basic Attributes and remove the Primordial Gas’s negative effects?” Shi Feng asked, smiling.

The Witch’s Hill’s new forbidden land wouldn’t pose any threat to Level 100-plus players, but it was an immensely hazardous area to players who hadn’t yet reached Level 70. Of course, it was also a sacred area for leveling and grinding equipment.

Since no one had explored the forbidden land yet, it contained the maximum number of monsters it could hold. However, that also meant that the area’s drop-rate and monster-respawn-rate were much higher than normal. Even if 10,000 players grinded in this forbidden land, there would be plenty of resources to go around.

Unfortunately, transforming this hazardous area into a treasured land required players to fulfill one condition; they had to be strong enough to grind these monsters.

A bunch of Tier 1 players that hadn't even reach Level 70 would be seeking their own death by coming here, but they could change that with the Void Field. If they could decrease the monsters' Basic Attributes by nearly half and remove the Primordial Gas's negative effects on players, even Level 60, Tier 1 players could slay these creatures. Only, their grinding efficiency would be quite poor.

However, the bonus EXP from killing monsters of a higher level would even the playing field.

Shi Feng had led so many Zero Wing members to such a dangerous area specifically to help them level up quickly, as well as collect Primordial Crystal Fragments.

He might be a particularly powerful player in God's Domain and capable of nurturing a significant number of experts in a short time, but at the end of the day, there was a limit to what a small number of powerful players could achieve. If he wanted Zero Wing to become truly formidable, he had to improve the strength of Zero Wing's members as a whole.

Naturally, one of the ways players could grow stronger in God's Domain was by leveling up. Every five levels was a major turning point in the game since better weapons and equipment would become available at those intervals. Hence, Shi Feng had decided to raise his Guild members' levels as quickly as possible. If he could help a large number of Guild members reach Level 60 within the next few days, it would elevate Zero Wing's overall strength. After all, even the various large Guilds' peak experts had only recently reached Level 59. They were still far from the Level 60 threshold, and the various Guilds' elite and expert members were even further.

"Halve the monsters' Basic Attributes and remove the Primordial Gas's suppression?" After considering Shi Feng's comment, Shadow Sword deemed that grinding here would be possible if that were true. Even if their Tier 1 MTs couldn't tank these monsters, they could leave the task to the Tier 2 MTs, plenty of which had joined this expedition. "But is that possible?"

"Relax. I've prepared an item to do just that," Shi Feng said as he retrieved the strengthened set of Void Field Magic Array Scrolls from his bag.

“A magic array? But, with so many monsters...” Shadow Sword roughly understood what Shi Feng intended to do when he saw the stack of Magic Array Scrolls, but with so many monsters around them, they’d need dozens or hundreds of arrays to cover the gorge.

“Wait a moment; you’ll understand what I mean,” Shi Feng said. He then passed the Void Field scrolls to Alluring Summer and a few other magical class experts. “Take these scrolls and activate them in these locations. Try to avoid any monsters while you activate the scrolls.”

“Leave it to us.”

After examining the coordinates Shi Feng had indicated, Alluring Summer and her companions went into action.

Shi Feng intended to activate the strengthened Void Field from halfway down the gorge. If they successfully activated the magic array there, it would cover nearly half of the area, giving Zero Wing’s team enough room to fight.

Once Alluring Summer and the other casters were in position, they unfurled the Magic Array Scrolls and activated them.

A gigantic, silver magic array then manifested over nearly half of the forbidden land, enveloping every monster within range. Void Field then purified the Primordial Gas in the affected area, dissipating it. In addition, every monster rapidly lost Basic Attributes.

Zero Wing’s members were stunned.

The Lord and Great Lord ranked monsters' Attributes fell by 50%. Now, they couldn't even compare to Level 60 monsters of the same rank. The only advantages they still had were their combat standards and high level.

"MTs, start pulling aggro! Fight in 100-man units. Do not enter each other's combat areas! Cola, you and the other Tier 2 MTs will tank the Grand Lords! Tier 1 MTs, you only need to handle the Lords and Great Lords!" Shi Feng commanded once the Void Field was complete.

Following which, the 10,000 Zero Wing members quickly split into 100 teams of 100 players. These teams then split up and hit different areas in the forbidden land. Each team dealt with three to five Great Lords, and those with Tier 2 MTs handled at least one Level 69 Grand Lord.

Due to Void Field's power, the forbidden land's danger had significantly decreased.

However, Zero Wing's members weren't able to deal much damage due to the level suppression. Even Tier 2 damage dealers barely dealt more than -10,000 with each attack. Even so, the region's monsters gradually lost HP.

Normally, Zero Wing's 100-man elite teams could eliminate a party of Lords and Grand Lords of the same level in ten minutes or less, but now, it took each team half an hour to defeat a party of monsters. However, as the Lords and Great Lords died, everyone's experience bars increased by a sizable chunk.

After gaining an abundance of EXP, the team's regained their enthusiasm. All of the team's Level 55 elite members reached Level 56 after around six hours of grinding, while the Level 56 elite players only needed a little more time to level up. At most, they'd need another four or five hours to reach Level 57. Their leveling speed was nearly five times as fast as experts in other areas.

However, these players were far more surprised by how much loot they gained than the awarded EXP.

Chapter 1975 – Level Increases

Zero Wing's members had fought in the forbidden land for six hours; the weakest foes they had slain had been Chieftain rank, while most had been Lords.

Perhaps because they were the first to kill these monsters, the team had collected over 4,100 Primordial Crystals during their six-hour grind.

These fragments could fetch over a thousand Gold on the market, but only a fool would sell their Primordial Crystal Fragments. With ten fragments, one could synthesize a Primordial Crystal, which they could use to nurture their Guild Mounts. If one were lucky, they might even upgrade their Guild Mount to Bronze rank after using 20 to 30 Primordial Crystals.

The forbidden land's monsters had also dropped enough weapons and equipment to make these players' eyes glow.

All of the dropped weapons and equipment were Level 60 or above.

The various large Guilds had been expending a lot of effort to collect Level 55 equipment lately. Raiding Level 55 Team Dungeons wasn't as easy as Level 50 Dungeons, and unlike the latter, in which Tier 1 players could still be effective, Level 55 Team Dungeons had been tailored for Tier 2 players. Tier 1 players would simply be a burden in Level 55 Team Dungeons. They'd only be useful if they wore extremely high-quality equipment.

Hence, the various large Guilds struggled desperately for Level 55 weapons and equipment.

Meanwhile, most of the equipment the Lords in the Witch's Hill's forbidden land dropped was Bronze rank, although they had a small chance of dropping Mysterious-Iron Equipment Naturally, the Great Lords dropped Mysterious-Iron and Secret- Silver Equipment, with the latter having a severely lower drop-rate. While Grand Lords were guaranteed to drop Secret- Silver Equipment, they did have a higher drop-rate than Great Lords. They also had a slight chance of dropping Fine-Gold Equipment.

Since Zero Wing's members were the first to pioneer the forbidden land, there was an extremely high number of monsters in the area. Even the rarely-seen Great Lords and Grand Lords were available in abundance right now.

After just six hours of hard work, Zero Wing's 10,000-man team had obtained over a dozen pieces of Level 60 Fine-Gold Equipment, over 100 pieces of Level 60 Secret-Silver Equipment, and more than a thousand Mysterious-Iron and Bronze Equipment pieces. Their operation had been quite lucrative.

The team's latest harvest was already worth more than the strengthened Void Field Magic Array's production costs. "Leveling up here is so fast! At this rate, I'll climb from 57 to 58 in less than a day!"

Grinding higher-leveled monsters is amazing! Our Guild Leader is still the best! He actually got his hands on such a

powerful magic array! Once I reach Level 60, I'll purchase some Level 60 Mysterious-Iron Equipment and get rid of my

outdated Level 50 items! My friends will die from envy!1

“That’s right! A friend of mine that joined a super-first-rate Guild was recently boasting about how he had obtained Level 55

Secret-Silver Equipment. Once I reach Level 60, I can buy two or three pieces of Level 60 Secret-Silver Equipment from the Guild Warehouse!”

The more Zero Wing’s members fought, the more enthusiastic they became. They showed no signs of fatigue. They all felt as if their struggle to level up had been a mere hallucination. At the same time, they were in awe of Shi Feng’s abilities.

After experiencing the wonder of this leveling speed, Zero Wing’s players grinded with even more effort. They even took out and used their stockpiled Exotic Stamina Potions to stay in battle as long as possible.

Shi Feng’s team was far more energetic than he had expected.

He had assumed that he’d need to use two more sets of normal Void Field Magic Array Scrolls to get his team up to Level 60, but watching these players’ current leveling speed, he might only need one more set of Void Field Scrolls. If that were the case, he could bring Zero Wing City’s other elite and expert members here to level up as well.

Time passed quickly. Whenever a player reached Level 60, Shi Feng would tell them to leave. If they had proven their strength, he’d instruct them to challenge their Tier 2 Promotion Quest. If they weren’t strong enough, they were told to improve their equipment and techniques. To keep the team full, Shi Feng had Aqua Rose send other Guild members from Zero Wing City.

After grinding for about 20 hours, several hundred of Zero Wing's Tier 1 experts had reached Level 60. Once they traded Shi Feng for Level 60 Mysterious-Iron or Secret-Silver Equipment, they left to challenge their Tier 2 Promotion Quests.

Now, even the lowest-leveled elite member was Level 56, while most of them were Level 57. The majority of Zero Wing's Tier 1 experts were now Level 59, with only a few stuck at Level 58.

The team's overall leveling speed was explosive. Grinding here proved far more effective than in ten resource zones.

Aqua Rose was immensely excited to see this.

With the resources this forbidden land had to offer, Zero Wing could solidify its foundation and strength.

In God's Domain, every location had limited resources, and areas that could accommodate thousands of players, allowing them to level up rapidly, were incredibly rare. Generally, the various superpowers dominated these areas. After all, ordinary resource zones could only accommodate several hundred players at a time. If players flooded to a resource zone, leveling speed would decrease. It was easy to imagine how precious zones that could accommodate several thousand players were, yet this forbidden land easily served more than 10,000 players, and they all leveled at a phenomenal pace...

If the various superpowers found out about this, their envy would know no bounds.

"Guild Leader, we've found three unknown alchemy recipes and an unknown stone tablet among the loot. Even an Advanced Appraisal can't identify them," Alluring Summer, who was busy collecting the various team's loot, suddenly reported.

Unknown alchemy recipes and an unknown stone tablet? Shi Feng's lips curled into a smile as he considered a possibility. He then said, "Bring them to me."

"Understood! I'll be right there!" Alluring Summer said as she gave Shi Feng's excited expression an odd look. She then ran toward his current location.

Once Shi Feng received the unknown recipes and tablet, he eagerly activated Omniscient Eyes to appraise the items.

I was right! Shi Feng was ecstatic as the items revealed their information.

Of the two items Alluring Summer had collected, the alchemy recipes were none other than the Resuscitation Potion Recipes. Only Master Alchemists and above could use these, and each recipe was worth thousands of Gold.

Countless players had ventured to the Witch's Hill's forbidden land to grind for these recipes, and even then, they were unlikely to drop after a full day of grinding, yet Shi Feng held three copies in his hands.

He had to admit that the benefits of pioneering a forbidden land were truly wonderful. Not only were there plenty of monsters to kill, but items' drop-rates were much higher than usual.

The unknown stone tablet, however, was even more valuable than the Resuscitation Potion Recipes.

If Alluring Summer hadn't mentioned the tablet, he would've forgotten that it had a chance of dropping here.

The unknown tablet had been crafted from Red Luminaries Stone. It was an Ancient God's Secret Key, an item that had been immensely famous throughout God's Domain in the past. Normally, this item only dropped in Otherworlds, but since the monsters in the Witch's Hill's forbidden Land were from Otherworlds, it had a slight chance of dropping. Unfortunately, the Secret Key's drop-rate was so minuscule that no one had ever thought of grinding for it here.

But despite its abysmal drop-rate, an Ancient God's Secret Key had appeared...

Chapter 1976 – Ancient God's Secret Key

Shi Feng could not help but grow a little excited as he looked at the Red Luminaries Stone tablet in his hand.

The Ancient God's Secret Key was an extremely rare item in God's Domain, even rivaling Fragmented Legendary items.

However, the Ancient God's Secret Key was different from Fragmented Legendary items. Fragmented Legendary items could only be obtained by killing powerful bosses, completing Epic or above Quests, or opening Epic or above Treasure Chests. Fortunately, the Ancient God's Secret Key had a chance of dropping from monsters that resided in the various Otherworlds. Of course, the monsters had to be Level 50 Great Lords or above.

In the past, the various major powers had all sought an Ancient God's Secret Key, but the drop-rate was painfully low. Moreover, players' Luck Attribute wouldn't affect the drop-rate, and as a result, regardless of how hard the various major powers grinded for this item, very few had actually obtained one.

“Guild Leader, is it very valuable?” Alluring Summer asked when she saw Shi Feng’s excited expression.

“Of course! It is extremely valuable!” Shi Feng nodded. “You could say that it’s just as valuable as an Epic Treasure Chest!”

“An Epic Treasure Chest?” When Alluring Summer heard Shi Feng’s claim, her eyes glowed as she gazed at the Ancient God’s Secret Key.

An Epic Treasure Chest had a very high chance of yielding Epic items. Thus, they were undoubtedly precious to the various large Guilds. Most Guilds only had a small number of Epic items at this stage of the game, and only the Guild’s upper echelons or peak experts qualified to use them.

Even in Zero Wing, Epic items were extremely rare. In total, Zero Wing had less than 100 Epic items, and that was already enough to attract the various first-rate Guilds’ jealousy.

“However, we can’t use this key yet. We need to be strong enough to obtain an Epic item. Otherwise, we will simply waste the Ancient God’s Secret Key,” Shi Feng said as he stored the key away. He had no intention of using the key right now. Instead, he commanded Zero Wing’s members to move deeper into the forbidden land and grind its numerous Field Bosses.

The Ancient God’s Secret Key was akin to an Epic Treasure Chest, but unlike a Treasure Chest, players had to rely on their strength to obtain the key’s harvest, not luck. Meanwhile, the greater one’s survivability was, the more they’d gain from the Ancient God’s Secret Key.

There had even been rumors in the past about a superpower obtaining a Fragmented Legendary item from the Secret Key.

With a single Fragmented Legendary item, a Guild could easily nurture a peak expert. It would even of even greater help when players challenged their Tier 4 and 5 Promotion Quests.

That was why all of the various major powers had coveted the Ancient God's Secret Key. Fragmented Legendary items were extraordinarily valuable, and even after a decade in God's Domain, first-rate Guilds had only collected a small number of them. Second-rate Guilds had been lucky if they had one or two Fragmented Legendary items.

Now that he had an Ancient God's Secret Key, he had to be careful with how he used it.

Of course, Shi Feng had no intention of letting it sit around and collect dust. Each Secret Key had a one-week expiration. Whether players used it or not, it would disappear after seven days, so it wasn't possible to save the key until it was most valuable.

Shi Feng then handed the three Resuscitation Potion Recipes to Aqua Rose, instructing her to bring them to Melancholic Smile and start the potion's production as soon as possible.

The potion's necessary materials weren't particularly valuable. There had only been such a small supply of these potions in the past, despite the high demand, due to the recipe's rarity.

God's Domain's superpowers had yet to obtain a Resuscitation Potion Recipe, making this the perfect opportunity for Zero Wing to make a fortune. Once the various superpowers secured the recipes, though, Zero Wing's profits through the potion would plummet. It was the same case with the Strengthening Devices. Initially, Zero Wing had earned quite a bit from selling the devices, but as more superpowers and first-rate Guilds had obtained the Strengthening Device Design, the competition had increased. As a result, Zero Wing's profits from the device had steadily decreased.

Since the Resuscitation Potion didn't exist on the market yet, Zero Wing could monopolize the potion's sales.

Zero Wing wasn't like the various superpowers. Not only did the various superpowers have a lot of territory in the game, but they also had support from major corporations. Superpowers didn't have to worry about resources or funds since the corporations backing them provided a constant supply. However, Zero Wing didn't have that kind of support, relying on its own power to acquire funds and resources.

Unfortunately, developing a Guild's territory and increasing member-count required a lot of both.

This was especially true for the situation in the Ore Empire. While Zero Wing had been preoccupied with Miracle, according to the Secret Pavilion's report, Blackwater had made significant progress in raiding the Ore Capital City's armory, obtaining quite a few war weapons. In addition, the Guild had recently occupied another fortress in the Ore Empire. Due to this success, Blackwater had transferred even more members from its main headquarters to the Ore Empire.

Moreover, Beast Emperor, Blackwater, and Dark Soul had secretly formed an alliance and intended to take over the Ore Empire. Annihilating Zero Wing was the first step in their plan.

The alliance between these three powers wasn't good news for Zero Wing.

Most importantly, unlike Blackwater and Dark Soul, Beast Emperor and Zero Wing were irreconcilable enemies. Shi Feng had severed Beast Emperor's path to promotion, and an active Evil God's Temple still existed within Star-Moon Kingdom. So long as these two factors continued, only one could survive the war between Zero Wing and Beast Emperor.

Hence, Shi Feng needed to prepare for this eventuality. Silverwing couldn't withstand a joint assault from these three powers with its current defenses.

After organizing the rest of the loot, Shi Feng continued to lead Zero Wing's members as they gradually cleared out the monsters in the forbidden land's outer region, venturing farther towards its core.

Although the forbidden land's outer region was home to a lot of monsters, the strongest in the area were Grand Lords. With Void Field's suppression, Zero Wing easily took care of these monsters, and although they would respawn after some time, there weren't as many as there had been initially. Once they had limited the population, Level 60, Tier 2 experts would have no problems grinding these monsters efficiently, even without the Void Field. Zero Wing's players would be fine as long as they didn't provoke the Grand Lords.

As the team reached the forbidden land's inner region, their gazes settled on a gigantic, scaled lizard.

[Void Lizard] (Void Creature, Mythic Rank) Level 70

HP 600,000,000/600,000,000

Shi Feng had formed a 1,000-man team to raid the Void Lizard, over 600 of which were Tier 2 players, and the lowest- leveled among them was Level 60.

Once everyone was in position, Shi Feng had Cola, now Level 61, begin the raid.

If they had to face the Void Lizard under normal conditions, Shi Feng would have kept his players as far from the Mythic Boss as possible. Level 60 players had no hope of taking down a Level 70 Mythic

monster, and even a Tier 2 MT like Cola would only be able to tank the Boss if he activated his Berserk Skill.

However, they didn't have to fight under normal circumstances. The strengthened Void Field was still in effect, and the Void Lizard's Basic Attributes had decreased by 20%. In addition, Shi Feng had nine members of the team utilize the Nine-stars Polar Domain Magic Array to suppress the Void Lizard further, ensuring that the Boss only retained 70% of its Basic Attributes. With it this weak, even Cola could tank the Void Lizard without a Berserk Skill, albeit barely.

Unfortunately, the team wasn't able to deal much damage to the Boss due to the level suppression. Even among the Tier 2 damage dealers, very few dealt more than -10,000 damage. However, with players like Shi Feng and Zero Wing's core upper echelons, all of whom had monstrous Attributes, the team's total DPS exceeded the Void Lizard's battle recovery, steadily whittling away the Mythic monster's HP.

90%... 60%... 30%...

When the Void Lizard had 30% of its HP remaining, the Boss went Berserk. In response, Shi Feng ordered his team to activate their Berserk Skills to endure the Void Lizard's berserk period. After more than an hour, the team eventually defeated the Mythic Boss.

As the Void Lizard died, everyone on the 1,000-man team received an abundance of EXP. Cola and a few other Level 61 players instantly rose to Level 62, and the other Tier 2 players watched their experience bars increase by a sizable chunk. As for Shi Feng, a golden glow enveloped his body as he climbed from 69 to 70.

Chapter 1977 – Tier 2 Training

Seeing the collapsed Void Lizard, Zero Wing's 1,000-man raid team breathed a sigh of relief, joy surfacing on their expressions.

The bountiful EXP the Mythic monster had granted wasn't the only reason for their joy; they also celebrated the loot the Boss had dropped. The dazzling mountain that had appeared beside the monsters' colossal body made every member of the raid team drool.

At first glance, there were easily more than 50 items in the pile. Over a dozen among them were weapons and equipment that had the glow of Fine-Gold and Dark-Gold items.

However, the only item in the small mountain of loot that caught Shi Feng's eye was the bottle of Void Blood. With this, he could craft a few more sets of Void Field Scrolls. As for the remaining items, the most valuable was the Resuscitation Potion Recipe. In Shi Feng's opinion, the Level 60 Fine-Gold and Dark-Gold Weapons and Equipment were average at best. The best piece of equipment that had dropped was the Void Shoes, a set of Epic ranked cloth armor boots.

Shi Feng instantly handed the Void Shoes to Violet Cloud, increasing her Epic item count to five. With Death's Sigh, Violet Cloud could now easily contend with peak experts.

"I'm beat!" Cola complained as he let his body fall to the ground. "I never thought that fighting a higher-leveled Mythic monster would cost so much Stamina. Had the Boss lasted any longer, I would've died from exhaustion."

Compared to fighting the Void Lizard, the Grand Lords he had faced earlier were child's play. The Void Lizard had lasted more than an hour, and he had stayed on high-alert throughout the fight due to the Boss's high combat standard. If he had made the slightest mistake, he would've taken a direct hit, and he had no doubt that one hit would've been enough to end his life instantly.

Fighting the Void Lizard was more mentally exhausting than grinding monsters for ten hours without a break. Cola had lost Stamina at a severe rate, and although the system didn't provide an indicator for Stamina, Cola guessed that he had less than 20% remaining based on how tired he felt. Had the raid continued for any longer and his Stamina fallen below 10%, he would receive a penalty to his combat power. He wouldn't have been able to keep up with the Void Lizard's attacks, and it definitely would've instant-killed him.

Turtledove and Ye Wumian, who also rested on the ground, nodded in agreement.

Fighting a Mythic monster that was ten levels higher than they were was truly exhausting. In fact, this raid had been even more intense than raiding the Void Serpent.

Cola and the other Tier 2 MTs weren't the only ones exhausted. Everyone that participated in the raid practically had less than 30% Stamina remaining. Only Shi Feng didn't seem tired as he moved towards the pile of loot that had manifested beside the Boss's feet. Every Zero Wing member was shocked.

Shi Feng had fought on the frontline during the entire raid. His total damage output had also topped the raid chart, exceeding second place by more than double. Occasionally, he had even helped the MTs tank. Shi Feng should've used more Stamina than anyone in the raid, yet he looked as if he had done nothing but watch. Fire Dance, who had come in second for damage dealt, was drenched in sweat, clearly just as exhausted as the MTs.

"Is the Guild Leader a monster? He's not even tired after such a long, arduous battle?" Zero Wing's Tier 2 experts were confused as they watched Shi Feng collect the loot

They were all Tier 2. Logically, there should not be much of a difference between their total Stamina, and Shi Feng had fought far harder than they had, yet they were nearly out of Stamina...

“That’s normal. You guys made too many excess movements during the fight Most importantly, you guys haven’t adapted to the flow of battle, allowing you to fight at peak condition constantly. It is only natural that you run out of gas more quickly.” Shi Feng could not help but laugh when he overheard his teammates’ conversation.

In truth, he was just as surprised by how much Stamina he still had. He had never expected the added benefit after reaching the Realms of Truth.

“Guild Leader, do you have any training methods?” Cola asked, desire flashing in his eyes.

Although Cola had reached the Refinement Realm and could reduce his Stamina consumption during fights a little, he was still leaps and bounds behind Shi Feng. He even wondered if Shi Feng had twice the Stamina he had.

Stamina was extremely important to expert players. If he could learn a technique that allowed him to reduce Stamina consumption, he could rely on his Stamina to whittle down an expert of equal standards in a fight. After all, fighting an expert player consumed Stamina much faster than fighting a Boss monster. Such a technique would be of great help whether he fought Boss monsters or expert players in the future.

“Training, is it?” Upon hearing Cola’s question, Shi Feng realized how important it was to train his team in Stamina control.

Although controlling one’s Stamina wouldn’t improve their combat power, it would have a massive impact on the player’s performance.

When grinding in the fields, players' grinding efficiency was largely dependent on their Stamina. If players had various tools to aid in their Stamina recovery, they could increase their grinding efficiency. However, such tools were very rare and valuable. Players simply couldn't afford to use them constantly.

However, if players entered the Realms of Truth, not only could they increase their combat power, but they could also increase their leveling speed. After all, the lower one's Stamina consumption was, the longer they could fight.

Thinking up to this point, Shi Feng decided that it was time to train Fire Dance and the others in the Lost Town.

Since the Guild had lacked powerful combatants previously, Tier 2 players like Fire Dance didn't have the leeway to leave the frontline, but now that Zero Wing had more than 1,000 Tier 2 players, Fire Dance and her companions could afford a break. Furthermore, the difference in the equipment standard of the various superpowers' peak experts and Zero Wing's core upper echelons shrunk as time passed. The various superpowers continued to collect more Epic items, and most of their peak experts had obtained Peak Legacies. If Zero Wing wanted to maintain its lead on the various superpowers in terms of peak combatants, it was imperative that Fire Dance and the others grow stronger.

The only reliable method Shi Feng could think of to increase Fire Dance and her companion's combat power was to train at the Lost Town's Extraordinary Tower.

If Fire Dance and the others could reach the Realms of Truth, they could help the Guild even more than they already did. In a situation where two players had equal Basic Attributes, a Refinement Realm expert that had entered the Realms of Truth as well could rival a Flowing Water Realm expert in terms of combat power, and the former would have even better control of their abilities.

"Aqua, notify our main force members and have them gather in White River City's Residence in two hours! We're going to participate in special Stamina training!" Shi Feng addressed Aqua Rose.

“Stamina training? I’ll notify them right away!” Aqua Rose was ecstatic to hear Shi Feng’s latest order. However, after giving the matter some more thought, she could not help but ask, “Guild Leader, since we’re participating in special training, why don’t we include the Guild’s other experts, as well?”

“I don’t want too many people to know about this training method yet. Moreover, the Guild has many affairs that require Tier 2 experts to manage. Taking too many people at once isn’t ideal,” Shi Feng said, shaking his head.

The Lost Town was a specialized training ground for the Realms of Truth. Its value was immeasurable. If the various superpowers found out about it, they would do everything in their power to take it from him. Hence, he had used the excuse of Stamina training. If too many people found out about his Lost Town, it would increase the chances of the secret getting out, and he couldn’t afford for that to happen. Zero Wing didn’t have the ability to defend the town properly yet.

Shi Feng didn’t have to say more for Aqua Rose to understand what he was trying to say. She stopped asking questions and contacted the Guild’s main force members.

Following which, Shi Feng held an internal auction for the weapons and equipment the Void Lizard had dropped. He then left the two remaining sets of Void Field Scrolls with You Ziping and had him and the other Tier 2 internal members take charge of the grinding operation in the forbidden land. As long as they didn’t provoke any Mythic Bosses, they wouldn’t have any issues in the forbidden land with the Void Field’s assistance. Once Shi Feng had finished designating tasks, he left the forbidden land, pulling out a Return Scroll to teleport to White River City once teleportation was available again.

Chapter 1978 Reputation Soars

How lively!

When Shi Feng exited the Teleportation Hall, he was greeted by the sight of a crowded street. Merchant players were busy conducting business along the street, and impromptu teams recruited members for their Dungeon raids.

These impromptu teams were all quite strong, with at least Level 56 members. Some teams even had the leadership of Tier 2 players. At this stage of the game, such impromptu teams were considered incredibly powerful. These teams in other cities were usually led by Tier 1 experts; very few had Tier 2 experts.

Shi Feng also spotted quite a few adventurer teams recruiting members, all of which were extremely powerful with more than ten Tier 2 experts on average. Even a few well-known adventurer teams had come to White River City from other kingdoms.

Most of the players on the street were high-leveled and well-equipped, in fact. Level 57 expert players were a common sight, and there were many independent players wearing multiple pieces of Level 50 Secret-Silver Equipment.

At this point, White River City's prosperity actually surpassed Star-Moon City. It looked nothing like an ordinary major NPC city, having developed far more than Shi Feng had expected.

"Zero Wing is amazing! Not only did it repel Miracle in the Black Dragon Empire, but I've also heard that it has recently joined the Secret Chamber of Commerce some! I'm definitely going to sign up for Zero Wing's mass-recruitment!"

"I've heard the same. And so many well-known adventurer teams have come to White River City to join the Guild. Even if Zero Wing rejects their application, they're willing to work as subordinate adventurer teams for the Guild. Because of this White River City has seen a drastic increase in player traffic."

"I know, right? Although the resources around White River City aren't anything special, the city has a direct route to the Eclipse Gate, and that area has fairly abundant resources. Even if we don't make it into Zero Wing this time, it's not a bad idea to develop here. Furthermore, White River City is Zero Wing's main headquarters. When the Guild recruits members in the future, we'll have a far better chance of joining the Guild if we stay here!"

As Shi Feng walked through the streets, he heard many excited conversations regarding his Guild.

Although Zero Wing had displayed immense strength, it still lacked a powerful background and funding. It was a Guild that relied on its own power to survive. Because of that, not many players and adventurer teams had optimistic views of Zero Wing's prospects, but now, the Guild had also joined the Secret Chamber of Commerce.

Even without the support of a major corporation, Zero Wing wouldn't have to worry about funding in the future with Secret's connections. It even had a high chance of becoming a super-first-rate Guild in the future. This presented a golden opportunity for adventurer teams and expert players.

Existing super-first-rate Guilds and Super Guilds already had well-developed structures. They had also filled most of their available management positions. Climbing the corporate ladder would be extremely difficult for newcomers; even geniuses would need a long time to reach a significant position.

However, Zero Wing was different. The Guild wasn't yet stable, and its foundations had various holes and lacked talented players.

However, now that Zero Wing had a hope of becoming a superpower, a player had a chance of becoming an upper echelon as long as they joined the Guild and performed well. Becoming the upper echelon in a super-first-rate Guild was much faster than trying to climb the corporate ladder in an already-established super-first-rate Guild.

With such an opportunity before them, how could players and adventurer teams ignore this chance?

This was the reason that White River City had become the focal point of Star-Moon Kingdom. Large numbers of independent players and well-known adventurer teams swarmed the city, instantly pushing

White River City's player population past 10,000,000. Moreover, these players' quality surpassed that of other kingdoms' capital cities.

When Shi Feng reached the city's Candlelight Trading Firm, he discovered that the Guild Residence wasn't the only busy area. Candlelight bustled with activity, and Liang Jing was busy reviewing the long line of Lifestyle players standing near the Shop's entrance.

The line outside of the Shop extended from one end of the street to the other. Moreover, the standards of these applying Lifestyle players were considerably high. The weakest applicant was a Basic Lifestyle player, not a single Apprentice stood in line. There were also plenty of Advanced Lifestyle players waiting for their review. The scene stupefied the independent players that had just arrived in the city, and when other Guilds' members saw this, their eyes nearly fell from their sockets.

All of the various large Guilds offered incentives to recruit Advanced Lifestyle players, but very few usually took the bait, yet more than 100 of these players had eagerly applied to the Candlelight Trading Firm, obediently waiting in line...

The news certainly spread quickly! Shi Feng was a little surprised by the thousands of Lifestyle players applying to join Zero Wing.

He had to admit that joining a top Chamber of Commerce had its benefits. He hadn't expected Secret's reputation to be so useful.

Candlelight hadn't officially started working with Secret, yet so many Lifestyle players had rushed to join Zero Wing. By the time Candlelight collaborated with Secret and started to sell products through the Chamber's channels, he'd likely see several times more players trying to join his trading firm.

Shi Feng could relate to a certain degree.

Although the former Candlelight Trading Firm had solid foundations and superb talent-nurturing capabilities, it hadn't had enough channels to sell its products.

Now that Candlelight had both, Lifestyle players considered it the best place to develop.

Following which, Shi Feng headed to one of Candlelight's Special Workshops and handed a Resuscitation Potion Recipe to Silent Wonder, leaving it to the Chief Alchemist to decide who should learn the recipe. He then visited his own Special Forging Room and started to craft more Void Field Magic Arrays.

After a little over an hour, Shi Feng had completed five sets of Void Field Scrolls out of eight attempts. These five sets would enable many of Zero Wing's elite and expert players to grind in the Witch's Hill's forbidden land. Then, even without the Void Field, they could simply return to grinding in the forbidden land's outer region. Now that the area's monsters had died more than a few times, the respawn rate had decreased. Even the ordinary Tier 2 experts should have no problem helping the Tier 1 players grind there.

Once Shi Feng had settled his affairs in Candlelight, he made his way to Zero Wing's Residence.

Currently, Blackie and the other main force members sat in the Residence's second-floor hall. They had been waiting for quite some time, and they all looked forward to the special Stamina training.

One's combat standard was the basis for their combat power, and the more they fought expert players, the more this idea proved to be true.

They used to overwhelm their opponents with their Basic Attributes, but as players progressed in the game, their advantage continued to lessen.

“Commander, we really lucked out this time! We’ve just joined the Guild’s main force, yet we get to partake in special internal training. I wonder what the Guild Leader has to teach us?” Seven Light, a young, Tier 2 Swordsman, spoke excitedly to the middle-aged man beside him.

“I’ve already told you that I’m no longer Unbounded’s commander. In the future, refer to me as Brother Bone,” Stubborn Bone told the youth beside him, exasperated. “But you’re right; we’ve really gotten lucky this time. We actually get to train under Black Flame personally. I assume he’ll teach us some kind of footwork or body technique.”

Every large Guild had its own internal training programs. Some programs taught combat techniques that were exclusive to the Guild, and others provided lectures. Stubborn Bone, though, was confident that this training session would involve learning a combat technique through practice. After all, Zero Wing was famous for its many techniques.

Quite a few other players in the group were former adventurer team members as well. For example, Remnant Cloud and Graceful Moon, the prior commander and vice-commander of the Firecloud Fox adventurer team, were also present. These former adventurers were all curious about what Shi Feng had in store for them.

“Everyone has gathered, Guild Leader,” Aqua Rose reported when she noticed Shi Feng enter the hall.

“Good. Let’s set off, then.” Shi Feng nodded. He then led the team to the Residence’s first underground floor.

Chapter 1979 Visiting the Extraordinary Tower Again-

Visiting the Extraordinary Tower Again First underground floor in Zero Wing's Residence:

Under Shi Feng's lead, the group arrived before a strictly guarded room. Ten Personal Guards stood at the entrance.

Zero Wing's main force members were shocked to see the Personal Guards.

These NPCs were all Level 75 or above, and the team was familiar with two of them, both Secret-Silver Personal Guards. Even superpowers coveted such top-tier guards.

Of the two Secret-Silver Personal Guards, the Level 76, Tier 2 Summoner was Aqua Rose's Personal Guard, while the Level 76, Tier 2 Magic Knight belonged to Fire Dance. It had caused quite a commotion when the two women had obtained them.

Although Secret-Silver Personal Guards weren't strong enough to fight opponents of a higher tier like Shi Feng's Anna and Kite, they could still rival Tier 3 NPCs of the same level. Not even a Level 75, Tier 2 peak expert would be a match for these guards. As for current Level 60 peak experts, they'd only have a hope of defeating the Personal Guards if they fought in a large team.

Yet, two of these Personal Guards had been tasked with guarding this room. Based on the other guards' auras and levels, it was safe to assume that they were at least Mysterious-Iron rank. At this stage of the

game, even a first-rate Guild's upper echelons only employed Mysterious-Iron Personal Guards. Secret-Silver Personal Guards were simply too rare, even rarer than Epic items.

Meanwhile, the various large Guilds and superpowers typically used Secret-Silver Personal Guards to protect their Guild Warehouses, yet two of these NPCs defended a mere room...

Why wouldn't this surprise the team members?

However, these players' shock reached new heights as they entered the room.

The room was incredibly small, and one would be hard-pressed to fit a hundred people within. Only a magic array occupied the room, carved into the floor in the center. It didn't seem like a place that warranted Secret-Silver Personal Guards' protection.

Shi Feng could not help but smile when he saw his team's confusion, but he didn't bother to explain the situation.

Under Shi Feng's commands, the team then split into groups of ten.

"Everyone, step in the magic array," Shi Feng said as he did just that. Once everyone was in place, Shi Feng inserted a Magic Crystal before a white flash enveloped him and the nine members of his group. They vanished.

The rest of Zero Wing's main force members finally understood what the magic array was for. They then entered the magic array and mimicked Shi Feng's actions, one party after another.

When they reopened their eyes, they found themselves in a foreign town. It was one other than the Lost Town, located in the Boneless Land.

The Lost Town was no longer the desolate, abandoned place it had been. Dilapidated buildings had once dotted the area, and not a single NPC could've been found in the town.

But while the town wasn't teeming with NPCs, dozens wandered along the main street now. Similarly, renovated Shops, restaurants, and hotels now filled the town.

The Lost Town now looked like any typical, NPC border town.

However, unlike NPC towns, several ancient, imposing buildings remained. Ancient divine runes and images had been carved into these buildings' walls, and among them, the most eye-catching was the square, white tower in the town's center. A pitch-black orb hovered at the tower's peak, radiating a frightening aura that deterred anyone from casually approaching.

Yet, the most important thing Zero Wing's members noticed was the town's Mana density. The Mana here was no less dense than in Stone Forest Town, and it felt even denser as one approached the white tower. The Mana around this strange tower could even rival that of Silver Wing Town.

"Amazing! Where are we?"

"Guild Leader, are we training here?"

Everyone turned to Shi Feng after observing the town for a moment. Even Aqua Rose and the other upper echelons were stunned. They all wondered when Shi Feng had gotten his hands on such a wondrous place.

Setting aside the town's leveling environment, its high Mana density made the town incredibly valuable.

"This is the Lost Town. It also belongs to Zero Wing. Unfortunately, the town still lacks facilities, so I haven't opened it to the public," Shi Feng said, chuckling. He gestured to the white tower and said, "That tower will be your training venue."

Although the Guild members he had led here were all Zero Wing's main force members, none of them had known about the Lost Town before today. After all, Shi Feng hadn't told anyone about it. Even the internal members he had power-leveled in the Boneless Land hadn't known that Zero Wing had secured the Lost Town. They had only known that a dangerous town existed in the Boneless Land.

He hadn't kept this secret because he was overly cautious, but because the Lost Town's value warranted such caution.

Even after ten years in God's Domain, he had never heard of a town or place that could train players to reach and progress in the Realms of Truth, and this training system had been designed by the Main God System. It was far more accurate and refined than the training systems the various superpowers had designed.

Hence, he couldn't afford to reveal this secret to the world. If news about the Lost Town's ability leaked, Zero Wing would instantly become public enemy number one. The various superpowers definitely wouldn't let Zero Wing off the hook.

However, to increase the strength of Zero Wing's experts as quickly as possible and nurture more experts that could contend with peak experts, he had no choice but to take this risk. As players progressed in the game and reached higher levels, Zero Wing would continue to lose its advantages. The moment that Zero Wing fell behind, its enemies would strike.

Shi Feng had another reason for leading his main force to the Lost Town, as well. Now that Zero Wing had solved the issue of its Magic Crystal shortage, he could afford to operate the Extraordinary Tower every day.

"We're training in there?" Zero Wing's players looked at the tower, a little disappointed. "Does it have advanced combat rooms?"

None of them showed any interest in training in a venue the Main God System had created.

They had already experienced such training systems before. One such example was the Divine Colosseum's Trial Tower. The Trial Tower held absolute authority over God's Domain's players. Not only could they test their strength in the Trial Tower, but they could also use it to discover their flaws and improve themselves.

They assumed the tower before them was similar to the Trial Tower.

Unfortunately, the Trial Tower only offered minor assistance at this point. It was unlikely that this white tower, which looked far less impressive than the Trial Tower, would provide better training.

"Not interested?" Shi Feng could not help the smile pulling at his lips when he noticed the team's lack of enthusiasm. "How about this? If any of you manage to get past the first floor within one week, I'll reward you with a Bloodline that will improve your Life Rating!"

“A Bloodline? Guild Leader, are you for real?” Shadow Sword and the others’ excitement returned.

They had all heard of Bloodlines, and many of them had taken part in the Demonkin King raid on Kama Island. They had seen the Space-time Bloodline that the Demonkin King had dropped. There was no doubt that the Bloodline was a superpowerful item, and it wouldn’t be an exaggeration to call it a free pass to Tier 3. It could even help players when they challenged their Tier 4 Promotion Quests.

“Of course.” Shi Feng nodded. “However, you have to clear the first floor within a week.”

“The tower’s first floor? Shouldn’t that be a piece of cake?”

Zero Wing’s players then dashed towards the Extraordinary Tower, more than eager to get to work.

Shi Feng, however, casually entered the tower and headed for the top floor. He then called up the Extraordinary Tower’s system interface and released the second floor’s seal. This was the reason he had come to the Lost Town today.

1980 Second Floor Unsealed

Chapter 1980 – Second Floor Unsealed

The moment Shi Feng chose to remove the seal on the Extraordinary Tower’s second floor, he instantly lost 100,000 of the 110,000 Magic Crystals he had recently collected.

The divine runes on the Extraordinary Tower's exterior then lit up with a steady, colorful brilliance. Mana flooded toward the tower from far beyond the Lost Town's boundaries, rapidly increasing the town's Mana density.

After several seconds of this, the Lost Town's Mana density was even higher than in Silverwing Town, and after a few more seconds, it could rival the density in Zero Wing City.

Everyone within the Extraordinary Tower felt the change.

Due to the increased Mana density, the players within the tower received a Well Rested buff, indicating that they could accumulate 15% of the Double EXP buff after resting in the Lost Town for 48 hours.

Sure enough, this Extraordinary Tower is really amazing. Shi Feng was slightly surprised at how dense the Mana had become.

The Mana density within the tower was at least 20% higher than in Zero Wing City. This meant that players would recover their Stamina and Concentration 20% faster inside the Extraordinary Tower than they would in the city.

Even if players practiced Advanced Combat Techniques, they could train continuously at an adequate pace in such a Mana- rich environment. To God's Domain's expert players, training here was the ultimate dream.

If Zero Wing offered such a precious training ground for lease, the various superpowers would likely form a long line for a chance to rent it since mastery of an Advanced Combat Technique would provide

their players with a huge boost in combat power. Refinement Realm experts would be able to challenge Flowing Water Realm experts, and Flowing Water Realm experts would be able to challenge Void Realm experts.

However, Advanced Combat Techniques were not easy to master. Executing such techniques consumed a lot of Stamina and Concentration. Meanwhile, players' regeneration of Stamina and Concentration was normally extremely slow. Hence, players could practice their Advanced Combat Techniques for only a very limited number of times each day, yet mastery of Advanced Combat Techniques required a lot of practice. Thus, the higher Mana density inside the tower was a great boon.

Shortly after Shi Feng released the seal on the Extraordinary Tower's second floor, the divine runes and magic arrays carved on the inner walls lit up as well. Unfortunately, if he wanted to use the second floor's training system, he'd have to pay 5,000 Magic Crystals per day. Even a first-rate Guild could afford such an expense for only a few days.

The Manatite vein Zero Wing had recently acquired was the only reason Shi Feng dared to activate the second floor now.

Despite the Guild's recent expansions, Zero Wing would still have nearly 20,000 extra Magic Crystals after daily expenses. Hence, the Guild could afford to maintain the second floor's operation.

Shi Feng then left the top floor and prepared to face the second-floor challenge.

Although he had comprehended the Realms of Truth's principles and had mastered the Truth Realm to reach the Ascension Realm, he had relied on his personal understanding to accomplish these feats. He hadn't received any official training or guidance, but now that the system's specialized training for the Realms of Truth was before him, he had to put it to good use. Furthermore, he had to prepare for using the Ancient God's Secret Key he had obtained.

Obtaining an Ancient God's Secret Key was incredibly difficult. Who knew when he would find another one?

If he wished to maximize the Secret Key's value, he'd have to grow as strong as possible. He'd be able to secure better items from the Secret Key only with better survivability.

As Shi Feng descended the staircase to the Extraordinary Tower's first-floor training ground, he noticed that it had implemented a similar system to that which had stopped players from entering the tower before he had taken ownership of the town. Players on the first floor were required to approach a magic array in the center. On their way there, the tower bombarded the players with various attacks, although the attacks didn't cause any damage. They only repelled the players.

The only difference between the first-floor training ground and the initial defense mechanism was the attack pattern they used.

When Shi Feng had found the Extraordinary Tower and tried to enter, he had faced only head-on attacks. However, in this training ground, players were attacked from every direction. Of course, players couldn't use any Skills or Spells; they had to rely on their own abilities to reach the center of the room.

Fire Dance and her companions were moving towards the central magic array, but no matter how they tried to contend with the incoming attacks, the result was the same. None of them could get within 100 yards of the array. The training ground's radius was only 200 yards, yet no one could cross half this distance.

Even Violet Cloud and Fire Dance, who were both close to reaching the Flowing Water Realm, barely crossed the 60-yard mark. The best among the other Refinement Realm experts could reach only the 50-yard mark. As for non-Refinement Realm experts like Remnant Cloud and Stubborn Bone, they couldn't even make it to 30 yards.

The first-floor training ground was far more difficult than the Extraordinary Tower's defense mechanism.

"Guild Leader, this place is amazing! We already have to face more than a dozen head-on attacks before we reach the 10-yard mark. The attacks are so fast, too! Unlike players' and monsters' attacks, these attacks seem to appear and disappear abruptly. It's impossible to predict the attack trajectories and dodge. And that's not even the best part! Once we cross the 10-yard mark, we're attacked from all directions. No human can stop these attacks!"

"That's right! Not only do the attacks come from every direction, but you have to deal with more attacks as you move forward. When you reach the 50-yard mark, the attacks even change their trajectories without warning. And the further you progress, the more the attacks change. These transformations are so frustrating. Even Big Sis Fire got defeated shortly after crossing the 60-yard mark."

When Zero Wing's players noticed Shi Feng's approach, they burst into a round of enthusiastic comments. Despite their slow progress, they were all immensely excited, feeling as if the doors to a whole new world had just opened up before them.

They were all experts that had joined Zero Wing's main force. Even the weakest among them was close to the Half-step Refinement Realm standard, and many of them had mastered multiple combat techniques. Even so, they felt like infants learning to walk when they faced the training ground's trial, able to apply only a tiny fraction of their knowledge and combat experience.

This was especially true for people like Remnant Cloud and Stubborn Bone, who had just joined Zero Wing's main force.

They had never imagined that Zero Wing had found such an awe-inspiring training ground. They all felt as if they were learning something even more amazing than combat techniques.

As they continued to challenge the trial, their reactions and ability to make instant judgments improved. However, they knew that they couldn't rely on these improvements to pass this trial. They needed to

ingrain the appropriate reactions and the attack's transformations in their minds until they could react instinctively.

It felt as if this trial were trying to engrave a complete set of Basic Combat Techniques into their bones, enabling them to execute a technique with every movement.

"It seems you all have gained a significant harvest. I hope some of you break through the first floor's training ground in one week. I'll be waiting on the second floor," Shi Feng said, chuckling. He then headed for the magic array at the center of the training ground.