

The Boss Behind The Game

Chapter 151: The Rock Ghost King Had Come To Help (Part 3)

As the battle gradually progressed into its third hour, the situation at hand was still jammed in a deadlock.

Not only were the evil spirits unable to break through, but the players couldn't advance. They were simply driving each other to exhaustion.

In addition, the Zombie Energy Pillars did not disappoint as they continued to create an endless flow of new spirits to join the battle, showering the players with the satisfaction of continually leveling up.

Just as the players thought that the situation would last until they went offline, trees suddenly collapsed, one after another, on the west side of the Ghost Mountains. The silhouettes of numerous gigantic figures entered their field of vision.

Multitudes upon multitudes of shadows of the Tree Demons, Ancient Tree Demons, and Enchanted Trees appeared with no end in sight.

At the same time, a monstrous figure plunged from the sky. The moment it landed on the ground, a majority of the evil spirits were pinned underneath its hefty body.

"Damn it, the Rock Army is here!"

"What are they doing here? Are they friends or foes?"

"Hopefully not the enemy! We might be able to defend against the evil spirits themselves, but I doubt we can defeat the Rock Ghost King!"

"Hold your horses! Don't act rashly!"

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While the players were anxiously discussing it among themselves, the Tree Demon Army abruptly charged from the west, speedily rushing toward the Evil Army. Then they launched an attack on the Zombie Energy Pillars next to them.

"Roar!"

Accompanied by a ferocious growl of the Rock Ghost King, the area of wood elements drastically expanded. The spirits within the area were swiftly hurled into the air by countless branches and instantly strangled by a powerful force.

The emergence of the Rock Ghost King alarmed the nearest Evil Ghost General. It instantly leaped out from within one of the Zombie Energy Pillars and pounced toward the Rock Ghost King.

However, this time, it no longer had the opportunity to restore its health while facing the Rock Ghost King, who was already at the mid-stage of the Ghost King Realm.

In a flash, thousands of green vines popped up from the ground and wound themselves tightly around the Evil Ghost General, hoisting him into the air.

Along with the fierce roar from the Rock Ghost King, the vines steadily tightened their grip as a glistening, dark, viridescent light glowed from its surface. Soon, it seemed that the Evil Ghost General would not be able to endure it any longer. In the next moment, the vines shredded him into smithereens in the air, which were then scattered onto the ground.

With that, the Rock Ghost King had unveiled his terrifying dominance as the fittest in the Ghost King's Territory. Even the evil spirits of the Ghost General class posed no threat to him.

Below, the battlefield formed by the Ancient Tree Demons was pushing forward relentlessly like a bulldozer. That made it extremely taxing for the evil spirits to defend, and it was evident that they were very overpowered by the vast gap in strength.

After being attacked by the Tree Demon Army, the evils were entirely annihilated. Coupled with the fact that they were subjected to attacks from the Door Gods on the other side, the evil spirits' rate of spawning by the twelve Zombie Energy Pillars were unable to meet their rate of mortality, as they were murdered too quickly.

Witnessing the scene, the players were utterly stunned.

They did not expect that the Rock Ghost King would lend them a helping hand. Thus, they were extremely flustered and befuddled, wondering what was actually happening around them.

After the spirits had been completely annihilated, the Rock Ghost King glanced at the players' camp and then locked his gaze on Wu Guoyi.

"Since I've come to help, why isn't anyone attacking together with me!?"

When they heard this, Wu Guoyi and the other players felt a headache creeping up to them.

Actually, they had not killed enough monsters yet.

Although the Rock Ghost King was being generous, they were quite reluctant to join him. After all, this was a once in a blue moon opportunity for them to farm these monsters.

However, since the balance had already been disrupted, they most probably would not be able to keep it up. Thus, Wu Guoyi immediately announced on the live chat channel...

“All warriors, rise! Prepare to break through and kill!”

Followed by the command to attack from Wu Guoyi, the warriors and assassins began to pierce through the defensive line of the Door Gods by killing the evil spirits.

Meanwhile, the mages stayed within the defense, using long-range spells to assist the front line in their attack.

Faced with attacks from the players and the Tree Demons, the initial advantage that the Evil Army had largely evaporated. Even if the twelve Zombie Energy Pillars ceaselessly produced more evil spirits, it was impossible to withstand the overwhelming assault from the two large armies that had united.

When he saw that the players joined him in the war, a hint of relief flashed through the Rock Ghost King's eyes.

After all, he had contemplated carefully for some time before arriving at the decision to personally lead the army this time.

Due to the existence of Zombie Energy Pillars in the Ghosts Mountain, his North Rocks were often invaded by the evil spirits, which made him feel extremely distressed.

From his experience of a similar invasion 400 centuries ago, he discovered that once any of the Zombie Energy Pillars were attacked, the other Zombie Energy Pillars would be able to sense it and would come forth to provide support.

If he really launched an attack on the Zombie Energy Pillars in the Ghosts Mountains, there would most likely be a heavy price to pay regardless of the outcome.

This was absolutely unacceptable for him. If the Tree Demon Army suffered substantial damages, he could imagine that the new forces in the Mansion of the Dead, who had always kept a watchful eye on the North Rocks, would surely jump at the opportunity to attack them.

However, he did not expect the new forces from the Mansion of the Dead to take the initiative in raiding the Zombie Energy Pillars.

This greatly lifted the Rock Ghost King's attitude. He immediately brought along his army and laid out of sight, far away. Meanwhile, he had been paying close attention to the battle, so that he could leap at any opportunity to gain the upper hand while both parties were at each other's throats.

However, the battle situation was beyond the Rock Ghost King's imagination. Initially, he had thought that the battle would bring significant losses to the new forces since the evil spirits kept emerging endlessly. Unless there was an attack that could completely demolish the Zombie Energy Pillars, dragging out the battle would merely be digging their own graves.

However, after intently watching the battle between the players and evil spirits for four whole hours, the Rock Ghost King suddenly realized that both forces were on equal terms and even the most powerful monsters were being resisted by the players.

Based on the situation, this would unquestionably press on into a never-ending battle.

The Rock Ghost King was dumbfounded, but a new thought suddenly surfaced in his mind. He concocted a plan to ally with this new force and take the initiative to eliminate the evil spirits together.

After all, these new forces consisted of intellectually-developed living beings that could be reasoned with, unlike the spirits who would only battle to fulfill their bloodthirsty instinct. There was still room for negotiation.

Besides, there was another crucial reason. If these players were ultimately wiped out by the evil spirits, then the North Rocks, which was the nearest region to the Ghost Mountains, would risk invasion by the evil spirits born from the twelve Zombie Energy Pillars.

This was equivalent to commencing a full-scale war against the evil spirits. By that time, even if he emerged victorious, he would possibly lose half of his Tree Demon Army.

After careful consideration, the Rock Ghost King finally decided to lead the army to strike and assist the players in uprooting those Zombie Energy Pillars and to put an end to this apocalypse of evil's invasion.

However, he did not realize that the players were entirely unappreciative. They had even begun to exchange quiet murmurs in the live chat channel.

"Don't think that just because you've offered help, I won't be cutting down trees anymore. That's impossible."

"That's right, it is not easy to discover such an ideal place to farm monsters. Now that it's been ruined, somehow I feel it's a pity."

“Thanks for the help, but the trees must be cut. After all, we still haven’t gotten enough money to upgrade our boat.”

“That’s a different matter. We aren’t unreasonable people, so we’ll have to reduce the number of trees cut by one a day, to maintain the Rock Ghost King’s pride.”

“That’s right, in order to repay the Rock Ghost King for his support, we will cut one less tree a day!”

“You guys are so shameless, but I agree with it!”

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Witnessing the players’ discussions in the live chat channel, Lu Wu felt profoundly ashamed. He felt that if the Rock Ghost King was aware of the players’ thoughts, he would probably aid the Evil Army instead and just exterminate these players.

Chapter 152: Restriction On Cutting Down Trees Was Impossible (Part 4)

After the Rock Ghost King led his army to join the battle, the situation devolved into a one-sided attack.

Meanwhile, the players were heading toward the mahogany hut. The battle had persisted for six hours and apart from the Evil Ghost Generals holed up in the Zombie Energy Pillars, the surrounding evil spirits had all been wiped out.

However, there was still no end in sight. Now, the Rock Ghost King was using his gigantic body to strike one of the twelve Zombie Energy Pillars ruthlessly.

However, the Zombie Energy Pillar was exceedingly solid and sturdy. Even with the tremendous strength of the Rock Ghost King’s attacks, it simply refused to collapse.

Meanwhile, the players and Tree Demon Army had surrounded the twelve Zombie Energy Pillars and helped exterminate the newly birthed evils.

No doubt, that matter greatly worried the Rock Ghost King as well. While he was focussing on demolishing the Zombie Energy Pillars, the numbers in his camp would undoubtedly suffer substantial losses while battling against the evil spirits.

Fortunately, there were players there to share the burden of killing the spirits from eight of the Zombie Energy Pillars. The Rock Ghost King’s Tree Demon Army simply needed to tackle the evil spirits from the remaining four pillars. Since the pressure had vastly diminished, that enabled the Rock Ghost King to concentrate solely on destroying the Zombie Energy Pillars.

Under the repeated impact from the Rock Ghost King, a crack finally appeared on the Zombie Energy Pillar.

“Destroy!”

The Rock Ghost King’s hundred-meter tall body rose straight from the ground and landed fiercely on the crumbling Zombie Energy Pillar that was filled with cracks.

“Boom!”

The towering Zombie Energy Pillar finally toppled, releasing a wave of rich zombie energy.

Then, a black orb emerged from the thick mist and soared into the sky.

However, the Rock Ghost King did nothing to obstruct it. He turned toward a second Zombie Energy Pillar and instantly barreled into it.

Needless to say, the players were baffled. They could not comprehend why the Rock Ghost King would let the orb, which could produce zombie energy, free. However, they did not have any players of a flying character class. Thus, there was naturally nothing they could do to stop it.

They could only watch helplessly as the orb, a potential treasure, drifted off.

While the Rock Ghost King was destroying the second Zombie Energy Pillar, the players seemed quite relaxed. Countless mahogany huts dotted the land around the Zombie Energy Pillars that they were guarding. Once new evil spirits were spawned, they did not even have to act before the Door Gods would proactively annihilate them. In the meantime, all they had to do was use their skills at the Zombie Energy Pillars.

However, the Zombie Energy Pillars were ridiculously stubborn. Not only did the attacks from the players inflict zero damage to them, but the Evil Ghost Generals would also occasionally leap out and attack.

Despite that, they could still easily beat them every time.

The satisfaction from grinding monsters made the players quite reluctant to destroy the Zombie Energy Pillars.

However, it merely remained as a thought, since the existence of evil spirits had thoroughly disrupted the balance in Beiqi. Even if all of these Zombie Energy Pillars were destroyed, evil spirits would still prowl on every inch of the Land of Beiqi at this

stage. It would unmistakably be time-consuming to ensure all the spirits were completely eliminated.

“Boom!”

At this moment, a crack surfaced across the second Zombie Energy Pillar. A surge of zombie energy burst from the cracks while a black orb whizzed toward the sky again.

The third pillar...

The fourth pillar...

Just as the Rock Ghost King was about to take down the last Zombie Energy Pillar, Wu Guoyi spoke all of a sudden.

“Rock Ghost King, why don’t we just keep this pillar!”

The Rock Ghost King paused in his tracks and turned his head around to stare at him.

“Why?”

“Its existence can help to reduce...”

Initially, Wu Guoyi had wished to say that the Zombie Energy Pillar might help reduce the frequency of trees in the North Rocks being felled by players. However, before half of the sentence tumbled off his tongue, he realized that it would sound too blunt, so he coughed as a disguise.

“Its existence can help to cut back on our energy consumption?”

“What do you mean?” the Rock Ghost King seemed rather perplexed.

This gave Wu Guoyi a sharp headache as he did not know how to respond. He was afraid that if he said it too directly, he would upset the Rock Ghost King and cause him to murder them all on the spot.

“Sure!” replied the Rock Ghost King out of nowhere.

Wu Guoyi was dumbfounded, as he could not comprehend why the Rock Ghost King would suddenly be so easy-going.

“Still, you guys must promise me that you will never invade the North Rocks. In return, I will approve of your position as Beiqi’s new force.”

“No way, we would rather starve than not cutting down trees!”

“That’s right, that’s right. Logging is the shortcut to immense wealth. Don’t you know that it’s as cruel as killing one’s parents to stop someone from obtaining wealth?”

“Rock Ghost King, this is your fault. Cutting trees and keeping the Zombie Energy Pillar are two entirely different matters. We need trees to upgrade our boats!”

“If worse comes to worst, we could reduce the number of trees felled by one. It’s impossible to stop logging once and for all, as that’s the only way to upgrade our boats.”

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This surprising turn of events thrust the players into fervent discussions. Meanwhile, the branches around the Rock Ghost King came to life menacingly, while a vicious glimmering light flashed in his eyes.

Seeing this, Wu Guoyi announced on the live chat channel, “Stop it, the Rock Ghost King is practically fuming. If you guys want to cut down trees, there’s not a need to speak about it so openly, just keep it to yourself. In the future, you can just sneak in surreptitiously. For now, we must promise him first!”

Instantly, the chat was plunged into total silence.

Then, Wu Guoyi looked at the Rock Ghost King with a solemn face and said, “Alright, I promise you!”

The dancing branches gradually slowed and retracted as the anger in the Rock Ghost King’s eyes seemed to subside. He then stared at Wu Guoyi and said, “I hope that you can keep your promise!”

Wu Guoyi nodded awkwardly.

In actuality, he was merely a temporary commander for the current battle event. Once it ended, he would no longer possess the ability to constrain these players. As such, his promise was not a representation of the agreement with all of the players.

Besides, cutting down trees was the only method for ordinary players to upgrade their boats at this stage. So, it was simply unrealistic to restrict their logging activities.

Moreover, by keeping this Zombie Energy Pillar, it could at least lessen the frequency of players teaming up to cut down trees in the North Rocks. Thus, it would still be considered beneficial for the North Rocks.

After another glance at Wu Guoyi the Rock Ghost King’s massive body rose into the air, as he headed toward the North Rocks. Meanwhile, the Tree Demon Army from below steadily retreated.

When the players saw the situation, they also stowed away their mahogany huts and disbanded. They wanted to stop attacking the last Zombie Energy Pillar for a while.

In fact, the sole purpose behind preserving this Zombie Energy Pillar was not because they would not destroy it anymore. After all, the main quest of the ongoing game content was to destroy all Zombie Energy Pillars to advance.

The most important reason they wanted to keep this Zombie Energy Pillar standing was for its continuous supply of evil spirits, so that players could still kill the monsters and easily level up.

Although there were a few million players now, a majority of them were new players. This meant that their overall strength could not be elevated by much. Furthermore, there were only a handful of areas in inner Beiqi where players could grind evil spirits.

In areas like the North Rocks, which was under the command of a Ghost King, players could only enter sneakily as they would not be able to retaliate.

Hence, by conserving this Zombie Energy Pillar, players could develop and grow by relying on the strength of the evil spirits. This was important and absolutely necessary from Wu Guoyi's point of view.

Of course, this was not his decision alone to make, but rather a decision that was made after discussing with the presidents of several influential guilds.

After all, only when the players' overall strength had increased, their hunting range would expand accordingly.

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In Evil Nightmare City, Little Sha reached out and seized the 11th orb that had fallen from the sky. He shoved it into the Yin Soul Eye Seal and resumed waiting, as he sat in the coffin with his hands tucked under his cheeks.

Then, he waited for a very long time...

Little Sha gazed up at the sky blankly.

"Did it lose its way?"

Chapter 153: Incompatible (Part 5)

After the battle between the players and the evil spirits, a new idea materialized in Lu Wu's mind. It was to subdue the Rock Ghost King for their own use.

After all, what Lu Wu lacked most now was a real dominant power.

Although the Beiqi Army was already considerably powerful, it was still quite weak when facing high-level enemies.

Just like in this current battle, when confronted with an Evil Ghost General, if a player did not possess enough strength to slay it immediately, then the evil would not be eliminated.

Similarly, when a player encountered other powerful creatures, they could be easily defeated. However, it was not a child's play if you wished to keep or kill it.

Currently, there was no one of Ghost Commander Level or above worth showing off on Lu Wu's side, apart from Tong Gua, whose power was remarkably unstable. This was an absolute disadvantage for a player's power.

Therefore, Lu Wu started to ponder if he could tame the Rock Ghost King as part of the power of Beiqi for his own use, then digitize them. If that was successful, he would be able to make up for the players' weakness, allowing the overall strength of the Beiqi Army to rise to another level.

Of course, this was merely one of Lu Wu's many plans for future development. After all, there was still no corresponding power and strength to implement it.

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The day after the evil invasion crisis ended...

The three-month exclusive authorization signed by Lu Wu and Wu Guoyi had finally reached its expiration date.

These few days, Lu Wu would receive plenty of calls from other gaming platforms each day, in hopes of negotiating for cooperation.

This gave Lu Wu an intense headache, but he naturally would not refuse. After all, this was helpful in promoting the game.

Needless to say, Lu Wu would not give any of these platforms conditions for cooperation that were as great as those he offered Wu Guoyi. In addition to not providing advertising fees, he also stipulated that these few platforms must allow the game Battle Online to appear once a month on the promotional page of their homepage.

In comparison to the terms and conditions that other games put forth for paid advertisements on said platforms, Lu Wu's demand was undoubtedly harsher.

This time, however, none of the platforms rejected Lu Wu's suggestion.

This was because anyone who had gaming knowledge and had experienced the game itself knew how impactful the game would be in the future.

Besides, Lu Wu rejected all suggestions for a face-to-face discussion by the gaming platforms. He ordered for the contracts to be mailed to him, as he refused to discuss them in person.

He did not have that much time to meet them one by one.

After spending a tedious couple of days to read through and sign the several heaps of contracts, Lu Wu could finally let out a sigh of relief.

However, that was not the end of Lu Wu's duties. Once he managed to settle the cooperation matters with local gaming platforms, another swarm of foreign game developers constantly called him, hoping to obtain authorization as international agents as soon as possible.

Yet, Lu Wu turned them all down after detailed discussions.

The reason was pretty simple. The way that they planned to promote Battle Online was different from what Lu Wu had in mind.

The terms that they proposed were basically a one-time buyout of foreign operating rights of the game, on top of a request to activate the soul coin top-up function in the foreign version for profit.

Though they offered high prices, even he himself was short on soul coins. So how could he possibly let them put it on sale? Hence, he declined without a second thought.

However, now the problem was that if the soul coin top-up function was not activated, foreign agents would not be able to use the game Battle Online to earn money. That way, no profit could be generated for them. Not to mention the costly agent fees that they were required to pay, which made this, all in all, a loss-making trade.

Hence, they came up with the buyout system. If they run the game on a buyout system, as long as the game content was attractive enough, it would still be profitable for them.

However, Lu Wu still refused in the end, as a one-off buyout would surely drive out a portion of players. Besides, it was also not agreeable to him.

Lu Wu's firm attitude dismissed a fraction of the agents. But soon, new foreign gaming agents approached him. They made it clear that they could give up the game top-up and buyout system, but asked to slot advertisements into the game in exchange. This was their strategy to make a profit.

Lu Wu still declined the offer.

After all, the gaming agents merely desired profit, while Lu Wu actually cared about how the players' strength could be raised. If advertisements were planted into the game, it would unmistakably tarnish the game experience. So, Lu Wu refused again.

After rejecting all the calls from foreign gaming agents, Lu Wu was faced with a challenging issue. How could he promote the game overseas?

As if he could read Lu Wu's mind and sense his troubles, Wu Guoyi called him that day. He told Lu Wu that he had a plan to expand the gaming platform's market, Platform173, as well as taking in a handful of agents for Battle Online.

Wu Guoyi's idea was simple.

He was optimistic about Battle Online and felt that the game could gain immense fame overseas. It was as simple as that.

As for profits, he had never once thought to count on Battle Online. What he truly wanted was for this game to boost the impact of their platform abroad, thereby driving income from the other sources.

After Lu Wu seriously considered his proposal, he decided to formally cooperate with Wu Guoyi. This was because Wu Guoyi proved that he would not interfere with any progress in the game and at the same time, as an old player, he clearly knew that Lu Wu would never agree with the top-up path.

Although he had always been unclear about Lu Wu's thought processes...

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After finalizing the matter concerning foreign agencies, Lu Wu received another call from the Black Sea Corporation, informing him that the gaming pods would be officially launched in five days.

Meanwhile, the Jie De Corporation's gaming pods were already officially on sale.

On the day of the release, the Jie De Corporation announced to the public that the game was collaborating with all well-known local game developers. As a result, they could now cancel an array of default limitations set in the game, such as safety timing.

At the same time, they also showcased a series of functions in the gaming pod to the media.

One such feature involved the gaming pods using nutrient solutions to supplement the basic bodily needs of the players after prolonged gaming periods. Another feature

demonstrated muscle exercises in order to prevent muscle atrophy. The list was exhaustive.

The emergence of gaming pods instantly exhilarated a majority of domestic players, especially those who had long been dissatisfied with the set safety timing limit of twelve hours on Battle Online. After engaging in the forum discussions, they began to purchase the Jie De Corporation's gaming pods.

On the first day of release, they had received a whopping four million orders for the gaming pods. Thus, they hastily shipped out the stock they had prepared beforehand in large batches. The higher-ups in the Jie De Corporation realized that staying one step ahead indeed gave them a huge advantage. On the other hand, the Black Sea Corporation could only watch helplessly as their market share elapsed, for they lagged behind.

However, the Jie De Corporation did not expect a significant horde of players to post negative feedback about how disappointing the gaming pods were on their official website. They complained that it was incompatible with game operations.

Confronted by this situation, the Jie De Corporation immediately launched an investigation to track down and interrogate players who gave poor ratings.

The Jie De Corporation's leaders fell silent after consolidating the results of player feedback.

The reasons behind the low ratings from players requesting refunds were roughly uniform, "Unable to run Battle Online, it's bad!"

They never anticipated that the gaming pods' inability to run Battle Online would cause such a huge effect.

Following the incident, they commenced a meeting without delay. At last, they hurriedly ordered the technical department to demolish the shield in Battle Online.

However, just as they thought the problem was finally resolved, the players' feedback started to become even more intense. Now, the number of people demanding a refund had gradually surged to about two million.

If the gaming pods were incompatible with game operations, then these players demanding the removal of gaming restrictions could simply wait for them to fix the bug.

Unfortunately, the current problem was that even though Battle Online could be downloaded into the gaming pods, once the game icon was clicked, players would be greeted with a game notification that said,

"This game is not compatible with this device!"

Chapter 154: The Counterattack Of The Black Sea Corporation

Meanwhile, in the conference room of Jie De Technology Corporation headquarters.

The company's upper management was focused on the data graphs displayed on the screen.

Their faces grew sour when they saw the increasing number of returns. The situation at hand was far more serious than they had envisioned.

At present, the number of unsubscribes had surpassed four million. According to the collected statistics, all of the problems had basically arisen due to the incompatibility to run the game Battle Online.

They had not anticipated harm to themselves when they initially put restrictions on Battle Online.

However, when they recognized the problem and removed the shield, they found out that the game was not compatible with the gaming pods.

Since the gaming pods had just been released, the advantage that the Jie De Corporation originally possessed would be utterly lost if the Black Sea Corporation officially launched its gaming pods while the market was unstable.

Under such circumstances, the company's technology department burned the midnight oil to uncover the problem. However, Battle Online was still incompatible.

Thus, they eventually realized that the problem was with Battle Online, rather than the gaming pods.

Immediately, they contacted Wu Guoyi, as he was the one who facilitated their collaboration with many large companies. Hence, only he would know the game manager's contact information.

Upon receiving the Jie De Corporation's request, Wu Guoyi dialed Lu Wu's cell at once and informed him that the corporate manager wanted to invite him over to talk about the game compatibility issue.

However, Lu Wu refused without a second thought.

Although he had always been quite work-oriented, it was no surprise that he fought back, since it was the Jie De Corporation that first cracked down on Battle Online.

Furthermore, he was merely an insignificant person for now, so he did not want to have any appointments.

At this time, the players were insulting the gaming pods furiously in the Battle Online forum:

Invincible_Loneliness: "The gaming pod is a piece of garbage, claiming to be able to stay online all day? I've canceled my subscription. I really got so happy over nothing."

Crayon_Shinchan: "Another avant-garde game product has just been released. All the users are praising it, let's all buy that. (funny)"

Watermelon_Taro: "I, a poor dog, reluctantly bought one too after seeing everyone purchasing it. Now, it's telling me it's not compatible. I almost bashed it in! Why would I need such a useless thing?"

Xueli_The_Strongest: "It seems that the number of buyers in this forum is nearly four million. I've just checked the Jie De Corporation's official website and almost all the post-sales bad reviews are basically saying that it isn't compatible with Battle Online."

Peppa_Boar replied to Xueli_The_Strongest: "I guess it's only us who need things like gaming pods the most. Other games' security limits are simply not as crazy scary as Battle Online, so basically, more than 80% of players in this forum ordered it, but the result is rather disappointing."

Broke_Trash: "Believe it or not, I've already prepared several boxes of nutrient solutions for my few-month hibernation plans, but in the end... (flips table)!"

Crayon_Shinchan replied to Broke_Trash: "Hibernation is a good word (funny)!"

Assassin_Creed: "If a gaming pod that's compatible with Battle Online exists, trust me, I would sleep for a year. (funny)"

Crayon_Shinchan replied to Assassin_Creed: "Only if you don't die in a year. (funny)"

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In such a grave situation, the Jie De Corporation repeatedly begged Wu Guoyi to help, but Lu Wu's attitude was firm and he simply gave them the cold shoulder. In the end, the helpless Jie De Corporation came to Battle Online's official web forum and sent a letter of apology to Lu Wu through their suggestion inbox.

Even with that, Lu Wu didn't buy it.

In his head, Lu Wu was clear that if it was not for Battle Online's high popularity among its users, it would probably be destroyed by the Jie De Technology Corporation's firewall this time.

Hence, if the Jie De Technology Corporation's initial intention was to bring him down, a letter of apology by itself would not solve the problem.

So, Lu Wu replied to him with a letter.

The contents were simple. If the Jie De Technology Corporation was willing to take out 5% of the profits from their gaming pods, the developers of Battle Online might be able to work overnight to fix the ongoing incompatibility bug.

Lu Wu's conditions greatly angered the upper management of the Jie De Technology Corporation. All of them declared in the meeting that they were not going to compromise.

However, the crisis was not over yet.

The day after Lu Wu responded to the email, players in Battle Online were all taken back by surprise when an advertisement for the Black Sea Technology Corporation's gaming pods appeared on the game's login interface.

In addition to the gaming pod's many uses, the advertisement also held a message that players cared about the most.

(This gaming pod is perfectly compatible with running Battle Online. By using this gaming pod to log into the game, the 12-hour safe gaming time limit would be lifted.)

The news inevitably sent players into a frenzy again.

After seeing an official assurance that it would work perfectly, the bulk of orders through in-game links hit the Black Sea Corporation like a wave.

Within a single day, the Black Sea Technology Corporation received more than four million orders.

At this point, even the Black Sea Corporation was quite flustered by the overwhelming response.

They thought they were about to lose the battle against the Jie De Corporation, but the tables have turned.

Moreover, the background data indicated that 99% of these orders were directed from the links in Battle Online.

The huge surprise caught the managers of the Black Sea Corporation off guard. After recovering from the shock, they instantly began to prepare their counterattack against the Jie De Technology Corporation. They took the initiative to contact Lu Wu, hoping to cooperate with him in terms of their gaming pods.

After all, the key to this counterattack was Battle Online, which had provided them with countless orders.

This time, they came up with three cooperation strategies for Lu Wu to choose from.

First, awarding a special title with the purchase of a gaming pod.

Second, awarding a certain amount of soul coins with the purchase of a gaming pod.

Third, rewarding additional event quests with the purchase of a gaming pod and upon completion, the players could gain hidden character classes.

At the same time, the Black Sea Corporation also promised to cover for the expenses for all the rewards sent out, in hopes to elevate the influence of their gaming pods.

However, Lu Wu rejected all of them.

Lu Wu was well aware of the Black Sea Corporation's thinking, but it was his principle that outsiders cannot interfere with the game progress.

In the eyes of the Black Sea Corporation, these three conditions could be easily done by Lu Wu.

In reality, Lu Wu was unable to do that. Other than the special title which he could freely issue, generating soul currency and hidden character classes as bonus rewards were simply unrealistic.

If these were made into rewards, especially the hidden character class, Lu Wu was very sure that all players would purchase the gaming pod.

Even the bosses of many major guilds had not come across the opportunity to obtain a hidden character class, not to mention a gaming pod. As such, the rich players would gladly accept the price even if it was marketed at ten times or a hundred times the current price.

Besides, if it was put on sale, Lu Wu could have chosen to sell the hidden character classes directly instead of binding them to the gaming pods.

Although Lu Wu could easily distribute large batches of bonus special titles, this would also affect his game settings.

After all, it did not matter if the attributes of the titles increased the experience achieved from fighting monsters or the character attributes, it would still cost Lu Wu soul coins.

Even increasing the number of free Instance Dungeons or free transports alone would still pose a bad deal for Lu Wu.

Currently, Lu Wu did not need much real money, as long as he had enough to spend. What he needed and lacked most were soul coins.

In addition, this collaboration for promotion would provide Lu Wu with 5% of the profit as long as the Black Sea Corporation's gaming pod was purchased through the built-in link in the game, according to the provisions of the contract.

That was a large sum in itself, which would be enough to cover his expenses.

The Black Sea Corporation was somewhat stunned regarding Lu Wu's rejection, but they eventually relented.

On the other side, the Jie De Technology Corporation was thrown into pandemonium.

They had just discovered that they'd lost an enormous amount of orders to the Black Sea Corporation.

The main reason was solely because of the game Battle Online.

Chapter 155: Lunar New Year's Event

The Black Sea Corporation was busy shipping out gaming pods while the Jie De Technology Corporation was still struggling with its own issues.

Gamers who got their hands on the gaming pods were undoubtedly thrilled as the 12-hour security shutdown of the server was over as promised by the officials of Battle Online.

The forum was flooded with good reviews for the gaming pods by the Black Sea Corporation.

Broke_Trash: "Awesome! We can finally hibernate, everybody. See you in spring (waving emoji)!"

Assassin_Creed: "You guys are not going to believe this. I've hired a maintenance man to come over on a regular basis to renew the nutrient solution for me. I hereby announce that I'm going to sleep for a whole year! (smirking emoji)"

Crayon_Shinchan replied to Assassin_Creed: "Farewell, young man!"

Xueli_The_Strongest: "I returned the gaming pod of the Jie De Corporation and bought the one from the Black Sea Corporation. As expected, the official recommendation did not disappoint (happy~)"

Watermelon_Taro: "I'm feeling good~ Life has never been so good..."

Cabuda: "I'm so tempted because of you guys. I'm currently saving up to get one, too!"

As the players were excited over the gaming pods, Lu Wu launched the Lunar New Year's event inside the game.

[Lunar New Year's Event Launch Notice]:

Event One – Limited Time Auction for New Year's Fashion Sets

Details: A limited time auction of three different styles of fashion sets will be available every night during the event period (Each style is limited to 1,000 pieces, and the top bid is 150,000 dragon coins, each player is limited to one set.)

Event Two – Collection of Fashion Fragments

Details: Killing a monster in the game gives a chance to drop fashion fragments during the event period (the more powerful the monster, the higher the chance to drop fashion fragments). 288 fashion fragments can be synthesized into one of the three fashion sets in the Event Messenger Area.

Introduction of Fashion Sets: With all fashion items from synthesis or auctions as the starter, a certain number of fashion fragments can be used for upgrading or improvisation of appearance.

Event Three – Random Lunar New Year Lucky Money Red Envelopes

Details: There will be chances to obtain lucky money through hidden red envelopes in all areas of Beiqi during the event period. A random number of soul coins between 1 to 1,000 will be rewarded from collecting and opening the red envelopes.

Event Four – Chasing Off the Legendary Nian Beast

Details: A Level 200 monster (the legendary Nian Beast) will be spawned in the Land of Beiqi every hour during the event period. A Blue, Red or Purple Level 55 weapon (randomized), soul coins (randomized), and New Year Messenger title (very low chance) will be dropped upon its death.

Nian Beast: Extremely low damage with very high health.

Note: Players' rewards will be in conjunction with the damage done to the Nian Beast and will go directly into players' personal channels.

The three sets of outfits yet to be released were displayed under the event details.

These three sets were all designed by the omnipotent Bei Li. Lu Wu named them Winter Dance of the Crane, General Dragon's Armor, and Fallen Glory, respectively.

Despite having more than ten sets of outfits for Lu Wu to choose for his template, he only chose these three – the main reason being the desire to cater to the setting of the game.

These three sets had one same characteristic – all of them emitted an ancient charm.

The players were all excited after looking at the three fashion sets. Some players who were professional fashion designers even commented on the outfits with their own opinion in the forum.

[I'm a professional fashion designer. I am in love with these three sets of outfits even though I'm picky. Battle Online has never failed to surprise me, I love it so much! (kisses~)] (Author: AdorkableCluelessGirl)

Well, let me share my opinion on these three fashion sets and give some advice to players who wanted to get a set but didn't know which to choose.

First of all, I'm going to review the first set of the three, called Winter Dance of the Crane.

Fashion Review: The design of this set's appearance is closely related to the theme. The simple yet elegant white which represented the coldness of snow, the edge of the cuffs embellished with crane feathers, coupled with the scarlet color on the hair, was more than perfect as it vividly depicts the image of red-crowned cranes. I just have to give it to the graphic designers of Battle Online that they are absolutely the world's top.

My Proposal: It's a must-buy! What? You don't have the money? Just sell your house, your car, or even your own body. It's Lunar New Year, you really should spend some cash in the game to get new clothes!

The next review is on the second set, the domineering outfit called General Dragon's Armor.

Fashion Review: This set is full of a general style. The dragon on the helmet was shaped in a way as if it could take down the world in fury, not to mention the red tassel flowing like hair. The shoulders, chest, and waist are decorated with ferocious animal heads. The metal texture on the knee shield and the armor scales on both sides highlighted the hardness, with a cloak covering the iron copper body from the back.

Even a player who looks weak will instantly appear tall and strong in it. Also, the string tassel that hung low seems to add some gentleness to this thick armor.

My Proposal: Although this set has both a female and male version, it suits male players with tall figures. Wearing it will make you look more mighty and powerful~ I have only one piece of advice. Reload and buy!

Last but not least, my favorite set which is called Fallen Glory.

Fashion Review: This outfit has lavender, lilac, and ivory white as the main tones, which make it appear elegant and chic. The design of the long wide sleeves and slim waistline brought out the ancient charm even more. All the tiny details are remarkable, the butterfly accessory around the waist matches the butterfly embroidery on the shoulder edges perfectly. The softly tailored round toe boots and other details give this set an overall mild and gentle aura like a nice cup of tea, portraying elegance.

My Proposal: Ding~ Sold my house, my car, and my boyfriend! Draw your swords and get ready to fight for the fashion auction tonight!

After reviewing the three sets, I am dying to own these fashion icons, I really like them!

Those who aren't able to get them from the auction, don't be sad. You can still own one of these cool sets by collecting fashion fragments to synthesize one within the specified date.

However, these dazzling sets are only in starter form and they can be upgraded by collecting fashion fragments. They are so irresistible, I am desperate to get one right now.

So, where are my Beiqi Army comrades? Let's kill wild mobs to get these sets!

Finally, I wish all gamers a happy Lunar New Year!

Also, I wish that all of your powers are cut off and your gaming pods explode when the fashion auction starts so that none of you can take it from me (gentle smiling face emoji)!

Replies:

Invincible_Loneliness: "Although this player is a bit black-hearted, she is indeed a professional. Looking at how she praised it, I feel like getting a set of General Dragon's Armor now even though I wasn't really interested in fashion. As for money (sinister laugh emoji), I hope that someone can defeat me, it's so lonely to be on top!"

Crayon_Shinchan lonely replied to Invincible_Loneliness: "Please take care of me during the event tonight! (smirking emoji)"

Invincible_Loneliness replied to Crayon_Shinchan: "I've been enduring you for a long time. Leave your username if you dare, I'm trying to teach you some manners!"

Crayon_Shinchan replied to Invincible_Loneliness: "You should look for it yourself. I'll give in if you're able to do so. (smirking emoji)"

Watermelon_Taro: "The poorest member of this forum is shrinking into a corner once again and starting to cry silently. My heart is distorted from jealousy due to the lack of riches. I need money, need! (crying emoji)"

Xueli_The_Strongest: "This is a war between the rich, I'm looking at my poor boyfriend silently and accepting that I can only collect fashion fragments to synthesize one in order to own a set (crying emoji). Damn it, I want to get Fallen Glory so badly after your praise, I hate you so much (teeth gritting emoji)!"

Peppa_Boar: "Smiling silently here, I'm ready to buy a set on the spot, things that can be settled with money is never an issue. I'd buy the hidden character class too if it's on sale, no matter how much it costs."

A_Large_Wolfdog: "What!?! (confused emoji)"

Invincible_Loneliness replied to A_Large_Wolfdog: "Doggy... don't cry. This event doesn't seem to have anything to do with you."

A_Large_Wolfdog replied to Invincible_Loneliness: "(Flips table) Don't stop me, I've given up on myself, I want to destroy the world!"

Crayon_Shinchan replied to A_Large_Wolfdog: "I can't stop laughing, haha, let me comfort you, don't cry..."

A_Large_Wolfdog replied to Crayon_Shinchan: "Leave your username if you dare! (gaze of a large black dog.JPG)"

Gamers had started discussing the fashion sets in the forum even though the event had not even officially started.

Chapter 156: Fashion Auction

While the players were on the edges of their seats as the time was approaching, Lu Wu finally granted access to the portal for players to purchase Fashion Shop dragon coins with cash.

The players' top-up orders came rushing at the moment the portal was made available.

If it was not for Lu Wu's battle artifact which was a special server, he believed that his original game server would have crashed a long time ago.

The sum of top-up orders reached a whopping total of 3,000,000,000 dragon coins within an hour. There were almost 6,000,000 players at that point, which meant the top-up amount had not even reached its peak yet. The top-up orders were still rushing in and the top-up total was still rising.

Even Lu Wu was dumbfounded due to the mind-blowing top-up total.

If this continued, he was sure that the top-up total would easily exceed 10,000,000,000 when the Fashion Shop officially launched.

This was the first time Lu Wu realized that making money was as easy as pie.

However, Lu Wu would definitely not disappoint the players' trust toward Battle Online.

Lu Wu issued a notice beforehand to the players who would later ask for refunds of their dragon coins as a result of losing bids. The notice assured that dragon coins could be re-exchanged for cash.

After all, the dragon coins could only be used during the fashion events and they were pretty much useless at other times.

Lu Wu planned to make fashion events like this a weekly activity instead of only granting access to the features that allowed players to collect fashion pieces and bid on limited edition fashion during events and celebrations. He decided that these fashion events would be held every Wednesday.

Lu Wu did not need to spend a single soul coin to create fashion items. He only needed to use an artifact to create a prop to collect the fashion fragments when a player had killed a mob.

It literally needed no cost.

The colossal amount of top-ups opened Lu Wu's eyes to the violence and brutality of business.

The event was about to start.

The passionate players in the forum were caring for each other, asking one another if their game consoles were fine, and if they were able to log in to the game.

However, the forum turned into deafening silence with two minutes to spare.

All the players were focused on the Fashion column in the shop, which was still gray at the time. The air was full of suspense as they were waiting for the auction to officially start.

Lu Wu was also observing the players' behaviors. He wanted to see if there would be a surprising and remarkable outcome from this event which was about to be normalized.

All the players immediately clicked on the Fashion column the moment a thread of color appeared on the gray shop column.

The players were full of excitement while looking at the three fashion sets which were officially launched. Each of them started choosing the sets to bid on.

However, the Fashion Shop turned gray again before they could click on anything!

A game message popped up...

[Server Announcement. The three sets for today's event are sold out. The highest bidder is 150,000 dragon coins, the lowest is 150,000 dragon coins. The total amount sold were 3,000 sets. The limited-time fashion auction has ended.]

Lu Wu was taken by surprise.

The players were confused.

Not only was Lu Wu shocked, but the players were also practically stunned.

In their eyes, the Fashion Shop shut down after it was launched for only a short moment.

The players were angered and flocked into the forum to get some insight.

Invincible_Loneliness: "Damn, thank God I immediately bid the highest amount at 150,000 dragon coins once I got into Fashion Shop. That was nerve-racking, they've sold out instantly."

Peppa_Boar: "Wow, I'm shaken up. Did these 3,000 sets only take ten seconds, heck, even five seconds, to be sold out? My internet speed is fast – are all of you hackers or something?"

Xueli_The_Strongest: "(Facepalm emoji) I gave it a try with 10,000 dragon coins. Fashion Shop shut down before I could click anything. I cannot deal with this."

AdorkableCluelessGirl: "Hehe, thankfully I foresaw this and dumped 150,000, the highest bid straight. I was so close to losing my love, the Fallen Glory... I feel great~"

Your_Husband replied to Innocent_Girl: "If it was not for your recommendation, the site might be up for a few seconds more and I could have gotten a set, too. (Blood dripping knife emoji)"

Battle_Angel: "Crying here, I bid 100,000 dragon coins for the Winter Dance of the Crane outfit and I thought I could pause for a moment before raising the bid. Who knew the site would crash within five seconds? It was already too late when I noticed. I regret not bidding more. Please have another auction."

Autumn_Leaves_In_Luoyang: "That was amazing! I got a set of Fallen Glory, thanks to my wise provision that this would happen. All sold out in five seconds, that's some scary shit."

NeverGoingBack: "I managed to get it... *silently passes by* Let me just show it off and laugh at all you green-eyed monsters. (image of fashion set)"

Chaotic_Disturbance: "**Stomping and beating own chest* I missed my chance to show off! I started off with 150,000, too, but I was one step behind."

Watermelon_Taro: "The war between the rich is crazy. May I ask where your money came from? I want to be like you guys and throw money wherever I want to. (jealous)"

Speechless_Heart: "Since it's the Lunar New Year, I wonder if you guys trained your speed by finding hidden red envelopes. I feel attacked, it is impossible to buy anything now. I am ready to do labor for money in the wild. Thankfully, I saved myself a Zombie Energy Pillar. I am prepared to use my blood, sweat, and tears to get myself a set too in these few days."

Crayon_Sinchan: "My liver is going off soon. Thank God I got myself a gaming pod, I am not going offline for a few days, I don't care. I am prepared to slay all the mobs and get the fashion fragments."

The event ended after only five seconds. Many players broke down in tears once they found out the reason.

Nonetheless, the reality could not be changed. They knew that they could only obtain the fashion sets by spamming for the fragments while losing sleep. Hence, they left the Mansion of the Dead, their eyes red and swollen as they started searching for any wild monsters to kill.

That was the day the army of the Fourth Disaster marched out of the safe zone from the Mansion of The Dead. They were prepared to start a war in Beiqi.

Right then, a game notification appeared.

[Server Announcement. The Nian Beast has spawned. Search coordinates from Burial Grounds.]

This notification rocked the players' world. The crowd rushed toward the portal in the Mansion of The Dead instantly.

The Burial Grounds was packed within a split second.

"Nian Beast! Where is the Nian Beast? Let me touch it!"

"Stop pushing me! Look at your map and coordinates. Get out of my way."

"I cannot afford to die so easily this time. Let me touch it at least, it would all be worth it. Everyone gets out of the way!"

Thousands of players swarmed into the Burial Grounds like locusts toward the Nian Beast's spawning spot.

Right at that moment, a humongous creature, fiery red in color, was padding around the area south of the Burial Grounds.

The sudden rush of the player army from the north startled the Nian Beast. It let out a frustrated roar before charging toward the players.

Wang Damang who was at the front line suddenly went pale. He came to a realization that he had been running too fast, he was about to become as dead as a dodo soon.

The Nian Beast was already very near to him and finally bumped into his body, causing him to be thrown a few feet away.

He landed on the ground hard. However, to his surprise, he realized that his health bar only dropped less than one third, which meant that the fall did not cause much damage to him.

Looking at the other players who were rushing toward the Nian Beast, he immediately stood up and rushed over. Since he already knew that the Nian Beast could only cause mild damage, he had nothing to be afraid of.

It was as Wang Damang predicted, the Nian Beast was indeed a New Year's gift from Lu Wu to the players.

Due to the fact that the Nian Beast could not cause much damage, it was impossible for it to kill the players. However, its own health bar was higher than ever.

After the Nian Beast was killed, the rewards for the players were calculated according to the ratio of their damage to the beast's total health.

Chapter 157: The Curious Hydra King

Although the Nian Beast which spawned in the Burial Grounds had a very high defense and health, it could not hold for more than ten minutes when faced with the attack of millions of players.

Meanwhile, a game message appeared in the players' minds.

The players had either received soul coin rewards or weapons and equipment. None of the players received the special award this time, which made them feel pitiful. However, they knew that they still had a chance since the event had just begun.

Seeing the smiles on the players' faces, Lu Wu also smiled with joy.

He had worked hard in advance to create a festive atmosphere of Lunar New Year for the players in the game. The Mansion of the Dead which was originally surrounded by a cold atmosphere was now red with decorations like Chinese-style ornaments, lucky banners, and lanterns. It was filled with the Lunar New Year's atmosphere.

However, the Mansion of the Dead was basically empty due to the launching of the Lunar New Year events, and all of the players had stepped out of the Mansion of the Dead to work hard for their potential rewards.

The players were very occupied that night. Aside from looking for hidden Lunar New Year's red envelopes with lucky money inside and killing wild monsters in order to collect the fashion fragments, they had to rush to attack the Nian Beast which was set to respawn randomly every hour.

The whole Land of Beiqi was full of players scurrying around.

The players' movement had naturally attracted the attention of many Beiqi forces.

However, they had become accustomed to the weird behaviors of this new force. They were fine with it as long as they were not provoking them.

.....

Ascension Zone, East Side of Beiqi.

The Hydra King lowered his head while devouring a fanged boar. He raised his head suddenly when the boar was half-eaten.

A crowd of players a distance away was rushing toward his direction.

Although the Hydra King was not intimidated by this new force of Beiqi, he had no intention to mess with it.

The gamers had done two things that concerned him.

Firstly, they killed Cha Na who was not to be underestimated although he was only a Ghost General because he was about to break through the Ghost King's Territory. The new force's ability to kill Cha Na implied that they could beat someone at the level of a Ghost King.

Secondly, the players prevented the invasion of evil.

Although it was done with the help of the Rock Ghost King, the fact that these players were able to negotiate with the Rock Ghost King was remarkable.

After all, he knew the Rock Ghost King's character well. To be able to talk to him, the gamers must have obviously caught his attention on the basis of their abilities.

Although the Hydra King was confident that he could achieve these two things as well since he was already a Ghost King and he had the strength similar to the gamers. He assumed that the gamers would be at the same level as a Ghost King although he was not clear of their exact strength.

Therefore, the Hydra King had never taken the initiative to provoke the new force in Beiqi.

However, with such an extensive attack, the Hydra King realized that a war was about to happen. He immediately raised his head with a furious expression.

It was impossible for him to give up on the Ascension Zone since he had been staying in this area for many years. Since the players had the guts to invade his territory, then they could only settle it with war.

The Hydra King let out a loud roar and ascended into the air when the players stepped into the Ascension Zone. He was about to sweep over the players.

However, the following scene made him stunned.

These millions of players did not even bother him at all. They were shouting and screaming in the open space while demonstrating various skills.

Also, they seemed to be in a very fierce battle.

The Hydra King was stupefied upon witnessing the scene. He immediately looked at the area where the players attacked to look for their target. However, no matter how he looked, there was no other creature in that area.

The performance of the players was so real as if they were really slaughtering each other. The Hydra King rubbed his eyes and fell into an incomprehensible state.

Lu Wu could not help but laugh after looking at that scene.

The Nian Beast was condensed by an artifact so it was not an actual object. It was just like an illusion which only the players could see. The Hydra King clearly misunderstood something here.

Realizing that the players' target was not him, the Hydra King paused mid-air and he did not launch an attack on the players. He only stared at the players while trying to make sense of what they were doing.

Time passed... the Hydra King was unsure whether he was blind or the players below were blind.

As a Ghost King, he could see even the tiny worms wriggling on the ground clearly although he was in mid-air. Moreover, he had nine heads. Even if a pair of his eyes had really gone blind, it was impossible for his remaining sixteen eyes to be blind, too.

However, there were millions of players and ten million eyes below. Comparing the total number of eyes, the Hydra King thought that he was more likely to be blind.

After spectating for about ten minutes, the players who were attacking frantically stopped their attacks at the same time with smiles on their faces.

Then, the players dispersed into different directions like a tide.

The Hydra King was utterly confused.

Staring at the ground which was plowed by the players' spells, the Hydra King could not control his curiosity and flew over.

He then checked the ground carefully. He even plowed the land and searched all over it. However, he could not find a single corpse except for a few small bugs.

It made him even more baffled.

The Hydra King who had no idea what was going on looked at the half-eaten fanged boar in a distance. He had lost his appetite.

It was terrible when one's curiosity was not fed with an answer.

.....

Beiqi's Mansion of the Dead.

Two figures went online and appeared in the empty safe zone.

Another figure appeared in the resurrection point.

Looking at Murphy and Little Pomelo in front of him, Hu He grit his teeth while stomping.

“Enough. It’s Lunar New Year, can’t we just play peacefully? Is there an enmity between us that you guys have to kill the event that I created?”

Murphy and Little Pomelo did not reply. They only stared at Hu He who was dancing at the resurrection point.

“Fine, just wait and see when I refine a Hiderigami. I will surely teach you guys a lesson.”

Facing the persistent assassin couple, Hu He felt like he was about to get murdered.

He initially thought that it was a good opportunity for him to escape when all players left the Mansion of the Dead. Who would have thought that this would happen?

“Can’t you guys just give me a way out?” Hu He spoke again.

Murphy and Little Pomelo still remained silent and stared at him.

“We’ll see!” Hu He said and stomped again before he went offline.

Little Murphy heaved a sigh of relief after Hu He left.

“Let’s complete our quests. I don’t think that he will be online anytime soon.”

“Alright!”

As the two were preparing to leave the safe zone, a Skill Instructor carried some of the Wood Spirit Clan’s wine and walked past them with a smile.

“Wait, Instructor!” Murphy called out to the Skill Instructor all of a sudden.

The Skill Instructor turned his head in puzzlement.

“Instructor, we would like to master the Prajñā Scarification!”

The Skill Instructor remained silent.

“Instructor, you must be familiar with the skill. We really wish to master the Prajñā Scarification. We have long wanted to ask for your insight.”

Looking at the two's sincere faces, the Skill Instructor smiled awkwardly.

"I don't know about that!"

"No, you are so well-skilled, it's impossible for you to be unfamiliar with the Prajñā Scarification. There must be some hidden quest to be completed in order to trigger the tutorial, so please assign us the quest. We will try our best to complete it no matter how tough it is."

Murphy and Little Pomelo's facial expression was sincere as they were humbly asking for advice.

The Skill Instructor was in tears internally at the moment. To be frank, he wanted to master that skill, too, but he really couldn't.

Chapter 158: A Fatal Attack

Millions of players were scrambling everywhere while following the event messages during the Lunar New Year event.

It was a strange phenomenon that was quite peculiar for the other forces in the Land of Beiqi to watch. Millions of players would suddenly rush to an area and perform various skills in the air every hour.

The Rock Ghost King who had the most contact with the gamers was the most calm. Other than him, all the other forces in the Land of Beiqi were dumbfounded, especially the Hydra King in the Ascension Zone.

It had appeared three times when the players collectively rushed in and attacked the air madly in one night.

The Hydra King felt like he was going crazy with this group of gamers that night.

He even had the impulse to take the initiative to attack and destroy all these creatures.

.....

Skill instructing room in the safe zone – the Mansion of the Dead.

"Instructor, I think we can really try and learn."

Skill Instructor Qu Feng took a sip of Wood Spirit wine. Running out of things to say, he kept staring at Murphy and Little Pomelo in front of him. He was fed up for they still refused to believe that he'd really not mastered the skill.

"Do you guys really want to learn?"

“Yes!” the two of them were astonished as they thought that the Skill Instructor was finally going to teach them.

“Let me tell you something... I heard that Tong Gua from the casting workshop on the opposite side of the street had met with the Cursed Clan who knew how to perform the Prajñā Scarification. I’m sure that he knows how to practice it. Maybe you guys can try to ask him... and by the way, please don’t mention me.”

Murphy and Little Pomelo’s expression tensed up upon hearing that. They nodded sternly before turning away and walked across the street.

Qu Feng heaved a sigh of relief and retrieved the wine flask as he felt that the crisis had been averted. However, he spat out the freshly-poured wine in his mouth before he could swallow when he noticed the two persistent individuals had turned up at his door once again just staring at him.

“What’s the matter now?” Qu Feng wiped his clothes and asked abjectly.

“Instructor, you forgot to assign the quest to us. We did not receive any game message saying that the hidden quest is on.”

Qu Feng was speechless.

“It’s not a quest, it’s merely a guide. The hidden quest should be with Master Tong Gua. Hurry up.”

“Oh! You may continue enjoying your wine, instructor. We’ll get a carton of Wood Spirit wine to honor you once we have mastered the skill.”

Qu Feng nodded quickly upon hearing that.

The two followed Qu Feng’s instructions and appeared outside Tong Gua’s casting workshop in a jiffy.

However, the two did not enter as there was a sign hung on the door of the casting workshop.

[I am sleeping and I am operating my business whenever I want. I will break the leg of whoever dares to knock on the door!]

The two exchanged glances and Little Pomelo whispered, “Murphy, what should we do?”

“Master Tong Gua only stated that we can’t knock on the door, I guess it’s fine as long as we don’t knock,” replied Little Murphy while pointing at the half-open window next to the door.

Little Pomelo was astounded, then nodded. Both of them then proceeded to crawl into the workshop from the window.

The casting workshop looked small but the interior space was extremely spacious. There was a huge refining furnace in the middle area and wine bottles were scattered everywhere in the room. [Read more chapter at vipnovel](#)

Meanwhile, Tong Gua was lying on the bed, his thunderous snores emanating the scent of alcohol.

“Master Tong Gua! Master Tong Gua!”

The two came to the bedside and proceeded to shake Tong Gua who was sleeping soundly.

However, Tong Gua continued sleeping as if he could not sense anything and revealed no signs of waking up.

“What should we do? The master seems to be heavily drunk,” Little Pomelo showed a helpless shrug.

“Let me think of a way,” said Murphy while scanning Tong Gua’s body before finally focusing on a small earthworm-like appendage between the master’s legs.

“No, that’s not appropriate...” Little Pomelo seemed to understand his idea but was hesitant about it.

Murphy did not answer but only returned a smile. He then reached out and pinched Tong Gua’s earthworm hard.

With his fatal part being attacked, Tong Gua got up immediately with widened eyes. He looked at the two standing beside his bed with disbelief.

“Hi! Master Tong Gua!” the two quickly made a bow.

“You... you guys... fuck...that hurt!”

“Master Tong Gua, we are here to seek your advice.”

“Ouch... advice... advice my ass... what have you just done to me?” Tong Gua’s face was flushed as he held his crotch, gasping in pain.

“Master, do you know how to cultivate the Prajñā Scarification?” the two bowed again and asked.

Feeling the sting coming from his lower body, Tong Gua wanted to cry but he had no tears. The fact that he almost lost his little one while he was deep asleep was terrifying for him.

Will I be crippled? Tong Gua had a terrible thought.

Bending over, Tong Gua left the bed trembling while holding the bed for support. He ignored the two, turned around, and walked into a compartment of the house before slamming the door shut.

The two of them waited and Tong Gua returned soon with a red coat and a lifeless expression.

“Master Tong Gua!” the two bowed again quickly upon seeing that.

“Did I ever offend you guys?” Tong Gua questioned in despair.

“Offend you? Master Tong Gua, I think you misunderstood, we are here to seek advice.”

Tong Gua did not believe those words at all. He walked in a wobbly manner to the bed and sat down again, his eyes fixed on the two.

“Firstly, tell me how you guys got in here.”

Both Murphy and Little Pomelo pointed their fingers toward the window in unison.

Tong Gua felt his teeth aching after one glance. He then asked, “What’s your purpose in doing that?”

Tong Gua was actually trying to buy himself some time and see if he could practice predestination to toughen his cultivation and have sweet revenge.

However, his cultivation was at zero and his strength at this stage did not allow him to do things the hard way. He could only reconcile.

“Master Tong Gua, do you know Prajñā Scarification?”

“Prajñā Scarification?” Tong Gua was stunned for a moment.

How could he be unfamiliar with this name when it was the most powerful skill of the Cursed Clan? He could still vividly remember the battle that destroyed the Cursed Clan. They were fortunate that the clan elder chose to perform the Prajñā Scarification day by day. If he was the chosen one, he would surely be doomed.

“Why are you guys asking about this?” Tong Gua was curious.

“We have advanced to Cursed Apostle and we want to master this class’s strongest skill, the Prajñā Scarification to become the strongest assassins!”

“Cursed Apostle?”

Tong Gua was suddenly reminded that these players did have the choice to advance their skills in the direction of the Cursed Clan after class advancement.

Suddenly, Tong Gua started to believe that these two players were not here for revenge.

However, their way of seeking advice made him particularly upset. Although he knew some secrets of the Cursed Clan, he had no intention to share them with these two at all.

“Forget it, both of your qualifications are mediocre and you couldn’t possibly master it,” Tong Gua said after thinking about it a moment.

“Master Tong Gua, please teach us the Prajñā Scarification. We will not give up if we can’t master the skill!”

“Oh? So what?” Tong Gua’s pride was boosted. He rested his left leg on the bed with a proud face.

“We will move you with our sincerity and come often to ask for advice!”

Tong Gua widened his eyes upon listening to the words. How can these two who seem so serious be this shameless?

It was obvious that they wanted to give him another fatal attack.

The hidden threat by the two was indeed effective as Tong Gua was starting to feel sheepish.

His original plan was to return for revenge when he was done practicing predestination to toughen his cultivation. However, the two in front of him were gamers so they were practically immortal. Even if he could get revenge later, his earthworm would definitely be crippled if these two ever came for him in the future.

Feeling wronged, Tong Gua finally looked up.

“I can teach you guys, but I have one condition.”

“Go ahead, Master Tong Gua. We will definitely accept it!” their eyes were bright and shining.

Chapter 159: The Ambitious Rock Ghost King

“Mind you, I can’t guarantee that you guys can master it!” Tong Gua added, seeing the two had agreed.

Murphy and Little Pomelo nodded immediately.

“Okay, Master Tong Gua!”

“Then let me tell you about the origin of the Cursed Clan.”

“The Cursed Clan are not natives in the land of Beiqi, but a race who moved here from Naraka. It seems that they supported the wrong team during the battle for the monarch position. After the birth of the new monarch, they moved to Beiqi in order to prevent their clan from being exterminated.”

“The situation in Beiqi at that time was also very unstable, with two major forces competing for the position of monarch in Beiqi.”

“Speaking of that, this clan had a miserable fate. In order to gain a foothold in Beiqi, they chose to support one of the two forces after assessing the strength of both sides. However, they still picked the wrong team. The force they trusted eventually lost, and they were almost annihilated. By the way, the leader of the other winning force was Lu Yan, the latest King of Beiqi, who just passed away recently.”

When he thought of the King of Beiqi who treated him well, Tong Gua sighed deeply in his heart.

“Was the Cursed Clan wiped out, too?” asked the two as though they were curious babies.

“Well, they should have been obliterated, but not necessarily destroyed. It is said that a few people survived and fled to the Arctic Abyss with the defeated force. Of course, I’m not sure if it’s genuine news, because I was practicing divine power during that time. I had an isolated practice for a long time.”

“The Arctic Abyss?” the two immediately opened their map and scrolled to the south.

However, as they had not been to that place before, the map only showed rivers below the Burial Grounds. The rest of the area was covered by map fog.

“Therefore, if you really want to learn the ability of the Cursed Clan, then you have to ask them. If they have survivors, they would have escaped to this Arctic Abyss, because they’re unable to survive in other areas of Beiqi.”

“Nevertheless, I want to remind you that this Arctic Abyss is almost a forbidden area in Beiqi. It is an eerie place. Although it is located above a geothermal volcano, its glaciers still haven’t melted in over hundreds of thousands of years. Instead, it is perennially showered in heavy snow.”

“What’s more, it is said that the birth of this Arctic Abyss is related to the Ice Snow Clan who was under the first King of Beiqi so it’s not a good place anyway. Besides, even if that defeated force really did hide in the Arctic Abyss, the Ice Snow Clan would have wiped them out.”

“Hence, you should think about it carefully. Since you are immortal, it is okay to go and play around. If you come across the Ice Snow Clan, don’t mess with them because their patriarch who may be alive has reached the Ghost Emperor Realm. Beiqi will be overturned if they get angry.”

“I have told you guys everything that I know. What ideas do you have in mind?” Tong Gua looked at them and asked.

“We will go!”

Seeing that the duo was so headstrong, Tong Gua waved his hands. He seemed to be afraid that they might come back to trouble him if they could not find the Cursed Clan. So he spoke again.

“Don’t be discouraged if you really can’t find them. When you have grown more powerful, you can go to the Naraka Territory. Many races here have the power of the Naraka Realm.”

The two of them nodded again and bowed respectfully to Tong Gua. Then, they turned around and made their way to the door and climbed out the window next to it.

Tong Gua was speechless.

“Wait, how did they know that I know the origin of the Cursed Clan?” Tong Gua held his crotch, feeling that something was wrong.

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In the external world, the big holiday event was still going on.

That very moment, millions of players suddenly appeared airborne as they were transported to the peripheral of the North Rocks. They marched toward the inner part of the North Rocks.

Facing a frenzied wave of players, the Rock Ghost King felt his heart skip a beat. He hastily stopped his subordinates who were preparing to launch an attack.

“Calm down and let these madmen be. They will leave in no time.”

It was exactly like what the Rock Ghost King had mentioned. After the players surrounded an area and went crazy for a moment, they all giggled and started to retreat.

“Lord Rock Ghost King, what kind of race are these new forces, and why have we never seen them before?” the steel zombie commander could not help but ask curiously.

There was also a hint of uncertainty in the eyes of the Rock Ghost King. He turned his head to look at the Soul Liberating Envoy Du Yan.

“You were the first to contact them. Do you know their origin?”

Upon hearing that, Du Yan replied respectfully to the Rock Ghost King.

“Lord Rock Ghost King, this force has appeared in the Mansion of the Dead inexplicably after the death of the King of Beiqi. I do not know their origin.”

The Rock Ghost King was even more confused after hearing what Du Yan had to say.

How could Ghost Kings like them not know in advance of such a large-scale influx in Beiqi?

The Land of Beiqi could only be accessed through four areas: his North Rocks, the Eastern Liuli, the Western Barren Grassland, and the Southern Arctic Abyss.

First of all, the Arctic Abyss could certainly be ruled out – people could not pass by that area at all. Also, he would have definitely noticed such a massive biological invasion in the North Rocks, so the North Rocks could be excluded, too.

Next, Eastern Liuli was the area where Cha Na was stationed. If they really wanted to come across the Eastern Sea, they would face Cha Na head-on. How could they occupy the Mansion of the Dead before killing Cha Na?

If so, this force might be from the Barren Grassland.

Nevertheless, the Rock Ghost King still felt something was amiss.

As he had addressed those creatures several times, he found that the abilities they mastered obviously came from Beiqi.

Rune Warriors, Sun Chasing Archers, Naraka Realm of the Cursed Clan, and so on were the abilities that once existed in Beiqi. Assuming that those creatures were all from the outside world was probably too much of a coincidence.

As he thought for a moment, the Rock Ghost King's face went pale.

"Du Yan, do you still remember when the King of Beiqi said that he would befall the underworld one day?"

Hearing that, Du Yan arched his hand, "Lord Rock Ghost King, I have indeed heard the King of Beiqi say this before."

"Then, do you remember that the King of Beiqi would include all of the Beiqi Army's heroic spirits of ghost general rank and above – and the enemy's souls that they had killed – in the Valiant Spirits Palace, for enshrinement?"

"I do remember it. The King of Beiqi said that the purpose was to make the future generations remember these former warriors."

At this very moment, the Rock Ghost King's face became extremely dignified.

He recalled something vital.

It seemed that the abilities of the players were related to the deceased warriors who had been included in the Valiant Spirits Palace.

As the Rock Ghost King thought about it, he suddenly had a conjecture.

This new Beiqi force had a great possibility to be related to the late King of Beiqi. Maybe it was the secret force that he had secretly built, in order to achieve his ambition to befall the underworld.

Thinking of this, another thought suddenly surfaced in Rock Ghost King's mind.

If this power was really the secret weapon of the King of Beiqi, could he control it, or would there be a way for him to control it instead?

He did not believe that the King of Beiqi would train a force beyond his control. There must be a way to ensure that this secret weapon would never betray him.

Chapter 160: Sneak In For Investigation

Mansion of the Dead, Beiqi.

As the players were all outside, the entire safe zone in the Mansion of the Dead looked empty. Although the city was adorned in a fiery red color, it still seemed rather dull with only NPCs occasionally walking along the streets.

At this very moment, a small sapling suddenly emerged from the ground of the mansion's safe zone.

It surveyed around meticulously. After it was sure that no one had discovered it, its two roots pulled out from the ground and moved forward like human feet, one step at a time.

Looking at the familiar streets of the Mansion of the Dead in front of him, the Rock Ghost King was appalled.

This Mansion of the Dead had once been completely demolished, but now most of the buildings were totally restored along with many new ones. Most importantly, these rebuilt buildings were almost the same as the ones before destruction.

Along with astonishment in his heart, he continued to move forward step by step.

His purpose was to investigate why this new Beiqi force emerged and what kind of secrets they possessed.

If these creatures were really the late King of Beiqi's secret force, then the Rock Ghost King felt that he might be able to find the method the King of Beiqi had left to control this force in this place.

The first place he chose to investigate was Beiqi's most important domain hall. After all, if there was a way to control the secret force, King Beiqi would most probably have left it inside that hall.

After he walked across several streets, the Rock Ghost King suddenly stopped in his tracks.

He found a bizarre building with a hammer hanging diagonally on the roof, but what caught his attention was the plaque of the building.

"Tong Gua's Casting Workshop!"

Seeing the name of the building, the Rock Ghost King was startled.

Of course, he knew about Tong Gua's casting ability. He was the best-hidden caster in Beiqi.

However, the Rock Ghost King immediately shook his head as he thought of it.

How could it be? Even if the King of Beiqi wanted Tong Gua's help to cast weapons, he would have to spend a lot of effort in persuading him. According to Tong Gua's personality, he would never open a casting workshop here.

The casting workshop was probably named after Tong Gua the Ghost King because the owner adored him. Having figured it out, the Rock Ghost King immediately took a step. He was ready to continue his journey in the direction of the domain palace.

However, the Rock Ghost King suddenly sensed a breath approaching him. He immediately inserted his roots into the ground, posing as a small sapling grown from the ground, swaying aimlessly in the wind.

"Fuck. What lousy luck! These players must be cheating! How could my luck be so bad? I almost lost my pants! I'm so mad!"

Tong Gua who was not far away was staggering with his feet splaying outward. He held a pot of Muling wine in his hand and scolded himself all the way.

Thinking of the soul coins that he had lost to the players by playing cards, Tong Gua was upset. He could not help but throw the red coat on his shoulders to the ground, then jumped up and stomped on it...

Recognizing the person, a drop of sweat dripped from the Rock Ghost King's forehead. He quickly stabilized his body to prevent himself from being exposed.

After Tong Gua vented his frustration, he picked up his red coat again from the ground and clutched it in his hand. He walked unsteadily to the door of the casting workshop, kicked it open, and walked in.

Seeing this scene, the Rock Ghost King heaved a sigh of relief, his heart filled with horror and doubt.

Tong Gua the Ghost King was the most powerful Ghost King in the land of Beiqi. His status in Beiqi was much higher than him, and someone with whom the Rock Ghost King would never dare to mess with.

He had several points of contact with Tong Gua before. Once he had been severely beaten by Tong Gua who was in a bad mood at that time. The Rock Ghost King still vividly remembered how terrifying Tong Gua's strength was.

Although Tong Gua had disappeared for some time, the King of Beiqi had mentioned that he was having an isolated practice. The king also had said that Tong Gua was half a step away, not far at all, from reaching the Ghost Emperor Realm.

When he saw Tong Gua appear in this place, the Rock Ghost King was full of fear. He was afraid of being discovered and murdered.

The Rock Ghost King was now certain about his own guess.

This new Beiqi force might really be related to the late King of Beiqi, and Tong Gua's so-called months of isolated practice were actually to help the king build up his secret force. This new Beiqi force was not powerful enough to employ Tong Gua as their caster, and there was only one possibility – Tong Gua did it voluntarily.

When he thought of this, the Rock Ghost King was really scared. He was afraid that he would be murdered for knowing too much.

It was even more likely that the deceased king was actually alive.

After spotting Tong Gua, he suddenly felt how naive his previous thoughts were. He was also grateful for not being impulsive.

If he had led the Tree Demon army to attack this place, Tong Gua alone would have already vanquished them.

This very moment, the figure of Tong Gua suddenly appeared at the door again. The Rock Ghost King immediately stopped pondering and tried his best to act as a small sapling, murmuring continuously in his heart, "I'm just a little sapling, you won't find me, I'm just a little tree..."

Upon the Rock Ghost King's horrified gaze, Tong Gua walked directly toward him.

"Ah, since when has this sapling appeared at my door?" Tong Gua looked at the sapling in a daze, apparently baffled.

Tong Gua then reached out his hand and patted the Rock Ghost King who was in the state of a small sapling with a hint of satisfaction in his eyes.

"Not bad! Not bad at all! Looking good!"

The Rock Ghost King felt that his heart was about to explode. He feared that Tong Gua had already noticed something unusual and would give him a devastating blow.

The Rock Ghost King did not know that Tong Gua had lost his cultivation. His heart was jittering. After all, in his opinion, Tong Gua could easily find out who he truly was with his peak power as the Ghost King.

However, Tong Gua just stared blankly at the Rock Ghost King. The latter felt he might have a heart attack – it was too exhilarating.

"Good tree!" the drunk Tong Gua praised again.

However, the Rock Ghost King was dumbfounded by the next scene. Tong Gua suddenly unzipped and began peeing on him.

“Fuck! I can’t stand it anymore!”

Feeling the rush of warm liquid on his body, the Rock Ghost King was going crazy. If it weren’t for the rational desire to survive that restrained him, he might just give Tong Gua’s body a good slap.

To survive! To survive! Rock Ghost King kept comforting himself, but he was close to collapsing.

“Hoo!”

Tong Gua shook his body with a look of satisfaction on his face.

Pulling up his trousers, Tong Gua glanced at the small tree once more. He could not help but praise it as a good tree again. He then turned around and entered the workshop, closing the door with a loud thud.

Not far away, a small snake hiding in the slab gap that observed the scene gave out a petrified gaze.