

The Strongest

Chapter 131 - Owning a Mysterious Flame

Shortly after Shi Feng published the post, many players replied to it.

No way! Such a high bounty! It would be great if I had chosen to start at Red Leaf Town!

One Silver Coin just for the regular members... that's already an entire day's worth of my earnings. If I strive hard an entire day, I could kill at least seven or eight of them, which would be seven or eight hundred Credits. If I continued hunting for an entire month, the amount I can earn would be several times higher than my normal salary!

Could it be a scam? Wasn't that Ye Feng an expert in dire straits? Where did he get so much money?

The commenter above is right! This is definitely a scam. This Ye Feng is just trying to make a name for himself and win the pity of the masses, tricking us into opposing Martial Union.

There were many players who voiced out their own varying opinions. Some supported Shi Feng, while some felt disgusted with him. A large number of players cursed at Shi Feng, and an even greater number refused to believe that Shi Feng possessed that much money. After all, making a rough calculation, just killing all the members of Martial Union in Red Leaf Town once would cost a lot, not to mention killing them several times. Even a normal tycoon would not dare carry out such an action, much less a poor expert in dire straits.

I am Stabbing Heart of Assassin's Alliance. I am in full support of Brother Ye Feng, and I can guarantee that everything Brother Ye Feng has said is the truth. If you aren't able to cash in your bounties from him, you can collect them from me instead.

Just when everyone determined Shi Feng was a scammer, Stabbing Heart's abrupt reply sent a tremor through the forums once more.

Although Ye Feng was famous, when compared to a large Guild, his prestige was still sorely lacking.

On the other hand, the words Stabbing Heart from the Assassin's Alliance had written were wholly different. Ignoring the fact that the Assassin's Alliance was a second-rate Guild, possessing a member count in the tens of thousands, just the dozen years or so fame they had accumulated from other virtual reality games was strongly persuasive.

Wow! The Assassin's Alliance's Stabbing Heart has appeared! Please let me join the Assassin's Alliance!

Even Stabbing Heart has already shown himself, so the bounty must be real! This time, the players of Red Leaf Town are going to make a fortune!

Not long after Stabbing Heart's appearance, another reply appeared which instantly caused the number of views on Shi Feng's post to multiply by tens.

Ye Feng is my friend. I can guarantee his credibility. If there are any problems, you can find me to deal with them.

The reply, indeed, belonged to the Snow Goddess, Gentle Snow, herself. Moreover, she was willing to make assurances for Shi Feng. Those who cursed at Shi Feng previously immediately shut up after her reply, because if they did not, the Snow Goddess' fans might pummel them into meat paste.

Ye Feng, you are my idol! Please take me in as your disciple! I'm willing to do anything you ask! I guarantee it!

Big Brother Ye Feng, do you have a girlfriend? Little sister is 18-years-old, has a beautiful appearance, a sexy body, and wishes to become big brother's girlfriend! I can give birth to a bunch of little monkeys for big brother!

Looking at Gentle Snow's reply, everyone immediately thought Shi Feng was just too awesome. He had received the support of Stabbing Heart of Assassin's Alliance and the Snow Goddess of Ouroboros. This was not a treatment any ordinary expert would receive. Now that God's Domain was so popular, Shi Feng's future would be limitless.

Slum Area, The Enchanted Bar:

"Boss Ironsword, this is not good! Ye Feng placed a bounty on our heads!" an Assassin suddenly rushed into the private room.

Currently, Ironsword Lion happily drank away, his face flushed red. He did not think the alcohol in a virtual world could get a person get drunk. The alcohol had such a rich and mellow taste. Compared to the alcohol available in the real world, what he drank right now was much better. It was no wonder those players that tread on the path of darkness all loved to hang around in this place.

At this moment, the person who rushed into the room shouting had immediately interrupting Ironsword Lion from enjoying his drink. Annoyed, he said, "Why are you shouting? It's not like the sky is falling. Which son of a bitch was it that placed a bounty on me? Let's see if I don't hack him into pieces."

"Boss, I heard it was that Ye Feng who placed the bounty on us," Drifting Blood said in a daze.

“Ye Feng? With him alone, he wants to place a bounty on us, Martial Union? Who would even believe his words?” Ironsword Lion laughed in contempt, swallowing another mouthful of Old Tom Gin.

“Boss Ironsword, it’s true! If you don’t believe it, take a look at Ye Feng’s post. Right now, views on it have exceeded one million already,” the Assassin helplessly said.

Originally, he did not believe that an independent player would dare place a bounty on a large Guild, either. Anyone who dared would just be digging their own graves. Without great enmity against a Guild, no one would not carry out such an action. Such an action was a major threat to the reputation of a Guild, and they would definitely not let off any players who dared provoke them. If they did not kill the player until he quit the game, they would not let the matter rest.

However, reality told him otherwise, as such an incident had truly occurred.

Ironsword Lion still did not believe his subordinate’s words. To place a bounty on the members of Martial Union, was this Ye Feng seeking death? Hence, Ironsword Lion checked out the official forums.

Immediately, Ironsword Lion was dumbfounded.

Ye Feng actually dared place a bounty on all of Martial Union! He really intended to fight until one side was gone!

However, Ironsword Lion had forgotten that he was the one who first placed a bounty on Ye Feng. He had already forgotten his own declaration to fight until one of them was obliterated.

After taking a closer look at the contents of the post, Ironsword Lion was truly shocked. Those who originally called Ye Feng a scammer had all shut their mouths now, and they all itched to slaughter the members of Martial Union. It was like they discussed competing over vegetables on the forum.

When Ironsword Lion saw the price tag of his own bounty, he nearly exploded with anger. He had spent a million Credits to hire Absolute Heaven to assassinate Ye Feng, and the bounty of 10,000 Credits he publicly declared was just for entertainment. He was not hoping that someone would kill Ye Feng at all; his main goal was to kill Ye Feng's teammates.

Now, however, Shi Feng had tagged him with a bounty of 5,000 Credits. In doing so, wasn't Ye Feng stating that he was far from being his equal?

The most unbelievable thing was that Stabbing Heart and Gentle Snow had also stood out to show their support for Ye Feng.

Ironsword Lion simply could not understand this situation. The bounty he placed was only on Ye Feng, yet, why did these fellows mind other people's business? Gentle Snow was one thing, but why had Stabbing Heart appeared as well? He and the Assassin's Alliance had always minded their own business, and he had never provoked the Assassin's Alliance before. So, why was Stabbing Heart showing his support to Ye Feng?

"Good! Good! Good!" Ironsword Lion repeatedly said. His anger jerked him out of his drunken stupor, his expression turning extremely sinister as he coldly said, "Since he wants to play, then I'll play! Immediately place a bounty on anyone with the guts to kill any of our members! Also, increase the bounty on Shi Feng's teammates to 2,000 Credits per person. I want to see just who can tempt these players."

"Tell the ones below to be careful of their actions and form parties when they go out leveling."

“Yes.”

After Ironsword Lion finished giving out his instructions, the Assassin turned and left. Following which, Ironsword Lion initiated contact with Absolute Heaven. He wanted Absolute Heaven to take action a little sooner, killing Ye Feng to absolve him of this anger.

Elsewhere, Shi Feng had rented an Intermediate Forging Room in the Forging Association.

Now that the Ice-Blue Devil Flame was in his hands, Shi Feng was prepared to use this time to train his Forging, placing all his effort into making the Silver Dawn and other equipment.

Shi Feng walked to the furnace, canceling the Tier 1 Mysterious Flame provided by the Intermediate Forging Room. He then took out a dark blue flame from his bag. This dark blue flame was just like a flame sprite, joyfully jumping about in Shi Feng’s palm. Furthermore, the flame gave off a scorching heat, causing the temperature in the room to rise quickly.

System: Do you wish to bind the Ice-Blue Devil Flame as your personal Mysterious Flame?

“Bind? Don’t tell me that I can only use it after it’s bound?” Shi Feng did not know why, but although he held the Ice-Blue Devil Flame in his hand, he was unable to glean any information about it.

Even a Tier 1 Mysterious Flame was extremely rare throughout God’s Domain. In his previous life, he had never come into contact with a Mysterious Flame, and this was his first time learning that the flame needed to be bound before use.

He recalled that the Mysterious Flame could be placed in the Forging Room of the Guild. That way, all Guild members were able to use it while not being able to take it away. So, just why was this Mysterious Flame a bound item?

Shi Feng stopped caring about the details. He immediately chose to bind the Ice-Blue Devil Flame, intending to learn its effects.

Chapter 132 - Evolution Crisis

After Shi Feng chose to bind the Ice-Blue Devil Flame...

Suddenly, the Ice-Blue Devil Flame started transforming. The small flame within Shi Feng's palm momentarily burned fiercely, wrapping Shi Feng's entire palm. Shi Feng immediately felt a scorching heat surrounding his hand as if he had just dipped it into boiling water.

Previously, he was unable to feel the high temperature of the Ice-Blue Devil Flame, and only now did he truly experience its heat. Although he tried to store the flame back into his bag, no matter what he tried, there was no reaction from the Ice-Blue Devil Flame.

Instead, a binding loading bar appeared, slowly increasing.

Successfully fused 3%... 4%... 5%...

Isn't it a binding? Why did it turn into a fusion? Looking at the green colored fusion bar, Shi Feng felt a sense of unease. He could barely endure just the pain he currently felt. However, the temperature of the flame constantly rose, while the fusion rate of the flame was extremely slow. If this situation were to continue, Shi Feng would, sooner or later, die from the pain alone.

Just when Shi Feng had called out the pain perception system's interface, intending to turn off all his senses of pain, his flaming hand no longer felt hot. Instead, he felt a cooling feeling on his palm as if it submerged in ice-cold water.

Is the fusion complete?

Shi Feng took another look at the fusion bar; it showed 8%, still very far from reaching 100%. However, since it was no longer hot, Shi Feng gave up the notion of turning off the pain perception system.

However, another moment later, his flaming hand grew colder and colder as if it were inside an ice-cube. Shi Feng could not help but shiver at the chilling temperature.

Just when he was unable to endure the cold any longer, the flame surrounding his hand turned hot once more. In such a way, the flame constantly alternated between hot and cold. Shi Feng was also able to understand the reason for this phenomena. Just like its name, the Ice-Blue Devil Flame possessed both ice and fire attributes. However, Shi Feng no longer wished to endure torture by the Ice-Blue Devil Flame, so he chose to turn off the pain perception system.

System: During the fusion process of the Ice-Blue Devil Flame, if pain perception falls below 20%, fusion will fail and cause a fixed amount of damage to the player. Are you sure you want to turn off the pain system?

"Crap!" Shi Feng could not help but curse at the despicable system.

The system was clearly trying to toy with him. Moreover, it did not mention what sort of damage the 'fixed damage' was.

The fusion progress was already at 30%, so he couldn't just give up halfway. Helpless about the situation, Shi Feng could only tune down his pain perception from the original 40% to 20%. That way, he could, more or less, bear through the suffering.

However, things were far from over. After the fusion bar reached 50%, the Ice-Blue Devil Flame started spreading throughout Shi Feng's entire body, turning Shi Feng into a flaming man. Shi Feng's entire body burned with a deep blue flame, just like the Ghost Rider.

Compared to the Ghost Rider's flame, however, the flame burning Shi Feng's body was much more pure and dazzling. Even the ground below his feet started showing signs of melting.

The floor of the Forging Room had undergone special strengthening techniques specifically to resist high temperatures. The floors of the Forging Room were much stronger than even a Secret-Silver Weapon. However, this floor could still not withstand the flame surrounding Shi Feng's body. One could just imagine the frightening temperature that was emitted by the flame.

Right now, if someone were to attack Shi Feng using a Bronze Weapon, the scorching flame would, most likely, melt the weapon before it could even come near Shi Feng.

Fortunately, Shi Feng had long since familiarized himself with pain. He had also adjusted his pain perception down to 20%. Otherwise, he really could not endure the ever-changing temperatures of the Ice-Blue Devil Flame.

After enduring the same process for twenty minutes, the fusion of the Ice-Blue Devil Flame finally completed.

System: The Ice-Blue Devil Flame has been bound as Player Ye Feng's personal belonging.

System: Fusion of the Ice-Blue Devil Flame completed. After undergoing the tempering of the Ice-Blue Devil Flame, player's physique has improved. Strength +10, Endurance +10, Agility +10, Ice Resistance +20, Fire Resistance +20. Able to fully control the Ice-Blue Devil Flame.

Even this is possible? Shi Feng was shocked.

Ignoring how valuable the Ice-Blue Devil Flame was to Forgers, Shi Feng did not think that it could even improve a player's physique after fusion. Shi Feng had effortlessly obtained 30 Attribute Points and 20 points in both Ice Resistance and Fire Resistance. Resistance was extremely hard to obtain in God's Domain, and a single point increase would have a large effect, not to mention an increase of 20 points. Such an increase was enough to instill despair in many mage classes. If fire magic could originally deal 100 damage to Shi Feng, right now, it would be good if could even deal him 30 damage.

Shi Feng then chanted a name in his mind, a deep blue flame appearing in the middle of his palm. This was indeed the Ice-Blue Devil Flame. Following Shi Feng's thoughts, the flame freely moved about, growing and shrinking.

[Ice-Blue Devil Flame] (Tier 2 Mysterious Flame)

Can be used in battle to increase damage by 20%, and an additional 40% damage to ice or fire attributed skills. Simultaneously, it increases the success rate for Potionmaking, Forging, and Cooking by 10%.

These Attributes had completely surpassed Shi Feng's imagination.

In his previous life, he had never received any information regarding Mysterious Flames being capable of increasing a player's battle prowess. It was also impossible for the Mysterious Flames to only increase a player's battle prowess in this life. Hence, the only possibility was that the players who obtained Mysterious Flames did not leak a single word about it, silently enjoying the fortune.

Just the Mysterious Flame's ability to increase the success rate of Forging and Potionmaking was sufficient to send all the major powers in God's Domain into an uproar. If the information about it being capable of increasing a player's battle prowess leaked, the competition over Mysterious Flames would become much more intense. Forgers and Potionmakers would have no chance to obtain a Mysterious Flame for themselves at all.

Mysterious Flames were always said to give the greatest benefits to Potionmaking and Forging, but in Shi Feng's view, Elementalists who learned Potionmaking were the ones who gained the greatest benefits. Originally, an Elementalist's damage was very frightening. They were like human cannons. If they were to receive an upgrade to their ice and fire attributed skills, it would leave others speechless. In addition, the Ice-Blue Devil Flame originally increased its user's damage by 20%, which meant that an Elementalist who had the Ice-Blue Devil Flame would have their damage output increased by 60%. The Elementalist possessing the Ice-Blue Devil Flame could easily kill an MT of the same level with the same quality of equipment in just two or three moves.

Although Shi Feng was not an Elementalist, the Ice-Blue Devil Flame still provided a relatively large increase to his battle strength.

With the Ice-Blue Devil Flame, Shi Feng felt that the future development of his skills should be more directed towards the fire or ice attributes. That way, he could reap the greatest benefits from using the Ice-Blue Devil Flame.

Following which, Shi Feng took out a pile of Hard Stones and started making Advanced Whetstones, increasing his forging proficiency.

The success rate for making an Advanced Whetstone was 60%, with the possibility of increasing proficiency by 1 point with each success. Although the increase was not as much as when he made Bronze Equipment, the time needed to make an Advanced Whetstone was much shorter. Shi Feng only needed to burn the Hard Stones in the Ice-Blue Devil Flame for a short while, followed by a couple of knocks from his hammer; then he would have completed an Advanced Whetstone.

If Shi Feng were to make Glimmer Chestplates, he would not be able to sell them for a lot of money. After all, there were various Guilds currently selling that item. On the other hand, making the high-level Bronze Equipment and Mysterious-Iron Equipment from the Forging Designs he bought from Stonehammer Town was not very efficient. It would be much better for him to just upgrade to an Intermediate Forging Apprentice, increasing his success rate a little earlier. At that time, it would not be too late for him to start using those Forging Designs.

Meanwhile, while Shi Feng made the Advanced Whetstones, tension rose throughout the entire Red Leaf Town.

However, it was not only due to the matter of Shi Feng and Martial Union placing a bounty on each other. There was also the crisis after God's Domain's evolution.

Due to the difficulty of the monsters in the wild increasing, the large influx of newcomers, and Shi Feng's stock clearance of the Auction House, the prices of items rapidly increased. Within a short two hours, the prices of items had already doubled, causing many players to voice out their complaints.

Originally, the money they earned within a day was small. They also needed to buy many items they needed in the wild, such as food and beverages, Return Scrolls, and such items. There were also the Regeneration Potions and Mana Recovery Potions. However, the prices for all these items had suddenly skyrocketed.

Amongst the items with inflated prices, the highest was equipment. Previously, 20 Copper Coins was sufficient for a player to purchase a piece of Level 2 Common Equipment. Right now, they would need 40 Copper Coins to do so. As for Bronze Equipment and higher, the increase in their prices was even greater.

However, without good equipment, how could they hunt monsters? Hence, the majority of the players right now all held the thought that they had to obtain a good piece of equipment no matter what, even at the cost of saving up the money meant for potions. With good equipment, they could easily look for a party to join. Their efficiency of killing monsters would also rise as a result, and it was only a matter of time before they earned back their money.

As a result, the prices of equipment constantly rose.

Similarly, this phenomenon caused plenty of players, who were wealthy in real life, to purchase Coins using Credits for purchasing equipment, causing the price of Coins to skyrocket, too.

Looking at this situation, the players in Red Leaf Town became even more attentive towards the bounty put out by both Shi Feng and Martial Union. The players, who were previously uninterested in participating, started to take action. There were many experts who began searching for Shi Feng and his teammates, and there were some who set their sights on Martial Union.

“Forming a party to hunt Ye Feng’s party! Must be Level 6 or above, with a complete suit of Bronze Equipment! Those who fulfill the conditions, please gather at my location!”

“Forming a party to hunt members of Martial Union! Must be Level 5 or above! Those who wish to make a quick buck, don’t miss this chance!”

Meanwhile, there were plenty of players shouting out party recruitments in the plaza of Red Leaf Town. However, their grinding targets were no longer monsters, but players.

Suddenly, Shi Feng and Martial Union's game of hunting lured the players throughout all of Red Leaf Town.

Chapter 133 - Fire Dance

Inside the Red Leaf Forest, where the green grass was plush like a cushion...

A party of Level 5 players currently surrounded a group of three Level 5 Forest Wolves. The players advanced and retreated in battle familiarly, steadily pushing the three Forest Wolves towards defeat. In a short moment, one of the Forest Wolves died from the large fireball that flew at it, while the remaining two Forest Wolves only had a small amount of HP remaining.

"Leader, we're already Level 5. We're tired of constantly killing the same Forest Wolves. Let's just kill the Level 6 Grassland Lion Cubs! I hear the loot is quite good. Moreover, everyone can obtain a larger share of experience there," the bold and powerful Shield Warrior said as he blocked a Forest Wolf's attack.

"Forget it. In these troubled times, you forget that everyone from our Martial Union has a bounty on their heads. Each one of us is worth 1 Silver Coin, and there are plenty of people looking for this transaction," the party leader, an Elementalist, shook his head. He felt that the Shield Warrior's suggestion was too risky.

"Leader, since when have you become such a coward?" a Berserker with waxy skin curled his lips, asking disdainfully.

“Before, when we snatched Elite monsters and equipment and even killed the other players, I’ve never seen you reluctant before!”

“Regardless of what other people say, Martial Union is a famous large Guild in Red Leaf Town. I don’t believe that those people would be so foolish, daring to kill us. Even if they come, we can kill them off and make a quick buck!”

The Elementalist party leader nodded, thinking that his subordinate’s words sounded logical.

In Red Leaf Town, only Martial Union bullied others. Whoever dared provoke them was only seeking death.

The Elementalist party leader then said, “Alright. After we kill these two Forest Wolves, we’ll go kill the Grassland Lion Cubs.”

“Oh yeah!”

The Shield Warrior grinned, using his shield to send one of the Forest Wolves flying. He then followed up with a Heroic Strike on the other Forest Wolf, taking away its remaining HP.

Immediately after the party from Martial Union killed the final Forest Wolf, they suddenly discovered that they were surrounded by a team of over twenty players. Moreover, every one of these players was Red Named, and clearly, they had already killed a lot of players.

“Brothers, our luck is good this time! They are all from Martial Union!”

A Red Named female Assassin with a provocative body revealed herself from Stealth. She wore a smile as she looked at the players from Martial Union.

The members of Martial Union immediately felt chills through their bodies. This female Assassin was clearly the scout for this entire team. Although she should have been hiding near their party this entire time, they did not detect her presence at all.

“What are you all trying to do?” the Elementalist party leader asked in a cold tone, his eyes observing his surroundings.

“What are we doing?” the female Assassin gleefully smiled at the party leader from Martial Union, saying with a laugh, “Of course, we are here to do some happy things with you.”

“Sister Fire Dance, why are you wasting your breath on them? Let’s just kill them and be done with it,” one of the Rangers standing in the encirclement said, feeling restless. His bow was already nocked and aimed at Martial Union’s Cleric.

The Shield Warrior from Martial Union knew that they were not a match for these group of players. Hence, he intimidated, “You guys better think through this. You will not have a good ending if you become Martial Union’s enemies. By the time we take care of that Ye Feng, we will take revenge on those who dared attack the members of our Guild. You guys best consider your actions properly. Don’t make a mistake.”

“Is Martial Union really that amazing?” The female Assassin named Fire Dance played with the dagger in her hand. Curling up her lips slightly, she said, “Why have I heard that you guys suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of my idol, Ye Feng?”

Moreover, since you guys dared make trouble with my idol, it's no different than seeking for trouble with me. You should all just die, right here."

"Brothers, take action! Don't let any of them escape!"

Hearing Fire Dance's command, the twenty-plus players surrounding Martial Union rushed forward.

Meanwhile, the female Assassin named Fire Dance suddenly appeared behind the party leader from Martial Union. She immediately knocked the Elementalist unconscious, her icy-cold dagger slashing across his neck. She then followed up with a Backstab and Eviscerate, instantly taking the party leader's life, her techniques both quick and efficient.

The other members of Martial Union were extremely shocked by this scene; their hearts stopped beating completely. Immediately, they turned and ran.

However, would it be that easy to run away? Immediately, the Ice Walls of Elementalist blocked their escape, followed by Ice Spheres reducing their Movement Speeds. Several Berserkers separately used Charge on their targets, followed by Breaks, greatly reducing the Movement Speeds of the members of Martial Union once more. With their fleeing speed slower than even a tortoise, the members of Martial Union died within moments.

"Tidy up the loot quickly. We'll be looking for our next target," Fire Dance issued her command.

"These fellows sure are fat[1]. They have contributed three pieces of Bronze Equipment to our inventory. It really makes you wonder just how fat Ye Feng's party, which is much more powerful, is," a lean Berserker said as he collected the dropped items. He couldn't help but drool when he gazed at the Bronze Equipment the members of Martial Union left behind.

“Hmm? Water Buffalo, are you having ideas about my idol’s teammates?” Fire Dance looked at the Berserker, smiling faintly as she asked.

Immediately, the Berserker called Water Buffalo quivered, hurriedly laughing as he replied, “How would I even dare? I was only fantasizing in my mind a little! If I really did look for trouble with them, I would only be there to die at their hands!”

“Humph! At least you know your limits,” Fire Dance snorted. She then turned, departing in search of her next target.

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Red Leaf Town, Slum Area, The Enchanted Bar:

Peng!

Ironsword Lion angrily smashed the alcohol bottle in his hand after seeing the report from his subordinates.

“Who can tell me what is going on exactly?”

“Why is it only our members are dying, while not even a shadow of Ye Feng’s teammates can be found?”

According to the report from his subordinates, within a short two hours, of all the members of Martial Union stationed in Red Leaf Town, 58 of them, had already died once. Amongst those who died, nine of them were even the top echelons or elites of their Guild. Not only had they lost a level as a result of dying, they even dropped some of their equipment. This was a huge loss for Martial Union's Red Leaf Town branch. Moreover, Ironsword Lion was required to compensate them for their losses.

Besides that, the large number of deaths had largely impacted the loyalty of the members of Martial Union. Many started to think of leaving the Guild as they did not wish to be dragged into this game of hunting. If this matter did not quickly resolve, the Martial Union branch at Red Leaf Town would, sooner or later, break up.

"Boss Ironsword, could they be hiding? Why don't we increase the bounty on them? That might tempt the true experts," Drifting Blood suggested.

"Fine, increase the bounty immediately. I don't believe that we can't find them," Ironsword Lion nodded his head. He then continued saying, "Remember, as long as you receive any information, immediately contact Absolute Heaven."

"Leave it to me, Boss. I'll relay the information immediately."

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Inside an Intermediate Forging Room, Shi Feng repeated the same task, over and over.

Shi Feng took out a Hard Stone, immediately using the Ice-Blue Devil Flame to burn it. He then used the Runic Hammer to tap at it a few times, very quickly forming a high-quality Advanced Whetstone.

System: Advanced Whetstone has been successfully forged. Forging Proficiency increased by 1 point. Obtained 200 EXP.

[Advanced Whetstone] (Consumable)

When used on a Level 20 weapon or below, recovers the durability by 8 to 12 points. Simultaneously, it increases the damage of the weapon by 3% for a duration of 30 minutes.

Number of usage remaining: 3

In the later stages of the game, the value of this item would become greater and greater. The reason was that the damage to a weapon increased as monsters' prowess increased. It was especially true for monsters that were Level 7 and above, as some of them possessed skills that could greatly reduce the durability of a weapon. Hence, Whetstones became one of the necessities when grinding and battling in God's Domain's wilds.

Compared to a normal Whetstone, not only could the Advanced Whetstone recover a weapon's durability, but it could also increase the weapon's sharpness, increasing the weapon's damage by 3%. This effect could even compare to a buff, and it would greatly benefit melee players. There would be plenty of melee classes scrambling over this item, and they would still be willing to buy more after buying the first. No player would willingly reduce their damage when fighting monsters, even if it were just a 3% reduction.

Right after Shi Feng finished the Advanced Whetstone...

System: Congratulations! You are the first player to be promoted to an Intermediate Forging Apprentice. Obtained 50,000 EXP. Rewarding 10 Runic Steel.

TL Notes:

[1]fat: this isn't the obese kind of 'fat.' This term is used to refer to those who are very wealthy in terms of game equipment/money.

Chapter 134 - Silver Lake

After seeing the system notification, a faint smile appeared on Shi Feng's face.

He finally received the promotion to Intermediate Forging Apprentice after making over 400 Advanced Whetstones. However, to obtain the promotion to Advanced Forging Apprentice, he needed 3,000 Proficiency Points. He could not achieve such an amount in a short period.

Shi Feng looked at his experience bar. It was currently at 94% of Level 9, only 6% away from the Level 10 threshold. As long as he strived a little further, he would break through that threshold.

In God's Domain, there was a huge boost in Attributes every ten levels.

When players obtained their first ten levels, it was an indication that they could enter a city. In a city, players could enjoy various benefits. Not only could they purchase resources not sold in towns, but they could also obtain plenty of high-leveled quests. Players could even purchase Bronze Equipment at a low price, though that depended on the player's luck. It would also be much easier for players to make money once they reached a city. Furthermore, players could use the Teleportation Gates available in the

city to transfer to high-level monster areas; they would not need to waste a huge amount of time on travel, quickly arriving at Level 10 or higher monster areas.

Moreover, the game of God's Domain only truly began after entering a city.

When that time came, the players from tens or hundreds of towns would gather in a city. A single city would have, at the very least, over 100,000 players. Moreover, White River City was one of the five largest cities located in Star-Moon Kingdom. The number of players that would gather there would exceed a million. At that time, the various Guilds could centralize their influence completely, displaying the true strength of a Guild. This would also increase the competition between Guilds. It would be a lot less peaceful when the various Guilds competed over the limited resources available.

This was the case with all virtual reality games. The resources available were limited, and the best resources and leveling spots would only number so many within a city's region. However, with the huge amount of players, if one wanted to level up and upgrade themselves quickly, they needed to compete over said resources. As a result, those without strength would be eliminated and left behind.

Not to mention an independent player, even a small Guild would have absolutely no chance of surviving inside a city. The large Guilds would all monopolize the various high-level resources and valuable leveling areas, while the small Guilds and independent players could only hole themselves up in locations with inferior resources.

Hence, if one could set foot in the city even a moment earlier, the competition they would face would greatly lessen.

However, that did not necessarily mean that one would be safe just by entering the city ahead of others. Instead, the more advantages a person possessed before entering the city, the better off one would become afterward.

Take Blackwing City for example. If an average player were to enter the city, they would only be there to gain some knowledge and experience, a purely time-wasting endeavor. However, if it were one of the upper echelons of a large Guild, things would be quite different. Aside from being able to form a relationship of mutual exchange with Guilds from other countries, they could purchase items unique to Blackwing City in bulk. Such benefits would lead to huge improvements of a Guild.

Right now, Shi Feng's level was ranked number one in White River City, and the others would need at least two or three days before they could catch up. During this time, Shi Feng wanted to increase the gap further. Only then could he carve out a place for the Zero Wing Guild he wanted to establish in White River City.

So this is Runic Steel? As expected, this is a treasure. Shi Feng took out a piece of blue steel, filled with magic, from his bag, joy filling his entire being.

In Shi Feng's previous life, many Forgers competed madly for just a piece of Runic Steel. Even if they managed to buy one, they would treat it like their baby; they would not use it lightly.

Meanwhile, Shi Feng possessed ten pieces of Runic Steel right now.

[Runic Steel] (Fine-Gold Rank Consumable)

When used to forge Level 50 Fine-Gold Equipment or below, increases success rate by 10%. There is a fixed chance to increase the forged equipment's rank by one, up to a maximum of Fine-Gold Rank.

No matter how one looked at it, Runic Steel was significantly better than the Hundred Refinement Steel. Moreover, it could even increase an equipment's rank.

“Hahaha! With this Runic Steel, my success rate for forging the Silver Dawn will be even greater now!”

Shi Feng had purchased all the materials required to forge the Silver Dawn at the Auction House. In addition to the materials he had purchased before, he could forge a total of 16 Silver Downs. Just the cost alone for a single Silver Dawn was over 37 Silver Coins. Even an elite party needed to raid a Hard Mode Party Dungeon half a dozen times before collecting such an amount.

Hence, Shi Feng only chose to forge the Silver Dawn after he was promoted to Intermediate Forging Apprentice.

Shi Feng took out the Forging Design for the Silver Dawn, clicking to learn it. He began the process of forging his first Silver Dawn.

Previously, before he had obtained the Ice-Blue Devil Flame, his success rate for forging the Silver Dawn was only 32%. After the addition of the Ice-Blue Devil Flame, the success rate increased to 42%. If Shi Feng used the Runic Steel, he could further increase it to 52%. A mere Intermediate Forging Apprentice's chance of successfully forging a Secret-Silver Weapon was just over 50%. Even a Master Forger would be flabbergasted at this success rate.

The reason was that a Basic Master Forger only possessed a 30% success rate when forging a Secret-Silver Equipment, and only a Grandmaster Forger had a 50% success rate.

Shi Feng carefully read through the process of making the Silver Dawn before refining the materials.

Shi Feng first used the Philosopher's Stone to obtain a high-purity refinement of the materials. He then placed the materials into the Ice-Blue Devil Flame, waiting for them to merge. Shi Feng possessed 100%

control over the Ice-Blue Devil Flame; so he could merge the materials together to an exceptional degree.

However, Shi Feng chose not to include the incomparably precious Runic Steel in the forging process this time.

The first attempt was only for Shi Feng to familiarize himself with the forging process of the Silver Dawn. Moreover, he only possessed ten pieces of Runic Steel, and each one of them was worth at least 1 Gold Coin. The Runic Steel was extremely hard to obtain, and using it now would just be a waste. If other Forgers knew that Shi Feng intended to use the Runic Steel to forge the Silver Dawn, they would curse at Shi Feng in anger.

The Silver Dawn was only a Level 10 Secret-Silver Weapon, yet, Shi Feng actually thought of using the Runic Steel to forge it. Such an action was simply maddening.

Ten minutes later, the refinement process was complete. Shi Feng looked at the product of his refinement with satisfaction. He then placed the piece of metal on the anvil, using the Runic Hammer to pound at it.

Sparks flew about as the sounds of the hammer striking the metal resounded throughout the Forging Room.

Shi Feng was extremely careful with every strike, afraid that a single misstep would affect the final shape of the Silver Dawn.

After striking at the metal hundreds of times, sweat drenched Shi Feng. Satisfied, he clicked the Generate button.

Following which, the red-hot metal began to take shape, transforming into a silver-colored longsword.

He investigated the weapon's information.

After a full 5 seconds...

System: Forging of the Silver Dawn has failed.

Shi Feng looked at the weapon's Attributes, discovering that it was only a Level 10 Mysterious-Iron Weapon. Indeed, the forging failed. However, Shi Feng was not overly disappointed at the results. Although the success rate stated was 42% on the surface, due to it being Shi Feng's first time forging the Silver Dawn, the actual success rate was much lower. Success was impossible, no matter how one looked at it. If he succeeded, it would be a true miracle.

With a failure in hand, Shi Feng summarized his experience into a lesson for himself.

The reason Shi Feng could lead a third-rate Guild like Shadow to become one of the top second-rate Guilds was not due to any inborn talent of his. Instead, it was because Shi Feng always summarized and learned from his experiences.

If others gained experiences from success, Shi Feng gained experiences from failure.

After reviewing for over ten minutes, Shi Feng started forging a second time.

However, after twenty minutes or so, it was another failure. The weapon he forged was still Mysterious-Iron ranked, though with a slight improvement; the Attributes of the weapon were slightly better.

Shi Feng continued forging, and failing, for a total of six tries, taking a loss of over 2 Gold Coins.

Feeling that he was mostly familiar with the forging procedures, Shi Feng started his seventh attempt of forging the Silver Dawn. He even used a Runic Steel this time.

Soon after, Shi Feng refined, hammered, and shaped the lump of metal.

Clicking Generate...

Suddenly, an exquisite-looking light blue-colored longsword formed. There were even mysterious runes carved on the blade of the sword, the runes possessing faint traces of magic circulating within. With a glance, one could immediately tell that it was no ordinary weapon.

Shi Feng immediately grew excited. He knew that he lucked out this time, and it was not as simple as a mere success.

I wonder what the Attributes are? Shi Feng clicked to check the weapon's Attributes.

He had to wait a total of ten seconds before the system could give him a conclusion.

System: Runic Steel's effect triggered; rank increased by 1.

System: Blacksteel Insignia effect triggered; Attributes increased.

System: Silver Lake has been successfully forged. Forgery Proficiency increased by 3 points. Obtained 10,000 EXP.

Chapter 135 - Personal Exclusive

The series of system notifications startled Shi Feng slightly.

He had only made some slight adjustments to the Silver Dawn based on his habits and battle styles.

He did not think his luck would be so heaven-defying.

Even out of a hundred tries, both effects definitely won't trigger together again. One could just imagine how greatly enhanced the Silver Lake's Attributes are; to what extent of an increase, however, nobody knew.

The Runic Steel could upgrade an item's quality by one rank. That meant that Secret-Silver Rank could be upgraded to Fine-Gold Rank.

As for Blacksteel's Insignia, it could increase the Attribute values of a piece of equipment, and the increase would normally be between 5% to 25%. If the weapon's Attributes rose by 20%, it would be the equivalent of having upgraded the weapon's quality by an entire rank.

If both effects stacked with each other, the refined light blue longsword would, at the very least, be a top-tier Fine-Gold Weapon, with the possibility of even being a Dark-Gold Weapon.

A Level 10 Dark-Gold Weapon... At this stage of the game, aside from Magic Weapons, it was the most powerful weapon available, period.

Immediately, Shi Feng held up the Silver Lake that gave off a blue glow, checking its Attributes.

[Silver Lake] (Fine-Gold Rank, One-handed Sword)

Level 10

Equipment Requirement: Strength 45, Agility 80

Attack Power +78

Strength +18, Agility +22

Attack Speed +1

Durability 70/70

Additional Passive Skill -

Flowing Shadow: Creates an afterimage effect while attacking. Simultaneously, the faster the Attack Speed is, the greater the damage caused. Damage can be increased up to a maximum of 50%.

These Attributes completely surpassed that of a top-tier Fine-Gold Weapon. With the additional skill, Flowing Shadow, the Silver Lake was absolutely comparable to a Dark-Gold Weapon.

The Attributes combine both speed and Strength. As expected, it is as I thought. The more he looked at the Silver Lake, the greater his love for it became.

In God's Domain, the equipment forged generally had better Attributes than the equipment dropped by the Bosses from Dungeons. Moreover, the forged ones were more suitable for specific classes. Hence, many experts preferred to hire Master Forgers to craft them custom weapons and equipment personally.

Hence, Master Forgers were extremely welcomed and respected in God's Domain. The experts of God's Domain, especially, loved to make friends with Master Forgers.

Master Forgers also held great influence within a Guild.

Within God's Domain, nobody would rashly offend a Master Forger.

Who knew which expert a Master Forger had forged a weapon for before? If one carelessly provoked a Master Forger, they might end up assassinated or hunted by a large number of experts. After all, these experts all wished to earn a favor from a Master Forger, calling it in for custom equipment.

Only suitable equipment would be the best equipment.

Although these personalized weapons and equipment were only slightly better than equipment dropped from Dungeons, the battle prowess a player could display while using the equipment would increase manyfold.

Regarding these sorts of weapons and equipment, they were all referred to as Exclusive Equipment. They were only suited to a single individual or a certain type of individual.

The Silver Lake was a Personal Exclusive Weapon that Shi Feng created for himself.

If other Swordsmen used the Silver Lake, it would only display the power of a normal Fine-Gold Weapon. However, in Shi Feng's hands, it could display the prowess of a Dark-Gold Weapon.

Previously, Shi Feng had lost the Crimson Blade in battle, and he just happened to be in need of a new weapon.

This Silver Lake would suffice for Shi Feng's use for a very long time, and he would not need a new weapon any time soon.

Now that he had crafted his first Personal Exclusive Weapon, Shi Feng felt much more assured. He then continued forging more Silver Dawns.

After successfully forging the Fine-Gold Ranked Silver Lake, it became much easier for Shi Feng to forge the Silver Dawn.

Two days quickly passed. During the day, Shi Feng would move some items to his new house, decorating his new home with some furniture. He then trained his body as usual. At night, after he entered God's Domain, he forged equipment without stopping. In such a way, his time was fully occupied.

After training his body for a time, in addition to the constant aid of the Nutrient Fluids, Shi Feng could feel a clear improvement in his body's physique. Also, his mind felt much more clear. Currently, his physique had only caught up with the average standard of the athletes in his university. As long as he persevered for another fortnight, he might be able to reach the standard of the fighting and martial arts societies' members. At that time, his body could absorb Nutrient Fluids more efficiently, allowing his mind to become much more active.

Meanwhile, during the nights in God's Domain, aside from occasionally visiting the Auction House to purchase materials and appreciation items, Shi Feng had conducted a large transaction with Stabbing Heart. Shi Feng sold the Level 5 to Level 7 Bronze Equipment he possessed in bulk, earning himself over 2 Gold Coins and over 200,000 Credits. Other than that, Shi Feng spent the remainder of his time cooped up in the Intermediate Forging Room. Not only did he forge Silver Dawns, but he also forged plenty of equipment using the Bronze and Mysterious-Iron Forging Designs he obtained from Blackbeard.

After he spent all his money on forging equipment, he continued making Advanced Whetstones.

In a period of two days, Shi Feng had forged a total of 31 Silver Dawns, over 200 pieces of Level 8 Bronze Equipment, over 100 pieces of Level 9 Bronze Equipment, over 100 pieces of Level 10 Bronze Equipment, over 60 Mysterious-Iron Weapons, over 70 pieces of Mysterious-Iron Equipment, and over 2,000 Advanced Whetstones.

If other Forgers saw at these numbers, they might faint from shock. Shi Feng's forging speed was simply outrageous.

However, the main reason Shi Feng could create so many items was his low rate of failure.

After forging so much equipment, Shi Feng's level had long since reached Level 10, and he was not that far from Level 11. As long as Shi Feng desired, he could go to White River City at any time. However, he did not plan to make that journey yet. At the very least, he wanted to make a trip to Blackwing City first, before going to White River City.

According to Shi Feng's understanding, the average players were mostly at Level 6, the pro players at Level 7, while only those leveling madmen who played the game 24 hours a day might be Level 9. Hence, Shi Feng was not in a hurry. Going from Level 9 to Level 10, the EXP needed was not a small amount. At the very least, it would take over a day to obtain it.

Just as Shi Feng prepared to go to the Auction House and sell a few more Glimmer Chestplate Forging Designs...

Shi Feng suddenly discovered an interesting matter.

The members of Martial Union, whom he could previously see on the streets, were nowhere to be found.

Could Martial Union have disbanded already? Shi Feng was slightly puzzled. He then called out the Bounty System governed by the Main God System, checking just how many members of Martial Union have died during this period.

The collection of bounties in God's Domain could be done through the Main God System. As long as a player completed a bounty and submitted the appropriate information, the Main God System would verify the information. After verification, the bounty previously registered and stored by the employer would be handed over to the player. There was absolutely no need for the employer to personally verify all information submitted, wasting a lot of time in the process.

Previously, Shi Feng stored 5 Gold Coins and a million Credits in the Main God System, enough to burn Martial Union for a month or two.

However, now that Shi Feng took a look, he was immediately dumbfounded.

The 5 Gold Coins he placed were no more, while there was still around 800,000 remaining of the one million Credits.

The bounty on a normal member of Martial Union was only 1 Silver Coin or 100 Credits; five Gold Coins meant 500 kills. If it were an elite member of the Guild, the bounty was 10 Silver Coins or 1,000 Credits, and 5 Gold Coins was the equivalent of 50 kills. Such a number was sufficient to send all the elites of Martial Union in Red Leaf Town back to Level 0. Furthermore, there was still more than 100,000 Credits used up.

It had only been slightly more than two days since Shi Feng announced the bounty, and yet, so much was gone already. With this, nearly all members of Martial Union stationed within Red Leaf Town had died, several times to boot.

This was a devastating and irrecoverable strike to Martial Union in Red Leaf Town. It was no wonder there were no players from Martial Union on the streets.

After looking at the numbers and video evidence, Shi Feng only had one word in his heart.

Awesome!

Having suffered to such a degree had definitely crippled Martial Union.

Among all the kill counts, a female Assassin held the record for the most kills. She slaughtered over 50 members of Martial Union, and none were repetitive. This attracted Shi Feng's attention.

After watching the recordings of the female Assassin in action, Shi Feng was incomparably shocked.

The girl's techniques were extremely skilled, and in battle, her usage of skills was simply perfect. She was absolutely one of the rare expert Assassins.

"Fire Dance?" Shi Feng looked at the name displayed at the number one spot, his mouth softly reciting it. According to his memories, there didn't seem to be an expert female Assassin called Fire Dance.

At this moment, a call request suddenly came from Blackie.

"What happened, Blackie?" Shi Feng knew that Blackie would not randomly call without a purpose. The only possibility was that something had happened.

"Brother Feng, I don't know what happened, but those bastards from Martial Union found us. They also sent many of their elite players to surround us. Among them, there were also a few experts from Martial Union that I have never seen before."

“We went all out to break out of the encirclement, but because of my inability, Cola sacrificed himself and stayed behind to cover for us. The others also died as they tried to open a path. Right now, Lonely Snow and I are the only ones left alive. Brother Feng, you need to be careful. You definitely mustn’t allow them to discover you. If they do, you won’t even have the time to use a Return Scroll,” Blackie said with an extremely hurried tone; both rage and resistance filled his voice.

Ever since he started grinding for levels with Cola and the others, adventuring and going through life and death together, they had long since formed a very deep bond. Now, however, to secure his escape, Cola and the others took the initiative to stay behind and stall the enemies, while he could only run away.

Thinking up to this point, even more anger filled Blackie over his own inadequacy. If he could become slightly stronger, he might not have to watch his teammates die, one after another.

“Where are you? I’ll come immediately.” Hearing Blackie’s report, Shi Feng burned with rage. However, he remained calm as he spoke.

“Brother Feng, you mustn't come here! There are too many players from Martial Union right now. Moreover, there are several experts here as well. I’ll try to think of a way to escape with Lonely Snow,” Blackie advised. The only reason he contacted Shi Feng was that he worried Shi Feng might accidentally encounter the players from Martial Union. It was not that he did not believe in Shi Feng’s strength, but the players from Martial Union simply numbered too many. There were also many experts among them; Shi Feng would have no chance against them.

“Tell me where you two are, now,” Shi Feng said each word coldly, an icy glint flashing in his eyes.

Hearing Shi Feng’s grave tone, Blackie knew that Shi Feng was serious. Moreover, Shi Feng was very angry. Helpless, Blackie said, “We’re in Gale Valley.”

“Alright, I’ll be there immediately. Be careful not to get surrounded,” Shi Feng said.

“Lonely Snow and I have escaped into the inner regions of the Gale Valley. Shrubs and fog fill this place, so they should not easily discover us.” Blackie felt that he should not have contacted Shi Feng. That way, he wouldn’t have dragged Shi Feng into this mess as well.

“Good, then. Since you can’t use Return Scrolls, someone might be using some special skill to stop you. However, you two can still use Isolation Scrolls. That way, it will be much harder for them to discover you. Find a good place to hide. I’ll arrive soon,” Shi Feng disconnected the call.

Although Shi Feng did not know how Martial Union managed to find another group of players, even with experts leading them, they were gravely mistaken if they thought they could easily bully him.

Shi Feng dashed towards Gale Valley.

Chapter 136 - Resonant Sword

Gale Valley was quite far from Red Leaf Town. For the sake of speed, Shi Feng used a Speed Scroll without hesitation.

Instantly, Shi Feng’s speed soared, his body leaving behind afterimages as he ran.

“Crap! Who’s that? How can he be so quick? Is he hacking?”

“How could that be? This is God’s Domain... However, that is truly fast. Before I could get a clear look at him, he was already gone. That person must be an Assassin who went full Agility with all his speed-increasing skills activated.”

The players who saw Shi Feng running were all shocked by his wind-like speed. He was no slower than a sports car.

Ever since Shi Feng reached Level 10 and equipped his new weapon, the Silver Lake, his battle prowess was at least double that of at Level 9.

Moreover, after players reached Level 10, all Attributes increased by 10 points and HP by 100 points. Due to this increase, there was a large gap between Level 9 and Level 10 players.

However, compared to the average Level 10 player, Shi Feng’s Attributes were much higher. The Ice-Blue Devil Flame alone had greatly increased Shi Feng’s Attributes, not to mention the Magic Weapon, Abyssal Blade, and the Fine-Gold Weapon, Silver Lake. Furthermore, Shi Feng possessed the complete Silvermoon Set Equipment, coupled with a few independent pieces of Secret-Silver Equipment. He also had the title, Might of a Thousand, currently equipped.

Shi Feng’s Strength alone reached 93 points. It was absolutely an unreachable amount to the average player. Moreover, Shi Feng’s Agility had broken through the 100-point threshold, activating the Intermediate Agility Hidden Passive Skill.

Like the Wind.

It was renowned as a godly skill for battling in the open. With this new passive skill, players’ Movement Speed increased by 15%, Attack Speed increased by 5%, and the shrubs and brambles of roads and

forests would no longer affect him. Simultaneously, consumption of Stamina had slightly reduced, greatly improving a player's survivability and ability in battle.

Originally, Shi Feng needed to travel for about two hours to reach Gale Valley. However, with this new passive skill, it took Shi Feng less than an hour to arrive.

The outer region of Gale Valley was a Level 8 area, while its inner regions were Level 9. Not only was there a large number of monsters in Gale Valley, but the monsters here also traveled in groups. Without a certain amount of strength, one could only seek death by coming to this place. Right now, only a small minority of players dared come here to level up.

The Gale Valley was long and narrow. If over 500 players were present, they could perform an inch-by-inch search as they advanced. However, based on the information Blackie provided, Martial Union had only sent around 200 players. It was not enough to create a perfect encirclement of the area, and it would not be easy for them to locate Blackie and Lonely Snow.

Moreover, if these 200 or so players wished to locate Blackie, they would have to spread out and form search parties.

In regards to jungle battles such as this, Shi Feng had experienced plenty in the past. In his previous life, he had done battle with many second-rate Guilds, and even first-rate Guilds, in forested areas. Although the players involved numbered in the tens of thousands, he still bloodily massacred his enemies. It could be said that Shi Feng was most familiar with these types of battles. For the players who had only recently experienced the evolution of God's Domain, however, their experiences of such warfare was nil.

As expected, there is a sentry here.

Before arriving at the entrance of Gale Valley, Shi Feng had altered his appearance.

After entering Gale Valley, with his extraordinary five senses, Shi Feng immediately discovered the four Level 6 Assassins hidden around the valley's entrance.

These Assassins were all scouts of Martial Union specialized in investigation. They were currently tasked to report back all the players who entered the Gale Valley, determining whether or not said players were here as the enemy's backup. With this information, they could allow their members to prepare beforehand and set up an ambush. Unfortunately, Shi Feng had long since guessed this, hence his alteration of his appearance before entering the Gale Valley. Even if the experts of Martial Union knew that someone had entered the Gale Valley, they would not know it was Shi Feng. They would only see him as an independent player, here to level up, and they would not be wary of him.

Shi Feng paid no heed to these Assassins. Instead, he went deeper into the Gale Valley.

Based on Shi Feng's strength alone, it would be extremely easy for Shi Feng to kill these four Level 6 Assassins. However, he would not. Doing so would only alert the enemy of his presence. If he caused the members of Martial Union to become vigilant, he could not achieve the greatest effect when he ambushed them later on.

"Boss Unstable, there's a player entering the Gale Valley. However, he's not the target, Ye Feng," one of the Assassins on guard at the valley's entrance reported.

"Got it; you guys stay on guard there. As long as Ye Feng enters the Gale Valley, immediately report it to me. Also, remember to tail him, and do not let him discover any of you. As long as you all do a good job, you will be members of the Guild's elite team in the future," the player called Unstable commanded seriously.

"Yes!"

After finishing his report, the Assassin grew extremely excited. He became much more serious as he silently awaited by the entrance for Ye Feng. However, he did not know that the person he mentioned had long since entered the Gale Valley.

After Shi Feng entered the Gale Valley, he constantly advanced, through the treetops. He utilized his heightened vision to observe the surrounding situation, making accurate decisions.

En, someone's here.

Very quickly, Shi Feng detected sounds of battle from the forest a short distance ahead. Moreover, it did not seem like a small battle.

Immediately, Shi Feng stealthily closed in on the origin of the sounds, intending to discover more about the situation. If it were only a battle between players and monsters, there would not be so much movement. Moreover, the closer Shi Feng was, the clearer the sounds of metal clashing against metal and the ear-piercing screech of blades and swords interweaving with each other.

Could they have discovered Blackie? Shi Feng shook his head, feeling that the possibility was extremely low. Previously, when Blackie contacted him, Blackie stayed in the Level 9 inner regions of Gale Valley. Meanwhile, this was the Level 8 area of Gale Valley, and there was no way Martial Union had encountered Blackie.

When Shi Feng leaped up to one of the trees closest to the scene of the battle, he discovered that it was indeed a conflict between players. Moreover, the battle was very intense.

The weaker of the two parties only had six players remaining, and they did not even have a healer. Meanwhile, the players bearing the Guild Emblem of Martial Union were still considerably strong; they had a total of 18 players remaining, with three of which were healers. Amongst the healers, two were Level 7 Clerics, while one was a Level 8 Druid. They all wore matching Bronze Set Equipment mixed with a few pieces of Mysterious-Iron Equipment. The rest of the players also had relatively good equipment, and the lowest leveled among them was a Level 7 player possessing a complete set of Bronze Equipment.

These 18 players were elite members of Martial Union. If they were not elites, they would not possess such levels and equipment. They looked even stronger than the elites Shi Feng had faced off with before.

Since when did Martial Union possess so many elites? Shi Feng was slightly puzzled.

Logically, Martial Union should have long since been crippled after dying so many times. So, how did so many elites suddenly appear? Moreover, every one of them possessed good equipment, and compared to Martial Union at its peak, they were much stronger. In Red Leaf Town, their power could rival that of a third-rate Guild. It was truly an unfathomable situation.

“Little girl, don’t even think of escaping this time. Just obediently wait for your deaths!” the commanding team leader from Martial Union sneered as he looked at the female Assassin possessing a sexy body.

Looking at the hot female Assassin, she had an attractive oval face, slender eyebrows, and eyes as clear as water. The girl was very beautiful, like a dazzling pearl or fluorescent jade, and beneath her appearance, she hid a faint lovely tenderness.

“Aren’t you thinking too highly of yourselves? You want me to stay put and let you kill me? Dream on. Even if I die, I’ll take you guys with me,” the provocative-looking girl glanced at the Swordsman team leader, the corners of her lips curling up slightly as she said disdainfully.

“Sister Fire Dance, you should leave! Let us hold them off for you. If we continue dragging this on, none of us will get away. Don’t forget; we are now Red Players, and the death penalty is extremely severe. At the very least, we would lose two levels and three or four pieces of equipment,” the Berserker beside the girl softly suggested.

Although the Berserker spoke in a very soft tone, Shi Feng, who possessed extraordinary five senses, managed to hear him clearly.

Fire Dance?

It was no wonder Shi Feng thought that the female Assassin looked familiar. It turned out that she was Fire Dance, the female Assassin who ranked at number one for killing the members of Martial Union.

It seems that I have to lend some help this time. Shi Feng faintly smiled as he stood on the branch.

Even if he were not familiar with Fire Dance, he would still lend her some help. The reason he came here was to kill everyone from Martial Union, creating rivers of blood. He wanted to teach the players from Martial Union what the rage of an independent player truly meant.

At this moment, the Swordsman team leader laughed loudly, saying, “Do you think you can still escape? The moment we discovered you, we called for all our comrades to hurry over. We have long since surrounded this place. If you can still manage to escape, I’ll eat this greatsword of mine.”

“It seems they will bury us here. Our only choice is to carve out a trail of blood,” Fire Dance said.

After hearing the Swordsman team leader from Martial Union speak, Fire Dance’s expression turned grim, gritting her teeth slightly.

Originally, she intended to come here to kill the members of Martial Union. She did not think that she would fall into Martial Union’s trap instead. After killing their way out of the encirclement with much difficulty, these players once more surrounded them. Their chances of escaping were already scant, and if another twenty or so enemies arrived, even that tiny hope of escape would vanish.

If she and her teammates died now, with the previous Crime Value they had accumulated, at the very least, her teammates would each lose two levels, while she would lose at least three levels and all of her equipment. Such a loss would devastate them, and their team would very likely disband, never to rise again.

“Hahaha! It’s too late to fear now! Originally, we prepared this ambush for that Ye Feng, but I never thought you guys would send yourselves to death. From now on, the fine equipment that you guys use will belong to us! Brothers, go! Leave that little girl for me to deal with,” the Swordsman team leader licked his lips as he spoke, his eyes revealing an undisguised greed as he gazed at Fire Dance’s sexy body.

Naturally, Shi Feng, who was hiding in the forest, heard the entire conversation.

Although he knew Martial Union definitely had some hidden plot, it turned out that they planned to set a trap for him all along.

Previously, he had stayed inside the Forging Room, creating equipment. Moreover, he had also altered his outward appearance, making it impossible for Martial Union to find him. Hence, they chose to take

action against Blackie and the others, using them to lure him out. At the same time, they would set up a trap and surround him.

Unfortunately, although they had prepared for a variety of situations, they missed out on two important points.

First, Shi Feng possessed the Demon Mask that allowed him to disguise his character's appearance and information easily.

Second, they gravely underestimated Shi Feng's current strength.

"Brothers, follow me and let's kill our way out!"

At this moment, Fire Dance chose to take the initiative and launched an attack. In the blink of an eye, she rushed towards the spot where the encirclement had the least amount of players. Before the Berserker standing there could react, Fire Dance's dagger had already pierced the back of his head, forcing him into a Fainted state. Fire Dance immediately followed up with a Backstab, Assassinate, and Eviscerate, instantly removing half of the Berserker's HP.

The other members of Fire Dance's team also rushed forward with her, breaking through the encirclement.

However, just as the several Level 7 players fell to critical health, a dazzling white light surrounded their bodies, recovering over half of their total HP. Moreover, those players were not just weaklings. They stubbornly held back the members of Fire Dance's team, not backing down in the slightest.

“Mages, go all out! Clerics, cast your Shields! Rangers, mark the Assassins! Do not let them get away! I don’t want to become a laughing-stock for the players in Blue Water Town,” the Swordsman from Martial Union commanded as he similarly charged at Fire Dance.

Including herself, Fire Dance’s team only had six players remaining. Each of them faced off against two or three enemies. Their enemies also had healers constantly replenishing their health. They had no chance for victory at all.

Moreover, with the constant bombardment from the backline mages of Martial Union, Fire Dance lost another two of her teammates in the blink of an eye.

“Is this really it for us...?” Fire Dance watched her comrades fall in front of her eyes, her heart bleeding at the sight.

However, Fire Dance had no time for anger as she faced off against three enemies at once. One of the three was also the team leader from Martial Union. However, in addition to being outnumbered, she also had to deal with the constant attacks from the mages. As a result, her HP reduced continuously, while a majority of her skills were on Cooldown. She could only dodge the incoming attacks to reduce as much damage as possible.

“Hahaha! Little girl, if you wish to blame someone, then blame that Ye Feng of yours for standing out! All who go against Martial Union will earn a fatal ending! However, you can be relieved. That Ye Feng fella will sooner or later accompany you as well!”

Just when the Swordsman thought that victory was in his grasp, a black figure silently appeared behind Martial Union’s healers. Nobody had even discovered the appearance of this person.

Without anybody noticing, two sword lights pierced through one of the Level 7 Clerics, causing damages of -397 and -542, instantly killing him. Only when the Cleric died did the second Cleric and Druid notice an enemy right beside them. Moreover, this new enemy instantly killed one of their comrades.

“Ene...my...”

The other Cleric attempted to yell out in fright, yet, he suddenly discovered that he was unable to yell out. He did not know when it started, but at this moment, both his abdomen and neck spurted out fresh blood. Moreover, when he turned to look at the Druid beside him, he noticed that the Druid was in a similar situation.

However, neither of them noticed that, in actuality, they had been attacked at the same time as the first Cleric. Only, their reactions were slightly delayed, failing to notice their own HPs had already to zero.

Staring at each other, they both fell forward, their visions turning a dull grey.

That’s three down. Shi Feng’s eyes flashed with a cold glint. He then shifted his cold gaze to the mages nearby.

Based on Shi Feng’s current Attack Power, even if he did not depend on the Ice-Blue Devil Flame’s damage increase and did not use any of his skills, he could still kill any Cloth Armor classes of the same level with only two strikes from his swords.

Two swords, six images. With Shi Feng’s current Attributes, it was an easy feat, and there were burdens when doing so. Moreover, the faster Shi Feng’s sword slashes were, the greater the damage the Silver Lake could cause. If Shi Feng’s speed reached its pinnacle, it might even be possible for him to instant-kill a Cloth Armor class with just a single sword strike. In an open battlefield like this, Shi Feng was just like a harvester, reaping players’ lives.

With Shi Feng's current Attack Speed, if other players did not activate their Extraordinary State[1], they could not block Shi Feng's attacks at all. Without a doubt, they would instantly die. Meanwhile, the current players able to activate the Extraordinary State were usually melee classes, such as the Swordsman team leader. Only with it could they possibly have a chance to react and retaliate against Shi Feng. However, even then, it was only a possibility.

Shi Feng then activated Wind Blade, rushing towards the nearest Elementalist of Martial Union.

"Are you healers dead or what? Don't you even know how to heal?" a low HP Assassin of Martial Union cursed.

However, the Assassin's curses received no replies. Seizing the opportunity, Fire Dance, with her accumulated 3-Star Energy, used Eviscerate to finish off this Assassin.

The backline mages witnessing this scene all turned to look at the healers behind them, intending to find out what had happened.

However, the moment one turned, he immediately discovered a dark shadow sliding across his neck, with another blue shadow piercing through his chest. His HP bar displayed before him rapidly decreased. Soon after, his vision darkened, and his life extinguished.

After killing the Elementalist, Shi Feng turned towards the other mage classes.

"Leader, there's a monster ambushing us," a Summoner at a distance shouted in fright after witnessing this scene. However, before he could even get a clear look at this ambusher, the Level 7 Elementalist was already dead. Such a scene caused this Summoner to have shivers all down his body.

“Can’t you see that I’m busy here? If it’s just a monster ambush, don’t you know how to deal with it yourselves?” the Swordsman retorted angrily. At this moment, he still exchanged moves with Fire Dance, and he could not afford a distraction. It’s just a monster; where’s the need to report even that?! Are you an idiot or what?

Hearing no reply from the Summoner, the Swordsman thought his subordinate turned to deal with the monster. Hence, he focused more on his battle against Fire Dance.

In reality, however, the Summoner already lay beneath Shi Feng’s feet. The three mages nearby who attempted to escape were dead as well. Meanwhile, Shi Feng’s name turned a crimson red, as if it would bleed at any time.

Currently, only three players remained on Fire Dance’s team, and all three of their HPs were almost gone. Meanwhile, Martial Union still had nine melee players whose HPs were above 50%.

“Leader, something’s not right! I’m already at half health, but the healers haven’t healed me yet,” a Berserker shouted.

“Crap, what are you healers doing?! Do you not want to play anymore?” the Swordsman bellowed after discovering the problem as well.

However, just after he finished his bellow, he suddenly felt a chill down his back. He hurriedly rolled to a side, dodging.

Immediately after, three sword images pierced through the space he stood before.

The two other players in front of him were not as lucky. Both of Shi Feng's swords pierced through their backs. Without even knowing the cause of their deaths, both of their bodies fell lifelessly to the ground, their eyes wide open.

As the leader, the Swordsman was the strongest among the entire team. However, when he saw this scene play out before him, he suddenly felt cold throughout his body. Being able to kill both of his comrades instantly and without using any skills to boot, just how heaven-defying was this person's Attack Power?!

"Who are you? Why are you acting against us?" The team leader gathered up his courage, angrily shouting, "Do you know who we are? We are members of Martial Union! If you don't wish to die, leave this place immediately! I can still let you off the hook!"

However, he suddenly heard the reply whispered from behind him.

"The ones I'm here to kill are precisely you from Martial Union."

The Swordsman team leader turned his head, his complexion turning pale instantly. Previously, the mysterious player standing in front of him had, in the blink of an eye, arrived at his back, giving him a cold smile.

Before the Swordsman team leader could even scream, Shi Feng sent a Chop at him. The pitch-black Abyssal blade pierced through his chest, causing over -700 damage, instantly dropping his HP to zero.

Pairing up Silent Steps and Chop, Shi Feng had killed off the Level 8 Swordsman team leader.

Meanwhile, Fire Dance, witnessing this scene from a distance, was utterly dumbfounded. This mysterious player had instantly killed the Swordsman team leader, whom she had difficulty dealing with.

Is this mysterious player truly a player?

He can't be a ghost of God's Domain, right?!

After the team leader of Martial Union died, the other members were all fear-stricken.

After witnessing Shi Feng's extraordinary speed and frightening damage, they all felt unprecedented fear.

"Is this even a player?"

"He can't be a monster, right?"

This way of thinking reverberated in the minds of these players, causing them to tremble with fear.

Although Fire Dance had good technique, at this moment, she did not dare to make any careless movements. She could only watch in silence, and unknowingly, a streak of sweat rolled down from her forehead. When faced with this mysterious player before her, Fire Dance's instincts were telling her that, if this mysterious player wanted to deal with her, death would be the only outcome for her.

TL Notes:

[1]Extraordinary State (previously Extraordinary Condition): Mentioned in Chapter 29

Chapter 138 - Hidden Expert

Fire Dance's eyes flickered when she saw Shi Feng's figure. Aside from the immense pressure that she felt from him, she could also smell the stench of death on him.

From the moment Shi Feng appeared, she was aware of Shi Feng's existence.

However, Shi Feng's movements and battle techniques were just too quick, to the point where she even questioned her own senses. Only when the team leader died was she shocked out of her daze.

From the death of the first Cleric to the death of the Swordsman, only a short five seconds had passed. Every time Shi Feng revealed himself, another player fell to the ground, blood spurting from their bodies. Shi Feng was like the Grim Reaper, harvesting the lives of Martial Union's members.

One could only describe Shi Feng's movements as 'erratic.' Shi Feng also wore a pitch-black hooded cape that hid his face. In addition, the Demon Mask hid his name, level, and other information. Aside from his HP bar, there was nothing else to see. It would not be strange even if he received the same treatment as a monster.

The only reason Fire Dance knew Shi Feng was not a monster was that she had overheard Shi Feng speaking to the Swordsman team leader in a low tone.

However, the fact that Shi Feng was not a monster, but instead, a player, shocked Fire Dance even more.

Just how high were Shi Feng's Attributes for him to be so strong?!

Meanwhile, Shi Feng felt nothing unexpected about the feats he had just accomplished. The Attributes of these players was not even half of his own.

Virtual reality games were just that cruel. Although the gap of Attributes between each level was small, when accumulated to a certain degree, the gap in total strength would be massive.

"Quick, escape! That's a monster!"

"I'm not fighting anymore; that monster is just too scary!"

Although they knew that this was just a virtual reality, the remaining five players from Martial Union were still utterly afraid, their hearts beating madly. Their team leader, the strongest amongst them, died in an instant; he wasn't even able to retaliate in the slightest. This was no longer a monster that players could handle. Immediately, every one of them fled, intending to meet up with the others hurrying over. Only then could they have peace of mind.

"It's too late to escape now."

Shi Feng activated Windwalk, and like an arrow, his body shot forth, instantly catching up to the first Assassin. In a fright, that Assassin attempted to turn his body to block Shi Feng's attack; unfortunately for him, Shi Feng's Attack Speed was just too fast. With a wave of the Abyssal Blade, three sword images landed upon the Assassin's vital points. Without even managing to block a single sword image, the Assassin died.

When the several other escaping players saw that an Assassin, a class widely known for their Agility, fell without even being able to defend, immense fear permeated their minds. They poured more into their effort to escape.

However, it was futile as the distance between them and Shi Feng only grew shorter and shorter. Meanwhile, the Abyssal Blade was like the scythe of the Grim Reaper already placed around their necks. Shi Feng needed only a slight tug, and their lives would be forfeit, right then and there.

Within a moment, with an absolute difference of speed, Shi Feng very quickly killed the five escaping players. He then started tidying up the loot.

These Martial Union players all wore pretty nice armor. A majority of them were all fully equipped with Bronze Equipment, and some even had a few pieces of Mysterious-Iron Equipment. However, the equipment was all just Level 4 or Level 5 equipment. Meanwhile, they each dropped at least one piece of equipment after death.

Eighteen players meant eighteen pieces of Level 4 to Level 5 Bronze Equipment. If Shi Feng sold it all, he could make a small fortune.

While Shi Feng picked up the drops, Fire Dance, standing at a distance, held her delicate hand over her madly beating heart. Slightly calming her emotions, she picked up the courage to walk towards Shi Feng, saying in gratitude, "I am called Fire Dance. Thank you for saving us."

Originally, Fire Dance despaired, having prepared for her death.

Only, she never imagined that someone would suddenly appear. Moreover, that someone massacred the players from Martial Union.

Everything that happened was like a dream.

Although Fire Dance also worried that the mysterious man before her would suddenly go berserk, killing her and her teammates as well to steal their equipment, based on the man's previous actions, Fire Dance knew that the mysterious man before her did not mean them any harm. Otherwise, he would have already taken their lives along with the Swordsman's of Martial Union.

"You don't have to thank me. To begin with, these people originally set up this trap for me. You guys should hurry and leave. This place is very dangerous right now, and the other members of Martial Union should be arriving very soon," Shi Feng softly said as he picked up the dropped equipment.

He had only saved Fire Dance and her companions in passing. He could also take the chance to thank Fire Dance for working so hard, killing the members of Martial Union.

Fire Dance suddenly blanked at Shi Feng's words, staring at him with her big, watery eyes. Her heartbeat accelerated further, feeling like it was too good to be true.

"You... You're Ye Feng?" Fire Dance asked in disbelief.

The reason she came to the Gale Valley was that she had heard that Martial Union intended to deal with Ye Feng's teammates. Hence, she thought of coming to lend some help, and just maybe, she might even get to meet Ye Feng, himself.

It was truly unbelievable how fate could toy with a person's life.

Originally, she thought of offering Ye Feng aid, yet in the end, Ye Feng had saved her.

Was this fate?

Thinking up to this point, a faint blush added to Fire Dance's snow-white cheeks. She felt that she was overthinking, and she was unclear as to why she would have such a thought.

"That's right; I am Ye Feng. How did you know who I am?" Shi Feng looked at the excited Fire Dance, puzzled. He was sure he was not acquainted with this beauty standing in front of him. However, seeing Fire Dance's expression, it would seem that she was somehow familiar with him.

Meanwhile, the Berserker, Water Buffalo, was tongue-tied after hearing Shi Feng admit that he was indeed Fire Dance's idol, Ye Feng; an incomparable fanaticism appeared in his eyes.

Previously, he felt Shi Feng was not all that powerful, and that he was only an expert over-exaggerated by others.

Now, he was utterly convinced.

Sure enough, there was nothing false about Shi Feng's famous reputation.

Shi Feng could solo the elite team from Martial Union that even they could not deal with. In the past, even if others hyped it all over the place, he would still have not believed any of it. Now, however, aside from shock, admiration for Ye Feng filled his being.

It was no wonder why Ye Feng was Fire Dance's idol.

"Big Brother Ye Feng, you don't know this, but in reality, Sister Fire Dance is your..." before Water Buffalo could finish speaking, he received a kick from Fire Dance. He grimaced from the pain, but when he looked at the expression in Fire Dance's eyes that seemed able to eat a person whole, he immediately chose to cover his mouth, not uttering a single word.

"Is my what?" Shi Feng was puzzled.

"It's nothing! Water Buffalo is just having an epileptic fit! Big Brother Ye Feng, won't you leave with us?" Fire Dance slightly shook her head. She then worriedly said, "This time, Martial Union has sent over two hundred men here. They have long since surrounded this entire area. There are also several powerful Level 9 experts, and all of them are wearing sets of Mysterious-Iron Equipment. They killed many of our teammates. If they surround us, we will have no chance of escaping at all. Big Brother Ye Feng, it is not too late to escape. If we wait any longer, we'll lose the chance."

If it weren't for those experts, her team would not have incurred such huge losses.

"Level 9 experts, is it?" Shi Feng was slightly shocked.

The current Level 9 players in Red Leaf Town were experts at the pinnacle. Now, however, several Level 9 hidden experts suddenly appeared here. Moreover, they were all Martial Union's men.

However, so what if they were Level 9 experts?

Since they wished to deal with him, he would receive every one of them. It just so happened that he could use them to test his sword.

“You guys should hurry up and leave. I’ll stay here and take a look at these experts.”

Chapter 139 - Unstable Devastation

After he finished speaking, Shi Feng snuck into the forest.

“Sister Fire Dance, what do we do now? Do we leave?” Water Buffalo asked.

Fire Dance rolled her eyes at Water Buffalo. She looked towards the direction Shi Feng departed, saying, “Brother Ye Feng is the one who saved our lives. Of course, we have to help.”

Although Fire Dance believed in Ye Feng’s strength, she had personally witnessed how powerful those other players were. If they surrounded Ye Feng, he might end up in a very dangerous situation. If something occurred, a little help from her might allow Shi Feng to escape.

Immediately, the two snuck into the forest as well, following Ye Feng.

In the deeper regions of the dense forest, among the overgrown shrubs, Level 8 Shadow Leopards hid in the shadows.

At this moment, a 50-man team from Martial Union currently cleared away the Shadow Leopards in their path while they pushed forward.

“Brother Unstable, won’t we waste time if we go after that little girl called Fire Dance instead of continuing our search for Ye Feng’s teammates?” Ironsword Lion asked, disgruntled; his eyebrows scrunched up tightly as he looked towards the center of the team at the handsome youth humming a song with overflowing interest.

The humming youth was around the age of 27 or 28, and he was indeed the Brother Unstable who Ironsword Lion called out to. He was also the Vice-Leader of Martial Union, Unstable Devastation. Be it status or strength, Unstable Devastation far surpasses Ironsword Lion, and even Ironsword Lion had to refer to him as ‘Brother’ respectfully.

“Ironsword, you are still such a simple person. It is no wonder that brat Ye Feng toyed with you. You even entangled the Guild in this huge mess. Thanks to you, Martial Union’s reputation has suffered, utterly tarnished; do you understand that?” Unstable Devastation suddenly halted his steps. He looked towards Ironsword Lion, growling angrily, “If I had not discovered this so soon, Martial Union might have had no place in Red Leaf Town by now.”

Ironsword Lion lowered his head in silence.

“Your poor management has already destroyed Red Leaf Town’s Martial Union. Right now, in order to help clean up this mess of yours, I have no choice but to transfer all of the elites from the other three towns to Red Leaf Town to redeem our reputation. Yet, you still have the gall to speak up?” Unstable Devastation reprimanded Ironsword Lion in front of everyone else, not leaving Ironsword Lion any face. Ironsword Lion flushed red with anger. However, he did not dare reply, only enduring in silence.

The other leaders from the three towns sneered at this sight.

Every time Martial Union switched to a new game, the Guild's hierarchy also reshuffled. In the past, Ironsword Lion was always able to go wild, but not this time. Currently, Ironsword Lion was only Level 8, while they were all Level 9. Moreover, the Guild's development in their respective towns progressed fairly well, and they managed to recruit many newcomers with valuable potential. Compared to the current state of the Guild branch in Red Leaf Town, with only a few weaklings remaining, their branches were stronger by leaps and bounds.

"Ironsword, do you truly think that, after I have spent so much effort cornering Ye Feng's teammates, I would let two of them escape?"

"You should know that Ye Feng is our main target; his teammates are simply lures. If all his teammates died here, do you think he will still show?"

"We have already confined his teammates within Gale Valley, so we have achieved our initial goal. Right now, what we ought to do is to take revenge, and show the players in the town what the consequences are for challenging Martial Union. Meanwhile, that little girl is the best option as an example. She has killed so many of our people; many players are bound to pay attention to her. As long as we kill her back to Level 0, Martial Union's reputation will definitely recover to its peak. If we manage to kill Ye Feng, then Martial Union can also use this chance to leap through the threshold of a third-rate Guild."

Unstable Devastation had long since possessed a plan of his own. Ironsword Lion had always been one of the Guild Leader's most trusted aides. Many of the elders in the Guild also supported the Guild Leader. If Unstable wished to become Guild Leader, he needed to increase both his influence and fame.

Meanwhile, Ye Feng was a player with a certain amount of fame within White River City. He was a publicly acknowledged Swordsman expert, and his fame even far exceeded that of the Guild Leader, Nameless Pride. Hence, Ye Feng was his best choice.

As long as he could kill Ye Feng and upload the recording, he would instantly become an apex expert, famous throughout White River City.

Moreover, it would allow the Guild branch in Red Leaf Town to rise back up to prominence.

When that time came, the elders in the Guild would side with him, and the day he became the Guild Leader of Martial Union would only be around the corner.

“Ye Feng, you will become my stepping stone!” Unstable Devastation proudly said with a laugh.

He did not believe that an independent player could survive once surrounded by so many. Only, even until now, Shi Feng had yet to show himself, annoying Unstable.

Just as Martial Union slowly advanced...

Shi Feng, traversing through the treetops, discovered Unstable Devastation and the others. After some silent observation, he discovered that these players were all elites. The lowest amongst them was Level 7, and a majority of them were Level 8. There were also four players who had reached Level 9. They all wore Mysterious-Iron Equipment, and the weakest of their weapons was also Mysterious-Iron Rank. Meanwhile, the handsome youth leading these players wore a Secret-Silver ranked longbow across his back.

“Isn’t that Unstable Devastation?” Shi Feng immediately recognized the bow-carrying youth.

In Shi Feng's previous life, he had clashed many times with Unstable Devastation.

Unstable Devastation was a cunning and cruel individual. His battle prowess ranked within the top five throughout all of Martial Union. Compared to Ironsword Lion, he was much stronger.

Shi Feng was also familiar with the other three Level 9 players. They were all experts comparable to Ironsword Lion, and they were all branch leaders in other towns.

No wonder Martial Union suddenly has so many players. It turns out that they've called over the elites from three of the towns nearby. Shi Feng came to a realization.

These three Level 9 branch leaders were very strong. Only, in Shi Feng's previous life, Ironsword Lion had managed to obtain the pass to Blackwing City, allowing him a lead against the others. He then gradually widened the gap, finally becoming the Guild Leader of Mini Martial Union.

However, the tracks of history had already changed.

In this life, not only had Shi Feng kill Ironsword Lion twice, but he also obtained the Blackwing City pass that Ironsword Lion possessed. Ironsword Lion's life was fated to end in a tragedy, and he naturally was much weaker than the other three branch leaders.

If it were during the previous life, if Shi Feng met any one of these leaders, he would have had to proceed with extreme caution. If he met two of them together, he would definitely need to avoid them.

Now, however, although all five of them were together, Shi Feng had no intentions of leaving.

The situation was different this time.

Not only did Shi Feng possess a Magic Weapon, but he had also obtained the Ice-Blue Devil Flame and many other pieces of equipment that were top-tier at this stage of the game. He also had the advantage of levels; so, he naturally possessed the confidence to battle. Even if he couldn't win against them, he could still escape them.

At this moment, Unstable Devastation had yet to learn that one of his elite teams had been wiped out. That was because players needed to wait 10 minutes before reviving at the graveyard. Within 30 minutes of revival, players could not transmit any information or communication. Hence, Unstable Devastation and the others did not know that Shi Feng had arrived. They were not cautious in the least, and it was a perfect chance for Shi Feng to launch an ambush them.

Hence, Shi Feng continued to follow his target's unhurried advancement.

While they traveled, the team maintained impressive positioning. Their healers stayed in the middle, while Unstable Devastation and the other experts walked beside them. Moreover, the players in the center of the formation only watched the players at the front battle, with no intentions of killing the monsters themselves. This way, it would be difficult for even a top-tier Assassin to attack the healers.

Meanwhile, the players in the outer layer would not move further than 15 yards from the center. If something unexpected occurred, they could immediately lend aid.

Shi Feng did not seek a frontal confrontation. Instead, he would take advantage of his speed to slowly chip at the outer layer of this team. Soon after, Shi Feng silently closed in on them.

Within a short moment, the players of Martial Union met with a group of Shadow Leopards.

An extremely ferocious Level 8 Chieftain-Ranked Shadow Leopard King led the small leap of Shadow Leopards.

Shi Feng felt that this was his chance. He crept closer to the team, hiding in a bush and waiting.

Time passed, bit by bit...

The guards around the Shadow Leopard King were all dead, and the King was the only one left. The players of Martial Union grew very excited. Seeing as good equipment was about to drop, they all became much more serious and focused on the battle. They remained completely unaware of Shi Feng, already positioned on the tree above their heads.

“MT, make sure to dodge its skills; don’t let its claws land on you. As for everyone else, hold off as many strikes as you can. Healers, go all out with your heals.” Unstable Devastation was also excited. Immediately, the speed at which the arrows fired from his bow accelerated.

Unstable Devastation did not think that his luck would be so good as to allow him to meet a Level 8 Chieftain. This kind of field Chieftain would not just drop a single piece of equipment, but would normally drop several. Based on the Shadow Leopard King’s level, at the very least, it would drop Level 7 or Level 8 Secret-Silver Equipment and possibly Fine-Gold Equipment.

Mysterious-Iron Equipment was considered high quality at this stage of the game.

In the entire Martial Union, the total amount of Secret-Silver Equipment they possessed was no more than ten pieces. It was obvious just how precious they were.

Meanwhile, the Shadow Leopard King before them had the possibility of dropping Fine-Gold Equipment. Compared to Secret-Silver Equipment, it was much rarer, and its Attributes were much higher. Currently, not a single person in Martial Union possessed a piece of Fine-Gold Equipment.

Not to mention Martial Union, even those third-rate Guilds did not possess a single piece of Fine-Gold Equipment. Only second-rate Guilds or higher possibly owned such an item. However, Only the Guild Leader or Vice-leader would have access, while elite members could only look at it. It would be impossible for them to obtain it, as it would be the symbol of a Guild's status.

If they could obtain one or two pieces of Fine-Gold Equipment, killing Shi Feng would be a small matter.

As the Shadow Leopard King was a Chieftain Rank monster, the other branch leaders and Ironsword Lion also participated in the battle, both sides engaging in intense combat.

[Shadow Leopard King] (Chieftain Rank)

Level 8

HP 40,000/40,000

A casual pouncing attack from the Shadow Leopard King could easily end a player's life, while a single swipe of its tail could obliterate more than half the HP of a group of players. When it struck with its sharp claws, if an MT did not defend properly, they would instantly die. If the Shadow Leopard King roared, it could force back the enemies within an 8-yard radius, forcing them into a Fainted state for 3 seconds. In addition, the Shadow Leopard King was quite nimble and had extremely high Defense. As a result, the casualties and fatalities on Martial Union's side were relatively high.

Meanwhile, the damage Martial Union inflicted was limited. The strongest player among them, Unstable Devastation, could only cause -40 to -50 damage to it, while the others could only manage slightly over -10 damage.

Fortunately, there were plenty of players on Martial Union's side.

With a total of fifty players surrounding the Shadow Leopard King, they managed to shave off a lot of the monster's HP. The Shadow Leopard King's HP steadily fell, and when its HP was about to reach 50%...

Shi Feng immediately used Phantom Kill. Controlling his doppelganger to circle the group, Shi Feng prepared his doppelganger to ambush the mage classes and healers.

Chapter 140 - Shadow Leopard King

The Shadow Leopard King was a Level 8 Chieftain Ranked monster. As long as its HP fell below 50%, it would enter a berserk state. Both its Attack Power and Attack Speed would then increase by 20%, and even an MT geared with a full set of Level 5 Set Equipment could hold it off.

"Guardian Knights, pay attention to cast Protection Blessing on the Shield Warriors. Shield Warriors, prepare to activate Shield Wall at any time. As long as we can endure its berserk period, we will be victorious," Unstable Devastation knew about the berserk state; hence, he hurriedly gave commands as he saw the Shadow Leopard King's HP reaching 50%.

Protection Blessing could reduce the damage an ally received by 50%.

A Shield Warrior's Shield Wall could also reduce damage by 50%.

With both effects stacked, the Shield Warrior would only receive 25% of the total damage. Even if the Shadow Leopard King went berserk, the Shield Warrior could hold it off completely.

Finally, the Shadow Leopard King's HP dropped below the 50% threshold.

"Aooo!" the Shadow Leopard King bellowed, its body abruptly expanding.

Everything was within Unstable Devastation's grasp. Just as he was about to reveal a victorious smile, the situation suddenly changed.

At this moment, the Shadow Leopard King summoned two more Level 8 Elite Ranked Shadow Leopards, each of them possessing 3,000 HP. The two new arrivals roared as they abruptly pounced, arriving behind the healers on the backline. Before any of these healers could react, the two Shadow Leopards pinned them to the ground.

"Shift focus! Get rid of these two Elite Shadow Leopards first!"

Unstable Devastation's expression turned grim. Just after he finished speaking, the Elite Shadow Leopards annihilated two of their healers.

However, the Level 9 branch leaders were not to be trifled with. Just after the two Elite Shadow Leopards killed the healers, they moved into position to fend off the attacks of these two monsters, preventing the damage from extending any further.

However, with the loss of two healers, the pressure the core MT faced greatly increased. Even with Protection Blessing and Shield Wall, every attack he received from the Shadow Leopard King exceeded over -300 points. On the other hand, his own HP did not even exceed 1,200 points. Moreover, the Attack Speed of the Shadow Leopard King was very quick. If it were not for him constantly dodging its attacks, he might have long since died already.

Just with the Shadow Leopard King going berserk, Martial Union had lost over five players in the blink of an eye. The Shadow Leopard King's tail swipe took out three melee players. All three were instantly thrown and died while in mid-air.

"Hold on for a little longer. Its berserk period will be over soon." Watching his team members die, one after another, Unstable Devastation became very depressed and annoyed. The players he had brought with him were all elites, and every death was a huge loss to Martial Union. Fortunately, they could revive these players, greatly reducing the lost EXP.

However, as long as they could kill the Shadow Leopard King, all of the losses would be worth it.

Just when everyone from Martial Union thought the situation had stabilized, Shi Feng's doppelganger used Wind Blade, arriving behind a Cursemanacer.

The Cursemanacer had completely concentrated on the Shadow Leopard King, chanting incantations. He paid no attention to the surrounding situation at all.

Due to all of Gale Valley falling under Martial Union's control, the risk of an ambush was nonexistent. Hence, the Curse-mancer was very much at ease.

However, such a way of thinking was a big mistake.

After the doppelganger's sword pierced through the Curse-mancer's back, it then followed up with a Chop to the Curse-mancer's head. The doppelganger followed up with another normal attack. Although the doppelganger only possessed 50% of the original body's Attributes, just 50% of Shi Feng's Attributes was terrifying. It could compare to a Level 10 Swordsman geared with a complete set of Level 10 Bronze Set Equipment. Moreover, the doppelganger's target Curse-mancer was only Level 7, wearing only Level 4 and 5 Bronze Equipment. The difference between them was like the difference between heaven and earth.

In the blink of an eye, three damages of -189, -468, and -266 appeared above the Curse-mancer's head. Shi Feng's doppelganger instantly killed the Curse-mancer whose HP was less than 700 points.

The Curse-mancer's death quickly alerted the other mage classes.

"Someone's kill-stealing[1]!" an Elementalist shouted, startled.

The surrounding mages all felt a heavy pressure weighing down on them. This intruder finished off a Level 7 Curse-mancer in just three moves. If this mysterious Swordsman closed in on them, only death awaited.

Without delay, Shi Feng's doppelganger used Thundering Flash. Three streaks of lightning arced towards the nearest four mages, immediately sending all four of them into a fright. Among them, two Elementalists instantly reacted, using Blink to dodge the lightning. Meanwhile, the Curse-mancer, who did not possess Blink, threw himself to the ground, barely avoiding the attack. However, the last of the four mages, the Summoner, was not as fortunate. As he was closest to the attack, even though he, too,

attempted to dodge, he was late by a breath. Without a hint of suspense, the Level 5 Thunder Flash instantly fried him to a crisp.

Although the doppelganger only managed to kill a Summoner, a smile appeared on its face.

The goal of this Thundering Flash was not to kill someone but to open a path. At this moment, there were no obstructions between Shi Feng's doppelganger and Martial Union's healers.

The doppelganger activated Windwalk, dashing over. As long as it killed one or two more healers, Martial Union's entire team would fall into a huge predicament.

"Don't even think about killing the healers!"

At this moment, Ironsword Lion used Windblade and rushed to block the doppelganger. The swords from both parties collided, and as they attacked, they maintained their Extraordinary States, battling with four sword images each.

The doppelganger could not help but halt its momentum, forced to block the attacks.

After exchanging several moves, Ironsword Lion was incomparably shocked. He felt that the Swordsman, whose information displayed as 'Unknown,' facing him was a powerhouse. This mysterious Swordsman actually blocked all of his attacks. Moreover, every time their swords collided, Ironsword Lion could feel an immense weight bearing down on him, causing both his arms to go numb. Occasionally, there were even few sudden stabs aimed at his vitals, forcing him to activate Defensive Blade to block.

“Ironsword, it seems that you have truly fallen. You can’t even get rid of an average player trying to kill-steal,” a Level 9 Berserker geared in silver-gray battle armor snidely remarked.

“Crap. Five Rats, you come try, if you have the ability!” Originally, he was already greatly aggrieved due to the constant pressure from Shi Feng’s doppelganger, and his HP constantly fell. Now that he received jeers on top of it, he immediately enraged.

“Since you want me to join, then I’ll join!” the Level 9 Berserker, Five Rats, used Charge at Shi Feng’s doppelganger.

Charge carried with it a Fainted effect. Moreover, the surrounding mages were already in the midst of chanting incantations for their spells, sending Fireballs and Frost Arrows at the doppelganger.

The doppelganger activated Defensive Blade. It dodged the incoming magical attacks while it gradually closed in on Martial Union’s healers.

The Level 2 Defensive Blade aided the doppelganger in mitigating the damage from the attacks it received.

However, Five Rats followed up his Charge with a Break, greatly reducing the doppelganger’s speed.

“You three, get rid of him,” Unstable Devastation commanded the three Assassins, pointing. He did not have the time to think about an idiot who was attempting to kill-stealing a team with around 40 players remaining.

After receiving the command, the three Assassins immediately rushed at Shi Feng’s doppelganger.

Receiving the focused fire of over a dozen players, although the doppelganger managed to dodge a majority of the attacks, it still received a relatively significant amount of damage. The doppelganger's HP continuously fell, and within a moment, only 30% remained.

"Hahaha! I didn't think that it would be a fat fish with brain problems!" Judging on the exchanges made and damage caused, Five Rats determined that this mysterious Swordsman's equipment was exceptional. As long as he could kill the Swordsman, he would definitely drop a lot of good equipment.

The reason Five Rats thought so was that a single normal attack from the mysterious Swordsman dealt him around -100 damage. Meanwhile, his normal attacks also chipped away 100 of the Swordsman's HP. However, the problem lay in the fact that the mysterious Swordsman used a one-handed sword, while he used a two-handed sword.

In God's Domain, a two-handed weapon's Attack Power was much higher than that of a one-handed weapon, and the damage a two-handed weapon caused was normally around twice that of a one-handed weapon. Due to the strong power stored within a two-handed weapon, every attack from the weapon could cause a devastating amount of damage. Meanwhile, the damage a one-handed weapon could cause was much less. However, its Attack Speed was much quicker. As a result, the average amount of damage dealt by both weapons, in the long run, was about the same.

However, Five Rats had only managed to deal -100 damage to the mysterious Swordsman. It showed just how good the mysterious Swordsman's equipment was.

Unfortunately, it is still too little... It would be great if they could send more people over. In the distance, hidden within a bush, Shi Feng was slightly depressed as he saw that a dozen or so players attacked his doppelganger. He bitterly thought, Forget it; I shouldn't be too greedy. I should reel in the net, now.

Abruptly, Shi Feng's doppelganger burst with power. It suddenly leaped into the air. The Abyssal Blade in the doppelganger's hand then started to emit flames and thunder, immediately releasing a blast of elements towards the most crowded location.

TL Notes:

[1]kill-stealing(KS): In multiplayer video games, particularly in MOBAs, first-person shooters, MMORPGs and MUDs, kill stealing is the practice of obtaining credit for killing an enemy, when another player has put more effort into the kill. This usually happens when a game only keeps track of which player defeats an enemy. If one player whittles down some enemy's health points, but a different player eventually finishes the enemy off, this second player might obtain all of the loot or experience points from the enemy. Kill stealing is common when the rewards for finishing enemies off is highly desired within the game. (Source: Wikipedia)