

The Strongest

Chapter 221 - Astonishing Decision

“It’s not even going to give me a choice?” Shi Feng laughed bitterly as he looked at the system notification.

Shi Feng did not even have the right to reject an Epic Quest.

Shi Feng was truly confused as to how Fantasy Extinguisher had actually managed to complete this Epic Quest. In theory, he shouldn’t be able to complete the quest even if he sacrificed the entire Fantasy Shrine.

When converted to Credits, 30,000 Gold Coins was the equivalent of 300 million Credits. One could even buy a large company with that kind of money.

Moreover, compared to the difficulty of earning 300 million Credits, in reality, it was much harder to earn 30,000 Gold in God’s Domain.

Naturally, it was impossible for Shi Feng to earn 300 million Credits in reality right now. To speak frankly, if he were capable of such a thing, he would have long since done so. Why bother playing God’s Domain at all?

However, it would still be better for him to develop himself in God’s Domain, as God’s Domain had more prospects. Earning Credits in God’s Domain would be much faster than earning Credits in reality.

“Your Excellency Ye Feng, from now on, the entire Starstreak Trading Firm will be under your command. We will carry out any orders you give. Also, I would like to introduce you to someone. If Your Excellency needs anything, simply let her know,” Henry said, clapping his hands once.

At this moment, the large doors of the office suddenly opened, and a beautiful girl with golden-blonde hair stepped into the office. The girl with blue eyes wore a beautiful purple dress; the edges of her dress brushed against the red-carpeted floor. The girl had a fair and pretty face, and her long wavy hair, which reached her buttocks, fluttered in the wind as she moved. Her bangs covered her sea-blue left eye, while her uncovered right eye looked just like a shiny, blue gemstone. As she walked closer to Shi Feng and President Henry, her thin red lips formed a tranquil, yet attractive, smile.

“Anna, from today onwards, His Excellency Ye Feng will be the acting president of Starstreak Trading Firm, while you will be His Excellency’s assistant. You must properly assist His Excellency, understood?” Henry asked.

“Yes, President. I will not disappoint His Excellency Ye Feng.”

Following which, Henry sent a beaming smile at Shi Feng as he said, “Your Excellency Ye Feng, from today onwards, the Starstreak Trading Firm’s fate will be in your hands. Anna is very familiar with the Starstreak Trading Firm, and she is also very intelligent and capable. If you have any commands, please don’t hesitate to let her carry them out.”

System: Player has activated the NPC Administration System. Please call out the NPC Administration Interface to manage your subordinated NPCs.

Seeing Henry’s smile, in addition to Anna’s attractive appearance, Shi Feng was slightly stunned. He could almost feel cold sweat dripping down his forehead.

Henry obviously worried that Shi Feng would not give it his all in helping them. Thus, Henry had given Shi Feng this “benefit.”

“Fine. Leave the matter of Starstreak Trading Firm to me, then.” Shi Feng laughed bitterly. He never imagined that he could obtain a beautiful assistant in God’s Domain. Not even a Guild Leader would enjoy such treatment.

Also, Shi Feng felt relieved at the fact that he was not required to give 30,000 Gold to Starstreak Trading Firm. Instead, he only needed to help the trading firm make 30,000 Gold. Without a doubt, the difficulty of the quest had greatly reduced.

Immediately, Shi Feng called out the system interface, investigating the NPC administration interface.

[Ana] (Ye Feng’s Assistant)

Gender: Female

Age: 20

Loyalty: 50

Charm: 86

Physique: 60

Wisdom: 91

Level: 50

HP: 10,000

Her Wisdom is so high! Shi Feng was shocked when he saw the information displayed.

In God's Domain, Wisdom determined an NPC's potential.

Normally, NPCs would not have Wisdom exceeding 50 points. If an NPC's Wisdom reached 60 points, they would possess extraordinary statuses in God's Domain. Meanwhile, those with 70 points in Wisdom were usually Tier 2 mages. As for NPCs who had 90 points in Wisdom, they were usually characters such as Sharlyn, a Tier 3 Divine Official. However, Anna was far more amazing than Sharlyn. Sharlyn had a Tier 3 Class, so her Attributes would have been increased, resulting in her Wisdom reaching 90 points. However, Anna did not possess any class right now.

If Anna obtained a Tier 3 class, her Wisdom would exceed 100 points.

Although it was only a difference of 10 points, Wisdom increased slower as it reached higher numbers. Similarly, the difference between a single point in Wisdom would also become greater. An NPC with 100 points in Wisdom was the equivalent to Magistrate Weissman of White River City, an apex Tier 4 Wizard.

With such a powerful subordinate, Shi Feng's mood improved greatly.

Although 30,000 Gold was a huge sum of money, if Shi Feng earned it through the Starstreak Trading Firm, he would still have a thread of hope of succeeding.

Since he was already capable of earning 100 Gold per day by himself, if he utilized Starstreak Trading Firm's influence, he had a very high possibility of earning the 30,000 Gold Coins.

After all, Starstreak Trading Firm had shops based in eight cities, and every one of them was in the heart of the Trade Areas of each respective city. Meanwhile, the total population of these eight cities exceeded five million players. With such a large player base, it would be very easy for Shi Feng to make money.

Thinking up to this point, a flash of inspiration struck Shi Feng.

All this time, he thought of opening a shop in White River City. Only, he did not possess the sufficient reputation or money to do so. After all, not to mention purchasing a shop located within the Trade Area, even the cheapest shop in White River City required players to have 500 White River City Reputation Points in addition to 1,000 to 5,000 Gold Coins.

Although the price looked high, in reality, it was not as expensive as one would imagine. After all, the hardest part of purchasing a shop was the required 500 reputation points. By the time players obtained 500 White River City Reputation Points, a lot of time would have passed, and they would have long since collected the necessary Coins to purchase a shop. Moreover, the Coins at that time would not be as valuable as right now. At that time, 1 Gold Coin would at most be worth around 200 Credits, unlike the current situation where 1 Silver Coin could sell for more than 100 Credits.

By becoming the acting president of the Starstreak Trading Company, Shi Feng had essentially obtained the most valuable shops in eight different cities.

What did this situation hint at?

Nobody had a better understanding of this situation than Shi Feng.

Shortly after, under Anna's lead, Shi Feng left the President's Office to tour the Starstreak Trading Firm.

In truth, however, even without exploring the place, Shi Feng already had a thorough understanding of the Starstreak Trading Firm.

NPCs were different from players in that they could only sell common goods. Even the equipment they sold was Common rank and very rarely would there be a Bronze ranked item for sale. However, it would be a different story altogether if the store were run by a player.

On top of everything else, Shi Feng was also the officially acknowledged Chief Forger of Star-Moon Kingdom.

Just as Anna guided Shi Feng around the Starstreak Trading Firm, a few players who came to purchase some necessities such as food, water, scrolls, and potions were immediately dumbstruck when they noticed the duo.

"That NPC is beautiful!"

"Just who is that player? Isn't he too good at getting the ladies? He has even managed to land an NPC sister. This won't do; I need to convince him to teach me!"

The scene of Shi Feng and Anna walking together immediately attracted the attention of plenty of players. In reality, such attention wasn't just due to Anna's beauty. It was also due to the fact that Shi Feng had managed to get together with a female NPC. Such a feat was far more stunning than just getting together with a beautiful female player. Countless male players glowered at Shi Feng in envy. Meanwhile, this information spread throughout the forums like a storm, especially the footage of Shi Feng and Anna strolling through the sales area.

This footage became a sensation among players, and it allowed them to gain a new perspective on God's Domain.

Fortunately, Shi Feng had not used his true appearance at that time. Instead, he wore the identity of Black Flame.

"This should be enough," Shi Feng looked at the surrounding onlookers as he revealed a faint smile. The reason he had asked Anna to come out for a stroll was precisely to attract attention. He then spoke to Anna, "I've decided to change the Starstreak Trading Firm's business model. I wonder if that would be alright?"

Anna's eyes suddenly widened in surprise. She looked at Shi Feng with a confused expression as she thought, He has just taken the position as the acting president, yet, he is already taking such a bold and decisive action? Is this person really a business prodigy?

However, Shi Feng was her boss. Moreover, President Henry had already instructed her to listen to Shi Feng. Hence, she nodded her head, saying, "If Your Excellency wishes to change the business models, I wonder what Your Excellency needs me to do?"

"Very simple. I wish to hire adventurers to craft items for me, then sell the items they have crafted. So, I need you to get someone to refurbish the eight shops we own. The first and second floors of the building will be used to sell our wares, while the fourth to sixth floors will be rebuilt as a workspace. Also, get the news out that we are hiring Lifestyle players. Whether they are just normal people or adventurers, as long as they reach our standards, we will offer them 30% more than what others are offering."

Listening up to this point, Anna grew shocked.

This wasn't just a change in the business models; this was practically a change of occupation...

Chapter 222 - Trump Card

Immediately after Shi Feng gave his command, Anna started making the necessary preparations.

Compared to a normal NPC, Anna was simply too smart. In just a short amount of time, she had already finished carrying out Shi Feng's request.

During the time Shi Feng brainstormed on how he was going to utilize the Starstreak Trading Firm to earn 30,000 Gold, the entire Starstreak Trading Firm had also started its renovation. Following Shi Feng's request, the first and second floors were outfitted with sales counters. The first floor sold only the commonly used items, while the second floor would sell exquisite and precious items. Meanwhile, the fourth to sixth floors were refurbished into workshops for Lifestyle players.

Out of those three floors, the fourth floor consisted of solely Forging Rooms, while the fifth floor consisted of Potionmaking Rooms. The sixth floor consisted of workshops for the remaining classes and a warehouse meant for the use of both NPCs and players.

Meanwhile, the Starstreak Trading Firm's renovation had attracted the attention of many players.

Due to the footage of Shi Feng and Anna from before, plenty of players had arrived the trading firm to take a look out of curiosity. Yet, by the time they arrived, they discovered that the Starstreak Trading Firm was actually undergoing renovations.

This situation made all the players grow even more curious. Just what was going on here?

“Your Excellency Ye Feng, the matter you requested has been completed. Does Your Excellency have any other instructions?” Anna spoke gently as she walked up to Shi Feng, a tranquil smile on her face.

“Good. How many people did you manage to recruit?” Shi Feng asked.

“From the eight cities, we’ve recruited 245 Potionmakers. Among them, 209 are Basic Potionmakers, 29 are Intermediate Potionmakers, and 7 are Advanced Potionmakers. In addition, we also recruited 228 Forgers. Among them, 188 are Basic Forgers, 31 are Intermediate Forgers, and 9 are Advanced Forgers.” Anna took out a name list and place it on the table.

“That’s quite a lot,” Shi Feng was very satisfied as he looked at the number of NPCs on the list.

If a first-rate Guild’s upper management saw such numbers, they would surely be shocked beyond recovery.

After all, these were all genuine Potionmakers and Forgers; they were not apprentices. With such a frightening force, one could instantly turn a third-rate Guild into a Super Guild.

This was the amazing aspect the Starstreak Trading Firm. If it were a player-established store, they could not recruit nearly this many high-level NPCs. The best NPCs they could recruit would only be apprentices. On the other hand, the Starstreak Trading Firm had easily recruited this many Potionmakers and Forgers.

These NPCs were far more capable than player apprentices. The only downside was their slightly lower efficiency, slow improvements, and much lower growth potential.

“Your Excellency, I feel that it isn’t very appropriate to offer such a high salary. Since we are hiring so many people, we will also have to provide an equally large number of materials. We will take a huge loss through this transaction. If we continue down such a path, not to mention a month, the Starstreak Trading Firm will go bankrupt within ten days,” Anna said worriedly.

In order to hire all these people, the Starstreak Trading Firm had offered 30% more than the market price. The trading firm also had to bear the failures of these crafters. This was simply madness.

Moreover, whether it was potions or equipment, neither could earn them a lot of money. The sales of these items were similarly average.

Only those Master-level characters would earn a lot of money from their craft. Right now, they were simply taking a loss by recruiting so many people.

Anna truly could not understand why Shi Feng would invite all these people to work here. Wouldn’t it be better to purchase the finished products from these crafters? That way, their trading firm would not have to suffer any losses.

Unfortunately, Anna had no idea just how important these Potionmakers and Forgers were to the current players of God’s Domain.

“You don’t need to bother with this. The remaining thing we need is to convince the Basic Potionmakers to continuously make the Basic Recovery Potions and Basic Mana Regeneration Potions that they are adept at making. As for the Intermediate and Advanced Potionmakers, get them to make Intermediate Recovery Potions and Intermediate Mana Regeneration Potions. For the Forgers, get all of them to make only Whetstones,” Shi Feng said with a smile.

There were plenty of NPC Potionmakers and Forgers in God’s Domain. Meanwhile, only players with their own shops had the right to hire these NPCs. Otherwise, even when players provided the materials, these NPCs would refuse to make anything for these players.

However, there was a downside to getting these NPCs to make items. Simply put, they were slow. The number of items they could craft within a day was fixed. As for the advantage, NPCs had a much higher success rate, so they did not waste as many materials as players did.

Meanwhile, during the later stages of God’s Domain, as player-made items grew in abundance, the usefulness of these NPCs would similarly start to wane. Right now, however, these Forgers and Potionmakers were of great use to Shi Feng.

It was especially true for the Intermediate Recovery Potion and Intermediate Mana Regeneration Potion. These two items were very useful to players, as they could save their lives during a crucial moment.

Although these two items were common products, and their respective recipes were also available for sale at the Potionmaking Association, the players at this stage of the game were simply incapable of crafting them. Meanwhile, these two potions were only available for purchase from hidden NPCs, and only a limited amount was sold each day. They were items that a majority of the players in God’s Domain had no chance of enjoying.

If these NPC Potionmakers crafted these two potions, their success rate would be more than 70%. The materials needed to make an Intermediate Potion were only around 30 to 40 Copper, yet, each completed bottle could sell for 5 to 6 Silver Coins. If Shi Feng deducted the cost of hiring, he would still make a profit of 4 to 5 Silver Coins. So, why wouldn't he carry out this transaction?

Players needed these items the most right now. If the Starstreak Trading Firm sold these items, they would make a killing.

There were also the Whetstones. This was an item that all players lacked. Currently, each stack of Hard Stones sold for 13 Silver Coins, while a stack of Whetstones sold for 40 Silver Coins. When comparing the success rate of Forging Apprentices and an official Forger, how could the former even hope to win over the latter?

The only problem was materials. As the Starstreak Trading Firm had previously only purchased finished products from Forgers and Potionmakers, they did not have any materials of their own stored up. Now, they needed to provide the materials for these crafters.

Although the trading firm could purchase the more common materials at low prices, Shi Feng needed to be the one to gather the materials required to make Intermediate Recovery Potions, Intermediate Mana Regeneration Potions, and Whetstones.

However, Shi Feng was not afraid of this. The herbs needed to make the Intermediate Recovery Potion and Intermediate Mana Regeneration Potion were not very expensive.

After all, these herbs were utterly useless to players right now.

The players in God's Domain at the moment were still Apprentice Potionmakers. Crafting Basic Recovery Potions was already impressive. Why would they bother wasting materials to make unrewarding

potions? As a result, the herbs required to craft Intermediate Recovery Potions and Intermediate Mana Regeneration Potions were very cheap.

As for Hard Stones, Shi Feng wasn't worried. After all, he still had a humongous stock in his warehouse. He had enough for these NPC Forgers for a long time. Moreover, he could also continue purchasing them from Aqua Rose. He would not lack Hard Stones at all.

He would also sell these items in eight different cities. With all of these advantages, it would be challenging not to make a profit. Moreover, Shi Feng also revealed one of his trump cards.

Advanced Whetstones!

Advanced Whetstones were much stronger than a normal Whetstones. Not only did they recover twice the amount of a weapon's durability, but they could also increase the weapon's damage.

Shi Feng had already intended to sell each for 7 Silver Coins, and one stack would sell for 1 Gold, 40 Silvers. As long as he placed the Advanced Whetstones on the second floor, a majority of the players would fight over it, especially the large Guilds.

Oftentimes, just a 1% difference in damage could decide the victory or defeat of a Boss raid. Meanwhile, the Advanced Whetstone provided a 3% increase to a weapon's damage. So, how could the various Guilds, who were currently in a rush to raid Dungeons, miss out on this item? They would definitely be in a mad rush to purchase them.

Previously, Shi Feng had kept all the Advanced Whetstones for his personal use. Later on, he passed some of them to his teammates, leaving him with 800 or so for himself. With this amount, the Starstreak Trading Firm should be able to last a relatively long time.

However, Shi Feng's plans were not limited to this.

Now that he had such a large market available to him, he should fully utilize it as he would not have a similar chance like this in the future.

Hence, Shi Feng thought up this plan. He intended to fully manipulate the Starstreak Trading Firm to help him set up his own shop in the future.

Afterwards, Shi Feng left the follow-up work to Anna, while he departed the Starstreak Trading Firm alone.

Chapter 223 - Popular Starstreak

Inside a hotel in White River City.

Along with God's Domain's evolution, players understood the importance of rest. If they grinded monsters without rest, not only would their Stamina decrease, but their Concentration would also fall. Hence, after a day of battle, players would now rest at the hotel, having a drink and chatting with each other.

Players discovered that places like restaurants, hotels, and bars allowed them to recover Stamina and Concentration more quickly. After relaxing for two or three hours, they would feel refreshed and filled with energy.

“Did you hear? The Starstreak Trading Firm seems to be undergoing renovations. I heard that they are going to release new products for sale.”

“Who doesn’t know about this? After I made some inquiries, I found out that the Starstreak Trading Firm has also recruited tons of Potionmakers and Forgers. The trading firm is even hiring Lifestyle players right now. However, no players have dared apply for a position yet, thinking that it wouldn’t be a reliable job. I wonder what sort of new items they are going to sell?”

“Aside from the common usage items, what else could an NPC-owned store sell? They can’t possibly offer Bronze Equipment or rare potions, right?”

“That sounds about right.”

While the players in the hotel conversed, a male player suddenly pushed open the saloon doors, panting.

“Big news...! Starstreak Trading Firm has finished its renovations and has officially opened for business!” the panting Ranger exclaimed to his companions loudly.

“Why are you making a fuss? Aren’t they just reopening their business? We don’t lack Basic Potions or Common Equipment right now, so we don’t need to replenish our stock.” As the leader of the party, the Shield Warrior rolled his eyes as he watched this embarrassing companion of his. Others would make fun of them for the Ranger’s unsightly appearance.

Indeed, just like the Shield Warrior had feared, the other players in the hotel sent belittling glances, mocking smiles on their faces.

“Leader... listen... to me...” That Ranger excitedly said, “I saw Whetstones inside the shop! There are also Intermediate Recovery Potions and Intermediate Mana Regeneration Potions! Moreover, the Basic Potions are cheaper than anywhere else!”

“What did you say? There are Whetstones?” The Shield Warrior froze, stunned.

The entire hotel fell silent.

“Let’s go. Take us there immediately! We have to buy all of them, now!” The Shield Warrior abruptly stood up, casting Charge and arriving at the Ranger’s side. Grabbing the Ranger by the arm, he immediately rushed out of the hotel, running towards the Starstreak Trading Firm.

The other players inside the hotel were dumbfounded by this scene.

What?

“Crap, they’re going to buy out the Whetstones! We need to hurry as well!”

After entering White River City, players’ need for Whetstones had not decreased in the slightest. On the contrary, their need had grown. It was especially true when they faced high-level monsters, as the durability of their weapons reduced at a much faster rate.

As a result, the popularity of Whetstones had exploded. The available supply was far from meeting the demand.

By the time everyone had arrived at the Starstreak Trading Firm, a sea of people had already obliterated the shop's doors.

Aside from Whetstones, the players present also fought to purchase the Intermediate Recovery and Mana Regeneration Potions like madmen.

Meanwhile, this information had quickly spread to the ears of the various Guilds.

"Guild Leader, I've already collected a large sum from all our members, and we've managed to purchase 30 stacks of Hard Stones. This amount should be enough to last us a long time," Stabbing Heart spoke through the system communicator.

"Good. The moment the money-making team sends over the latest batch of Gold Coins, immediately return all the money we borrowed from our members," Cruel Sword excitedly said.

Aside from the Assassin's Alliance, other Guilds also frantically gathered funds.

"Snow, just what is happening at that Starstreak Trading Firm? Why would they suddenly start selling these items?" Zhao Yueru wrinkled her crescent brows when she looked at the latest news that she had

just received. She then said helplessly, “We’ve already spent a lot of money to purchase our previous stock of Hard Stones. We don’t have any money to purchase any more right now.”

“I’ve heard that the Starstreak Trading Firm is also selling limited edition Advanced Whetstones right now. Rumor has it the Advanced Whetstone’s effects are at least double that of normal Whetstones. In addition, it also provides a 3% Damage Buff! Although it is slightly more expensive, costing 7 Silver Coins per piece, we would have a much easier time raiding the Dungeon Bosses with them!”

Gentle Snow shook her head, a helpless expression appearing on her beautiful face as she said, “Under normal circumstances, NPCs would never sell these items. However, there is something strange going on. A player has created a connection with the Starstreak Trading Firm. I’m just wondering who could possibly achieve such a feat. Also, who would possess enough funding to supply so many Whetstones and Intermediate Potions. This is simply unbelievable. Send someone to investigate this matter immediately.”

Recently, she had managed to raise 20 Gold Coins and had purchased Hard Stones with that money. Yet, the Starstreak Trading Firm now sold Whetstones. She had not received any information before this incident, causing her to suffer disaster.

Currently, the issue of weapon durability had caused a roadblock in their Dungeon raiding progress. Everything would be too late by the time their Guild’s forgers managed to turn those Hard Stones into Whetstones. Other Guilds would have long since surpassed them.

They needed to obtain the Whetstones right this instant, especially the Advanced Whetstones.

Meanwhile, inside an Intermediate Forging room in the Forging Association, Shi Feng currently crafted Advanced Whetstones. He did so to increase his Forging Proficiency and earn money.

The present market was not the same as before. With the Starstreak Trading Firm around, he could now sell the Advanced Whetstones he made in eight cities. Although the Advanced Whetstones were somewhat expensive, players from the eight cities would still buy them. Even if Shi Feng forged Advanced Whetstones 24 hours a day, he still wouldn't meet the demand of the eight cities.

Currently, Gold Coins poured into the Starstreak Trading Firm's accounts with every passing moment. Shi Feng did not even dare open the money system notification. Only one short hour had passed since Starstreak Trading Firm reopened, yet, already, it had earned over 300 Gold Coins. However, this was only the beginning. Things would become more exciting later on.

Aside from making money, Shi Feng's goal in making Advanced Whetstones was to upgrade himself to an Advanced Forging Apprentice.

If he became an Advanced Forging Apprentice, he could learn the Advanced Book of Magic he had obtained from Stonehammer Town.

Previously, he only had White River City as the sole market for his wares. Now, however, he had eight markets. He also did not need to foot any of the high processing fees, so he could not waste this chance. Shi Feng intended to gain an impressive reputation and prestige among the eight cities. However, the Advanced Whetstones alone were not enough to achieve this result. Moreover, Advanced Whetstones could not increase his reputation, as these things did not carry his personal mark. Only the Starstreak Trading Firm would gain reputation from these Advanced Whetstones.

Most importantly, after everyone had a taste of the benefits of the Advanced Whetstones, they would fervently investigate how they could obtain the recipe. After all, the recipe for the Advanced Whetstone was not unique; players could obtain them from multiple Team Dungeons.

By the time Shi Feng opened his own shop, he would no longer possess the advantage he had right now.

Thus, he needed to become an Advanced Forging Apprentice and learn the Advanced Book of Magic, creating the one and only Mana Armor Kit. Once he thoroughly spread the Black Flame Forger's reputation with the Mana Armor Kits that only he could create, tons of players would search him out.

Chapter 224 - Runic Gold

In the quiet and steamy Forging Room, a deep blue flame burned brilliantly as it refined one Hard Stone after the next.

Originally, forging Advanced Whetstones had a low success rate. Yet, when Shi Feng made them, the process was as smooth as flowing water. Whether regarding production speed or quality, both were equally amazing, and one couldn't help but give praise when witnessing this scene.

Although the repetitive task was slightly cumbersome, when Shi Feng's thoughts wandered to the fact that each Advanced Whetstone could sell for 7 Silver Coins, endless motivation flowed into him.

After three hours had passed since Shi Feng started this laborious work, he had made 180 Advanced Whetstones. His speed could practically rival the efficiency of three or four Forgers combined.

Also, without noticing it, Shi Feng had also recovered his previously lost level, returning from Level 14 to Level 15. His current leveling speed was far more efficient than grinding normal monsters.

Having decided to take a short rest, Shi Feng examined his current Forging Proficiency. It was already at 1,253 points right now.

He needed 3,000 Proficiency Points to be promoted from an Intermediate Forging Apprentice to an Advanced Forging Apprentice.

As long as he continued to work hard for two or three more days, he could become an Advanced Forging Apprentice.

If other players knew of Shi Feng's promotion speed, they might become stupefied. After all, throughout the entire White River City region, aside from Shi Feng, there was not a single Intermediate Forging Apprentice to be found.

Shi Feng's forging promotion speed was monstrously fast.

Based on this speed, if I focus solely on forging, I can become an Advanced Forging Apprentice in two days, just in time for the next transaction with Aqua Rose. I can rake in another large sum of money from Aqua Rose. Shi Feng made a rough estimation, growing excited.

He greatly profited every time he met with Aqua Rose. If he could make another large sum this time, he would have mostly dealt with the matter of setting up his Workshop. Later on, he only needed to think of a way to recruit a large number of players that could serve as the backbone of the Guild in the future.

If he wished to establish a Guild with tens of thousands of members, he needed at least several hundred players to serve as the backbone of the Guild. Otherwise, he could not manage so many players properly. Hence, Shi Feng had decisively bought the office building to establish his Workshop. It would save him the trouble of having to move to a new Workshop in the future, limiting such issues related to the Guild's development.

Di... Di... Di...

“Hm? Gentle Snow?” When Shi Feng heard the ringtone for his communicator, he discovered the caller was Gentle Snow. However, she was not looking for Ye Feng, but Black Flame instead. It just so happened that Shi Feng had reasons to look for Gentle Snow as well.

Previously, he had intended to use the ID of Black Flame to establish the Lifestyle Guild, the Horizon Alliance. However, he never found the chance to do so.

Now, a chance had arrived.

Currently, he was temporarily in charge of the Starstreak Trading Firm, which possessed shops in eight different cities. Moreover, these shops were all located in the heart of each city. Regarding materials, workplace, or a place to sell items, Shi Feng now had everything a Lifestyle player would need in his possession. If he factored in Gentle Snow’s advertising, establishing the Horizon Alliance was practically a done deal.

If Horizon Alliance successfully developed, it would be worth a gold mine. He could obtain both funding and materials through this Lifestyle Guild.

At that time, Shi Feng would not have to worry about Zero Wing’s development.

“Black Flame, are you interested in making a deal?” Gentle Snow immediately asked without any greeting.

“A deal? I wonder what sort of deal Miss Snow wishes to make?” Shi Feng asked, curious.

"I know that you are related to the matter of the Starstreak Trading Firm, so I wish to purchase some Whetstones from you, especially the Advanced Whetstones. I'll pay Credits, and I'll buy as many as you have right now," Gentle Snow said.

"So, you desire the Whetstones. This should be simple. However, I need Gold Coins far more than Credits right now. If Miss Snow has a lot of them, I can definitely sell you my entire stock." Shi Feng did not refute Gentle Snow's claim. After all, it was not strange that she had discovered his relation to the Starstreak Trading Firm.

Previously, he had used the appearance of Black Flame to stroll through the trading firm with Anna openly. Moreover, many players had recorded a video of that scene. Since Gentle Snow had seen Black Flame before, she could easily figure out the relationship between him and the Starstreak Trading Firm as long as she saw one of those videos.

"I'll pay you three times of the market price via Credits." Gentle Snow did not want the other Guilds to catch up to them. Hence, she did not mind spending some extra Credits.

"Miss Snow, there is no need to continue. You and I both know how important Gold Coins are right now. If you do not have the sincerity to conduct this trade, let us just forget it altogether."

"I am sincere about this deal. However, I've recently purchased a large batch of Hard Stones, so I don't have any excess Gold Coins at the moment. How about five times the market price?"

Gentle Snow felt helpless right now. Black Flame certainly had a powerful backer supporting him, so he might not value Credits as much as Gold Coins. However, she truly had nothing she could use to trade. She only had Credits.

“Let’s just forget about the Credits. Don’t you have a lot of Hard Stones right now?” Shi Feng revealed a faint, bitter smile. If he were not required to earn 30,000 Gold Coins within 20 days, he would have definitely agreed to five times the market price. However, Gold Coins were much more important to him right now. This matter affected his own future development, so he could not compromise. Hence, he suggested, “Let’s exchange using Hard Stones, then.”

“Exchange?” Gentle Snow’s beautiful face froze. Stunned, she asked, “What will the ratio of exchange be?”

“That will depend on you. For the normal Whetstones, it will be a 1-to-4 ratio. As for the Advanced Whetstones, I require a 1-to-9 ratio,” Shi Feng stated calmly.

“Fine. However, I want only Advanced Whetstones. Moreover, I want to conduct the trade immediately.” After giving the matter some thought, Gentle Snow felt that this exchange seemed reasonable. However, Gentle Snow inwardly cursed at Shi Feng for being too hateful. It is as expected of the Chief Forger of Star-Moon Kingdom.

If she allowed the forgers in her Guild to make Whetstones right now, they could produce one Whetstone with every four or five Hard Stones. Meanwhile, Shi Feng had accurately suggested trading one Whetstone for four Hard Stones. The result of this exchange was just slightly better than the result the forgers in her Guild could produce. So, Gentle Snow agreed to trade the majority of their stock of Hard Stones for Advanced Whetstones, leaving the remainder for the forgers in her Guild to increase their Forging Proficiency.

“Alright, then. Look for an NPC named Anna once you arrive at the Starstreak Trading Firm. She will conduct the exchange immediately,” Shi Feng instructed, chuckling. Soon after, Shi Feng disconnected the call, resuming his production of Advanced Whetstones.

Shi Feng’s trade with Gentle Snow was only a small interlude. After Gentle Snow had exchanged four stacks of Advanced Whetstones with Anna, under Shi Feng’s instructions, Anna made the exchange

mechanism open to the public. The exchange ratio was the same as he previously mentioned to Gentle Snow. As a result, many players who lacked the money to purchase Whetstones started frantically exchanging their Hard Stones. They no longer needed Forging Apprentices to rip them off.

With this, not only could the Starstreak Trading Firm deal with its material supply issue, but it could also make a profit from this exchange. This scene caused many Lifestyle players to have second thoughts about applying to work at the trading firm.

Two days later...

System: Congratulations! You are the first player to be promoted to an Advanced Forging Apprentice! Obtained 200,000 EXP. Rewarding 5 Runic Gold.

“Finally! Still, the system is really generous this time, to think it would even give me a rare item like Runic Gold.” Shi Feng involuntarily smiled when he saw the system rewards.

Runic Gold could increase the forging success rate of an item by 10%. Simultaneously, it would have a chance to upgrade the rank of the forged item by one. Unlike Runic Steel, which could only upgrade an item’s quality to a maximum of Fine-Gold rank, Runic Gold could increase an item’s quality up to Dark-Gold rank.

However, Shi Feng’s joy focused on the promotion to an Advanced Forging Apprentice.

Ever since his Forging Proficiency had reached 2,000 points, the Advance Whetstones no longer rewarded 1 Proficiency Point 100% of the time. They only had a 70% chance to reward a Proficiency

Point. Meanwhile, after he reached 2,500 points, there was only a 40% chance of obtaining 1 Proficiency Point, while at 2,800 points, that chance further decreased to 20%. After spending two days forging away, he finally managed to earn the promotion to an Advanced Forging Apprentice.

After becoming an Advanced Forging Apprentice, Shi Feng immediately retrieved the Advanced Book of Magic from his bag, choosing to learn it without hesitation. Suddenly, a golden glow surrounded Shi Feng's body, and within Shi Feng's mind, the knowledge of producing the Magic Armor Kit appeared.

During these two days, aside from continuously producing Advanced Whetstones and raising his Forging Proficiency, Shi Feng had also made sure to train his body during the day. Incidentally, he also bought that office building in the city center for his Workshop.

Shi Feng had to pay a total of 60 million Credits in installments. He first paid 20 million Credits, while he would pay the remaining 40 million in full within 3 months.

Shi Feng had also earned over 10 million Credits from selling the White River City Guidebooks. He used 5 million or so to purchase various gaming facilities and other items to complete his Workshop. That way, when it was time to attend the university's Fellowship Party, he would have 5 million Credits and a luxurious Workshop to back him up. He was no weaker than Shadow right now.

Comparing Workshop facilities and environments, Shi Feng's Workshop utterly destroyed Shadow's.

Chapter 225 - Mana Armor Kit

While Shi Feng had been stuck in the Forging Room for the past two days, many of the players that had just entered the city were amazed by the scene they witnessed.

They never imagined that such benefits would be available in the city.

Whetstones were no longer items solely monopolized by Guilds. They could be purchased at the Starstreak Trading Firm along with the rare Intermediate Recovery and Mana Potions. Compared to other shops in White River City, the Starstreak Trading Firm's stock was far more thorough.

Most importantly, the Starstreak Trading Firm was the only location that sold Advanced Whetstones. This item had become the Starstreak Trading Firm's signature item and was only sold in limited numbers everyday.

With such an advantage, the Starstreak Trading Firm instantly obtained a strong foothold in the eight cities it occupied, suppressing the other shops.

During these two days, players no longer visited other shops to purchase their items, as they could simply purchase everything they needed at the Starstreak Trading Firm. As a result, business boomed for the trading firm.

Meanwhile, a huge incident also happened in White River City, and even Shi Feng, who was extremely knowledgeable about God's Domain, was shocked.

Ten Guilds had suddenly grouped, forming an entirely new, single Guild. This matter sent shockwaves throughout the entire White River City region.

Many of the second-rate and third-rate Guilds started panicking at this news. They all increased the treatment they offered to their members and continuously tried to recruit new members into their Guilds. Simultaneously, they also increased their speed of annexing smaller Guilds. As for the unrated

Guilds, they started to form alliances to resist the annexation of these second-rate and third-rate Guilds for self-preservation.

White River City, which originally had hundreds of Guilds contending with each other for supremacy, suddenly entered a new phase where only a handful of powers contended with each other.

In reality, a dozen or so unrated Guilds coming together to form one large Guild would not greatly affect these second-rate and third-rate Guilds. The main reason this merger frightened these powerful Guilds was the guild at its core; it was none other than the top-tier, third-rate Guild, Dark Star.

Furthermore, Dark Star had a new Guild Leader. Lone Tyrant had suddenly become Dark Star's new Guild Leader, while the previous Guild Leader had been chased out of his own Guild.

Originally, Dark Star already had Lone Tyrant, who was ranked first on the Ranking List. They also managed to obtain the First Clear of several Hard Mode Team Dungeons. Previously, they had even competed against the Assassin's Alliance over supremacy in White River City. However, due to lacking a powerful background, they could not grow any stronger within a short time. Now that Lone Tyrant had become the Guild Leader, not only had Dark Star annexed a large number of Guilds, but they had also managed to recruit quite a few hidden experts. Just a short time after the merger, Dark Star had obtained the First Clear of two Hard Mode Team Dungeons, and one of them was even the First Clear of a 20-man Hard Mode Team Dungeon.

As a result, Dark Star's fame soared once again. They were no longer beneath the Assassin's Alliance; they might have already surpassed the Assassin's Alliance.

Currently, Dark Star's influence in White River City could rival that of a first-rate Guild. They had become one of the tyrants of White River City.

On another note, for reasons unknown, the first thing Lone Tyrant did after he unified those unrated Guilds was place a bounty on Shi Feng's head.

Moreover, the bounty he set was rather generous. As long as someone could kill Shi Feng to Level 0, he would immediately reward the person responsible with five million Credits and an elder position in Dark Star. Meanwhile, any player who killed Shi Feng once could receive a reward of 200,000 Credits.

In a virtual reality game, such a high bounty was mind-blowing.

Right now, major corporations in the real world were only offering an annual salary of five million Credits or so when recruiting well-known top-tier experts. On the other hand, Shi Feng was not even a great character from a first-rate Guild. Such a high bounty on an unknown player was a first in the world of virtual reality.

Even though they did not know what sort of enmity Lone Tyrant had with Shi Feng, many players had expressed their sympathies for Shi Feng. Meanwhile, Lone Tyrant's tyrannic actions had undeniably garnered the attention of many independent players, compelling them to join Dark Star to develop themselves further.

However, from Shi Feng's point of view...

Lone Tyrant was simply a lunatic. He had snatched away only one First Clear away from Lone Tyrant; was there really a need to be so unforgiving?

Moreover, Shi Feng was really confused as to when Dark Star had become such an amazing existence. They had actually managed to annex more than ten unrated Guilds within such a short amount of time. One should know that each Guild would have at least one to two thousand members. In the case of a larger Guild, there might be even five to six thousand members. Yet, Dark Star had actually devoured and incorporated them in a single go with room to spare. Even the Assassin's Alliance did not possess a background strong enough to carry out such a feat.

Although Dark Star was very powerful right now, Shi Feng considered the bounty on his head no more than a joke.

If Shi Feng were only a normal expert, he might have trembled in fear as he could not continue mingling in White River City. However, was Shi Feng a normal expert? No, he wasn't. In a situation where everyone else had yet to familiarize themselves with God's Domain fully, Shi Feng already had ten years' worth of experience playing in God's Domain as an expert Swordsman.

As of this moment, Lone Tyrant, the current first ranked player on the Ranking List, was only Level 14. However, during the time Shi Feng had spent cooped up inside an Intermediate Forging Room producing Advanced Whetstones, he had already recovered to Level 16. Shi Feng was leaps ahead of Lone Tyrant regarding EXP they had.

Moreover, with his current Level and equipment, Shi Feng had dared to face an absolute powerhouse head-on from his previous life. So, why would he possibly be afraid of Dark Star?

This time, however, Shi Feng could not use the same strategy he had with Martial Union within Red Leaf Town. There was nobody in White River City who dared provoke a tyrannic tiger like Dark Star. Moreover, Dark Star had too many members; Shi Feng would go bankrupt if he placed a bounty on all its members. Not to mention, whether it was Gold Coins or Credits, Shi Feng was sorely in need of both right now.

Hence, Shi Feng chose to ignore Dark Star and instead, focus on his own matters, producing Mana Armor Kits.

Compared to normal Armor Kits, Mana Armor Kits were far more powerful. Aside from providing additional Defense, normal Armor Kits only provided a small bonus to Attributes. On the other hand, Mana Armor Kits provided a significant bonus. Moreover, Mana Armor Kits could be equipped on both plate and cloth armor. The materials needed to produce them were also very basic; no expensive or rare materials were necessary at all.

[Basic Mana Armor Kit]

Materials required: 10 Copper Ore, 3 Bronze Ore, 1 Basic Recovery Potion or 1 Basic Mana Regeneration Potion

Can be crafted into either Physical or Magical Basic Armor Kit.

Bound to character after equipping.

[Basic Physical Armor Kit]

Defense +80

Strength +3, Endurance +4, Agility +3

Maximum binding limit per character: 3

Can only be bound to Level 10 equipment or above.

[Basic Magical Armor Kit]

Defense +30

Intelligence +3, Endurance +4, Vitality +3

Maximum binding limit per character: 3

Can only be bound to Level 10 equipment or above.

[Intermediate Mana Armor Kit]

Materials required: 15 Iron Ore, 5 Fine Iron Ore, 1 Intermediate Recovery Potion or 1 Intermediate Mana Regeneration Potion.

Can be crafted into either Physical or Magical Intermediate Armor Kit.

Bound to character after equipping.

[Intermediate Physical Armor Kit]

Defense +200

Strength +10, Endurance +12, Agility +10

Maximum binding limit per character: 3

Can only be bound to Level 25 equipment or above.

[Intermediate Magical Armor Kit]

Defense +60

Intelligence +10, Endurance +12, Vitality +10

Maximum binding limit per character: 3

Can only be bound to Level 25 equipment or above.

[Advanced Mana Armor Kit]

Materials required: 20 Silver Ore, 8 Mithril Ore, 2 Advanced Recovery Potion or 2 Advanced Mana Regeneration Potion.

Can be crafted into either Physical or Magical Advanced Armor Kit.

Bound to character after equipping.

[Advanced Physical Armor Kit]

Defense +400

Strength +30, Endurance +40, Agility +30

Maximum binding limit per character: 3

Can only be bound to Level 50 equipment or above.

[Advanced Magical Armor Kit]

Defense +150

Intelligence +30, Endurance +40, Vitality +30

Maximum binding limit per character: 3

Can only be bound to Level 50 equipment or above.

As long as a player bound three Mana Armor Kits to their equipment, they would have the equivalent of an additional piece of precious equipment. Whether in a normal battle or Dungeon raid, the Mana Armor Kits would provide an immense improvement to a player. Who could resist such an enticing item?



Chapter 226 - Attracted by Fame

On a street located in the heart of the Trade Area, a man hiding himself under a hooded cloak hurriedly walked into the tall building, the Starstreak Trading Firm, by the roadside.

Due to its raging popularity, there were plenty of players entering and leaving the Starstreak Trading Firm. Moreover, players who wore cloaks were common at the trading firm, so the hurried man did not attract the attention of other players.

However, if one observed carefully, they would discover two exquisite longswords strapped to his back. Of the two swords, one released a faint glow that resembled a black flame, while the other released a green stream of light. One could easily tell that these two swords were extraordinary items. Moreover, the style of this man's equipment clearly indicated it was a Set Equipment and a high-quality Set Equipment at that.

This person was none other than Shi Feng currently disguised as Black Flame.

Previously, after spending most of his day hiding in a Forging Room, Shi Feng had forged a total of 600 Basic Mana Armor Kits; 400 of them were Physical Armor Kits, while the remaining 200 were Magic Armor Kits.

A large amount of Copper Ore, Bronze Ore, Intermediate Recovery Potions, and Intermediate Mana Regeneration Potions was required to make so many Armor Kits. Fortunately, Shi Feng had these materials in spades.

With the Philosopher's Stone, Shi Feng could refine Stones into Ores. There was no need for him to purchase any at all. As for Basic Potions, he simply needed to spend some money to purchase a large stock of them. However, when compared to the value of the Basic Mana Armor Kits, the cost of these potions was practically negligible.

Shi Feng had even resolved the issue of production success rate, which was the most troublesome factor when producing the Basic Mana Armor Kits.

For starters, as an Advanced Forging Apprentice, Shi Feng possessed a 20% success rate when forging the Basic Mana Armor Kits. After factoring in the Book of Forging and the various supporting tools he possessed, his success rate was further boosted to 66%. Although there was still the chance of failure, each try would only cost him 70 Copper Coins.

With Shi Feng's current wealth, he would not feel even an itch from losing such a meager amount of money.

After arriving at the third floor of the Starstreak Trading Firm, Shi Feng quickly discovered a long line of people in the hallway. These people were currently queued up outside an office. A majority of these people consisted of NPCs, while the minority were players.

"Hey, do you know what 'first come, first served' means?"

"You mannerless brute! You actually dare break the rules that Lady Anna has set!"

“Bro, you sure have guts, huh? Aren’t you afraid of Goddess Anna kicking you out?”

Regardless if it were the NPCs or players queued up in the hallway, all of them sent fierce glares at Shi Feng. However, their anger did not stem from their hatred of meeting Shi Feng for the first time. Instead, they were afraid of Shi Feng’s rudeness earning the ire of Lady Anna. They had been painstakingly waiting to meet Lady Anna for a long time now. If Lady Anna chased all of them away in a fit of rage, it would be a tragedy.

“What are you guys queuing for?” Shi Feng asked curiously.

Shi Feng casually glanced at the people queued up in the hallway. Just from a rough estimate, there should be over 200 people present; this was in no way a small number. Moreover, looking at how all of these people referred to Anna as “Lady Anna” or “Goddess Anna” with both admiration and respect, Shi Feng couldn’t help but grow astonished.

“You dare come here without even knowing this?” Everyone immediately rolled their eyes at Shi Feng. They looked at Shi Feng as if he was a noob, their gazes filled with disdain.

“The Starstreak Trading Firm is currently hiring a large number of Forgers and Potionmakers. If we’re chosen and can work for Starstreak, we will enjoy a private workshop all to ourselves. Moreover, the trading firm will provide us with an endless supply of materials. If we perform well, the trading firm will even reward us with our very own private research room and provide us with all the materials we need to carry out our research. In other words, as long as we can become a Forger or Potionmaker of Starstreak Trading Firm, both money and fame will be available for our picking.”

Speaking up to this point, everyone couldn’t help but sigh incessantly. They felt great envy towards those who had already become Forgers and Potionmakers of the Starstreak Trading Firm. However,

when a female player suddenly walked out from the office with a disappointed look on her face, everyone's mood immediately dampened.

Due to Starstreak growing more and more famous, the number of NPCs and players who wished to join the trading firm had also grown explosively. Hence, the tests' difficulty had also been increased. It was no longer as easy as the trading firm's initial recruitment.

"How many consecutive eliminations have that been already?"

"I think this should be the seventh. The test is becoming more and more challenging. Previously, one of every five applicants would succeed. Now, only one out of eight succeed. I wonder what the chances will be when it is my turn?"

The people queued near the back started growing anxious.

"Anna sure is strict." Shi Feng revealed a bitter smile.

Although having such strict selection criteria wasn't a problem, players were still fundamentally different from NPCs. Especially for players who were timid and introverted, it was a little extreme to reject them after undergoing only a single test.

Cream Cocoa, the female player who had just walked out from Anna's office, was one such example. In the past, Cream Cocoa was a genius forger who had the title as one of the Ten Great Master Forgers of Star-Moon Kingdom, and Shi Feng was fully intent of recruiting her into his Guild in this life.

He did not think that, shortly after Cream Cocoa had left the Assassin's Alliance, she would immediately come to Starstreak, only to be rejected once more.

Fortunately, Shi Feng had made a trip to Starstreak Trading Firm. Otherwise, he would similarly be shedding tears of regret with Cruel Sword...

“Hah... another failure... Where am I supposed to head to now?” At this moment Cream Cocoa wore a dejected expression. Previously, she had been chased out of the Assassin’s Alliance due to her production success rate being overly low. Now, Starstreak Trading Firm had also rejected her. After these consecutive failures, she no longer knew where she should head. “Am I really not cut out for forging? Maybe I should go adventuring and fight like the other players. However, I am a sports idiot. How am I supposed to fight like the others?”

“Hello. Are you here to apply for a job at Starstreak Trading Firm?” Shi Feng asked, blocking Cream Cocoa’s path.

“Mhm,” Cream Cocoa nodded as she glanced at Shi Feng. Currently, she did not have the mood at all to pay any attention to a stranger.

“Are you interested in taking another test?” Shi Feng asked with a smile.

Shock flashed in Cream Cocoa’s eyes. Immediately, she lifted her head and focused on Shi Feng. For a moment, she had even thought that Shi Feng was one of Starstreak’s personnel. However, when she failed to find the Starstreak Trading Firm’s emblem on Shi Feng’s clothing, she couldn’t help but feel disappointed.

“Hahaha! Who do you think you are? Starstreak’s President? Can you let someone, who has already been rejected, take the test again? If you wish to pretend, at least think of the time and place. Look at where you are at right now. At the very least, you should get a Starstreak Emblem before putting up your act,” a tall and beautiful Cleric sneered as she sent a disdainful gaze at Shi Feng.

However, Shi Feng did not get angry at this girl's provocation. Instead, he used Observing Eyes on this tall beauty.

[Melancholic Smile]

Level 10

Cleric

Seeing this name, Shi Feng was shocked. Although not as famous as Cream Cocoa, Melancholic Smile, the tall beauty of a Cleric before him, was also one of Star-Moon Kingdom's future Master Forgers.

Shi Feng truly did not think that the Starstreak Trading Firm could be so attractive as to lure two future Master Forgers.

"My bad, I forgot to introduce myself. I am..."

Just as Shi Feng was about to introduce himself, Anna suddenly walked out from the office as she called for the next batch of interviewees. However, the moment her eyes spotted Shi Feng, she hurriedly walked over to Shi Feng in a panic.

Meanwhile, everyone else revealed ridiculing smiles as they watched Shi Feng. They fully intended to enjoy the show that was about to play out.

You've humiliated yourself big time, now.

Shi Feng actually dared pretend to be Starstreak Trading Firm personnel. Now that he had been caught in the act, he would definitely be shown the way out.

"Your Excellency, this subordinate is extremely sorry for this! I did not think that these people would disturb you. I will immediately send them away," Anna glared at Cream Cocoa and Melancholic Smile, hurriedly apologizing to Shi Feng.

Chapter 227 - Master Black Flame

"Ahhh!"

Everyone who wore a mocking smile a moment before was so shocked that their eyes nearly popped out of their sockets when they heard Lady Anna speak to Shi Feng. Their jaws nearly hit the floor. They swallowed the ridiculing words they had prepared as their faces turned extraordinarily pale.

Cream Cocoa was similarly shocked by this scene. However, she accepted this news relatively quickly.

This is too great! I have another chance! Cream Cocoa's disappointed expression instantly shifted to excitement as she looked at Shi Feng.

Seeing Lady Anna's humble attitude towards Shi Feng, even going as far as to refer to Shi Feng as "Your Excellency," Cream Cocoa was sure that Shi Feng was no ordinary character. Since such a great character was willing to give her another chance, the flame of hope within her instantly ignited.

On the other hand, Melancholic Smile's current mood was the exact opposite of Cream Cocoa's. At this moment, she looked at Shi Feng with a face filled with astonishment. She then shifted her gaze towards the beautiful Anna. Melancholic Smile discovered reverence in Anna's mesmerizing bright blue eyes as she gazed at Shi Feng. Clearly, Anna was not acting. Moreover, when Anna noticed Melancholic Smile's gaze on her, she glanced at Melancholic Smile, and the reverence in her eyes instantly transformed into rage.

Melancholic Smile immediately panicked.

It's over... It's over... Why is my luck so terrible? Previously, I got kicked out of the Guild after offending one of its upper echelons. Now, before I have even set foot in the Starstreak Trading Firm, I have offended one of its great characters... Melancholic Smile's thoughts were chaotic, and her heart was distraught. She did not know how she should explain herself to Lady Anna to get out of this mess.

Shi Feng couldn't help but smile when he noticed Anna's furious glare and Melancholic Smile's flustered expression.

However, when Melancholic Smile noticed Shi Feng's smile, her delicate body couldn't help but tremble, dread filling her heart.

It seems that I can no longer stay in the Starstreak Trading Firm, Melancholic Smile lamented. If she had known about this beforehand, she would not have attempted to speak out of turn, interrupting Shi Feng's "happy occasion." In the end, she had dug her own grave.

However, Shi Feng's following words shocked Melancholic Smile.

“Anna, don’t mind me and continue your evaluations,” Shi Feng instructed Anna. He then shifted his sights to Cream Cocoa and Melancholic Smile, softly saying, “I will conduct both of your tests. Everyone else, continue as usual.”

“Yes, Your Excellency,” Anna respectfully replied.

Compared to a few days ago, Anna’s current Loyalty had risen from 50 to 70 points. Although it wasn’t a particularly high number, it was passable. At the very least, Anna would not cause him any trouble.

Do I still have a chance? Melancholic Smile never thought Shi Feng would give her another chance. After all, she had spoiled Shi Feng’s “happy occasion.” Logically speaking, he should have chased her out of Starstreak instead.

Following which, Shi Feng led both Cream Cocoa and Melancholic Smile up to the fourth floor of the building.

“Just who is he?”

“Isn’t he too amazing? He had actually made Lady Anna bow before him. If I could achieve a similar feat, I could die without regrets.”

Some of the players watched Shi Feng’s departing figure with admiration, inwardly guessing Shi Feng’s identity.

In the entire White River City, there had yet to be a single player-owned shop. Even Ouroboros, currently most famous Guild, had not accomplished such a thing. Yet, Shi Feng had succeeded in doing just that. Moreover, he was in the upper echelon of the Starstreak Trading Firm; his position was far above Anna's. So, how could this piece of news not be shocking?

Just how powerful of a backer must Shi Feng have to cooperate with the Starstreak Trading Firm?

Meanwhile, when some of the male players saw Shi Feng leading away both Cream Cocoa and Melancholic Smile, they inwardly cursed and called him an animal. One was not enough for him? He is practically abusing his authority! Inwardly, these male players felt both envy and disdain for Shi Feng.

Inside a forging room on the fourth floor, Shi Feng prepared five sets of materials to craft Whetstones for each of the two girls.

Looking at the materials placed on the stone table, Melancholic Smile's thoughts slightly lagged. She never thought that Shi Feng would truly give them a test and not have any unscrupulous thoughts towards them.

"What is it? Have you not learned how to make Whetstones yet?" Shi Feng asked curiously when he noticed Melancholic Smile's dazed expression.

The Forging Association sold the recipe for Whetstones. Moreover, it was available for only 30 Copper Coins. Logically speaking, every player who aspired to become a forger should have learned the recipe, not to mention players who had managed to enter White River City.

“Ah, that’s not it! I know how to make them!” Melancholic Smile hurriedly shook her head, a faint blush appearing on her cheeks. She felt ashamed of herself for completely misunderstanding Shi Feng’s intentions.

On the other hand, Cream Cocoa had a much purer mind than Melancholic Smile. She had not overthought things like the Cleric had. However, she was still extremely nervous at the thought of having to make a Whetstone in front of Shi Feng. She felt deeply afraid that she would fail the test.

Shi Feng had given each of them five sets of materials, and his requirement was for them to achieve at least two successful attempts. However, during her time at the Assassin’s Alliance, Cream Cocoa could only make one or two Whetstones out of ten sets of materials.

“Before you start, I’ll give you two a demonstration,” Shi Feng retrieved a set of materials from his inventory. With a wave of his hand, he started producing the Whetstone.

“You are a forger as well?” Cream Cocoa and Melancholic Smile asked in astonishment.

“Ah, how forgetful of me. I still haven’t introduced myself.” As Shi Feng had kept both his name and level hidden, others could not discover who he was. “I am Black Flame, a forger.”

“You are the Chief Forger of Star-Moon Kingdom?!”

“You are Master Black Flame, the one that developed the Glimmer Chestplate?!”

Cream Cocoa and Melancholic Smile immediately grew flustered. They would never have believed that they would meet the legendary Master Black Flame. After all, he was the person responsible for

elevating the status of forgers, turning it into the most popular Lifestyle class in Star-Moon Kingdom. Simultaneously, he had also given the various large Guilds a reason to support and nurture their forgers. One could say that Master Black Flame had done every forger within Star-Moon Kingdom a favor.

What was even more unbelievable was the fact that Black Flame was actually the ordinary and detached-looking man before them. In their eyes, Black Flame should have either been a handsome young man or a strange old man. However, Black Flame did not match either description.

Although Black Flame looked different from what they had imagined, that did not stop their growing excitement. If this man before them was the famous Black Flame, that would explain why Lady Anna showed so much respect. It also explained how the Starstreak Trading Firm could possess items such as the Advanced Whetstones.

Noticing Cream Cocoa's and Melancholic Smile's excited and hungry gazes, cold sweat dripped down Shi Feng's forehead. He coughed dryly and said sternly, "I will only demonstrate this once. If you cannot complete two Whetstones, you can show yourselves out. I won't accept you into the firm."

The two girls instantly calmed after being admonished by Shi Feng. Afraid that they would miss out on something, they both heightened their concentration as they watched Shi Feng's hands.

However, Shi Feng's actions rendered them speechless.

Shi Feng's production speed was simply too fast. Moreover, his actions were as smooth and natural as flowing water; one would easily find themselves mesmerized. Before they could react, Shi Feng had already finished producing a Whetstone.

"Alright, it is your turn now," Shi Feng smiled calmly as he pointed the two towards the materials on the stone table.

He was already an Advanced Forging Apprentice. Even if he did not utilize the Book of Forging, he still had an 80% success rate when producing Whetstones. However, even if he succeeded in making one, he would not receive any additional Proficiency Points. He had only done so to test the two girls' potential. After all, they were both future Master Forgers. If they could not gain any inspiration after watching him work, it proved that they had only become a Master Forger due to luck.

Chapter 228 - Meteoric Rise

As the level of technique Shi Feng demonstrated was slightly high, in addition to his strict requirement, Cream Cocoa and Melancholic Smile immediately grew serious.

Shi Feng's forging techniques had clearly undergone refinement hundreds and thousands of times. It was not something inexperienced forgers like them could hope to compare to. However, they had, more or less, noticed the key points in Shi Feng's demonstration.

Soon after, the two girls stepped up to their separate forging tables. As if they had received some enlightenment, they held up the forging materials and fell into deep thought.

As expected of future Master Forgers. Shi Feng revealed a faint smile when he noticed their actions.

At this point, it was impossible for the average player to possess sufficient materials to practice their forging with, not to mention the precious materials to produce items.

However, Shi Feng was different from these inexperienced forgers. During his ten years of playing God's Domain, he had encountered plenty of Master Forgers. In their free time, these players would usually discuss forging. For players with their skill level, their conversations were no longer about simply "playing a game" but instead, counted as true research. Shi Feng had experienced many such conversations. Coupling that knowledge with an endless supply of materials to use as practice, he had naturally learned the craft fairly quickly. However, in terms of talent, Shi Feng was far from being a match of the girls currently before him. After all, at the end of the day, Shi Feng was still a player more suited to battle and adventure.

The only thing he could do was combine the knowledge he had gained from listening to those masters with his own understanding of forging techniques and display it.

Although it would not be of great help, it would be enough as long as they could realize their own deficiencies.

At this stage of the game, a majority of the players had a relatively high success rate when producing Whetstones. They should have at least a 40% success rate; they should be able to produce two Whetstones out of five sets of materials. If they had passable techniques, it wouldn't be unusual if they could even produce three. However, a majority of the players at this stage could only produce one Whetstone out of five attempts.

Although the Forging Rooms in the Starstreak Trading Firm were not comparable to the Intermediate Forging Rooms in the Forging Association, they should still be much better than the Basic Forging Rooms. When making a common item like the Whetstone, the Forging Room should increase a player's success rate by at least 5%.

Due to this, Shi Feng required the both of them to produce two Whetstones out of five sets of materials.

After a period of silence, the two girls finally started their first attempt at producing the Whetstone.

Three minutes later, both had produced their first Whetstones. They wore joyful expressions as they handed their products to Shi Feng for evaluation.

“A failure. The same goes for this one,” Shi Feng shook his head after he checked the information on the two items. Both Whetstones were of poor quality, and they yielded zero effects when used.

Cream Cocoa and Melancholic Smile were both disappointed by these results. They knew they did not have many chances remaining. If they did not produce two Whetstones out of the remaining four sets of materials, without a doubt, they would be chased out of the trading firm.

After experiencing failure on their first try, the two girls spent more time reflecting before their second attempt. After reflecting for more than ten minutes...

The next action the two girls took astonished Shi Feng.

Within a single breath, the two had used up all four sets of materials. Moreover, their production speed was much faster than before. After producing all four Whetstones, the two smiled at each other. They then placed their completed Whetstones on the table, awaiting Shi Feng’s evaluation.

“You two have really surprised me. Out of four pieces, both of you actually managed three successes,” Shi Feng couldn’t help his shock when he looked at the information displayed before him. “Very good. From today onwards, you two are officially members of the Horizon Alliance. Here is the contract. If there aren’t any problems, just sign it.”

“Horizon Alliance?”

“It isn’t the Starstreak Trading Firm?”

Cream Cocoa and Melancholic Smile were confused when they took a look at the contract. After all, their goal in coming here had been to join the wealthy and powerful Starstreak Trading Firm.

However, after they read the contract, they discovered that the benefits stated were abnormally good. Even Cream Cocoa, who had come from the Assassin’s Alliance, found the offer quite attractive. After all, not only would they be provided with limitless materials and Forging Designs, but they would also obtain 15% of the profits once the item sold. They would also earn a minimum monthly salary of 2,000 Credits. On the other hand, the other Guilds only provided their forgers with 5% of the profits and a low monthly salary. The materials these Guilds provided were also very limited. Under normal circumstances, the best materials would be given to the forgers with better techniques, leaving remaining forgers wanting.

“I can’t reveal what kind of relationship the Horizon Alliance has with the Starstreak Trading Firm. However, I can tell you one thing; the Horizon Alliance is a Lifestyle Guild. It is not like your usual adventure and battle Guild, and Lifestyle players will be the core of this Guild. Moreover, in the future, the Horizon Alliance will expand its market much further than the Starstreak Trading Firm. We won’t only sell our products in eight cities, but in every city throughout the entire Star-Moon Kingdom. Moreover, you guys will not have to worry about materials. As long as you can produce items of sufficient quality, you won’t need to worry about failing to sell the item.” Shi Feng calmly smiled as he continued, “Of course, if you don’t want to, you can choose to join the Starstreak Trading Firm instead. It all depends on you.”

Cream Cocoa and Melancholic Smile considered their options carefully. At present, the Starstreak Trading Firm was undeniably the better choice if they wished to develop themselves further. Moreover, they had never even heard of the Horizon Alliance, not to mention a Guild run by Lifestyle players.

“I am willing to join the Horizon Alliance.” However, Cream Cocoa signed the contract without hesitation.

Melancholic Smile simply shook her head at this sight, thinking that Cream Cocoa was simply too naive. However, although she thought in such a way, she had similarly signed her name on the contract she received from Shi Feng.

The reason she had chosen was the man currently before her. Not only was he the Chief Forger of Star-Moon Kingdom, but he also had deep ties with the Starstreak Trading Firm. One could also say that, without the Advanced Whetstone, the Starstreak Trading Firm would not be enjoying its current popularity.

Most importantly, it was the Horizon Alliance's future potential.

"Good. Since you two have signed the contract, you are now official members of the Horizon Alliance. From this moment onwards, you two can use the Forging Rooms in the Starstreak Trading Firm any time you want. If you lack materials, just notify Anna, and she will provide them for you. You two only need to focus on advancing into a true Forger," Shi Feng said, smiling.

With two potential Master Forgers joining, Shi Feng felt much more optimistic about Horizon Alliance's future.

Shi Feng also made Melancholic Smile the Horizon Alliance's temporary manager. While she managed the Horizon Alliance, she was also tasked with poaching some of the Forgers and Potionmakers with potential from the Starstreak Trading Firm. After all, Shi Feng was only an acting president of the trading firm. Starstreak Trading Firm's Forgers and Potionmakers belonged to Starstreak only, not the Horizon Alliance.

When Shi Feng completed the second phase of the Epic Quest, he would no longer have any relation to the Starstreak Trading Firm. He would not be able to sell items through the Starstreak Trading Firm any longer. In other words, he and the Starstreak Trading Firm would draw a line between each other. So, he naturally had to recruit players with potential to his side.

Soon after, Shi Feng placed the Basic Mana Armor Kit for sale on the second floor of the Starstreak Trading Firm.

He priced each Basic Mana Armor Kit at 20 Silver Coins. Although this price could rival that of a piece of Level 10 Bronze Equipment, Shi Feng did not mind. After all, he had no fear that this item would not sell. He only feared that it would sell too quickly; thus, he had set such a high price.

Shi Feng then returned to his Forging Room and resumed forging Basic Mana Armor Kits. The 600 Basic Mana Armor Kits were just a drop in the bucket. He still needed to produce a lot more to meet demand.

Not to mention, Shi Feng still had a mountain in the form of 30,000 Gold Coins weighing down on him.

Moreover, plenty of Guilds had started growing greedy after seeing Shi Feng make so much money from selling the Advanced Whetstones. They all started thinking up of plans to obtain the recipe for themselves. Hence, during the past few days, many Guilds had started investigating the origins of the Advanced Whetstone. Shi Feng couldn't help but admit that a Guild was indeed far more powerful than an individual. Within a short amount of time, these Guilds had discovered the origins of the Advanced Whetstone. They had even managed to obtain its recipe.

The Moonlight Forest.

Treasures filled this place. Aside from having plenty of Treasure Chests and Field Bosses, the drop rate for Gemstones here was much higher than other maps. The various large Guilds in White River City had long since regarded the Moonlight Forest as a cash machine. On the other hand, independent players had no share of these bountiful resources.

“Guild Leader, the Intermediate Forging Apprentices in our Guild have successfully produced Advanced Whetstones. The Intermediate Apprentice Potionmakers have also managed to produce Intermediate Recovery Potions and Intermediate Mana Regeneration Potions,” a Ranger reported.

“Very good. It just so happens that White River City’s bazaar will be held tonight. We can use this chance to show off Dark Star’s strength,” Lone Tyrant smiled satisfactorily. He had long since grown impatient after witnessing the Starstreak Trading Firm rake in an ocean of wealth. Now that their Guild could similarly produce and sell Advanced Whetstones and Intermediate Potions, he was one step closer to becoming the true tyrant of White River City.

Chapter 229 - Black Flame Effect

Starstreak Trading Firm, at the premium goods counter on the second floor...

Due to the raging popularity of the Advanced Whetstones and the fact that only a limited amount was available for sale each day, many Guilds and players could normally be seen queuing and waiting at the counter.

Today, however, fewer people were present on the second floor of the trading firm. No one waited in line at the premium goods counter. Those present were only independent players just window shopping, and not a single Guild player wandered the spacious hall. Nobody present even asked about the availability of the Advanced Whetstones, and such a situation had caused Anna, the manager of the trading firm, to grow anxious. Immediately, she started an investigation into the cause of this sudden lack of customers. She then forwarded her findings to Shi Feng, letting him decide what to do with it.

“Although I have long since expected this, they certainly took action quickly. Is Dark Star trying to start a price war with us?” Shi Feng revealed a calm smile after he read the message Anna had sent him.

The reason the Starstreak Trading Firm’s business would suddenly grow cold was mainly due to Dark Star. Dark Star had managed to nurture Forgers and Potionmakers capable of producing Advanced Whetstones and Intermediate Potions. Furthermore, they had widely trumpeted the fact that they offered their products for a much lower price. Originally, a stack of Advanced Whetstones sold for 1 Gold, 40 Silvers at the Starstreak Trading Firm. However, Dark Star sold them for only 1 Gold per stack. As for the Intermediate Potions, both types sold at a price 1 Silver Coins cheaper.

Although the prices were greatly reduced, the Advanced Whetstone and Intermediate Potions were originally products that sold at greatly inflated prices. Even if one reduced their selling price, they would still earn several times the base cost of the items. Hence, in order to solicit customers, Dark Star would naturally initiate a price reduction.

As for the players looking to purchase these items, they would purchase these items for the lowest price. This was the natural law of human nature. Nobody would be so foolish as to purchase an item of equal quality for a higher price.

However, a price reduction was only the beginning of Dark Star’s strategy. To make matters worse, Dark Star had even made a decisive change to the exchange mechanism. Although the exchange rate they used for normal Whetstones was similar to the Starstreak Trading Firm’s, they had reduced the Advanced Whetstones-to-Hard Stones ratio from a 1-to-9 ratio to a 1-to-7 ratio. This ratio was just slightly higher than the production requirements of Intermediate Forging Apprentices. Compared to the Starstreak Trading Firm, Dark Star’s exchange rates were far more lucrative. As a result, many players had turned to Dark Star to trade their Hard Stones.

Now that the Starstreak Trading Firm had lost its main source of income for Hard Stones, even if they relied on the Hard Stones Shi Feng had previously accumulated, they would, sooner or later, run out. Without the necessary basic materials, how were they supposed to produce anything?

Moreover, Dark Star also possessed an advantage that Shi Feng did not; they had more people producing the Advanced Whetstones. As more time passed, Dark Star would obtain more Advanced Whetstone Recipes from raiding Dungeons. They could endlessly increase the number of people capable of producing Advanced Whetstones in their Guild. Meanwhile, the Starstreak Trading Firm only had Shi Feng. However, Shi Feng currently had neither the manpower nor the time to waste raiding a low-level Dungeon for the recipes. If this situation persisted, Dark Star would surpass the Starstreak Trading Firm eventually.

Soon after, Shi Feng passed on his verdict to Anna. Since Dark Star wanted to start a price war, he would gladly engage. Hence, he adjusted the prices and exchange rates to equal Dark Star's. However, this change would only take effect in White River City; the prices and exchange rates would remain the same in the other seven cities. Simultaneously, Shi Feng also took this chance to reveal the Basic Mana Armor Kit.

Anna was very efficient in her work. Shortly after Shi Feng assigned her the tasks, she had completed all of them. Moreover, she had also added an additional counter on the second floor specifically for selling the Basic Mana Armor Kits.

Visiting players quickly discovered the new addition.

"Huh? There's a new counter here. What's this Basic Mana Armor Kit?"

"Won't we know once we take a look?"

Originally, one of the elite parties present on the second floor had only come to the Starstreak Trading Firm with the intention of purchasing some normal Whetstones for future use. However, when they noticed the appearance of the new counter and a new product, curiosity got the better of them, and they decided to investigate.

“Crap! This is insane! Is this thing made of silver? They’re actually charging 20 Silver Coins for a Broken Armor Kit! I can get a piece of Level 10 Bronze Equipment with that kind of money! They’re even limiting the sales of this thing to 50 pieces a day!”

“This is too expensive. Even though we are an elite party, our harvest from a single Dungeon raid will, at best, amount to two to three pieces of Bronze Equipment. Moreover, not only do we risk losing experience, but we also need to spend money on potions and repairs after a raid. One Armor Kit already amounts to our party’s total harvest in a single day.”

“Wait a minute, why are the Attributes of this Armor Kit so high? We can bind a total of three pieces on per character?! The total Attributes of three pieces is even higher than a Level 10 Mysterious-Iron ranked breastplate!”

“Look! Every Armor Kit is marked with a black flame! Don’t tell me this is something made by the Black Flame Forger?!”

Originally, the members of the team had cursed the Starstreak Trading Firm for trying to rip them off. However, the moment they noticed the Attributes on the Mana Armor Kits and the Black Flame mark, they involuntarily shuddered. Who was Black Flame? He was someone every veteran player throughout Star-Moon Kingdom knew.

Although the Glimmer Chestplate was outdated at this point, it was an undeniable fact that the item had once caused an uproar throughout Star-Moon Kingdom. Moreover, due to its gallant appearance, many players still held onto their Glimmer Chestplates. The ones that held the Black Flame mark looked even more awesome, and countless collectors wished to possess one of these pieces. Unfortunately, such marked pieces were exceedingly rare, and right now, each piece was already worth 50 Silver Coins on the black market. Yet, even at such an insane price, nobody would willingly sell theirs.

Now, Black Flame had revealed himself once more. He was even selling such powerful Mana Armor Kits.

It was just like the saying that had circulated Star-Moon Kingdom; anything produced by Black Flame would definitely be a premium product.

“How much money do we have right now?” speaking softly, the leader of the elite party suddenly asked in the party chat.

“Brother Qin, we barely have 43 Silver Coins if all six of us pool our money together. We have only managed to collect this after much difficulty to repair our equipment and buy some potions. You can’t be thinking to...”

“Trade a portion of the Hard Stones we collected for normal Whetstones, then sell the rest. Also, sell all of the Gemstones we previously obtained. Before anybody discovers this Armor Kit, we need to buy as many as we can. As long as we can equip our MT and healer with three of these Mana Armor Kits, we can easily clear Normal Mode Party Dungeons. Furthermore, by the time Starstreak sells out on these Mana Armor Kits, we can resell our extras for a high price. We should be able to earn back most of what we have spent.”

When the other party members realized the logic behind their party leader’s words, they immediately started pooling their money and sold all of their expendable items to buy as many Basic Mana Armor Kits as they could.

If both their MT and healer could have an additional piece of Mysterious-Iron Equipment, they could greatly reduce the number of deaths when they raided a Dungeon. With an additional 240 Defense and 12 Endurance, their MT’s strength would soar to the next level; their MT could tank Boss monsters with much greater ease. Not to mention, their healer would also receive an upgrade.

Soon after, the elite party’s MT and healer each bound three Basic Mana Armor Kits to their equipment. The party also bought an extra piece for future use.

In reality, it wasn't just this particular elite party that had found out about the Basic Mana Armor Kits. Several other elite parties and independent players that had wandered into the Starstreak Trading Firm had secretly sold off their assets after discovering the Armor Kits. Some of the players who were wealthy in reality even went as far as to purchase Coins at a high price to purchase the Armor Kits.

As a result, 50 Basic Mana Armor Kits silently disappeared from the Starstreak Trading Firm.

During the night, when the moon was bright, and the stars were few, many players would come to the pub to relax and chat.

"Old Qin, why is your party so happy today? You guys even bought such expensive alcohol to drink. Don't tell me it's your birthday?" a party leader of another elite party asked.

"Our Three-headed Wolves party is very happy today! Here! I'll treat your Nine-headed Birds party to this bottle of Ice Blue Spirit!"

"Did you guys strike it rich? Why are you being so generous? This is a high-quality spirit that costs 3 Silver Coins!"

"Of course! Today, our party managed to clear a Hard Mode Party Dungeon for the first time! We also managed to get a piece of Mysterious-Iron Equipment for our MT from that Dungeon raid. Tomorrow, we plan to raid another Hard Mode Party Dungeon."

The other players inside the bar were immediately shocked when they heard that someone had managed to clear a Hard Mode Party Dungeon. They all sent envious gazes at the player called Qin.

Throughout White River City, the number of independent parties that managed to clear a Hard Mode Party Dungeon could be counted on one's hands.

"Old Qin, stop boasting! Did you think I don't know about your party's strength? Not to mention Hard Mode, you guys still have to struggle through life and death to even clear a Normal Mode Party Dungeon!" The party leader of the Nine-headed Birds frowned in disbelief.

"Hahaha! If it were in the past, of course, it would be impossible. However, our party's MT has over 1,000 Defense and 1,600 HP right now!" Qin gleefully boasted.

The party leader of the Nine-headed Birds was greatly shocked by this information. After all, he and the other party leader had known each other for a long time now, so he knew Qin from top to bottom. Previously, the Three-headed Wolves' MT had not been so powerful; he was even weaker than the Nine-headed Birds' MT by a small margin.

After some probing, the Nine-headed Birds spent 20 Silver Coins to obtain the secret the Three-headed Wolves used to clear a Hard Mode Party Dungeon.

The main reason for the Three-headed Wolves' success was the contribution of the Basic Mana Armor Kits. During the day, the Three-headed Wolves were one of the parties that had secretly bought the Basic Mana Armor Kits from the Starstreak Trading Firm. With their newly improved MT and healer, in addition to their familiarity with the Dungeon they cleared, they finally managed to achieve the feat that all independent parties aimed for, clearing a Hard Mode Party Dungeon.

The night bazaar of White River City had been organized to allow players to conduct business with each other.

Due to Dark Star's incessant advertising, the bazaar today had grown lively. Many Guilds had collected a large amount of Hard Stones and Coins to purchase the Advanced Whetstones from Dark Star.

Players busied themselves with setting up stalls throughout the plaza where the bazaar would occur.

As one had to pay a steep processing fee to use the services of the Auction House, many players had opted to sell their accumulated loot today instead.

Meanwhile, of the many stalls set up at this plaza, the most attention-grabbing one belonged to Dark Star, as there were several hundred players currently lined up before Dark Star's stall. Seeing this, Lone Tyrant's heart fluttered with joy. By the time tomorrow arrived, Dark Star would become the wealthiest Guild in White River City, and very soon, they would even surpass the Starstreak Trading Firm. They would become the possessor of White River City's economic lifeline.

At that time, even Ouroboros would not be a match for Dark Star!

Half an hour after the bazaar started, something odd happened.

This incident caused plenty of Guilds to grow sluggish in their thoughts, and even Lone Tyrant was utterly dumbfounded.

“Can someone tell me just what has happened here?!” Lone Tyrant bellowed, pointing towards the empty plaza.

“Boss, I made some inquiries just now and found out that the Starstreak Trading Firm has similarly reduced the prices of their items. Aside from having the same prices as we do, they have also released a new product. I hear that the product is a Basic Mana Armor Kit made by Black Flame. As long as one binds this Armor Kit to their equipment, they will receive a great improvement to their Attributes and Defense. If a player binds three pieces to their equipment, then it would be the equivalent of having an additional top-tier Mysterious-Iron ranked breastplate.”

“However, Starstreak has limited the sales of the Armor Kit to 50 each day. So, everyone went to queue up for the item instead.”

“Black Flame? Isn’t that the Chief Forger of Star-Moon Kingdom? Why would he work with the Starstreak Trading Firm?” Lone Tyrant’s brows wrinkled. He had also heard rumors about Black Flame. However, the man was simply too mysterious, so nobody had a concrete idea which major power stood behind him. The public only knew that there was a deeply hidden major power supporting Black Flame.

“So what if he is the Chief Forger?” Lone Tyrant sneered, “Since Black Flame can create such a good item, we only need to make it as well. Immediately investigate the Basic Mana Armor Kit; find out where we can get the Forging Design. I truly wish to thank Black Flame for giving us this great business opportunity.”

“Boss is the best! I’ll investigate it immediately!”

Meanwhile, at the Starstreak Trading Firm, there was already a sea of people lining up outside the building.

“Selling one stack of Hard Stones for a low price! Come over here if you are interested!”

“Level 10 Bronze Axe for 30 Silver Coins!”

“Buying Silver Coins for a high price! I’ll take as much as you have!”

Unknowingly, a market had formed outside of the Starstreak Trading Firm. Although players could not set up stalls there, they could still do face-to-face trading. Albeit troublesome, nobody would mind such a small matter. After all, they were currently trying to make as much money as they could. By the time the Starstreak Trading Firm started selling the Basic Mana Armor Kits again, they would buy as many as possible.

While everyone stood in line outside the building, many had struck up conversations with one another. They started to boast about the effects of the Basic Mana Armor Kit.

What the Three-headed Wolves party had accomplished had especially become the envy of many independent parties.

Meanwhile, the more this news spread, the more it was blown out of proportion. Currently, the rumors mentioned that the Three-headed Wolves had originally not been able to clear even a Normal Mode Party Dungeon. However, after their MT and healer had each bound three Basic Mana Armor Kits to their equipment, the party immediately succeeded in raiding a Level 10 Hell Mode Party Dungeon. They had even obtained a Secret-Silver ranked shield and many other Mysterious-Iron Set Equipment pieces

from the raid, increasing their team's prowess to that of a party of experts. Some said that the Three-headed Wolves were currently stronger than even the elite members of a first-rate Guild.

This rumor had caused many independent players to long for the Basic Mana Armor Kits. They wished to obtain the Armor Kits and achieve great success.

Aside from independent players focusing on the Basic Mana Armor Kit, the various Guilds had also started taking action. They tried to think of ways to contact Black Flame. They wanted to purchase a large number of the Armor Kits from him directly. After all, if they could equip every member of their elite team with three Basic Mana Armor Kits, their team's strength would rise to an entirely different level. At that time, conquering the 20-man Hell Mode Team Dungeon would no longer be a dream.

Taking a step back, even if they could not clear the Hell Mode, if they could manage to clear the Hard Mode, they could still reap a lot of benefits. Hence, it was a must for them to obtain the Basic Mana Armor Kits.

Di... Di... Di...

"Snow, is Big Brother Black Flame offline?" Zhao Yueru asked, worried.

Gentle Snow nodded her head, saying bitterly, "I have truly underestimated Black Flame. Originally, I thought that he would suffer a small setback after Dark Star revealed the Advanced Whetstones and Intermediate Potions. However, I would never have imagined that he would reveal such a card, catching everyone by surprise."

Gentle Snow had believed that she had a good understanding of the man called Black Flame. However, time and again, Black Flame continued to surpass her expectations.

It was as if Black Flame had brought out two cards, one white and one black, forcing others to guess which card he would reveal. In the end, however, he had done the unpredictable by taking out a gray card, catching everyone by surprise.

Night in God's Domain was day in reality. At this moment, Shi Feng had already logged off from the game and started training his body. Hence, he had absolutely no idea about the current goings-on in White River City.

Ever since Shi Feng had moved to his new apartment, the first thing he did after waking up every morning was drink a bottle of Nutrient Fluids. He would then complete 20 sets of muscle strengthening exercises and a 10-kilometer morning run.

"The Nutrient Fluid is as extraordinary as expected. My current physique should be on the level of a normal member of the school's fighting society." After ending his morning run, Shi Feng made a rough estimate of his body's current condition. However, if he wanted a more accurate estimate, he would need to test his abilities in an appropriate training room.

After training and strengthening his body these past few days, Shi Feng was no longer as frail and thin as he used to be. Currently, Shi Feng's body had grown much sturdier, giving others a faint feeling that it was packed with vitality.

As usual, after completing his daily workout routine, Shi Feng paid a visit to the Workshop to check on its current renovation progress.

A Gaming Workshop occupied an entire office floor of such size. In the past, such a notion was simply inconceivable. However, along with God's Domain's growing influence, it wouldn't be odd even if a Gaming Workshop took up an entire office building, not to mention a single floor. In the past, Shadow was one such example. However, the Shadow of that time possessed a lot of members. It had even established ten great city-states under its name. It was only normal to have such a large Workshop.

"Brother Feng, you're here! The Workshop's renovation is complete. We are just waiting for the gaming facilities we ordered to arrive, and we'll set them up. After we finish that, our Zero Wing Workshop will finally take shape!" Blackie excitedly said, "At that time, those who we recruit to our Guild might just join without hesitation after seeing our Workshop!"

A few days ago, Shi Feng had suddenly paid a visit to Blackie's dormitory. He notified Blackie that he had already purchased a Workshop in the city center. In the future, Blackie would not need to live in the dormitory, disturbed by others.

Blackie could simply live in the Workshop and focus on playing God's Domain. Moreover, there was a high-class restaurant situated a floor below the Workshop. The well-known Big Dipper Training Center was also located on the street next to their building. Compared to living in the university's dormitory, it would be far more comfortable for Blackie to live in the Workshop.

In the beginning, Blackie had thought that the Workshop Shi Feng had mentioned would only be a house of 50 to 60 square meters. Even so, that would still be a relatively comfortable place to live.

However, when Blackie arrived at the building floor and discovered that the entire floor was meant for their Workshop, Blackie had nearly thrown out his back in shock. Shortly after, that shock had turned into immense joy. After all, this large Workshop of theirs was far more amazing than Shadow's. With such an amazing Workshop, would they even need to worry that they couldn't surpass Shadow in the future?

“Oh, right. Blackie, how are things on your side? How much longer do you guys need before getting out of there?” Shi Feng asked.