

## The Strongest

### Chapter 231 - Legendary Genius

Blackie and the others had been trapped in the Trial of God for several days now. If they remained inside, Shi Feng didn't know when he could go to the Demon's castle to obtain the Demon's Heart.

Hence, Shi Feng needed to know their current progress. If they were truly unable to leave the trial anytime soon, his only option was to seek Gentle Snow's help.

However, he did not want Gentle Snow to know too much about him. Unless it was a desperate situation, he would not turn to Gentle Snow for help.

"Right! I totally forgot to tell you since I was so excited about the Workshop!" Blackie lightly tapped his own head. The matter of the Workshop was simply too shocking. He continued, "Brother Feng, just where did you find such an expert little sister? She is just too awesome! Originally, we nearly despaired from the difficulty of the trial. However, thanks to her, we all made it through the trial with great ease! Right now, we're about to head to the highest floor to receive our reward."

"An expert? Little sister? Are you talking about Fire Dance? Haven't you already seen how amazing she is?" Shi Feng curiously asked.

"No, it's not Fire Dance, but Violet! We managed to clear the trial only thanks to her! But really, she is simply too strong!" Blackie lamented, "At the beginning of the trial, Little Sister Violet had only healed us from behind. As we progressed, her healing grew better and better, and she was able to grasp the timing of her heals perfectly! However, the monsters in the trial also grew stronger. After some time, we were barely surviving, even with Little Sister Violet's excellent healing. It was then that she took action. Although her combat standards, in the beginning, were very crude, as the battles continued, one after another, her combat standards increased endlessly. Within just a day, she had already surpassed Fire Dance!"

“I even felt that the Trial of God was created specifically for Little Sister Violet. Inside the Trial of God, for every trial we cleared, we would be given an evaluation and an appropriate reward. Meanwhile, ever since Little Sister Violet took action, she always obtained an evaluation of Rank A or above. Her Equipment and Skills continuously upgraded, and regarding damage output, even though I had the Mavis’s Guard, I only won against her by a small margin. If Little Sister Violet also had an Epic ranked staff, she would have long since left me in the dust!

“Little Sister Violet is the most talented person I have ever met in God’s Domain. Brother Feng, if you saw her frightening growth rate, you, too, would be shocked!”

After having mentioned Violet Cloud, Blackie could not stop his mouth as he talked on and on about her. Blackie spoke as if Violet Cloud were the strongest expert in God’s Domain, and nobody was above her.

Of course, Blackie was speaking about Violet Cloud’s innate talent, and not her current strength. After all, Violet Cloud’s rate of improvement was simply horrifying. With such an improvement rate, she would sooner or later become the strongest player in God’s Domain.

“It’s good that you guys passed the trial. However, you shouldn’t just pay attention to Violet. Don’t forget that you are a Cursemaner, while she is a Cleric. You also hold an Epic ranked staff in your hands. If your damage really does lose to hers, then you’re going to have to hand over the Mavis’s Guard to Violet!” Shi Feng joked. However, he was truly relieved.

It was no wonder Violet Cloud had managed to become a Cleric God in the past. Her innate talent was not a sham.

However, maybe because Violet Cloud had played a Cleric in the past, she had never revealed her true potential during the early stages of the game. However, after leaving Ouroboros, Violet Cloud could no

longer depend on her healing to play God's Domain as she only had herself to rely on in battles. Hence, she started to display her frightening talent.

Similar to the current situation in the Trial of God, healing alone was not enough. Hence, Violet Cloud had no choice but to engage in battle as well, inadvertently revealing her explosive talent.

"Maybe she is one of the legendary geniuses," Shi Feng sighed. In the past, although his techniques were good, when compared to Violet Cloud, the difference between them was like heaven and earth. It was no wonder Violet Cloud had become a Cleric God. However, Shi Feng would no longer waste his time in this life. He would not ignore training his body.

Currently, the Workshop could accommodate up to several hundred people. Moreover, there were also private rooms meant for upper management. Furniture of superior quality decorated these private rooms, and just the cost of a single set would have left Shi Feng's past self in awe. Aside from the private rooms, Shi Feng had also set up a workout room that allowed one to carry out some simple exercises.

God's Domain was not just any random game where players could become a tyrant by pulling a few all-nighters. If one wanted to campaign in God's Domain, they needed to prepare for a long and arduous war. Hence, players in God's Domain needed to balance both work and rest, and most importantly, train their bodies if they wanted to succeed.

"Brother Feng, the university's Fellowship Party is the day after tomorrow. Should we buy a luxury car and drive there? At that time, I want to see just who would dare look down on our Zero Wing Workshop!" Blackie said excitedly.

"I'll pass on the luxury car. I cannot afford such a thing right now." Shi Feng shook his head as he laughed.

Although Shi Feng had similarly thought of buying a luxury car to keep up appearances, he was currently tight on money. He still owed a large sum of Credits. It would be better to take a more pragmatic approach.

Following which, Shi Feng and Blackie spent the entire day putting up the finishing touches to the Workshop. The remaining problem they faced was the lack of members. They needed to recruit a large number of new members with potential.

---

When night arrived in the real world, Shi Feng entered God's Domain once more.

Shortly after leaving the Forging Room, a low ring sounded by Shi Feng's ears. It was the alert tone that signified the arrival of a system message.

However, the alert did not end at just that once. The ringing persisted for a long time and only stopped after over ten minutes had passed.

With a headache, Shi Feng called up the message interface. Immediately, several thousand messages appeared on his display, and all of these messages had been sent to his alternate ID, Black Flame. Shi Feng then took a look at these messages. All of them were from people attempting to purchase the Basic Mana Armor Kits. Moreover, aside from the players in White River City, even the Guilds from other cities were trying to contact him. However, Shi Feng simply revealed a smile at these messages, as he had already achieved his goal.

Fame. Not Starstreak's fame, but Black Flame's. Moreover, as long as he had the Basic Mana Armor Kit, Starstreak Trading Firm's business would not sour.

According to Anna's latest report, the Starstreak Trading Firm had earned over 900 Gold per day. However, this was only the beginning. As they increased the number of Forgers and Potionmakers under their command, their daily production rate would also increase. As a result, the money they earned would similarly increase. It was only a matter of time before they managed to earn 30,000 Gold.

However, there was still a far more important matter that Shi Feng needed to deal with right now.

Hence, Shi Feng immediately contacted Gentle Snow.

"Miss Snow, can I ask you for some help? I wish to buy a few Advanced Whetstone Recipes from you," Shi Feng asked.

"The drop rate for the Advanced Whetstone Recipe is extremely low, and even Ouroboros has only managed to procure several copies. Since we are old acquaintances, I can sell a few to you. However, I want to conduct the trade using Basic Mana Armor Kits." Gentle Snow revealed a smile. She rejoiced at the fact that Black Flame came to her for help. If so, she could just directly request to exchange for the Basic Mana Armor Kits.

Ever since the Basic Mana Armor Kits were revealed to the public, she immediately had her subordinates conduct an investigation on the item. However, they promptly discovered something unusual; it did not drop from anywhere at all. It seemed to be a Special Forging Design obtained through a quest, so there was no way for others to obtain it at all. Hence, if they wanted to obtain any Mana Armor Kits, they could only obtain them from Black Flame himself.

"Alright, but I wonder how Miss Snow plans to exchange?"

"One Advanced Whetstone Recipe for 20 Mana Armor Kits. I can trade three copies with you."

“Deal. You can send one of your subordinates to conduct the trade at the Starstreak Trading Firm.”

Shi Feng did not hesitate to accept Gentle Snow’s high price. After they agreed upon the transaction, Shi Feng disconnected the call. He then took the Mana Armor Kits he had just finished producing to the Starstreak Trading Firm.

Shi Feng intended for Cream Cocoa and Melancholic Smile to learn these Advanced Whetstone Recipes. After all, he still had many matters of his own that he needed to deal with; he couldn’t just forge items all day. In the future, the Horizon Alliance’s main strength would still have to depend on them. Thus, he purchased those recipes.

“Brother Feng, we’re out of the trials. When do we head to the Demon’s Castle?”

Shortly after Shi Feng had finished dealing with his own matters, Blackie’s message arrived.

## Chapter 232 - Returning from the Trial

At this moment, several figures suddenly appeared in the Teleportation Hall of White River City.

“Hahaha! We’re finally out of that suffocating place!”

“There are so many players in White River City!”

“Of course! We’ve been stuck in that broken place for so many days now!”

The conversation of these new figures resounded throughout the Teleportation Hall, and these players were none other than Fire Dance and the others who had just returned from the Trial of Gods.

The moment they set foot out of the Teleportation Hall, the group immediately attracted the attention of many players.

The equipment Fire Dance and the others wore was simply too dazzling, nearly blinding all observers. Even the elite team members of first-rate Guilds were not immune.

After all, among the eight members of the team, the poorest quality equipment they wore was Mysterious-Iron rank. Meanwhile, out of everyone in the party, the Cleric, Violet Cloud, had the best quality equipment. Although she did not have any Set Equipment, she still had 6 pieces of Secret-Silver Equipment and a Fine-Gold ranked staff. No matter how one looked at it, Violet Cloud’s equipment far surpassed that of any member of a Guild’s main force. Moreover, such magnificent equipment decorated Violet Cloud’s slender and elegant body, making her look even more stunning than usual. She looked like an angel descending to the mortal realm, simply breathtaking.

Aside from a beauty like Violet Cloud, there was another female member of the party who was equally beautiful. Garbed in a flame-red, tight-fitting leather shirt, the sexiness of Fire Dance’s polished body was further accentuated.

With two exquisite beauties present, the team of eight would naturally attract a lot of attention.

As a result, many of the teams present, who were originally about to set out to a Dungeon, crowded around Fire Dance and the others. They sent Fire Dance invitations, one after another, requesting Fire Dance and her team to join them in raiding a 20-man Team Dungeon.

Having a powerful Cleric like Violet Cloud would significantly increase their chances of success. Moreover, aside from Violet Cloud, the Guardian Knight, Cola, also had superb equipment. If these experts were willing to do them a favor, they could easily gain a few pieces of top-tier equipment.

Unfortunately, their beautiful dreams were doomed from the start as Fire Dance rejected them all without hesitation.

“We’ve fallen pretty far behind in levels. After we replenish our necessities, let’s go level up,” Fire Dance said, speaking in the team chat, completely ignoring the hungry gazes of the surrounding players.

Nobody in the team opposed her suggestion. After getting along with each other for several days, Fire Dance had already become the core of the team. Everyone had especially acknowledged Fire Dance’s ability to command. Simply put, if it were not for Fire Dance’s leadership, they would not have survived the Trial of God.

Just when Fire Dance and the others were about to head to the Starstreak Trading Firm to purchase some recovery items, over a dozen players walked towards them. Although these players did not possess a Guild emblem on their characters, they were clearly not a team to be underestimated. Even though the Shield Warrior leading this team was a man with an emaciated face and thin body, his appearance could not overshadow the keenness of his gaze. Moreover, this man currently wore a complete Level 10 Mysterious-Iron Set Equipment, in addition to a Secret-Silver ranked shield and one-handed sword. Possessing such items was a clear proof of his strength.

While Fire Dance and the others were shocked by the equipment and strength of the team moving towards them, the team in question was similarly shocked by Fire Dance and the others.

“Crap! Who is that little sister? She actually has six pieces of Secret-Silver Equipment on her! I’m not seeing things, right?”

“Smuggled Goods, I look down upon you! You’re actually only paying attention to the girl’s body! Can’t you see the weapon the Cleric girl has? Also, look at that vulgar-looking Curseman’s staff! It should be Secret-Silver rank or stronger!”

“Scram! I have no interests in flat chests! I am obviously talking about the hot little sister standing next to the Cleric!”

“...”

Although the Guardian Knight of Fire Dance’s team was lacking compared to their own MT, their Cleric and Curseman were obviously much worse than the two before them. Moreover, the two teams were similar in that they both were independent teams and neither belonged to the main force of a Guild.

In White River City, where Guilds occupied most of the important resource points, it was a rare sight for an independent team to possess such top-tier equipment. So, how could they not attract attention?

“Hello, I am War Wolf, team leader of the Holy Grail Knights.” The emaciated man, War Wolf, took the initiative to introduce himself to Fire Dance.

“Zero Wing’s team leader, Fire Dance,” Fire Dance replied, her interest to befriend this new team growing.

Shi Feng had passed the management of the team to Fire Dance, and Fire Dance knew Shi Feng had done so due to his trust in her. She did not wish to betray that trust. Hence, taking their future Guild into consideration, as the manager of the team, she naturally had to think of a way to expand and strengthen the team.

Meanwhile, the foreign team before her was clearly a formidable independent team. She felt their leader, War Wolf, was more than he appeared. Although she had never fought with him before, she knew that he was one of the rarely seen apex experts. If she had to PK against War Wolf, she would not have any advantage against him. If she could recruit such an expert and team into their Guild, they would have no worries when raiding large-scale Team Dungeons in the future.

“Fire Dance?” War Wolf was slightly surprised when he heard this name. He then said, “So you’re Fire Dance, the earliest player to get first place on White River City’s Ranking List? How fortunate to meet you.”

War Wolf’s evaluation of Fire Dance rose even higher after learning the news. Aside from Gentle Snow and Zhao Yueru, Fire Dance’s imposing aura was likely the most powerful of all the female players he had met. Moreover, Fire Dance was also an independent player.

“I was just lucky.” Fire Dance smiled as she said, “I see that Team Leader Wolf is about to go Dungeon diving?”

“That’s right. We’re currently about to raid the Level 12 Frost Nest,” War Wolf revealed. “Is Miss Fire Dance interested in joining us?”

The Frost Nest was a Level 12, 20-man Team Dungeon. Currently, aside from the main force of the major Guilds, no other team possessed the strength to challenge such a Dungeon.

“Thank you for your kind offer, but we still have our own matters to attend. We will definitely join you if we have the chance in the future,” Fire Dance immediately rejected War Wolf’s offer. Shi Feng had previously instructed them to raise their levels as he still had some important matters to deal with. If they entered a Dungeon right now, their leveling speed would suffer, and they might even lose some EXP. Hence, Fire Dance chose to reject the offer without a second thought.

“That’s truly unfortunate. Let’s add each other as friends, Miss Fire Dance. If we have a chance to raid a large-scale Team Dungeon together in the future, we can contact each other more conveniently.” War Wolf sent Fire Dance a friend request.

Since Fire Dance was also an expert of God’s Domain, Common Equipment would not satisfy her, yet, to obtain high-quality equipment, aside from killing Lord ranked Field Bosses and completing Special Quests, the only other option was raiding a Team Dungeon or a large-scale Team Dungeons.

However, an independent team was different from Guild members. The teams were loosely formed, and the strength of the members usually varied. If an independent team relied solely on themselves, they would have no way of clearing a large-scale Team Dungeon. Hence, independent teams needed to cooperate with one another. Only by combining the strength of multiple independent teams would they have a chance of raiding a 50-man or above large-scale Team Dungeon.

Yet, not just any independent teams would be fit for the task; a sufficiently strong independent team was necessary. Otherwise, entering a large-scale Team Dungeon would be suicide. Hence, War Wolf planned to befriend powerful independent teams. If they had powerful allies, they would have a much easier time raiding large-scale Team Dungeons.

---

Just as Fire Dance and War Wolf added each other as friends, Shi Feng had arrived at Blackwing City. He had come to conduct his third business transaction with Aqua Rose.

This time, however, Shi Feng had not brought a lot of the Level 10 equipment and weapons he had forged. Now that the majority of the players in God's Domain were over Level 10, these items were no longer as valuable as they were before. Hence, Shi Feng did not produce many of them. Instead, he prepared something better, something that could even attract the attention of first-rate Guilds.

In addition, the Blackwing Auction House was holding an auction today. To any wealthy player, this was a chance that must not be missed, including Shi Feng who currently possessed enormous wealth.

However, after Shi Feng had arrived at the appointed restaurant, Aqua Rose did not show up, even after a long time had passed. Instead, a pot-bellied man resembling Maitreya[1] walked over and quietly sat opposite of Shi Feng. With a gentle and elegant smile, he said, "Hello there, Master Black Flame. As Miss Aqua has some urgent matters to attend to today, she has sent me to represent her in this transaction. Miss Aqua expresses her sincerest apologies."

TL Notes:

[1] Maitreya:

<https://www.cgtrader.com/3d-models/exterior/landmark/3d-models-maitreya-buddha-statue-ba4f62b45edade1c8e90a8f97c5fe95e>

Chapter 233 - Astronomical Transaction

"Miss Aqua has some urgent matters?" Shi Feng was slightly surprised.

“That’s right. Although I cannot reveal to Your Excellency what those matters are, I, Joking Scholar, can represent Miss Aqua in conducting the transaction with you.”

However, Shi Feng did not believe him.

Every time he and Aqua Rose completed a transaction, both sides would gain massive profits. Logically speaking, there should be nothing more important than this matter. Even if Aqua Rose truly had an urgent matter, she should have at least notified him beforehand. However, Aqua Rose had not.

Shi Feng carefully observed this Maitreya-like person. Although he appeared absolutely harmless, his body exuded a sense of shrewdness that spoke of vast experience in the business world.

Virtual reality... In this realistic world, regarding a player’s expressions or demeanor, both would be fully displayed on their characters.

With over a decade of experience campaigning in God’s Domain, Shi Feng could immediately perceive the delight and panic hidden behind those beady little eyes.

“Since Miss Aqua has some matters to deal with, let us postpone our business transaction till next time, then.” Shi Feng smiled calmly before standing up, saying, “I still have some matters that I need to attend to, so I’ll leave first.”

Hearing that Shi Feng had no intention to continue the trade and intended to leave, Maitreya’s facial expression immediately changed. A hint of panic appeared in his friendly smile when Shi Feng stood.

“Master Black Flame, don’t be in such a rush! Although Miss Aqua is absent, Twilight Echo sincerely desires this trade’s success. We are willing to pay 30% more than the previously mentioned price!” Joking Scholar hurriedly stood and held back Shi Feng.

“Thirty percent? It seems that you guys really are sincere about this.” Shi Feng halted his steps, smiling. He then turned to face the panicked Maitreya, saying, “Since you’ve already made the offer, let us negotiate the price.”

“Of course, of course!” Joking Scholar hurriedly nodded his head, once more revealing his friendly smile.

Following which, the two sat and resumed their business transaction.

“Do you have what I asked of Miss Aqua the last time?” Shi Feng asked.

“Master Black Flame, please have a look,” Joking Scholar retrieved several Ore Bags. Hard Stones and rare forging materials filled the majority of these bags.

Moreover, aside from taking out five 400-slot Ore Bags, which were the largest Ore Bags currently available to players, he had also taken out a black leather bag. There were many runes carved on the exterior of this bag, and one could tell that it was not an ordinary item with just a glance.

It is as expected of Twilight Echo. They even have a Runic Ore Bag. Shi Feng was inwardly shocked.

The Runic Ore Bag was a Mysterious-Iron grade Ore Bag. It had a massive capacity of 1,200 slots, four times that of a Common grade Ore Bag.

However, this item was not easy to obtain. Only Lord ranked Bosses in mines had a chance of dropping this item.

Compared to the previous encounter, this transaction would be far larger. Joking Scholar had prepared over 2,000 stacks of Hard Stones, 300 stacks of Fine Iron Ore, 400 stacks of Silver Ore, and 200 stacks of Mithril Ore. Furthermore, there were also 100 stacks of Gold Ore, which was currently unavailable in Star-Moon Kingdom.

Just how much manpower and resources had they spent in the process of gathering such a large amount of precious ores?

This was precisely the strength of a first-rate Guild. It was not something a normal Guild could compare to.

“Good, everything that I requested is here. Deducting all these ores, if we factor in the 30% increase in price you previously mentioned, you just need to pay me an additional 120 million Credits.” Shi Feng took out a letter that had been encrypted by the System and placed it on the table. Only a specified person could open this letter, and outsiders had no way to discover its contents.

When Joking Scholar heard the price of 120 million Credits, his smiling expression immediately froze. He had nearly spat the black tea that was in his mouth, the teacup in his hand nearly falling to the ground due to his trembling.

“The 120 million Credits is the price of this encrypted letter?” Joking Scholar looked at the white envelope on the table, his facial expression turning extraordinarily ugly. His previously beady eyes abruptly widened as he sent a chilling glare at Shi Feng, coldly saying, “Master Black Flame, aren’t you going a little too overboard? We of Twilight Echo have come here with the sincerest intentions to conduct business with you. Are you looking down on Twilight Echo? Or do you not take Miss Aqua seriously?”

No matter how stupid Joking Scholar was, he knew that no transaction in God's Domain could currently achieve such a frightening cost. That was 120 million Credits! Not 120 million Hell Money[1]! Such an amount was sufficient for a normal person to live the rest of their life in luxury! Even Joking Scholar himself would not earn such an amount in this lifetime!

The only possibility was that Shi Feng was toying with him, or that Shi Feng had already found out that he was a fake. However, as a preventive measure, he still used Aqua Rose's name to warn Shi Feng.

Shi Feng calmly smiled at this Maitreya's reaction. He paid no mind to Joking Scholar's chilling and threatening gaze, unhurriedly saying, "How could you say such a thing? Weren't you the one that suggested for the 30% increase in price?"

"I've fully followed our previous agreement and have brought what that Miss Aqua requested. Could Miss Aqua have forgotten to tell you about it? Or is it because you are fake?" A chilling light suddenly flashed in Shi Feng's eyes as he loudly questioned.

"You!"

At this moment, Joking Scholar gnashed his teeth in anger.

Shi Feng had clearly pretended to be the fool here. Yet, he could not just reveal Shi Feng's act.

"Master Black Flame, of course, I was sent here by Miss Aqua! Please stop trying to probe me! Miss Rose never agreed to this!" Joking Scholar was no fool. He thought that Shi Feng was currently trying to probe him, so he quickly cooled his temper.

“Probe? What reason would I have to probe you?” Shi Feng smiled as he said, “I am very serious. If Aqua Rose didn’t mention such an important agreement to you and you have no knowledge of it, then it seems you are indeed a fake. If that is so, then I am truly sorry. Our business transaction ends here.”

Saying so, Shi Feng stood and prepared to leave.

Joking Scholar immediately panicked. He could no longer discern whether Shi Feng’s words were true or not. In the beginning, he thought Shi Feng was trying to swindle him. Now, however, it would seem that his previous preconception might be wrong.

Have I really guessed wrong? Was this letter actually what they intended to trade? Joking Scholar felt that his brain was no longer sufficient to process this matter. He could not see through Shi Feng at all.

Previously, Shi Feng had expressed immense interest in continuing the trade. Now, however, Shi Feng was about to leave after scoffing. Just what was he supposed to do?

Joking Scholar had personally witnessed the benefits Aqua Rose had obtained through her transactions with Shi Feng. If Twilight Echo could periodically conduct similar trades with Shi Feng and obtain such immense profits every time, the other first-rate Guilds in their kingdom would have no chance to compete with them. They would become the tyrant of their kingdom.

Just by becoming the lord of a city, the benefits that ensued were enough to attract the world-class corporations’ investments. Not to mention receiving a few hundred million, they could even receive tens of billions of Credits. If Twilight Echo could become the tyrant of a kingdom, they could receive investments from over ten major corporations. The Credits they could earn were unimaginable. In comparison, the 120 million Credit transaction right now could be considered negligible.

However, 120 million Credits was not pocket change either. Moreover, their Guild had only obtained the many ores before him through the painstaking work. If they gave them all to Shi Feng, the losses would be mind-blowing.

Of course, if such a powerful benefit were truly available, it could greatly assist Twilight Echo in elevating its current position, becoming the tyrant of the capital city.

However, Joking Scholar could not see past Shi Feng's thoughts at all. He did not know whether Shi Feng had the sincerity to continue their current cooperation. With his status, he did not dare make this gamble.

"Master Black Flame, please wait a minute! Maybe Miss Aqua has forgotten to mention this to me. I'll have to ask Miss Aqua about this before making a decision. If there truly are no problems, then the 120 million Credits and these materials will all be yours." Joking Scholar decided to hold Shi Feng back for now. He needed to report this matter to his superiors and let them decide what to do. That way, he won't have to take responsibility for this matter.

TL Notes:

[1]Hell Money: a form of joss paper printed to resemble legal tender bank notes. The notes are not an official form of recognized currency or legal tender since their sole intended purpose is to be offered as burnt offerings to the deceased as a superstitious solution to resolve their ancestors' financial problems. This custom has been practiced by the modern Chinese and across East Asia since the late 19th century. Early 20th century examples resembled minor commercial currency of the type issued by businesses across China until the mid-1940s.

Chapter 234 - While the Priest Climbs a Post, the Devil Climbs Ten

Naturally, Shi Feng could not just walk away after hearing Joking Scholar's words.

Although he did not know what had happened to Aqua Rose, if he could swindle so many materials and Credits, he would make a huge profit.

“Fine. I’ll give you one minute. I’m in a hurry.”

Shi Feng swept a glance at the clock displayed on the system interface. There were still two hours before the auction started at the Blackwing City Auction House. If he missed this chance, he would have to wait for several more days before the next.

Since a lot was at stake, Joking Scholar dared not waste any more time. He immediately sent a message to his superior, awaiting the decision.

After waiting for half a minute or so, Joking Scholar received a reply.

Joking Scholar immediately felt his mood refresh when he read the reply.

“Master Black Flame, Miss Aqua has said that, due to the transaction being of such magnitude, if we are to conduct this trade, we need to verify the item that you have provided. Of course, I will preside over this verification. If there truly are no problems, we will immediately transfer the money to you,” Joking Scholar confidently informed Shi Feng.

“That won’t do. If you guys get a look at the contents of this letter, then the information inside will no longer have any value. What if you decide not to pay me? Wouldn’t I take a huge loss instead? Unless you give me the money first, I will not let you look at the contents.” Shi Feng sneered, “Since Twilight Echo doesn’t have any sincerity in continuing this trade, so be it.”

Contrary to Joking Scholar's belief, the information inside the encrypted letter was the real deal. It could instantly promote a large Guild to the next level.

The information was especially useful to a first-rate Guild.

Of course, this information would not actually sell for an astronomical price of 120 million Credits.

Since he had cooperated with Aqua Rose in the past, he would not betray her and cooperate with someone else. Hence, he had only mentioned such an astronomical price to play with Joking Scholar.

"Master Black Flame, we are very sincere in this matter. If you continue responding to our sincerity in such a way, we can only take it as you toying with Twilight Echo. None who attempt to make fools of Twilight Echo find a good ending. If Master Black Flame doesn't want a misunderstanding, please let me take a look at the information contained in the letter. As long as there are no problems, then based on Twilight Echo's credibility, we certainly will not go back on our word and ruin our own reputation." Although Joking Scholar spoke with an amicable tone, he did not try to hide the cold glint in his eyes in the least.

"Are you threatening me?" Shi Feng's tone turned cold as he said, "Although Twilight Echo is a first-rate Guild, don't think that I, Black Flame, am someone you can easily mess around with. Since this matter has reached this point, our cooperation ends right here and now."

Shi Feng immediately left the restaurant, leaving behind a dumbfounded Joking Scholar.

Joking Scholar never thought Shi Feng would react so decisively.

In his opinion, Black Flame was only a forger. How could he possibly dare call shots with a first-rate Guild like Twilight Echo? Hence, Joking Scholar decided to threaten him. Yet, Shi Feng had not reacted as he had expected at all, so much so that his threat had yielded the exact opposite effect he had wanted.

The higher ups of the Guild had tasked him with maintaining the current business relationship they had with Black Flame. If there were a possibility, the best case scenario would be to recruit Black Flame into Twilight Echo.

“How abominable! This Black Flame is simply impervious to reason!” Joking Scholar had originally intended to hold Shi Feng back once more. However, doing so was simply too humiliating. After speaking those decisive words, if he had to suddenly change his tone and try to ingratiate himself with Shi Feng... He simply could not do it. He is definitely toying with me! That’s the only plausible reason why he isn’t willing to show me the contents of that letter!

Immediately after, Joking Scholar contacted his superior.

“Scholar, how did it go?” a dignified tone came through the communicator.

“Boss, that Black Flame rejected our proposal. He refused to let me take a look at the letter’s contents. However, I am very sure that he is trying to play us for fools. There is nothing important in the letter,” Scholar confidently assured.

“I understand. Although it is slightly unfortunate, Black Flame has also given us some enlightenment. Since Black Flame is unwilling to do business with us, we can just look for someone else. I hear that Star-Moon Kingdom, where Black Flame is from, should be in dire need of ores. Look for a powerful Guild from Star-Moon Kingdom at Blackwing City. I believe that they should be very willing to cooperate with us.”

“Yes, Boss.”

Currently, Joking Scholar felt exhilarated.

“Black Flame, did you really think that you are so amazing? Once I sell these ores to some other Guild in Star-Moon Kingdom, we’ll see if you can still survive there!”

Soon after, Joking Scholar had departed from the restaurant as well. He started looking for a new business partner from Star-Moon Kingdom.

Meanwhile, after Shi Feng left the restaurant, he immediately changed his appearance using the Demon Mask. He had long since waited for Joking Scholar’s departure.

Although Shi Feng did not intend to do business with Joking Scholar, that would not stop him from swindling the man.

After all, it was not easy for him to obtain so many ores. Moreover, it was not his style to just let Joking Scholar escape.

Previously, he had used the appearance of Black Flame, so he could not swindle those ores from him. However, now that he had changed his appearance, even if he swindled Joking Scholar, he would be fine as long as he immediately donned a new appearance.

Twilight Echo had spent a lot of wealth and manpower to procure the ores. If they failed to sell them, keeping those ores for their own use instead, they would need over ten days to exhaust such a large

supply fully. Twilight Echo could not bear such a heavy cost. After all, these ores could not increase their Guild's battle prowess. They could only do so by turning these materials into currency.

However, If they wished to turn these ores into money, they had to sell them to a Guild that was in dire need of ores. As for independent players, they simply had no way to deplete such a stock.

No. Unless they paid with Credits, even a first-rate Guild could not afford so many ores. However, would Twilight Echo lack Credits?

That's right; they didn't lack Credits. If they could spend Credits to purchase a large amount of Gold Coins, they would have spent several hundred million Credits without hesitation. However, the Main God System had not activated an exchange system for Coins. As for the virtual trade center, there was simply not enough Gold Coins to satisfy their demands.

Most importantly, if they purchased Gold Coins in bulk, their actions would inflate the prices of Gold Coins endlessly, and doing so was not a worthwhile investment. This was also one of the reasons why large Guilds normally would not purchase Gold Coins in bulk.

If Twilight Echo could not sell these ores quickly, it would wound the Guild's development.

However, it would not be an easy task to find a business partner willing to purchase so many ores. The only possibility they had was to look for a Guild from Star-Moon Kingdom. As long as Twilight Echo investigated, they would immediately discover that Black Flame was from Star-Moon Kingdom. Meanwhile, the fact that Black Flame purchased so many forging materials proved that Star-Moon Kingdom was in dire need. As long as the upper echelon of Twilight Echo had brains, they would naturally look for someone from Star-Moon Kingdom to cooperate with.

Unfortunately, Twilight Echo had miscalculated one point. It was not easy to obtain the pass required to enter Blackwing City. Even for a large Guild, they would need to spend a lot of time and effort to obtain

one. Not to mention, the majority of the Guilds and players in Star-Moon Kingdom didn't even know about the existence of Blackwing City.

Quite some time had passed since the launch of God's Domain. However, the players from Star-Moon Kingdom who could enter Blackwing City were among the extreme minority. It went without saying there were even fewer players who could afford so many ores.

---

An hour quickly passed with Shi Feng trailing Joking Scholar.

Sure enough, Joking Scholar failed to find even a single player from Star-Moon Kingdom. The majority of the players he met were independent players from other kingdoms and empires. Even when he met players belonging to Guilds, these players were not part of their Guild's backbone. Most importantly, none of these players had any interest in Twilight Echo's ores.

This situation depressed Joking Scholar. He wondered just why he could not meet any players from Star-Moon Kingdom. It would be fine even if it were even an independent player!

At this moment, Shi Feng took on Lone Tyrant's appearance using the Demon Mask, and he walked towards Joking Scholar casually.

Shi Feng's disguise looked extremely similar to the real deal. Moreover, the equipment he wore had also changed appearance. He now wore a complete Secret-Silver Set Equipment. On his back, he carried the Fine-Gold ranked Blood Red Longsword and Blood Red Cross Shield. Not to mention the Guild Leader of a second-rate Guild, even the Guild Leader of a first-rate Guild would find it difficult to obtain equipment as dazzling as Shi Feng's.

In addition, Shi Feng had completely replicated Lone Tyrant's arrogant air, creating a vivid image of the Guild Leader. Right now, even if someone familiar with Lone Tyrant stood before Shi Feng, they could not tell whether he was the real Lone Tyrant or not.

The players that walked past Shi Feng involuntarily found their heads turning towards him; both envy and admiration filled the gazes they sent his way.

The glowing effect of a Fine-Gold Weapon had nearly blinded their eyes.

At this moment, Joking Scholar was still blindly searching the streets for his target, a gloomy expression portrayed on his face. However, when his eyes landed on Lone Tyrant, who was Shi Feng in disguise, his eyes flashed with a glint of excitement.

His equipment! Not even our Guild Leader compares to him! The Guild he belongs to must be very powerful! I hope he is a player from Star-Moon Kingdom. Joking Scholar made a silent prayer as he walked towards Shi Feng.

"Hello! I am Joking Scholar of Twilight Echo. May I ask if Your Excellency comes from Star-Moon Kingdom?" Joking Scholar asked in anticipation.

"Are your eyes a decoration? Of course, I am from Star-Moon Kingdom! If you don't even know who I am, why are you even playing God's Domain?" Shi Feng arrogantly scoffed.

Contrary to expectations, not only did Shi Feng's scolding fail to anger Joking Scholar, but it had also made him rejoice. Immediately, Joking Scholar used an identification skill on Shi Feng.

[Lone Tyrant]

Affiliated Guild: Dark Star

After reading Shi Feng's basic information, Joking Scholarly immediately started a search through the official forums for information. Very quickly, Joking Scholar uncovered most of the information available about Lone Tyrant, and his mood instantly lifted higher than before.

"How careless of me! I did not expect to meet the well-renowned Guild Leader Lone Tyrant of Star-Moon Kingdom! I wonder if Your Excellency would be interested in purchasing some ores?" Joking Scholar spoke unhurriedly.

However, Shi Feng inwardly smiled at Joking Scholar's words.

Just as he had guessed, Joking Scholar was in a hurry to get rid of the ores in his hands.

"Ores? Are you looking down on our Guild?" Shi Feng angrily demanded.

"Guild Leader Tyrant has misunderstood me. Of course, I know that Your Excellency does not lack materials." Joking Scholar calmly said, "However, what about the other Guilds in Star-Moon Kingdom? If

Guild Leader Tyrant can sell a large number of ores to those Guilds at a low price, wouldn't Your Excellency make a huge profit?"

At this moment, Shi Feng faked an interested expression.

"Guild Leader Tyrant, after the recent update of God's Domain, fighting monsters places a huge toll on a weapon's durability. Hence, I believe that every Guild would be very interested in Whetstones. Meanwhile, the main material needed to produce Whetstones is Hard Stones. I just happen to have plenty of Hard Stones with me right now, and I can sell all of them to Your Excellency at a very low price," Joking Scholar hurriedly said.

"Cheap Hard Stones?" Shi Feng appeared even more interested now, saying, "Speak, then."

"I can sell these Hard Stones to Your Excellency at a price of 10 Silver Coins a stack. Similarly, I can also sell the other ores I have with me for much cheaper than those found in Star-Moon Kingdom," Joking Scholar offered confidently.

"You call 10 Silver Coins per stack 'cheap?' Are you trying to toy with me? Do you think I have so much time to waste on you?" Shi Feng growled, "I will pay, at most, 5 Silver Coins a stack. Otherwise, we do not need to continue this conversation."

"Your Excellency, I know how much Hard Stones sell for in Star-Moon Kingdom. Normally, each stack can sell for 11 to 12 Silver Coins. By reselling the Hard Stones Your Excellency buys from me, Your Excellency can still make an effortless one to two Silver Coins. Moreover, the amount of Hard Stones I have with me is by no means small. They can allow Your Excellency to make an immense profit." Joking Scholar had done his homework, thoroughly researching the prices of ores in Star-Moon Kingdom. Hence, Joking Scholar felt confident that Lone Tyrant was interested in buying the Hard Stones; Lone Tyrant was simply trying to lower the prices to maximize his profits.

“Twelve Silver Coins?” Shi Feng disdainfully said, “That was the price two days ago. Now that everyone’s level is higher, the available locations they can farm Hard Stones from has also increased. It is absolutely impossible to sell them at such a high price anymore. I’ll repeat myself one more time: 5 Silver Coins a stack. If you don’t want to sell, then so be it.”

Immediately, Joking Scholar grew flustered at Shi Feng’s words. Indeed, he had investigated the ore prices in Star-Moon Kingdom two days ago. Moreover, just as Shi Feng had said, players’ levels rose constantly. Not only would the drop rate of Hard Stones from monsters increase, but players could also obtain quite a number from mining ores.

Take the Hard Stones Twilight Echo had gathered, for example. Twilight Echo had previously paid around 3 to 4 Silver Coins per stack while gathering the Hard Stones. If they sold them for only 5 Silver Coins a stack to Shi Feng, they wouldn’t make a huge profit.

“Your Excellency drives a hard bargain. How about this; what do you think about 8 Silver Coins a stack?” Joking Scholar probed.

“Scram! If you’re not going to sell them, then forget it!” Shi Feng pretended to grow angry.

Although Shi Feng stated that the prices of Hard Stones had fallen, the prices in White River City had not decreased by much. Each stack could still sell for around 11 Silver Coins right now. However, Shi Feng was in no hurry. He knew that Twilight Echo was deeply afraid of keeping the Hard Stones and having their value depreciate as time passed. Such a loss could greatly hamper Twilight Echo’s growth, letting the other Guilds surpass them.

“Your Excellency, please wait a moment. How about 7 Silver Coins per stack?” Joking Scholar hurriedly bargained when he noticed Shi Feng about to walk away.

However, his offer failed to halt Shi Feng's steps.

"Alright, alright; 6 Silver Coins. I can't lower the price any further than that." Joking Scholar felt helpless at Shi Feng's unyielding attitude. However, it was simply too difficult to find players from Star-Moon Kingdom in Blackwing City. It was especially true for a Guild Leader like Lone Tyrant. If Joking Scholar could not sell these Hard Stones as quickly as possible, their value would continue to depreciate.

However, reality was cruel. Shi Feng did not halt his steps at all.

Joking Scholar started to panic now. He hurriedly ran to stop Shi Feng, saying in an urgent tone, "Your Excellency! Are you really not going to consider it? Six Silver coins is already a very low price! You can't find such an offer anywhere else!"

"Can't find?" Shi Feng smiled. Although Star-Moon Kingdom ranked above average among kingdoms that produced herbs, regarding mineral production, Star-Moon Kingdom ranked below average. Thus, the mineral supply in Star-Moon Kingdom lacked constantly. However, not every kingdom and empire was in a similar situation to the Star-Moon Kingdom.

Immediately, Shi Feng loudly yelled, "Selling Hard Stones for 6 Silver Coins a stack! You definitely can't find a price lower than this!"

Shi Feng's actions dumbfounded Joking Scholar.

However, many players on the street sent gazes of contempt towards Shi Feng.

"Stop joking around! You call 6 Silver Coins a stack 'cheap'? Even 5, Silver 30 Coppers is expensive where I come from! If you want to purchase in bulk, I can sell them to you at 5 Silver Coins a stack!"

“Ah! I nearly died from laughter just now!”

Many players on the street started laughing at Shi Feng.

However, the one who was truly embarrassed was Joking Scholar. At this moment, he felt so ashamed that he could not even raise his head to face Shi Feng. His absolute confidence from before had returned to slap him in the face.

Moreover, someone had already made an offer of 5 Silver Coins per stack. Nothing could have a more powerful impact than this.

“How about it? Didn’t you say that your Hard Stones were the cheapest? Didn’t you say that I absolutely couldn’t find a lower price than yours?” Shi Feng snorted as he asked, “Why is everyone offering me a lower price, then? Did you really think that I am a fool?”

“This is a misunderstanding! Really!” Joking Scholar hurriedly said, “Just like Your Excellency suggested before, how about 5 Silver Coins a stack?”

“Too late. I’ll offer, at best, 2 Silver Coins now. Before, I had only casually asked around on the street, and already, someone has offered me a price of 5 Silver Coins. If I ask even more people, I might even find a cheaper offer than that. There are plenty of kingdoms rich in ores.” Shi Feng smiled contemptuously.

Shi Feng's offer this time truly shocked Joking Scholar.

However, Joking Scholar knew that it was no longer possible for him to sell the forging materials for a good price.

At this moment, Joking Scholar had finally realized that making money in Blackwing City was not an easy task.

Although Blackwing City provided players with various opportunities, the competition here was more intense than any other city in God's Domain. The players in Blackwing City came from various kingdoms and empires, and each one of these kingdoms and empires had their own specialties. Although Twilight Echo was a first-rate Guild, they held no advantage whatsoever in this city. Even the forging materials they were so proud of held no advantage in this city.

Joking Scholar honestly wondered how Aqua Rose had managed to make so much money from her trips to Blackwing City.

"Your Excellency, can you give me some time? After all, the price you offered is simply too low. I need to consult with my superiors before making a decision," Joking Scholar persuaded Shi Feng.

"Fine. It just so happens that I need to purchase some items. We'll meet up in this plaza in 30 minutes." Shi Feng nodded.

The two promptly added each other as friends.

After parting, Shi Feng immediately walked into an empty alley.

The reason he had offered an extremely low price of 2 Silver Coins was to force Joking Scholar to contact his superiors. More importantly, he had done so to part with Joking Scholar. Otherwise, he would have no way of realizing his plan.

After walking into the alley, Shi Feng immediately used the Seven Luminaries Crystal and returned to White River City. He then rushed to the Bank, retrieving several hundred stacks of Hard Stones and other ores, before using the Seven Luminaries Crystal again to travel to Blackwing City.

Afterward, Shi Feng looked for a dark, narrow alley. Glancing at his surroundings and making sure that he had not been followed, Shi Feng changed into a new appearance again. This time, he disguised himself as an old man with white hair. He then donned a black hooded cloak and changed his name to Carlos. Aside from his name, he had concealed his information.

“That should be about it.” Shi Feng examined his disguise. Regarding outward appearance or temperament, both looked extremely mysterious. Moreover, his body also exuded a frightening aura. He did not look like a player at all.

After confirming that there were no problems with his disguise, Shi Feng walked towards a relatively populated street.

On the street, he discovered a relatively well-equipped Guardian Knight, and without hesitation, he walked towards this Guardian Knight. While he walked past this man, Shi Feng pretended to accidentally bump into him, knocking the man down to the ground.

Originally, the Guardian Knight was enraged from being knocked down. However, just before he started cursing, he noticed that the old man before him had a shockingly powerful aura, so much so that he

could feel his own body trembling slightly before this elder. Immediately, he used an identification skill on this old man and found out that the old man was called Carlos. Meanwhile, any remaining information about the old man displayed as “Unknown.”

In God’s Domain, there were only two scenarios that resulted in an unknown return from an identification skill. One was when the targeted player used a special item to conceal their information, while the other was due to a large gap in strength. In both cases, a normal identification skill would not suffice to determine the target’s information.

Meanwhile, the old man before him was clearly not a player, but an NPC. Hence, the Guardian Knight determined that the old man named Carlos was very powerful. Afraid that he would earn the ire of this mysterious NPC and get himself killed, the Guardian Knight immediately swallowed his words.

“Young man, are you alright?” Shi Feng spoke in a dignified tone, casting an overlooking gaze at the Guardian Knight.

“No, there are no problems at all,” the Guardian Knight hurriedly said.

“It’s good that you’re alright. However, it is still my fault for bumping into you. As compensation, you can come to my place to purchase items in the future. I will sell them to you at a discount,” Shi Feng said. Immediately, he started walking towards a nearby alleyway.

“Could my luck have come?” The Guardian Knight reacted quickly as he immediately followed Shi Feng into the alleyway.

Shi Feng was shrouded in mystery, and the aura he exuded was extremely frightening. Coupling that with the fact that he had bumped into a player, he would naturally attract the attention of many players on the street. Although Shi Feng’s words had not been loud, many of the surrounding players had clearly heard him.

There were countless fortuitous encounters in God's Domain. It was especially so for a place like Blackwing City. It was not strange for players to purchase some rare items from a Hidden NPC.

The elderly man before them was such a powerful NPC; it would not be odd for him to sell some powerful, rare item. So, how could they possibly miss out on such a good opportunity? Hence, every player on the street followed Shi Feng and the Guardian Knight.

"Damn, why are there so many people following us?" The Guardian Knight felt depressed when he noticed the crowd of players trailing behind him and the old man. However, his feet did not stop as he continued after Shi Feng.

Meanwhile, when Shi Feng noticed the large number of players following him, his lips curled into a smile. He had already achieved his goal.

Soon after, Shi Feng led the crowd of players past the street where Joking Scholar was.

As Joking Scholar had only needed to notify his superiors about the current situation, he had not wandered too far from his original location. Naturally, he also noticed the strange sight of a crowd of players following a mysterious old man. Hence, he hurried after one of the players trailing Shi Feng.

After making a short inquiry, Joking Scholar learned the reason for this strange situation. His face lit up with joy as he, too, joined this army of players.

Seeing that Joking Scholar had taken the bait, Shi Feng located an unoccupied gazebo and took a seat there. His expression remained indifferent as he gazed at the players following him.

The Guardian Knight from before immediately walked up to Shi Feng without hesitation. He intended to find out what items he could purchase from the old man.

In response to the Guardian Knight's actions, Shi Feng revealed a faint smile as he retrieved Hard Stones and many other types of rare ores. He then quoted extremely low prices for all these ores.

Shi Feng quoted one stack of Hard Stones for 40 Copper Coins, a stack of 200 Iron Ore for 4 Silver Coins, a stack of 200 Fine Iron Ore for 6 Silver Coins, 200 Silver Ore for 10 Silver Coins, and 200 Mithril Ore for 12 Silver Coins.

The Guardian Knight was immediately dumbfounded when he heard these prices. The prices Shi Feng quoted were far lower than the current market prices. It was especially true for the Hard Stones that were currently in high demand.

"Your Excellency Carlos, I wish to purchase 30 stacks of Hard Stones," the Guardian Knight said, excitement clear in his voice.

After all, if he returned to his own country and resold these Hard Stones at 5 Silver Coins, he would make an immense profit. Anyone would grow excited over such a situation.

Hence, the Guardian Knight spent all of the money he had on him to purchase Hard Stones from Shi Feng.

Meanwhile, the players that arrived a tad bit later were immediately stunned by the Guardian Knight's transaction. Immediately, they rushed forward to purchase Hard Stones from Shi Feng.

A majority of the players currently in Blackwing City were independent players. The money they carried did not amount to much, so the number of Hard Stones they could buy was limited. Most of the players only bought a dozen or so stacks of Hard Stones from Shi Feng. In the blink of an eye, Shi Feng had already sold over 200 stacks.

The players who managed to purchase Hard Stones from Shi Feng left with wide smiles. Some had even purchased Gold Coins using Credits, shouting their offer on the streets.

If they were to purchase Coins through the virtual trade center, the Coins would need at least 2 hours to arrive in their accounts. If it were a private transaction between players, however, they could immediately pay and receive the Coins. Hence, these players immediately started yelling on the streets, going so far as to offer double the market price.

Joking Scholar immediately panicked. This mysterious NPC was actually selling these items and at such a low price. There were even so many players purchasing Coins on the streets.

If news of this matter reached Dark Star's Guild Leader, Lone Tyrant's ears...

If that happened, he would never get rid of the forging materials in his hands!

Immediately, Joking Scholar sent this information back to his superior, and just as quickly, he received a reply. They ordered him to sell as many of the materials as he could at a low price. Following which, Joking Scholar immediately rushed towards the meeting location he had agreed upon with Shi Feng. He then sent Shi Feng a message, stating that they could conduct their trade immediately. Joking Scholar was deeply afraid of Shi Feng discovering the matter with the mysterious NPC. If Shi Feng found out about it, he wouldn't even be able to sell his Hard Stones for 2 Silver Coins a stack.

Shi Feng revealed a faint smile after seeing receiving Joking Scholar's message. Immediately, he told the players that he had sold out for the day and that he would return tomorrow. Many of the new arrivals were gravely disappointed. They lamented over the fact that they had been so slow, and they had no choice but to return tomorrow.

Soon after, Shi Feng vanished from the players' sight. He searched for a secluded location and donned the appearance of Lone Tyrant once more, before hurrying over to the meeting location.

## Chapter 237 - If You Don't Do Stupid Things, They Won't Come Back and Bite You in the Ass

In the central plaza of Blackwing City, many players wandered, sightseeing. Blackwing City was a must-see destination as it had been built atop the peak of a mountain. Meanwhile, the Stargazing Tower loomed in the central plaza of the city. Through the usage of a floating platform, players could arrive at the top of the tower and witness the full beauty of Blackwing City.

Beneath the Stargazing Tower, Shi Feng located Joking Scholar.

At this moment, panic painted Joking Scholar's face. His eyes were like searchlights as they scanned the plaza. When he finally spotted Shi Feng, he hurried over.

"Guild Leader Tyrant, the higher-ups have given me my instructions. To maintain long-term cooperations with Guild Leader Tyrant, we agree to sell the Hard Stones to you at 2 Silver Coins a stack. As long as you take these forging materials back to Star-Moon Kingdom, you can earn back at least three to four times the cost," Joking Scholar said as he walked up to Shi Feng, a smile filling his face.

Twilight Echo had spent a lot of time to obtain these forging materials. They had even spent an impressive sum of Coins and Credits in the process. Meanwhile, their main goal was to turn these forging materials into Coins. If luck would have it, they could even make a small profit from the trade.

By the looks of it, however, that would not happen. After all, not only were the forging materials of other kingdoms and empires similarly cheap, but there was also a mysterious NPC in Blackwing City selling these materials far below bottom-line prices now. The only thing Joking Scholar could do now was turn all these forging materials into Coins, even at the cost of taking a small loss. He could then head to the Blackwing City Auction and purchase some items that would benefit the Guild's development.

However, although ideals were wonderful, reality was very cruel.

It was clearly impossible for Shi Feng to spend hundreds of Gold to purchase these materials. Even if he had over 3,000 Gold Coins, he still wouldn't spend it in such a way.

Not to mention, Shi Feng had spent so much effort in swindling Joking Scholar. He naturally wouldn't stop at just 2 Silver Coins.

"Two Silver Coins a stack, now that's what I call sincere. However, just before I came here, someone mentioned to me that they are willing to sell a large amount of Hard Stones for 1 Silver Coin a stack. Moreover, if I am willing to purchase over a thousand stacks, they will lower that price even further." Shi Feng shook his head, feigning disinterest.

"What? One Silver Coin a stack? Who said that?" Joking Scholar was already on the brink of insanity. He had only found a large transaction after much difficulty. Now, however, someone was trying to undersell him. Moreover, that person clearly knew about the mysterious NPC selling forging materials.

If he had to sell each stack of Hard Stones for only 1 Silver Coin, he might as well take them back to his own empire and sell them there.

Yet, the various Guilds in Storm Empire, the empire Twilight Echo belonged to, was far from lacking forging materials. As for the independent players there, most were self-sufficient. As a result, the players purchasing Hard Stones were very few. On the contrary, there were plenty of players selling them. However, due to Twilight Echo's recent mass purchase, the prices of Hard Stones in the Storm Empire had increased. Originally, 2 Silver Coins would be more than enough to purchase one stack of Hard Stones.

If these Hard Stones were forged into Whetstones, though, the demand would slightly increase.

"You will have to investigate this person yourself. If there aren't any more matters here, I'll be going. I still have to discuss the exact pricing with that person. If I buy several thousand stacks, I wonder if he will sell at an even lower price?" Shi Feng laughed.

"Guild Leader Tyrant, please wait a moment!" Joking Scholar hurriedly said, "If you are willing to purchase a large amount, Twilight Echo is willing to offer the same price as that person! If you are willing to buy more than 20,000 stacks, I can offer you a price of 60 Copper Coins a stack! Take it as a sign of friendship!"

Currently, Joking Scholar no longer cared about price. The only fortunate matter to him right now was the fact that Lone Tyrant had yet to discover the mysterious NPC. Although Twilight Echo would incur an astronomical loss by selling the 2,000 stacks of Hard Stones they currently had at a price of 60 Copper, they could simply purchase more Hard Stones at a price of 40 Coppers from the mysterious NPC. If they resold those Hard Stones at 60 Coppers, they would make a clean profit of 20 Coppers per stack. If they resold 18,000 stacks, they could easily recoup their losses.

Hence, Joking Scholar needed to take action quickly. If Lone Tyrant found out about this matter, he might not even be able to sell the Hard Stones he had for 40 Coppers a stack.

“Sixty Copper Coins a stack? Moreover, you guys actually have over 20,000 stacks?!” Shi Feng feigned astonishment as he spoke.

“Of course! This is our way of showing sincerity! However, you have to buy 20,000 stacks to get such a low price.” Joking Scholar nodded his head, smiling.

“Hold on a minute. I’ll ask that person what price he is willing to offer if I buy 20,000 stacks,” Shi Feng said.

Hearing that Shi Feng was about to contact the person who knew about the mysterious NPC, Joking Scholar’s panic grew. Anyone aware of this information only needed to spend as much effort as flipping a hand over in this transaction. Even if they made a profit of 1 Copper Coin per stack, they could still earn 2 Gold Coins from selling 20,000 stacks. However, Joking Scholar’s situation was different. Hence, he hurriedly shouted, “Guild Leader Tyrant, please wait a minute! I don’t wish to waste time competing with those people, so I’ll offer you a cost price of 50 Copper Coins! Take it as me trying to befriend you! However, you have to purchase 50,000 stacks! I’ll even gift you 300 stacks of Iron Ore, 400 stacks of Silver Ore, 200 stacks of Mithril Ore, 100 stacks of Gold Ore, and also a Mysterious-Iron ranked Runic Ore Bag! Nobody can offer you a lower price than me!”

“You’re offering 50 Copper Coins a stack, and they come with a gift of rare ores as well? There are even 100 stacks of Gold Ore, a high-quality ore that I have never seen before. It seems that you are indeed sincere. I doubt that the other side can offer a price lower than this. Alright, then. I’ll buy 50,000 stacks of Hard Stones from you!” Shi Feng smiled contently. He was already quite satisfied that he could purchase 2,000 stacks of Hard Stones for only 50 Copper Coins a stack.

At the expense of selling over 200 stacks of Hard Stones at a price of 40 Copper Coins a stack, he could purchase over 2,000 stacks at a price of 50 Copper Coins in return. He had made a huge profit out of this transaction. As for the remaining 48,000 stacks of Hard Stones, if Joking Scholar uncovered the truth, he would never sell him Hard Stones for such a low price again. Basically, there wouldn’t be another business transaction between him and Twilight Echo. However, Shi Feng paid no mind to this.

With this batch of forging materials, he would not run out of Hard Stones anytime soon.

“Let’s sign a contract then, Guild Leader Tyrant,” Joking Scholar took out an electronic contract. With the Main God System bearing testimony to this contract, neither party involved was allowed to violate the conditions set.

“What is the meaning of this?” Shi Feng wrinkled his brows slightly.

“Guild Leader Tyrant, this is a large transaction that involves 50,000 stacks of Hard Stones. If Guild Leader Tyrant suddenly decides not to buy the Hard Stones, wouldn’t I suffer the loss? Of course, I am not trying to question Guild Leader Tyrant’s credibility. However, to avoid any future disputes, let us be villains before nobles,” Joking Scholar explained.

“Still, isn’t there a problem with this agreement? I don’t mind that the trade has to be done within ten days, but why do I have to compensate you 5,000 Gold Coins or 50 million Credits, with Gold Coins as priority, if I renege on the contract, while you guys don’t have to pay anything if you renege on your commitment?” Shi Feng angrily said, “You call this not questioning my reputation? From the way I see it, maybe we should forget about this business transaction altogether.”

Although Shi Feng appeared angry, inwardly, he couldn’t be any happier. Originally, he had no hopes of getting the remaining 48,000 stacks of Hard Stones. He would never have thought that Joking Scholar would take such an action. Contrary to being furious, Shi Feng couldn’t help but eagerly agree to this contract! The evil one brought upon themselves truly was the hardest to bear!

“Please wait, Guild Leader Tyrant! I simply forgot to write it in! If Twilight Echo reneges on the agreement, we will similarly compensate you with 5,000 Gold Coins or 50 million Credits. Moreover, Guild Leader Tyrant can rest assured about the validity of this contract, as our Guild Leader has personally signed. The only thing remaining is Guild Leader Tyrant’s signature,” Joking Scholar hurriedly

amended the agreement. He had indeed forgotten about this matter out of panic. After all, he was deeply afraid of Shi Feng discovering the mysterious NPC who sold forging materials.

However, as long as both parties signed this agreement, even if Lone Tyrant discovered this mysterious NPC, Joking Scholar had nothing to fear.

“Now, that’s more like it,” Shi Feng said with satisfaction after finding no problems with the agreement.

Shi Feng was nearly unable to suppress the excitement in his heart. After calming his excited mood down, he signed the contract.

However, Joking Scholar was far more excited than Shi Feng; his heart was about to break out of his chest. As he watched Shi Feng finally sign the agreement, the contract receiving the recognition of the Main God System, he simultaneously revealed a cold smile.

## Chapter 238 - Perfect Substitute

“Let’s first trade the 2,000 stacks that I have with me, then,” Joking Scholar felt fully relieved now.

“Sure,” Shi Feng revealed a faint smile, nodding.

Joking Scholar then called up the trade interface, initiating the trade.

With the agreement in effect now, even if Lone Tyrant discovered the secret, he would not dare renege on the deal. If he did so, he had to pay 5,000 Gold Coins or 50 million Credits, with Gold Coins set the priority. Hence, he could only gnash his teeth as he purchased 50,000 stacks of Hard Stones for 50 Copper Coins a stack.

The full transaction would total to 250 Gold Coins. Meanwhile, by reselling the 48,000 stacks of Hard Stones he would obtain from the mysterious NPC, Joking Scholar could make a clean profit of 48 Gold. In addition to the 10 Gold he just obtained, he would have a total profit of 58 Gold. Such an amount could allow him to purchase quite a lot of items at the Blackwing City Auction. He could also use the leftovers to increase the Guild's fluid funds.

Joking Scholar nearly roared with excitement.

This feeling is great!

However, Joking Scholar suppressed his excitement. He still needed to maintain a proper outward appearance.

Now that Twilight Echo had such fluid funds, they could develop at a much faster rate. Also, since his contribution in this matter was so great, Joking Scholar wondered just what sort of reward the Guild Leader would give him.

Currently, Shi Feng also felt exhilarated at the sight of so many forging materials. Most importantly, he had only spent 10 Gold Coins for all of them. Nothing could feel better than this.

As long as he resold them in White River City, he could earn 200 Gold Coins from the 2,000 stacks of Hard Stones alone. If he forged all of them into Whetstones, he could make 800 Gold. If he turned them into Advanced Whetstones, that would be a 2,000 Gold profit!

Although he could not make Whetstones and Advanced Whetstones at a 100% success rate, after deducting costs, he could still easily earn over 1,000 Gold.

Moreover, this was only in the case for 2,000 stacks. If he received the full 50,000 Stacks of Hard Stones from Twilight Echo, he could easily achieve the 30,000 Gold needed for his Epic Quest.

“Guild Leader Tyrant, please hold on a moment. I’ll go and retrieve the remaining Hard Stones.” Joking Scholar was satisfied after receiving the money. He would immediately use this money to purchase even more Hard Stones from that mysterious NPC.

“Fine. Let’s meet up at the Bank, then.” Shi Feng couldn’t help but smile as well when he saw Joking Scholar’s smile.

Although players could not retrieve their personal belongings from the Bank of Blackwing City, they were still allowed to store items. Right now, Shi Feng’s bag was full to the brim. It would be inconvenient for him to attend the Blackwing City Auction in such a state. Hence, he planned to store his items first.

As for the remaining forging materials he had been promised, Shi Feng no longer held any hopes of receiving them. After all, he could already envision the end result.

Shi Feng wondered just what sort of expression Joking Scholar would make when he found out that not only was the NPC that sold the forging materials no longer there, but the NPC would also never return.

Very quickly, Joking Scholar ran over to the gazebo the mysterious NPC had previously occupied.

“Where is he?” Joking Scholar looked at the scarcely populated alley. Aside from a few players, the mysterious NPC was nowhere to be found.

“Are you referring to that NPC that sold the forging materials? You came late. That NPC sold out of materials a while ago. He said he would only return tomorrow after restocking.”

“You guys are gullible. Did you really think such things will happen every day? I bet this was a one-time event triggered by some sort of quest. I highly doubt that old man will return. Otherwise, if the old man sold so many Hard Stones every single day, wouldn’t it break the market? The Main God System shouldn’t make such a mistake.”

Two “kind-hearted” players passing by suddenly started chatting about this incident.

“How could this be?” Hearing the words of the two “kind-hearted” players, Joking Scholar’s face instantly turned ashen. Words could no longer describe his current mood. “God, just what have I done...?”

Whether the mysterious NPC sold the Hard Stones in limited amounts every day or stopped selling altogether, to Joking Scholar, there was no difference between the two. No matter which scenario occurred, it was impossible for him to put together 48,000 stacks of Hard Stones within ten days.

If he failed to do so, then he would break the terms of the contract. If so, he would have to compensate Shi Feng with 5,000 Gold Coins, or 50 million Credits. Faced with such a heavy price, Joking Scholar had instantly fallen from heaven directly into hell. Moreover, he had fallen to the most horrifying eighteenth layer of hell, Avicii[1].

If he had known such a situation would occur, he absolutely would not have sold those forging materials he had for such a low price. In the end, he had only gained 10 Gold Coins for all those precious materials. Moreover, he had even dug his own grave and bought his own coffin by signing that 50,000-stack contract with Lone Tyrant. What was he supposed to do now?

“This won’t do. I need to contact Lone Tyrant immediately! I have to think of a way to scrap that contract!” At the end of the day, Joking Scholar was still a veteran businessman. Now that he knew what he should do, he hurriedly ran towards the Bank of Blackwing City.

If he had only lost this batch of forging materials, Twilight Echo could still bear such a loss; it would not greatly hamper the Guild’s overall development. Furthermore, he had at least received 10 Gold Coins for those materials. However, the remaining 48,000 stacks of Hard Stones would take Twilight Echo’s life. If he took Twilight Echo’s life, the Guild Leader would take his.

Just after Shi Feng stored all the materials in the Bank, he noticed Joking Scholar running over to him in a flurry. Although Joking Scholar tried to feign calmness, with the immense pressure and fear bearing down on him, he failed.

“Brother Scholar is fast. It must be exhausting for you to transport the stones back and forth. I wonder how many stacks you have brought this time?” Shi Feng poked fun at Joking Scholar.

“Your Excellency Tyrant, I need to discuss a certain matter with you.” Joking Scholar no longer had the confidence from before. He even started using honorifics in his speech. However, he had no choice as his life was now in Shi Feng’s hands.

“We are already business partners. If you have anything to say, just say it.” Shi Feng nodded.

“Your Excellency Tyrant is right. We at Twilight Echo have always been villains before gentlemen. Since we are business partners, we have to consider each other. If we trade 50,000 stacks of Hard Stones in a single go, I’m assuming that Your Excellency Tyrant won’t have enough Gold Coins. Even if given ten days, that should not be possible. Hence, after careful consideration, we have decided to alter the contract, loosening the conditions stated on it. How do you feel about this, Your Excellency Tyrant?” Joking Scholar slowly explained, his words sounding very logical.

If Shi Feng hadn’t known that Joking Scholar was trying to renege on the contract, he might have been moved to tears by Joking Scholar’s words.

As expected of a veteran businessman; he can still wear a straight face when tricking someone. For a moment there, I even believed he was thinking of my own good. Shi Feng inwardly sneered. Unfortunately, such words could not move his heart or trick him, especially since he had long since known Joking Scholar’s true colors.

“Many thanks for Brother Scholar’s worries. However, Brother Scholar can rest assured that, as long as I return to my kingdom with these materials and resell them, I can earn the money back very quickly. I guarantee that I can clear the debt within ten days, so there is no need for the extra trouble of altering the contract.” Shi Feng faintly smiled, saying, “Let’s hurry and finish the trade, then. The auction is about to start.”

Following which, Joking Scholar gave a dozen more reasons to cancel the agreement, such as lowering the price even further, or increasing the trade amount, and so on. Unfortunately, Shi Feng had rejected each and every one of them. This situation had pushed Joking Scholar to the brink of insanity. However, Joking Scholar didn’t wish to reveal his intentions accidentally, so even though he was close to the point of vomiting blood out of anger, he chose to hold it in.

“Brother Scholar, you don’t have to waste any more words in trying to change the agreement. I will not change it no matter what. After all, I can purchase 50,000 stacks of Hard Stones at a price of 50 Coppers a stack. That is a rare opportunity that I won’t find even if I try. Even if I bought them from an NPC, I definitely couldn’t buy so many!”

“You knew all along!”

“Of course. Who wouldn’t know about such a huge incident? Is there something wrong with your head? You wanted to resell the Hard Stones you bought from that NPC and make a huge profit off of me? Keep that in your dreams. I already felt that the NPC was unreliable. Thus, I agreed to your offer. Seeing your frustration, as expected, that NPC really was unreliable. I eagerly anticipate the arrival of the remaining 48,000 Hard Stones!”

“You swindled me!”

“I am representing Twilight Echo! Aren’t you afraid of angering Twilight Echo with your actions?! We can extinguish a third-rate Guild like Dark Star at any given minute!”

“Oooh! Twilight Echo is a first-rate Guild! I’m so scared! Unfortunately for you, Twilight Echo is based in the distant Storm Empire. You guys are simply too far away from Star-Moon Kingdom. So what if you are amazing? Can you do anything to me? What can you do to Dark Star? If you have the ability, then come to Star-Moon Kingdom! I’ll gladly exterminate Twilight Echo and remove its name from God’s Domain permanently! However, for now, you guys best think of a plan to deal with the compensation! Hahaha!”

Saying so, Shi Feng departed from Blackwing City’s Bank, laughing loudly and leaving behind an utterly dazed Joking Scholar.

Joking Scholar was completely unable to accept the reality that he had been swindled.

However, compared to being swindled, he felt more humiliated over the fact that Shi Feng had been toying with him from the beginning. Moreover, he had gladly jumped for joy like a monkey. When Joking Scholar thought about this, he felt utterly humiliated.

After a good while had passed, Joking Scholar bellowed, “Lone Tyrant, just you wait! Twilight Echo’s power far exceeds your imagination! We will definitely destroy you and Dark Star!”

TL Notes:

[1] eighteenth layer of hell, Avicii :

Chapter 239 - Surprised Again and Again

After Joking Scholar recovered from his shock, he immediately called up the system communication interface and reported to Twilight Echo’s Guild Leader, Glorious Echo.

“Guild Leader, that Lone Tyrant clearly looks down on Twilight Echo! He has already resolved to swindle 5,000 Gold Coins from us!” Joking Scholar reported everything that happened to Glorious Echo, trembling as he spoke. Although he was one of the core members of Twilight Echo, he had caused a huge loss to the Guild this time. Who knew what the Guild Leader would do to him?

“I understand. However, a mere third-rate Guild is not yet worthy of me taking action personally. I’ll send Brilliant Wargod to deal with the corporation standing behind Dark Star in reality. If Lone Tyrant is sensible, he should know what to do. If he thinks he can easily take 5,000 Gold Coins from me, he should think again.”

“However, Scholar, your performance this time has disappointed me. After you’re done with the auction, return and hand over your duties to Green Wave.”

“Yes, Guild Leader. I will meet with Green Wave once I return.”

Although Glorious Echo had not scolded Joking Scholar, he had made his intentions clear. Instantly, Joking Scholar's outward appearance seemed to age by over a decade. Even if he inwardly felt reluctant, he could only accept this conclusion.

At this moment, hatred of Lone Tyrant filled Joking Scholar's very soul. If it weren't for Lone Tyrant, he would not have fallen to such a fate.

Unless he could perform astonishingly, bringing a huge benefit to the Guild, the Guild would no longer regard him with any importance.

"No! I can't just give up! As long as I can buy an item at the Blackwing Auction that will surprise the Guild Leader, he might even decide to rescind my punishment!" A final trace of hope ignited in Joking Scholar.

With the 8 Gold he had brought from the Guild, in addition to the 10 Gold he previously obtained, he currently had 18 Gold on him. With so much money, not even a first-rate Guild could contest him in the auction.

---

Elsewhere, Shi Feng had already arrived at the Blackwing Auction House under the guise of Black Flame.

Shi Feng's plan had succeeded magnificently. Not only had he earned a large sum of Coins and Credits, but he also helped Dark Star make a powerful enemy.

Twilight Echo was a first-rate Guild. Meanwhile, as the Guild Leader of this first-rate Guild, Glorious Echo possessed over 20 years of experience playing virtual reality games. Furthermore, he had led Twilight

Echo in campaigns in the virtual world for over a decade, so he had a wealth of experience, and his strength and techniques were also extremely powerful.

Aside from such an impressive Guild Leader, Twilight Echo also possessed tens of top-tier experts. In the past, every one of these experts had become Tier 4 or above powerhouses. In addition, Twilight Echo also had three members who had achieved a Tier 6 class in the past, becoming god-ranked powerhouses. Among those three, one was none other than Twilight Echo's Guild Leader, Glorious Echo himself. Meanwhile, Aqua Rose and one of her good friends took up the other two spots.

This was the reason Twilight Echo stood out amongst the many tyrants surrounding them, becoming one of the few Super Guilds in God's Domain. In the past, Twilight Echo had far surpassed Ouroboros in every aspect, and they had even established a gigantic virtual empire for themselves. Back then, Twilight Echo was an existence that Shi Feng could only admire from afar.

Of course, Shi Feng could not take the current Twilight Echo lightly. After all, Twilight Echo was still a first-rate Guild. It had an extraordinary background, and there were countless corporations supporting them financially. They similarly had a large influence in the real world. To deal with a third-rate Guild like Dark Star, they could simply put some pressure on Dark Star economically in reality, and Dark Star would suffer.

Hence the reason Shi Feng had chosen to disguise himself as Lone Tyrant when toying with Twilight Echo.

Right now, Shi Feng still did not know who supported Dark Star from behind the scenes. However, with a first-rate Guild like Twilight Echo placing financial pressure on them in the real world, Shi Feng could, at least, glimpse the powerful organization standing behind Dark Star. That way, Shi Feng could take appropriate measures to deal with them in the future.

Just as Shi Feng was about to take a seat in the auction hall...

Shi Feng's system communicator rang out. The person contacting him was none other than Aqua Rose, who had been out of reach all this time.

"Miss Aqua, you sure are a busy person. You actually sent a representative for such an important business transaction," Shi Feng teased.

Shi Feng was very clear that Aqua Rose's absence had something to do with Glorious Echo.

After all, Aqua Rose's recent performance had been too impressive.

The nail that stuck out would be hammered down. Glorious Echo must've felt Aqua Rose was a threat to his position.

"Master Black Flame, you must be joking. I've only managed to log into God's Domain after much difficulty. However, it seems that I am still too late." Aqua Rose's tone was helpless as she spoke.

"What happened?" Shi Feng asked curiously.

Based on Aqua Rose's tone, Shi Feng could tell that this matter was not as simple as it seemed. Otherwise, why would a strong woman like Aqua Rose reveal a trace of depression and helplessness?

At the end of the day, Aqua Rose was still an honorary elder of Twilight Echo. Her position in the Guild was extremely high. Moreover, Aqua Rose's family in the real world had a powerful background. Her family was also one of the corporations supporting Twilight Echo financially, so they possessed significant shares of the Guild. Thus, unless Glorious Echo had gone insane, he should not have taken any vicious actions against Aqua Rose.

The current situation was merely a business competition, and both were still doing it to develop Twilight Echo. At worst, both parties would only feel dissatisfied with each other; they would not break off all relations with and start an all-out war.

“It’s nothing much. I only left Twilight Echo; that’s all,” Aqua Rose casually replied.

“What? You left Twilight Echo? Did your family not say anything about this?” Shi Feng nearly thought his ears had played a trick on him.

Although Aqua Rose sounded relaxed, Shi Feng could feel the aggrieved feelings hidden behind her words. After all, he had personally experienced a similar situation in the past. Still, the corporation behind Aqua Rose possesses a significant number of the Twilight Echo’s shares. That Glorious Echo must’ve gone insane to expel Aqua Rose from the Guild.

“My family tried to force me to do something that I didn’t want to do. I refused, so I was expelled from Twilight Echo as a result. In a fit of rage, I also ran away from home. I am penniless now after buying a new virtual reality helmet. I wonder if Master Black Flame would be willing to shelter me?” Aqua Rose giggled as she joked.

She had only been joking about her current financial state. After all, it was a fact that she was the princess of a major corporation. It was inevitable that she would have some money saved up. Even if she ran away from home and did not rely on her parents, the money she had in her bank account could allow her to live the rest of her life in peace without working.

“Sure. I would gladly welcome a powerful helper like Miss Rose. How does an annual salary of one million Credits, in addition to 5% of my Workshop’s shares sound to you?” Shi Feng naturally knew Aqua Rose only joked with him. However, Shi Feng did not wish to miss such a fortuitous opportunity now that it had landed in his lap. Who knew how long he would have to wait to encounter such an opportunity again?

Aqua Rose was immediately dumbfounded by Shi Feng's offer.

Normally, it was already impressive for a Guild to offer an annual salary in the millions. Yet, Shi Feng went as far as to offer her 5% of his Guild's shares willingly. This was an unimaginable offer, and it clearly showed how highly Shi Feng viewed her.

Aqua Rose suddenly felt bewildered.

Originally, she had intended to start up her own Workshop from scratch. After all, some of her loyal subordinates had left Twilight Echo with her after learning of her expulsion. With this group of people under her command, she could still establish a relatively strong Workshop. In the future, she intended to build a Guild powerful enough to rival Twilight Echo. She wanted to teach her family that their decision was a mistake.

The only problem remaining would be Twilight Echo's oppression. It was also why she currently had a massive headache. If she wished to continue developing herself and her Workshop in the Storm Empire, they would have to face the full brunt of Twilight Echo. Meanwhile, Aqua Rose was very clear on just how amazing Twilight Echo was as a Guild.

But now that Shi Feng had invited her with such sincerity, she was at a loss on what to do.

Chapter 240 - Purgatory's Shadow

“If that is still not enough, you can become the Vice Leader of the Guild. You can also form your own elite team and maintain independence. How about it?” Shi Feng added.

Twilight Echo’s abandonment of a future Tier 6 god-ranked powerhouse was the same as crippling both of their arms.

The reason Shi Feng thought “both” and not just one of their arms, was because, without Aqua Rose, her Tier 6 friend would not join Twilight Echo. Hence, Twilight Echo’s decision to expel Aqua Rose was the equivalent of expelling two future god-ranked powerhouses.

Meanwhile, Shi Feng had single-handedly caused this tragedy of Twilight Echo’s, albeit unintentionally.

If he could recruit Aqua Rose into his Guild, he very much looked forward to the Guild’s future.

“Even if I agreed to your offer, I still have a group of subordinates in the Storm Empire. I might be able to afford the expensive teleportation fee for myself, but they won’t be able to. Moreover, for my sake, they chose to leave Twilight Echo and abandon their bright futures there. I can’t just abandon them for my own selfish reasons. I am truly sorry about this.” Although Shi Feng’s offer was very attractive, Aqua Rose was not willing to abandon her subordinates.

“Are there a lot of them?” Shi Feng asked.

“There should be over a hundred people. Master Black Flame, you should just give up. Not even Twilight Echo can afford the teleportation fee for so many people,” Aqua Rose naturally understood Shi Feng’s intentions behind the question.

Teleportation across countries was costly. Moreover, the Storm Empire was very far away from Star-Moon Kingdom, so the teleportation fee involved would be far more expensive. A rough estimate for a single player was 2 to 3 Gold Coins, while the total for a hundred players would be at least 200 to 300 Gold Coins.

Not to mention just one first-rate Guild, even ten first-rate Guilds combined couldn't afford such a price.

It was impossible that Shi Feng would possess so many Gold Coins.

"So, it's only a hundred or so. Fortunately, there aren't too many." Shi Feng sighed in relief. If there were over a thousand players, then he would truly feel heartache from the teleportation fees. "Come to Star-Moon Kingdom, then. I'll pay the teleportation fees."

He had earned a ton from Twilight Echo before, and right now, it just so happened that he could return some of it to Aqua Rose. This could be considered as a type of fate as well. However, if Glorious Echo found out about this, he would most likely vomit blood out of anger.

"Master Black Flame, that's 300—hundred—Gold Coins, not 3 Gold Coins," Aqua Rose reminded Shi Feng.

"Yes, I know that. I'll send 300 Gold to you in a moment. After you arrive in White River City, head to the Starstreak Trading Firm to look for me." As the Blackwing Auction had already started, Shi Feng disconnected the call after saying so.

Shi Feng's words left Aqua Rose utterly shocked.

“Just what kind of power is behind Master Black Flame? How could he have such astonishing wealth? To casually hand over 300 Gold Coins... Could it be one of those Super Guilds?” Shi Feng’s tone when he spoke had been very casual as if the 300 Gold Coins he mentioned were merely 3 Gold Coins. Aqua Rose shook her head. “No, even those Super Guilds can’t spend 300 Gold Coins with such ease.”

“This is interesting. Anyway, I’ll get my answers as long as I arrive at White River City.” Aqua Rose revealed a faint smile, anticipation filling her heart.

---

Meanwhile, the venue of today’s Blackwing Auction was already packed with players. Among all these players, a majority consisted of the upper echelons of large Guilds.

These Guilds had scraped up every single Coin they could for today’s auction.

From their inquiries, they learned that the Auction House sold many astonishing items. Even if it was only in the normal auction, items such as Fine-Gold Equipment and materials required to forge Dark-Gold Equipment would be available. There was also a small possibility for items such as Dark-Gold Weapons and Epic ranked items to appear in the auction. One only needed sufficient Coins to purchase these precious items.

After going through several warm-up auctions, the fiery atmosphere in the auction venue reached its zenith.

From the start, players desired every item that had been up for auction. However, none of these items piqued Shi Feng’s interest, as all of them were only Mysterious-Iron rank. Although such items were useful to a Guild’s elite members, they were not of much use to him.

Meanwhile, the following item that appeared on stage instantly caused the eyes of every player present to shine. They all expressed great interest in this item.

This item was a Fine-Gold ranked dagger.

[Ice Thorn] (Dagger, Fine-Gold Rank)

Level 15

Attack +134

Strength +18, Agility +24, Endurance +15

Additional Passive Skill-

Power of Frost: Deals 50% frost damage to the target, reducing target's Movement Speed and Attack Speed by 50% for 4 seconds.

If an Assassin equipped this dagger, they would be like a tiger that had grown wings. Even if the Assassin failed to kill the enemy with a single hit, with the speed reduction in effect, they could continue linking skills to destroy their enemy.

Aside from the Ice Thorn, there was also a dagger called Raging Flames Dagger.

[Raging Flames Dagger] (Dagger, Fine-Gold Rank)

Level 15

Attack +134

Strength +18, Agility +24, Endurance +15

Additional Skill-

Power of Flames: Deals 50% flame damage to the target, reducing the target's Defense by 10% for 20 seconds. Effect stacks up to a maximum of 5 times.

All Assassins in the auction venue grew excited at the appearance of these two daggers. They practically drooled, wishing they could equip these blades.

Regarding the speed reduction, the armor break effect, or the additional 50% magic damage, they were all precious to Assassins. One could say that these two daggers were the best weapons for Assassins at this stage of the game, and they were second to none.

However, the minimum bid also caused the players to feel helpless and frustrated.

The bidding started at 5 Gold Coins. Moreover, the minimum increment for each bid was 10 Silver Coins. If they were to compete for this item, the price would still increase by a lot. If one of the large Guilds present bid on these daggers, that Guild would lose the ability to compete for the following items to show up in the auction.

Unless they had a particular need for these daggers, none of the Guilds present would insist on buying them.

“Not bad. They are indeed top-tier weapons for a Level 15 Assassin. It just so happens that I can gift them to Fire Dance,” Shi Feng said in satisfaction after examining the Attributes of the daggers.

“Great! Heaven has yet to forsake me! If I can present these daggers to the Guild Leader, he would definitely be very happy! He might even decide to my repeal punishment!” Sitting at the forefront of the auction hall, Joking Scholar’s eyes turned crimson as he looked at the Ice Thorn and Raging Flames Dagger displayed on the stage. If Level 200 guards were not present, he might have rushed onto the stage to snatch the weapons.

After the auctioneer announced the start of the bidding, the entire auction hall exploded.

“Five Gold!”

“Five Gold, 50 Silvers!”

“Six Gold!”

.....

Before a minute had passed, the price of the daggers had reached 7 Gold 20 Silvers. When the majority of the Guilds saw such a price, they quickly gave up on the daggers.

Hahaha! You all can compete with each other all you want, but don't even think that you can win against me! Joking Scholar was completely confident at the moment. He was not afraid that someone could bid higher than he could. Moreover, this was only the start of the auction; many more items would appear later on, and no one knew how powerful the following items would be. Everyone would hold back their bids. Hence, Joking Scholar was not afraid of someone competing with him over the daggers.

Seeing that the bids had stopped, Shi Feng opened his mouth and said, "10 Gold Coins."

The auction venue instantly fell silent. Although these daggers were top-tier weapons for an Assassin, that price was simply too high. However, that was not to say that these daggers were worth such a price tag. Rather, not many players currently present could afford such a price. They had not brought that many Coins with them to the auction. If the auction were conducted using Credits, many players would be more than willing to spend 500,000 Credits to buy these daggers.

"Black Flame? Shit! He is actually trying to compete with me! How could he have so much money?!" Joking Scholar was on the brink of insanity. If he offered an even higher price for the daggers, then he could not afford to bid on later items. Yet, if he did not buy these daggers, his future would be bleak.

In the end, Joking Scholar made a decision, loudly shouting, "10 Gold 20 Silvers!"

In response, Shi Feng merely smiled as he casually said, "12 Gold."

"Twelve Gold 10 Silvers!" Joking Scholar gripped his chest in pain as he shouted, his hatred for Shi Feng growing intensely.

“Annoying little pest. Twenty Gold.” Shi Feng did not wish to waste his time with Joking Scholar, so he abruptly raised the bid by a huge margin. He did not mind spending such a small amount of money. After all, he had made a huge profit off Twilight Echo today.

“Black Flame!” Joking Scholar glared at Shi Feng, a hint of despair hidden within his eyes. He only had 18 Gold on him right now, so he had no way to compete for the daggers at all. He never imagined that, in the very end, the Black Flame he had looked down on would give him the final blow, sending him into the abyss of despair.

On the other hand, Shi Feng felt it troublesome to pay attention to Joking Scholar. He did not even glance at the Maitreya as he focused on the next auctioned item.

Purgatory’s Shadow!

This was one of the three treasures one could only find in the Blackwing Auction House!