

The Strongest

Chapter 251 - Great Trees are Good for Shade

Zhao Ruoxi was silent for a long time after receiving Zhao Jianhua's lecture.

Zhao Ruoxi never would have thought that her second uncle, who had always pampered her to the extreme, would say such words to her. Moreover, he had described Shi Feng as such an ugly person. There was clearly a serious misunderstanding here; someone had definitely worked on him.

"Second Uncle, whom did you hear this from?" Zhao Ruoxi did not immediately refute Zhao Jianhua. Instead, she wanted to find out just what was going on right now.

"It isn't important who told me about it. Ruoxi, in the future, you are not allowed to associate with people like Shi Feng anymore. This is also elder brother's wish." Zhao Ruoxi had already been corrupted by Shi Feng, and nothing he said would actually change her mind. Hence, he needed to take decisive measures to end their relationship once and for all. Afterwards, he would approach Shi Feng and have him completely distance himself from Zhao Ruoxi.

Meanwhile, Zhao Ruoxi found herself stuck between laughter and tears. She knew that her second uncle was saying these things for her own good. However, she and Shi Feng clearly weren't in the kind of relationship her second uncle thought they were in; they were merely classmates. Yet, judging from her second uncle's words, it sounded as if she and Shi Feng's relationship had already reached the point where they were inseparable lovers joined together at the hip. Zhao Ruoxi couldn't help but laugh as she said, "Second Uncle, since when did you start providing cover for someone? Let me guess... this person must be Ling Feilong, right?"

"That's right. It is indeed Ling Feilong." Since Zhao Ruoxi had already guessed correctly, Zhao Jianhua did not contradict her. Instead, he straightforwardly argued, "Shi Feng is only a nobody. On the other hand, I feel that this child, Feilong, is not bad. Not only does he look good, he is also ambitious and possesses great skills in fighting. Nowadays, the popularity of God's Domain has already reached never-before-

seen heights, and I hear that Feilong brat is even in the upper echelon of the Shadow Guild. He also has a very good insight towards the future. Yet, instead of choosing a youth with good potential like him, you chose to go with an incompetent person. I am sure elder brother would stand together with me on this matter as well.”

“Second Uncle, you’re really misunderstanding things here! There isn’t anything between me and Shi Feng!” Zhao Ruoxi was utterly at a loss for words. Rather, she felt furious about Ling Feilong’s actions. However, she was inwardly rejoicing as well right now. Thanks to Shi Feng’s appearance, she could finally see Ling Feilong’s true colors clearly.

“Misunderstand? Your second uncle possesses discerning eyes, and I very much understand your situation. In any case, I will absolutely not allow that brat to enter this event. I am still capable of that, at least.” Zhao Jianhua did not believe Zhao Ruoxi’s words. He knew how very sly Zhao Ruoxi had been since her childhood. In any case, he refused to be fooled in this matter.

Zhao Jianhua was not some shrewd businessman, nor was he part of the Zhao Group’s management. Instead, he was a fighter that loved martial arts. Only afterwards did he start handling the security department of the Zhao Group. The real boss of the Zhao Group was Zhao Ruoxi’s father, Zhao Jianxuan.

Hence, Zhao Jianhua had always liked future professional fighters like Ling Feilong. After all, only a strong man could properly protect his own woman. Yet, what was Shi Feng? Zhao Jianhua had had Shi Feng investigated, and he discovered that Shi Feng was only a weakling who was constantly bullied by others. A person like Shi Feng was simply too unreliable. Hence, Zhao Jianhua was adamant at ending Zhao Ruoxi’s relationship with Shi Feng this time.

While Zhao Jianhua and Zhao Ruoxi were having their discussion, Ling Feilong, who was outside the door, eavesdropping on their conversation, secretly felt delighted.

Although he could not directly defeat Shi Feng, he could still play Shi Feng to death using a roundabout approach. In addition, he had also informed Zhao Jianxuan about this matter in advance. With both Zhao

Jianhua and Zhao Jianxuan vehemently opposing their relationship, even if Shi Feng had seduced and captivated Zhao Ruoxi's heart completely, the two of them could never be together. Hence, as long as he could develop himself in Shadow, becoming one of the core members of the Guild, Zhao Jianhua and Zhao Jianxuan would definitely support his pursuit of Zhao Ruoxi.

After obtaining the wealth of the Zhao Group, he could easily take control of the entire Shadow Guild. At that time, what would Shi Feng amount to? What would Zhang Luwei amount to? What would Lan Hailong amount to?

"Youcai, you've done well this time. I'll put in a few good words for you when I meet up with Brother Zhang next time. After you graduate, just come to Shadow," Ling Feilong said with satisfaction, patting He Youcai, who stood beside him in a deferential manner.

"This is but a trivial matter. In the future, I will be relying on Brother Long for support," He Youcai said with a smile.

Although He Youcai, as the Student Council President, was indeed an amazing character in Jin Hai University, after he graduated from the school, however, he would only amount to nothing. Nobody in society would give a damn about him. Aware of this reality, He Youcai had no choice but to agree to Ling Feilong's request to remove Shi Feng's registration for the Fellowship Party. Furthermore, Zhou Jianhua himself had even instructed him not to allow Shi Feng entry into the event. Since he could satisfy both parties with just an action, killing two birds with one stone, why wouldn't he do so?

Only, neither He Youcai nor Ling Feilong knew that, at this moment, the hotel's surroundings had become extremely lively. Originally, the Jin Hai Fellowship Party was a well-known event throughout Jin Hai City. Hence, many reporters and media outlets would show up to cover it. There was also no lack of onlookers hanging around the event venue.

However, the outside of the event venue was much livelier compared to previous years. Instead of just a small crowd, there was a sea of people here. Young and old, tall and short, all kinds of people could be seen lining up on the streets. Some of the uninformed passersby even thought an international celebrity had showed up at this place. It made them wonder just what these people were lining up for.

“Little brother, what’s happening in front? Why are there so many people lining up here?”

“Huh? You don’t know? The Zero Wing Guild is recruiting members.”

“Zero Wing Guild? What’s that?”

“Of course it is Star-Moon Kingdom’s most amazing and mysterious Guild!”

“What’s Star-Moon Kingdom?”

“Crap! Have you even played God’s Domain before? You don’t even know that? Which hole did you crawl out from?”

“...”

The passersby mostly consisted of office workers, and they usually worked from 9am to 5pm. Their lives were mostly taken up by their work, so how would they find the time to play a game? Naturally, they would not know anything about God’s Domain. However, when these office workers looked at the hundreds of people lining up, many of them started feeling confused about the game called God’s Domain. They wondered just what sort of game God’s Domain was, to actually have such a strong influence on so many people.

It was simply a Guild from a game recruiting members. Yet, there were actually several hundred people applying to join. Moreover, the numbers were still increasing without end. In a short moment, the number of people applying might even break through to the thousands. However, the most unfathomable thing was that even the reporters from television stations were running over to carry out a live broadcast on this situation.

Just what sort of situation was this?

“Isn’t it just membership recruitment for a Guild in a game? You can’t even earn a cent from playing a game, so what’s the point of wasting so much time lining up? What foolish people,” one of the passersby who was a white-collared elite mockingly laughed.

The instant this white-collar elite said those words, many of the people lining up immediately turned contemptuous gazes at him, as if they were looking at an idiot.

“What an idiot. He doesn’t even know what membership recruitment by a Guild in God’s Domain means. No doubt he’ll be in the rat race all his life.”

“What are you minding him for? How would he know that when a Guild is recruiting members in reality, they are also recruiting professional players for the Guild’s gaming workshop. A white-collar elite like him would be earning four to five thousand Credits a month. He would naturally look down on us part-timers who can only make two to three thousand Credits a month.”

“What are you saying? That’s the salary for an outer member of a Guild. If we become official members, then we’ll have a minimum salary of 5,000 a month. Meanwhile, elite members could get at least 10,000. Zero Wing is also recruiting quite a lot of members this time. They’re recruiting 300 outer members, 100 official members, and 20 elite members. With so many available spots, we might even get a chance to join Zero Wing.”

“I guess you’re right. I also hear that core members get a base salary of 50,000 Credits. I wonder just how much the eight great experts of Zero Wing are earning each month.”

“I hear that their salaries are over 10 million. Previously, there had been a financial corporation that offered them an astronomical amount of 8 million, yet, none of the eight experts had even reacted to it. Zero Wing’s wealth is simply unimaginable.”

The players lining up started a discussion among themselves. However, the white-collar elite was no longer as calm as he was before. After all, he had only managed to obtain a monthly salary of 5,000 Credits after attending countless interviews and working for his current company for three years. Yet, he was barely comparable to an official member of a gaming guild. Moreover, these gamers were only working part-time during the night. Suddenly, this office-worker had the urge to join the queue as well.

While Shi Feng was interviewing player after player on the street, his actions had also attracted the attention of the guests participating in the Fellowship Party. It was especially true for the large-scale Workshops in Jin Hai City. Some of the professional fighters that planned to start their career in God’s Domain also grew interested by this sight.

“Hahaha! Zero Wing has actually showed up at this place! Attending this Fellowship Party this time wasn’t a waste of my time at all!”

“Zero Wing Guild? Let’s hurry up and meet up with that person! This is a great chance for our Workshop! Who knows how many people and financial corporations are trying but failing to meet someone in the upper echelons of the Guild. We are truly fortunate to be able to meet one at this event.”

On the highest floor, the 36th floor, of the Golden Bridge Hotel, the Jin Hai Fellowship Party had officially started.

Most of the participants present at this event were well-known figures from various sectors of Jin Hai City. On the contrary, only a minority consisted of students who were about to graduate from Jin Hai University.

The Jin Hai Fellowship Party held this year was the grandest one yet, and the number of people invited this year was also the highest compared to past occasions. As a result, the soon-to-be graduates of Jin Hai University were provided with more career prospects. This was especially true for players of God's Domain. Many people from all walks of life had an optimistic view on God's Domain's future, because aside from allowing its players to experience battles and adventures, God's Domain also allowed players to enjoy various lifestyles and forms of entertainment. The array of activities one could experience in God's Domain was much more abundant than in the real world, and this aspect of the game allowed many corporations in the real world to integrate and develop themselves in the game.

Currently, there was an energetic old man in his sixties, who wore a white tunic, sitting at a corner of the event venue. Meanwhile, surrounding the old man were some of the most influential and powerful figures of Jin Hai City. Zhao Ruoxi's second uncle, Zhao Jianhua, was seated among these powerful personages as well.

"Are they not here yet?" the old man in the white tunic suddenly asked He Youcai who stood beside him.

"They've already arrived, but..." He Youcai's expression faltered as he hesitated on his words.

The elderly man before him was both the Headmaster and Chairman of Jin Hai University, Xu Wenqing, and he was a very influential man in Jin Hai City. The reason being, under Xu Wenqing's tutelage, many students had graduated from Jin Hai University with outstanding achievements, and such a contribution

made Xu Wenqing a well-known and well-respected character in the various sectors of Jin Hai City. Xu Wenqing's influence was so great that he could easily send Jin Hai City into an uproar with his words alone.

"Speak," Xu Wenqing suddenly said in a cold voice.

"They're outside right now..." He Youcai answered feebly, the sudden pressure making the knees of an inexperienced youth like him go weak.

"Since they're already outside, why aren't they coming in?" Xu Wenqing questioned, "Don't tell me they want this decrepit old man to invite them in?"

"Who do they think they are? They actually want Elder Xu to invite them in? Do they think that, just because they're good at playing a game, they can disregard us?" Zhao Jianhua angrily said.

"You few, go take a look at the situation and call them up. Tell them that I said so." Xu Wenqing felt that something was amiss after light contemplation. Aside from the professional players from gaming workshops, quite a few well-known figures from fighting competitions were still absent from the event as well.

"Yes." Receiving the command, Xu Wenqing's bodyguards, who stood by his side, immediately took the elevator down the hotel. These bodyguards wore black suits and black sunglasses, and all of them had tall and robust bodies.

"I don't understand what is going through these people's minds. What's the point of staying downstairs instead of coming up? Has something happened downstairs?" Zhao Jianhua felt furious at the absentees, and his view of professional gamers lowered even further now. In his opinion, no matter how good a gamer was, they were, in the end, still gamers. Without corporations supporting and financing them, they would only remain as small fries in society.

“I, too, am curious. Just what sort of mentality do young people have nowadays? Maybe we old folks are no longer able to keep up with the changing times?” said a middle-aged man dressed in black martial artist clothing with a self-deprecating laugh. As if he was a great ocean, the man gave others a calm and gentle feeling, and one would not be able to find a hint of energetic spirit coming off this man.

However, nobody present in the room would dare look down on this middle-aged man. The reason being, this man was Jin Hai City’s well-known martial arts master, Chen Wu. Several years ago, Chen Wu was the reigning champion of Jin Hai City’s fighting competition. He was the uncontested number one back then. However, now that he was older, he no longer participated in any fighting competitions. Instead, he had started his own dojo in Jin Hai City, which was very well-received.

“Master Chen Wu must be joking. Young people nowadays just don’t know the immensity of heaven and earth. It is only a virtual reality game. With Master Chen Wu’s skills, if you entered that game called God’s Domain, you can easily become one of the apex experts there,” Zhao Jianhua said.

“The real world and the virtual world are different things entirely. Moreover, times have changed. The future belongs to the younger folk now.” Chen Wu shook his head. As a martial arts practitioner, he was very sensitive towards matters that occurred around him. He could clearly feel the change of an era approaching quickly. It was especially true with the appearance of God’s Domain. Ignoring the fact that corporations all over the world were already investing in God’s Domain one after another, just the number of players the game had already surpassed one’s imagination. Anybody could easily tell how huge a potential God’s Domain had. Moreover, there had to be yet another secret being kept hidden about God’s Domain.

Although Chen Wu did not know what exactly this secret was, he did know that it was a secret capable of attracting the countless corporations around the world to scramble madly over. The virtual reality game known as God’s Domain was definitely not as simple as it appeared to be.

Meanwhile, although the various major corporations in Jin Hai City had similarly invested in God's Domain, they were simply like stray cats that smelled the scent of fish. They had no idea at all what sort of secrets God's Domain possessed.

After Chen Wu and Zhao Jianhua chatted for a bit, Xu Wenqing received a call from one of his bodyguards.

"Elder Xu, the people down here say that they have an important matter they need to do right now. They will need some time before they can go up."

"Important matter? What could be more important than the Fellowship Party this time? Don't they want the sponsorship and support from other corporations anymore?" Xu Wenqing's tone turned grim. Although he did not show it on his face, many who knew Xu Wenqing's temper immediately realized he was angry.

"It seems that they are trying to meet with one of Zero Wing Guild's upper management. However, there are too many people lining up right now, so it will be some time before they are done."

"Zero Wing Guild? Is it a Guild from God's Domain?" Xu Wenqing asked, curious.

Wasn't it just a gaming guild? Was there a need for so many famous gaming workshops to try to suck up to it?

Could this Zero Wing Guild be a very powerful existence within God's Domain?

Although Xu Wenqing did not play virtual reality games himself, he was still familiar with the well-known Guilds within the virtual reality world. Even so, Zero Wing was not among the famous Guilds he knew of.

“They say that Zero Wing is an extremely famous Guild in Star-Moon Kingdom. In certain aspects, Zero Wing is even superior to first-rate Guilds. Many corporations are also wishing to meet the upper management of Zero Wing. However, due to Zero Wing being overly mysterious, nobody has ever found a chance to make contact, so none of them want to miss this chance right now.”

“Putting it in such a way, this means that Zero Wing Guild isn’t an existence that can be ignored.” Xu Wenqing grew interested in this Zero Wing Guild, especially since such a Guild had appeared in a city like Jin Hai City. “To think that such an amazing Guild has appeared in our Jin Hai City without this old man knowing. Since it is so, invite this representative of Zero Wing Guild to come up and have a chat. This old man wishes to see just what kind of person this representative is.”

Moreover, it would not be a good thing to have so many participants of the Fellowship Party staying downstairs instead of being present at the actual event. He might as well have the representative of Zero Wing come up. That way, the guests from other gaming workshops could also participate in the Fellowship Party.

Everyone was shocked when they heard Xu Wenqing actually inviting an unknown guild representative to the Fellowship Party.

Meanwhile, outside the Golden Bridge Hotel, Xu Wenqing’s bodyguards had already met up with Shi Feng. They then relayed their employer’s intentions to Shi Feng, inviting him upstairs.

However, to these bodyguards’ surprise, Shi Feng immediately rejected the invitation.

“Mister Shi Feng, Elder Xu is wholeheartedly inviting you to join him upstairs. I guarantee that you will not be disappointed,” the leader of the bodyguards patiently persuaded Shi Feng.

“I understand. However, I am still not done with the recruitment here. Also, even if I do agree, you’ll have to ask the people lining up here if they’ll agree to let me go.” Shi Feng smiled as he pointed at the long line in front of him consisting of over a thousand people. He then continued, “Moreover, even if I am willing to go with you, someone inside will also chase me out again. I am a coward. That person has threatened me and said that I am not allowed to set even a foot in the hotel. I still have many people I need to interview, so please stop making things difficult for me.”

Xu Wenqing’s bodyguards were immediately rendered speechless. Wasn’t this just blatant disregard of them? However, they had no choice but to report this matter back to Xu Wenqing.

“What? Someone is threatening him from entering?” Xu Wenqing couldn’t help but laugh when he heard these words. He then said, “Then, tell him that, as long as this old man is here, I guarantee that nothing will happen to him in this Fellowship Party, and nobody will dare chase him out.”

“However, he still says that he doesn’t dare enter. He doesn’t wish to be chased out for a second time,” the bodyguard said helplessly.

“Chased out for a second time? Does that mean he was originally a guest of this Fellowship Party?”

“Yes.”

Xu Wenqing was stunned. However, anger immediately shot to his head when he finally reacted. Someone had actually dared to chase out a guest that he invited! Wasn't this just giving him a slap across his old face?

"Who? Who dares chase away a guest I invited?" At this moment, Xu Wenqing's voice turned extremely chilling. Although he was not a martial artist himself, the pressure he emitted caused many of those present to become fearful.

The bodyguard trembled as he slowly said, "He Youcai."

Chapter 253 - Five Demon Generals

"Good! Very good!" Although Xu Wenqing was smiling, the tone he spoke with was as chilling as the winter cold.

At this moment, even an idiot could tell that Xu Wenqing was furious.

Due to the conversation being held over the phone, nobody but Xu Wenqing himself could hear what his bodyguard had said. However, based on the words Xu Wenqing had spoken, the people around him knew that someone had done something to badly anger Xu Wenqing.

Where a matter such as chasing away an invited guest was concerned, neither Chen Wu nor Zhao Jianhua had such courage to do so, as doing so was equivalent to giving Xu Wenqing a slap across his face. Everyone valued their prestige. Since this person had dared give Xu Wenqing a slap, then this person shouldn't expect Xu Wenqing to welcome it with a smile.

At this moment, Zhao Jianhua, Chen Wu, and everyone else started feeling pity for the person that angered Xu Wenqing.

This was practically bearding the lion in its den[1], a truly suicidal action.

However, they were also very curious about the person that dared to chase away an invited guest. They wanted to know just who this daring person was.

“He Youcai, come over here.” Xu Wenqing looked at He Youcai, who was cluelessly standing at one side.

Confused, He Youcai thought Xu Wenqing had some orders for him to carry out, failing to notice that Xu Wenqing’s chilling intent was directed at him.

“Go downstairs and invite that person up here. If he isn’t willing to come up, then you don’t have to come back, either,” Xu Wenqing said coldly.

“Headmaster, this...” He Youcai was utterly confused about the meaning of Xu Wenqing’s words.

“You’ll naturally understand after you go downstairs.” Xu Wenqing sent a glance at the bodyguard beside him. The bodyguard intuitively understood Xu Wenqing’s intentions, and he immediately grabbed He Youcai and dragged him towards the elevator.

“Headmaster Xu, there must be a misunderstanding somewhere! I really didn’t do something like that!” He Youcai shouted in a panic, the fat on his body jiggling.

Even if he was given a hundred lives, he would never dare kick out an invited guest. He was merely a student of Jin Hai University, and nobody among the invited guests was someone he could afford to offend.

If he had to name someone that he had really driven away, then the only person that came to mind would be... Shi Feng.

However, Shi Feng was simply a student that was not worth mentioning. He was not an invited guest at all. No matter how He Youcai looked at this situation, Shi Feng would not be related to it in any way.

“This brat sure has guts,” Zhao Jianhua said in an ambiguous tone. It was unknown whether he was actually praising He Youcai, or disparaging him. However, everyone else was in full agreement with Zhao Jianhua’s words.

The bystanders could clearly tell that this incident was caused by He Youcai.

This incident had truly given them a shock. He Youcai was merely a Student Council President—an insignificant existence—yet he had actually dared to recklessly abuse the little power he was given. If He Youcai did not deal with this matter perfectly, then his best option to save himself was to pack up and leave Jin Hai City. Otherwise, only a tragic end awaited him.

Meanwhile, Zero Wing’s recruitment location had already become the most eye-catching sight on this street. Before he knew it, Shi Feng had recruited many new people for his Guild. Some well-known

Workshops in Jin Hai City were even included among them. The members of these Workshops were all relatively skilled. However, since they didn't have a top-tier expert leading them, they had a difficult time obtaining good equipment in God's Domain.

The reason being, a majority of the high-quality equipment could only be obtained from a Dungeon, while a minority came from Field Bosses. However, to a Guildless Workshop, Field Bosses were simply an unattainable dream.

This situation resulted in the Workshops having a hard time making money in God's Domain. Hence, many of these Workshops wished to join a Guild, a powerful Guild, in particular. If they had a top-tier expert guiding them, Dungeon diving would become a much easier endeavor. Moreover, compared to groping in the dark by themselves, they could improve themselves with much greater efficiency by learning techniques from the said expert.

Meanwhile, the Zero Wing Guild was undeniably the best option available in Jin Hai City for these Guildless Workshops.

Currently, none of the Guilds in Jin Hai City had officially become a rated Guild.

In the past, if Shadow had not spent a humongous sum of money to annex a large number of Workshops and recruited some new members with great potential, it would have had no way to quickly become a third-rate Guild. In such a situation, Shadow would have also fallen in the competition over White River City, as this was the brutality of God's Domain.

The Five Demon Generals have yet to show up even now. Could they be uninterested in joining Zero Wing? Shi Feng had already interviewed several hundreds of people. However, not a single one of the Five Demon Generals were actually among those hundreds of people.

In the past, the Five Demon Generals were the most powerful experts in Shadow. If their growth had not been limited by Shadow, they might have been promoted to a Tier 4 class or above.

These five people also played an indispensable role in aiding Shadow in obtaining the ten City States.

One could even say that Shi Feng's main goal in attending this Fellowship Party was to recruit these five people.

Don't tell me they're afraid of taking the interview? Shi Feng felt that there was a very high possibility of such a thing happening. After all, the current Five Demon Generals were obscure existences right now, nobodies in God's Domain. If they concluded that they would not be accepted into Zero Wing, they would naturally avoid taking the interview altogether, saving themselves the humiliation when they got rejected.

Thinking up to this point, Shi Feng felt troubled.

It was very possible for these five people to be inside the Fellowship Party right now. Yet, he had no way of entering the actual event venue. So, how should he go about recruiting those five?

Just as Shi Feng was feeling distressed over this matter, He Youcai came walking over.

"Why is it you?" He Youcai was immediately dumbfounded when he discovered the person he had been sent to invite actually turned out to be Shi Feng.

In He Youcai's opinion, Shi Feng was simply an ordinary student. His and Xu Wenqing's statuses were worlds apart from each other, and it was impossible for Xu Wenqing to actually send a personal invitation to Shi Feng. Yet, the impossible had actually happened now...

Meanwhile, Shi Feng couldn't help but shift his gaze to He Youcai. Suddenly, he asked with a smile, "President He, what brings you here? Don't tell me you wish to chase me away from this street as well?"

"This is a misunderstanding, a misunderstanding! Fellow student Shi Feng, how could I possibly dare to chase you away? All of this is simply a misunderstanding! Previously, due to an error to the system, your information was not properly registered. However, everything is fine now. Fellow student Shi Feng, you can now participate in the Fellowship Party as well!" He Youcai said with a fawning smile.

"President He, I am a very cowardly person. Previously, you yourself, President He, had said that, as long as I dare set even a single foot in the hotel, you would immediately chase me out. I truly do not dare provoke a personage such as you. I also feel quite comfortable staying here. If you don't have any other matters, then, please return to your event. I am still very busy right now." Shi Feng smiled, shifting his attention away from He Youcai.

Hearing Shi Feng's words, He Youcai's face instantly paled. Even an idiot could make out the meaning behind Shi Feng's words.

You chased me away without any hesitation before. Yet, now, you wish to invite me back? Do you think it's possible that I will agree?

He Youcai really wished to say "it's possible."

He Youcai was merely a Student Council President. Now that Xu Wenqing had already spoken, if He Youcai did not deal with this matter properly, his future would be over. Moreover, with Xu Wenqing's horrific reach, He Youcai did not even dare to think about having a future.

Noticing Xu Wenqing's bodyguard coldly looking at him, He Youcai's body shuddered with fear. Immediately, he did something that shocked even Shi Feng himself.

He Youcai immediately knelt before Shi Feng, hugging Shi Feng's thigh as he cried like a little girl, saying, "Fellow student Shi Feng... No! Brother Feng! I was the one in the wrong! I have eyes but failed to recognize Mount Taishan[2]! I am deserving of death! How could I have been so blind to actually listen to the words of that bastard, Ling Feilong! Brother Feng, I apologize to you! Please! If it can help cool your temper, please beat me up as much as you wish! As long as Brother Feng is willing to go upstairs with me!"

Shi Feng wasn't the only one shocked by He Youcai's actions. Even the bystanders were dumbfounded by this scene.

Did he really think he was invincible just because he was shameless?!

TL Notes:

[2] have eyes but failed to recognize Mount Taishan: to fail to recognize sb important or sb's great talent

Some of you may know that this idiom should actually be "have eyes but failed to recognize Taishan," but I'm going to go with the version that can be found on Baidu (Chinese version of Google) basically because it's the commonly accepted translation of the idiom (many people do know that it's incorrect, fyi). At this point in time, using the idiom without the word 'Mount' in it just sounds weird, at least to me it does...

Chapter 254 - The Young Will Surpass the Old

“As expected, it was Ling Feilong plotting behind the scenes.”

In truth, Shi Feng did not pay any attention to an insignificant character like He Youcai. He only wished to find out who was trying to make trouble for him. Since he was able to ascertain that it was indeed Ling Feilong playing tricks on him, he no longer had any use for He Youcai.

“Alright, save your crocodile tears. I’ll go up with you. However, my requirement is for you to clearly repeat the words you just said to Headmaster Xu. Otherwise, pray for your own future,” Shi Feng said calmly as he kicked He Youcai away.

“How could you do this to me?” Instantly, He Youcai recovered his previous smiling appearance, making it look as if none of the embarrassing scene from before had actually happened. However, there was a hint of hatred hidden beneath his eyes as he looked at Shi Feng.

He Youcai had already embarrassed Xu Wenqing. If he told Xu Wenqing of this matter, then he would be adding Ling Feilong to the list of people he had offended. Moreover, Ling Feilong was supported by Zhao Jianhua, who was an even more frightening existence. Even if Xu Wenqing were to forgive him, Ling Feilong and Zhao Jianhua would definitely not let him off.

A wolf in front, and a tiger behind—even if he did not lose his life, his future would be ruined.

Shi Feng was simply too cruel for wanting him to do such a thing!

“Why can’t I do such a thing? I am only asking you to tell the truth. Now, tell me, what is your decision?” Shi Feng smiled calmly, completely ignoring the poisonous glare He Youcai was sending him.

What comes around, goes around.

After some contemplation, He Youcai took a few deep breaths before coming to a decision. He then shifted his eyes towards Shi Feng, a malicious glint in his eyes as he said, "I can agree to your demands; however, you must allow me to join Zero Wing."

"It seems that you still aren't clear about your current situation. You wish to discuss conditions with me? Then let me tell you, you only have two options right now. You either speak or don't. In my personal opinion, it's best that you speak the truth. At the very least, you will earn the pardon of Headmaster Xu." Shi Feng then raised his brows, stating, "My patience is limited. I will give you three seconds to consider."

"Alright! I'll speak!" He Youcai quickly made his choice. Compared to Ling Feilong and Zhao Jianhua, he was even more afraid of Xu Wenqing. After all, Xu Wenqing's influence was simply too extensive.

Soon after, Shi Feng followed He Youcai and Xu Wenqing's bodyguard into the hotel and took the elevator up to the 36th floor.

Shi Feng's arrival at the event venue immediately attracted a majority of the participants' attention.

Due to Xu Wenqing's rage, many of the guests present had already found out about the incident concerning Shi Feng. They were very curious to see just what sort of person warranted a personal invitation from Xu Wenqing himself.

Under the bodyguard's lead, Shi Feng and He Youcai arrived before Xu Wenqing.

When an ordinary youth in black sportswear appeared before them, everyone couldn't help but widen their eyes. They started attentively evaluating Shi Feng, intent on discerning the secrets hidden behind Shi Feng's ordinary appearance.

To their disappointment, however, be it Shi Feng's attire or aura, both were similarly plain and ordinary.

"Shi Feng? Why are you here?" Ling Feilong couldn't help but grow astonished. Originally, he had intended to use this Fellowship Party to form a deeper connection with Zhao Jianhua. However, he never imagined that Shi Feng could actually make it into the event. The current situation went far beyond his expectations.

"Everything has an exception to it, isn't that so?" Shi Feng replied with a smile.

"Shi Feng, it's great that you made it! Originally, I planned to go down and look for you, but it seems that won't be necessary now!" Zhao Ruoxi said excitedly when she saw the new arrival was Shi Feng. Were it not for Zhao Jianhua holding her back, preventing her from leaving, she would have long since left this boring Fellowship Party.

Sitting beside Zhao Ruoxi, Zhao Jianhua immediately turned grim when he heard Zhao Ruoxi's words. Previously, Zhao Ruoxi had pestered him endlessly for him to let Shi Feng come up, angering him greatly. Never would Zhao Jianhua have thought that, not only did this commoner not give up, he had actually entered the event venue now.

Didn't I tell the ones below not to let him in? How did he manage to get in? Zhao Jianhua's mind was filled with questions; he failed to realize that Shi Feng was none other than the Zero Wing representative that Xu Wenqing had invited.

“Young man, come over here and take a seat. This old man is called Xu Wenqing, the current Headmaster of Jin Hai University.” Xu Wenqing slowly stood up and formally introduced himself.

“Shi Feng, a fourth year student of Jin Hai University,” Shi Feng replied softly.

“You are a student of our school? Indeed, the young will surpass the old. So young, yet you’ve already entered the middle management of the Zero Wing Guild,” Xu Wenqing said, slightly surprised. He did not believe Shi Feng had a very high position in the Zero Wing Guild. However, normally, only those in middle management or higher had the right to recruit members. Shi Feng had yet to graduate from university, yet he had already managed to become a middle manager of a mysterious Guild. In the eyes of commoners, this could be considered a great achievement. At the very least, Shi Feng was much more successful than most of the students present at the Fellowship Party today.

Xu Wenqing’s amiable bearing and praise towards Shi Feng slightly surprised Chen Wu and Zhao Jianhua, who sat close to Xu Wenqing. They never thought Xu Wenqing would praise a younger generation like so, a plain and ordinary youth like Shi Feng, no less. For a second, they even thought that their ears were playing tricks on them.

Even when faced with Zhang Luowei, the person with the brightest future in Jin Hai University, Xu Wenqing had simply said the words “not bad”...

Although they were shocked by the fact that a person like Shi Feng was a middle manager of a Guild, an achievement like this did not warrant such praise from Xu Wenqing himself. After all, Xu Wenqing was a very influential character in Jin Hai City.

However, Xu Wenqing held an optimistic view on Shi Feng’s future. Shi Feng’s temperament, which was as calm as the great ocean, especially solidified this opinion of his. This was not something a youth like him should have, or to put it bluntly, it should be impossible for a youth like Shi Feng to possess such a temperament.

If not for the fact that Xu Wenqing had met with countless people, and had seen all sorts of people throughout his life, he too would not have discovered this particular trait of Shi Feng's.

Being capable of entering the middle management of such a powerful Guild clearly showcased Shi Feng's ability. Before long, Shi Feng would definitely enter the upper management of the Guild, hence why Xu Wenqing was being so courteous with Shi Feng.

"Headmaster must be joking." Shi Feng laughed.

After Xu Wenqing exchanged a few words with Shi Feng, Xu Wenqing shifted his gaze once more to He Youcai, who was currently trembling where he stood. Xu Wenqing demanded coldly, "Speak. What happened?"

Although Xu Wenqing's voice was soft, it was filled with oppressiveness. Frightened, He Youcai no longer dared hide anything from him.

"Ling Feilong was the one that told me to do everything! He said he did not wish to see Shi Feng entangled with fellow student Zhao Ruoxi! Hence, under his coercion, I did not register Shi Feng for the Fellowship Party." He Youcai immediately pointed towards Ling Feilong, denouncing him. At this moment, he no longer cared about the consequences of his words.

Immediately, everyone's attention shifted to Ling Feilong.

Ling Feilong instantly felt a huge pressure bearing down on him.

At this moment, Ling Feilong felt utterly powerless, his breathing faltering. He was at a complete loss for words right now; anything he said would easily offend others. He also never imagined that Shi Feng would have Zero Wing Guild as his backing.

“Since you have nothing to say for yourself, then please leave this place. The Jin Hai Fellowship Party does not welcome you,” Xu Wenqing said abruptly in a deep tone, the rage contained within his words clear for all to hear. Looking at Ling Feilong’s expression, it was obvious what He Youcai had said was the truth.

Following which, two robust bodyguards walked towards Ling Feilong, clearly intending to send Ling Feilong on his way.

“Elder Xu, please wait a moment,” Zhao Jianhua suddenly spoke up.

Meanwhile, standing beside Zhao Jianhua were two of Shadow’s major shareholders, Lan Hailong and Zhang Luowei.

Chapter 255 - There is Only One Protagonist

Zhao Jianhua’s deep voice suddenly caused the splendid and lively venue to go silent.

Everyone present knew that, once Xu Wenqing made a decision, nobody was allowed to interfere with it. However, Zhao Jianhua actually stepped in and tried to interrupt Xu Wenqing. Suddenly, the atmosphere within the event hall turned extraordinarily intense, like a minefield where a single misstep could trigger a massive explosion.

In reply to Zhao Jianhua's interruption, Xu Wenqing did not speak any words. Instead, he merely stretched out his hand, halting the two bodyguards from dragging Ling Feilong away. He then returned his focus to Zhao Jianhua, his eyes carrying a questioning look. He wanted to know just what sort of reason Zhao Jianhua had for going against his decision.

Zhao Jianhua was one of the main sponsors for the Jin Hai Fellowship Party. He was also one of the directors of the Zhao Group, a major corporation in Jin Hai City. Hence, Xu Wenqing could not simply ignore Zhao Jianhua's opinion.

"Elder Xu, I am the one who allowed Ling Feilong to prevent Shi Feng from entering this place. Moreover, I feel that I did not make any mistake in this decision. Please don't make things difficult for Feilong." Zhao Jianhua then added with a laugh, "As for the reason why I didn't allow Shi Feng to enter, it was simply because I did not want him to continue associating with Ruoxi. Please understand my decision, Elder Xu."

"Second Uncle, I've already said that our relationship isn't what you imagined it to be!" Zhao Ruoxi argued immediately, her crescent brows slightly wrinkled.

Listening to the niece and uncle pair bickering with each other, Xu Wenqing, with his many years of experience, instantly figured out the crux of the matter. Suddenly, he laughed and said, "It is indeed good to be young. Since it is a matter between young people, then I will not intervene."

Ling Feilong immediately let out a sigh of relief when he heard Xu Wenqing's words. If he were truly chased out of the Fellowship Party, then his reputation would be in tatters. Fortunately, he had Zhao Jianhua on his side. Ling Feilong gave Shi Feng a look that seemed to say "So what if you received praise from Elder Xu? Aren't I still completely fine right now?"

Shi Feng merely shrugged at Ling Feilong's provocation, paying him no mind at all. Right now, his sole goal for coming upstairs was to look for the Five Demon Generals. Ling Feilong could do whatever he

wanted for all Shi Feng cared. However, if Ling Feilong dared to actively seek trouble with him again, then he couldn't be blamed for responding in kind.

At this moment, the elegant and handsome-looking Lan Hailong sent a glance at Zhang Luowei, who currently stood beside him.

"Fellow student Shi Feng, please wait a moment." Zhang Luowei stepped forward, hurrying to Shi Feng as he shouted, "I have been looking forward to meeting with Zero Wing for a long time now. I never would have thought I would get the chance to do so at this Fellowship Party. I hear that Zero Wing has plenty of experts, and each and every one of them has extraordinary skills. Fellow student Shi Feng, as a middle manager of Zero Wing, I believe that you must definitely be skilled. Hence, I wish to seek some pointers from you. We can also take it as an entertainment for this Fellowship Party. I wonder, what is fellow student Shi Feng's opinion on this matter?"

Hearing Zhang Luowei's suggestion, glints flashed through Xu Wenqing's, Zhao Jianhua's, Chen Wu's, and everyone else's eyes. They felt that it was a good suggestion. However, they still chose to remain silent as this was a matter for the younger generation; it wouldn't be good for old folks like them to intervene.

Among those who showed interest in Zhang Luowei's suggestion, Zhao Jianhua was the most eager for it to take place. Zhao Jianhua knew very well how amazing Zhang Luowei was. After all, even a martial arts master like Chen Wu looked favorably upon Zhang Luowei. Within a few years, Zhang Luowei would definitely become the fighting champion of Jin Hai City. Meanwhile, if Shi Feng embarrassed himself in front of Ruoxi right now, at the very minimum, he could make Zhao Ruoxi understand how ordinary Shi Feng actually was. Once she knew that they were people of two different worlds, she might even decide to give up on her relationship with Shi Feng.

"Is this going to be a martial arts competition?!"

“Excellent! To think that I’ll get the chance to witness Jin Hai University’s champion fighter exchanging moves with an expert from Zero Wing; the money I paid to join this Fellowship Party is totally worth it!”

Anticipation started filling the eyes of everyone present within the event venue.

“Hahaha! Fellow student Shi Feng, see how everyone is looking forward to an exchange between you and Luowei! It wouldn’t be good to disappoint everyone, right? You can rest assured, though, since this is only an exchange of pointers, we won’t go too far in this competition. We are only doing this to liven things up at this party,” Lan Hailong chimed in with a laugh. He continued, “I am also a board member of Shadow, and in regard to a Guild as powerful as Zero Wing, I had always wanted to learn a thing or two from you all. I wish to take a look at the gap between us so that I can turn Shadow into a Guild that would not lose out to Zero Wing. I hope fellow student Shi Feng will not refuse this competition.”

The shrewd Lan Hailong was very good with his words. He had made the simple competition between Zhang Luowei and Shi Feng sound as if it were a competition between Shadow and Zero Wing. Lan Hailong was clearly intending to use Zero Wing to raise Shadow’s status.

Originally, the protagonist for the Fellowship Party should have been Shadow Guild. However, that role had been hijacked by Shi Feng midway, and now, Zero Wing had become the protagonist of the event. Moreover, Shi Feng had also managed to recruit plenty of new members with good potential. Lan Hailong and Zhang Luowei naturally couldn’t stomach such a scene occurring right before their eyes. Hence, they thought of using Shi Feng as a stepping stone. That way, Shadow’s fame at this event would instantly surpass Zero Wing.

Moreover, Lan Hailong’s plans weren’t limited to just this one point. He also intended to publicize Shi Feng’s loss, allowing everyone, both inside and outside of God’s Domain, to know that an expert from Zero Wing had lost badly to a player from Shadow. At that time, Shadow’s reputation would not lose out to Zero Wing by one little bit.

As for Shi Feng himself, he would definitely be expelled from Zero Wing after turning the Guild into a laughing stock. This could be considered Lan Hailong's revenge on Shi Feng for stealing Shadow's limelight at this event.

Also, now that the event had become so lively, with so many people cheering and calling out Shi Feng's name, Shi Feng would not have an easy time declining the competition request.

"How could you say such a thing?" Zhao Ruoxi asked, dissatisfaction in her tone. "Shi Feng is a gaming expert, not some fighting expert. What point would there be for the two of them to have a match with each other?"

Immediately, many people among the audience came to a realization. Although Shi Feng was amazing inside a game, that did not mean he would be equally amazing at fighting in real life. Even if Zhang Luowei defeated him, that did not prove that Zhang Luowei was strong inside the game.

"Fellow student Zhao Ruoxi, you must be joking. God's Domain is a virtual reality game, and every aspect of the game is extremely realistic; I believe that anyone who has experienced combat in God's Domain would know this. Although being good at fighting in real life does not necessarily make someone good at the game, the same cannot be said for the opposite. If one is good at the game, then it shows that they are equally skilled at fighting in real life. In fact, I know just how amazing fellow student Shi Feng is. After all, he was able to defeat Zhou Yuhu, the student who placed third in Jin Hai University's fighting competition. With such strength, it would be a pity for the two of them to not compete against each other." Lan Hailong smiled calmly. Contrary to his words, he had absolute confidence in Zhang Luowei obtaining victory. As for Shi Feng, although he was relatively powerful himself, he was definitely not a match for Zhang Luowei. The reason being, Zhang Luowei had already reached the standards of a professional. He was on an entirely different level when compared to Zhou Yuhu.

"What?! That Zhou Yuhu was actually defeated by Shi Feng? No wonder he managed to become a middle manager of Zero Wing. As expected, Zero Wing is powerful!"

Many of those present in the event hall was shocked by this revelation, their anticipation towards the competition between Shi Feng and Zhang Luowei growing even more intense.

“It seems that I really can’t underestimate young people. To think that he would choose to keep himself hidden despite possessing such skills. It is truly rare for a youngster like him to have such a humble heart,” Xu Wenqing commented, his evaluation of Shi Feng rising even higher now. “With such a temperament, his future achievements would definitely be extraordinary. Chief Zhao, don’t you think your requirements are a little too high? You should just let the younger folk handle themselves; it wouldn’t be right for us older generations to constantly stick a hand into their matters.”

“It can’t be true, right? He managed to defeat Zhou Yuhu with a small body like that?” Zhao Jianhua looked at Shi Feng suspiciously. He had a good grasp on the standards of the fighting competition held in Jin Hai University. It was also the reason why he admired Ling Feilong’s achievement of obtaining ninth place in the competition.

“Alright, then. Since everyone is looking forward to it so much, how could I bear to refuse?” Shi Feng laughed.

Lan Hailong was still as good with words as he had been in the past.

Shi Feng had a very clear understanding of Lan Hailong. Lan Hailong was also the cause for his decade of hard work going to waste. Shi Feng remembered this point very clearly. Originally, Shi Feng had not intended to seek trouble with Lan Hailong in this life. After all, those matters had all occurred in his previous life. Hence, Shi Feng decided that, as long as Lan Hailong did not provoke him in this life, he couldn’t care less what Lan Hailong did. Yet, Lan Hailong just had to come looking for trouble. Since it was so, Shi Feng would not remain courteous with Lan Hailong. It was also a good chance for him to rid himself of past grudges.

“The brat actually agreed. It seems he still has some courage to him.” Zhao Jianhua’s opinion of Shi Feng changed slightly.

Zhang Luowei was reputed to be a genius at fighting, and his mastery of Luohan Quan[1] was very high. Many professional fighters were not even his match. Meanwhile, Shi Feng was only a gamer. Although his achievement of defeating Zhou Yuhu was indeed praiseworthy, when compared to Zhang Luowei, they were still on entirely different levels.

Standing beside Zhao Jianhua, Zhao Ruoxi grew panicked.

Why is this Shi Feng acting so foolishly? Zhao Ruoxi was inwardly speechless at Shi Feng’s decision. Lan Hailong merely flattered him a little, yet he’s already acting so cocky. Doesn’t he know that Zhang Luowei is a real martial arts expert?

Meanwhile, Ling Feilong stood at a distance, sneering at Shi Feng. He had personally witnessed Shi Feng’s fight with Zhou Yuhu, so he knew Shi Feng was pretty skilled as well. However, he still had a long way to go before he was Zhang Luowei’s match. Moreover, Zhou Yuhu had taken Shi Feng lightly the last time, resulting in him being caught off guard and losing to Shi Feng in one strike. If Zhou Yuhu had paid more attention to the fight, the final result definitely wouldn’t have been so decisive.

Currently, Shi Feng and Zhang Luowei were no longer fighting as individuals. Instead, they were representing their respective Guilds in a competition. As long as Zhang Luowei defeated Shi Feng, in addition to Lan Hailong wantonly spreading the news about it, Shi Feng would definitely bring great shame to Zero Wing.

This was also the part Lan Hailong was brilliant at.

Death by overpraising!

First, he endlessly praised Shi Feng and spoke of how amazing he was in front of everyone else. Then he made Shi Feng sound as if he was representing his Guild in this competition, turning this normal exchange into a contest between two Guilds. Finally, once Zhang Luowei defeated this “amazingly powerful” Shi Feng, Lan Hailong would use this piece of information to showcase just how amazing Shadow was.

Even if Shi Feng was a middle manager of Zero Wing, he would definitely still receive a heavy punishment. After all, this matter concerned the reputation of the Guild.

Lan Hailong’s means were indeed cruel and decisive.

As the audience started cheering and discussing the competition, the staff members of the event went ahead with preparing a fighting ring for the competition.

“Who do you think will win?”

“Of course it is Zhang Luowei! He is my idol! During the university’s fighting competition, he obtained first place with great ease. None of the contestants could take three moves from him before being defeated. Although Shi Feng is also very strong, he doesn’t have much of a presence; I can feel nothing from him at all, as if he doesn’t even exist. Zhang Luowei, on the other hand, is like a cruel and ferocious beast. When I stood near him, I could feel a heavy pressure bearing down on me. When his eyes landed on me, I even felt a shiver go down my spine.”

“I agree. Shi Feng might be an expert in God’s Domain, but this is a real-life martial arts competition. It would be good if he could survive ten moves from Zhang Luowei. If this fight was held in God’s Domain, however, it would definitely be an interesting duel.”

While everyone was feeling pessimistic about Shi Feng's chances of winning, Zhou Yuhu, who was resting at a corner of the event hall, walked up to Zhang Luowei's side.

"Brother Zhang, you have to be careful when you are going up against Shi Feng. I've fought with him before. Although he doesn't have remarkable strength, and his physique is no good as well, he is very experienced in combat. He has a very good grasp of when to take action, and his fists and feet are extremely nimble," Zhou Yuhu said.

"Little Hu, you're overthinking things. Even if Shi Feng has reached the level of a professional, I can likewise defeat him with ease. Don't worry, I'll return the shame he brought to you," Zhang Luowei laughed as he clapped Zhou Yuhu's shoulders. He was completely unaffected by Zhou Yuhu's words. When one reached his level of skill, one's determination would be as hard as steel.

Certainly, Zhang Luowei was not underestimating Shi Feng. He had simply reacted this way due to the arrogance of an expert. He would have confidence no matter what kind of enemy he faced.

"Brother Zhang..."

Zhou Yuhu knew that his advice had fallen on deaf ears. However, only those who had personally exchanged moves with Shi Feng would know how frightening he truly was.

If Zhang Luowei was described as a ferocious beast, then Shi Feng was like the great ocean. No matter how powerful a person was, they would be helpless in the face of Mother Nature.

In truth, Zhou Yuhu had wanted to dissuade Zhang Luowei from having a competition with Shi Feng. Only, after taking into consideration Zhang Luowei's prestige, he had instead chosen to warn him to be careful. However, his words had clearly been in vain.

The staff members had very quickly enclosed an area for the martial arts competition. Although the fighting ring was somewhat smaller than one in an official setting, there was still a space of 100 square meters available. It was sufficient for two people to exchange punches and kicks with each other.

Meanwhile, Xu Wenqing, Zhao Jianhua, Chen Wu, and several other well-known figures in Jin Hai City sat in the section closest to the fighting ring. Everyone else could only stand several meters behind them to observe the fight.

In the ring, Shi Feng and Zhang Luowei stood five meters apart from each other. The former was an ordinary man who had no presence whatsoever, while the latter was like a muscular beast that looked as if he could swallow a man whole. The imposing aura Zhang Luowei emitted could cause others to tremble in fear.

A great battle between these two men could happen at any moment now.

Meanwhile, the audience around the ring started tensing up, their eyes locked on the two fighters' every movement.

Unlike a fight between ordinary people, which would take a long time to finish, an exchange between experts would end in an instant. Hence, they were deeply afraid of missing out even the slightest detail of the brilliant exchange between the two.

In contrast, Xu Wenqing and the other influential characters were currently talking cheerfully with one another.

“Master Chen Wu, as an ex-professional fighter and a martial arts master, which of the two do you think will win in this competition?” Xu Wenqing asked, a small chuckle escaping his lips as he caressed his beard.

“I can’t say for sure. In a martial arts competition, strength and luck are both equally important. If I were to judge solely based on presence and physique, then Zhang Luowei is clearly a cut above Shi Feng. However, I have never personally witnessed how skilled Shi Feng is, so I can’t make a clear judgement.” Chen Wu shook his head, not providing a definite answer.

If it was anyone else, even if it was the first time for Chen Wu to meet them, he could still determine the person’s strength based on the presence he felt. He would then further evaluate the person’s physique and make a rough evaluation. In Shi Feng’s case, however, Chen Wu could sense nothing from him. Shi Feng’s presence was so weak that Chen Wu might overlook him.

If Shi Feng were just an ordinary person who had not defeated a combat expert like Zhou Yuhu, then Chen Wu would definitely conclude Shi Feng was a harmless white rabbit, an insignificant existence. Yet, defying all expectations, this little white rabbit had actually defeated a ferocious tiger like Zhou Yuhu. Hence, Chen Wu could not help but reevaluate his opinion of Shi Feng.

After all, if a little white rabbit could get rid of a ferocious tiger, who would believe that it was still a little white rabbit?

Even if Shi Feng was a little white rabbit, he was still a rabbit demon that was capable of killing a tiger.

If Shi Feng had truly cultivated into a demon, then his presence was merely a facade.

If one had cultivated into a demon, while the other was still an ordinary animal, the two would be on entirely different levels.

However, experts capable of cultivating themselves into a demon were extremely rare existences. The so-called “cultivating into a demon” did not refer to one becoming a demon physically, but spiritually; it also referred to wisdom. When an expert reached this realm, the martial arts they practiced would no longer be something inanimate; it would start to take on life. However, a youth like Shi Feng should not be capable of reaching such a realm yet.

Hence, Chen Wu could not determine Shi Feng’s degree of mastery.

“Master Chen Wu, how can your keen eyes fail to make a judgement? Both Shi Feng and Zhang Luowei are just youngsters. Although both of them can greatly improve in the future, you should have some indication of who will win, right?” Zhao Jianhua refused to believe Chen Wu’s words. After all, it was clear at first glance who was stronger, and who was weaker. Hence, Zhao Jianhua believed that Chen Wu was simply leaving some face for Shi Feng.

Unfortunately, Zhao Jianhua did not know that martial arts practitioners were usually forthright in their actions, even more so for a martial arts master like Chen Wu. He was always straightforward with his words, and he would never do something like twist his words around. He would only speak whatever was on his mind.

While the few of them were having their cheerful conversations...

The referee in the fighting ring sent a glance at both Shi Feng and Zhang Luowei, before abruptly swiping his hand down between the two fighters. Immediately, he shouted, "Begin!"

Chapter 257 - Extraordinary

The moment the referee gave the signal, Zhang Luowei took action and immediately charged at Shi Feng.

However, Zhang Luowei did not rush forth like a normal person would, as attacking in a straight line would be too plain and predictable. Instead, he zigzagged as he moved, his footwork constantly changing as he swiftly weaved his way towards Shi Feng.

If it were any ordinary person faced with Zhang Luowei's footwork, they definitely would not know how to react to it properly. They would be enthralled by Zhang Luowei's erratic footwork and allow him to close in on them.

Aside from placing emphasis on footwork, Luohan Quan practitioners also stressed fast, accurate, and fierce punches. If one failed to block a punch from a Luohan Quan practitioner and received a hit to the chest, the battle would end right there and then.

Meanwhile, as a person of this modern era, and also as a professional fighter, Zhang Luowei had an arm strength of over 100 kilograms. Receiving a punch from him would be no different from being smashed in the chest with a hammer. Humans were also not made out of metal. Even if they were, after receiving tens of smashes from a hammer, they would still turn into scrap metal, needless to say what would happen to a body made of flesh. With Zhang Luowei's physique, it would be no surprise if he broke most of Shi Feng's ribs with a single punch, sending him flying back one to two meters away even.

However, Shi Feng was no ordinary person. Instead of retreating, he chose to advance and face Zhang Luowei head-on. Shi Feng utilized the Swimming Dragon Steps as he strode forward, his feet moving as if the ground was completely frictionless. Shi Feng immediately slid towards Zhang Luowei, catching the

latter off guard. Zhang Luowei never thought Shi Feng would actually know such nimble and irregular footwork. Right now, he could not find any way to land a good punch on Shi Feng.

Shi Feng had over a decade of campaigning in God's Domain. The combat experience he possessed far exceeded the imagination of an ordinary person. After all, there had been no dearth of martial arts masters and powerful Boss monsters to serve as his opponents in the past. On the other hand, Zhang Luowei did not even possess a thousandth of Shi Feng's combat experience. Although Shi Feng's current physique was no match for Zhang Luowei's, Shi Feng made up for it by using the agility and fast reaction speed he gained from his years of battle. When fighting Bosses in God's Domain, even the slightest mistake could cause players to lose their lives. Among the countless Boss battles Shi Feng experienced, there was many a time when he had to rely on his body's instinctive reactions instead of his eyes to make decisions.

Such instinctive reactions were done under an unconscious state. If one wished to train themselves to this level, they needed to experience plenty of battles, regularly treading the line between life and death. However, one would rarely encounter such conditions for training in real life, even as a professional fighter. After all, when faced with a life-or-death situation in the real world, there was a high chance of losing one's life, and once dead, there was no second chance available.

On the other hand, players could experience these life-or-death battles countless times without any risk of actual death. They could simply try again once they died in the game. This was also the reason why many professional fighters were obsessed with God's Domain in the past.

Only when one was placed in a life-or-death situation would one be able to display one's full potential. As long as they survived the battle, the insight they received from the battle could greatly increase their strength.

Why did so many experts in the real world train at precipices?

It was to experience the feeling of having their life hanging by a thread; they wanted to use the threat of death to stimulate their innate potential. However, taking such a course was extremely dangerous. Normally, only experts dared to do such a thing. If ordinary people tried it, ten out of ten, they would lose their lives.

Meanwhile, when a player died in battle in God's Domain, they could just revive with an intact body.

An expert in a hundred battles. After experiencing a hundred battles, even an ordinary person could become a combat expert. Meanwhile, in regard to the countless battles Shi Feng had experienced in the past, even an idiot could become a demon. Not to mention, Shi Feng had learned plenty of martial arts in the past. He had been a top-tier Sword King in the past as well, and he had only been a thread away from being promoted to a Tier 4 Sword Emperor.

The reason he could not become a Sword Emperor, however, was not because his techniques had been lacking. After all, Shi Feng's combat techniques had already achieved perfection at that time, and he could easily adopt many techniques to his battles, not limiting himself to just a single style of combat.

Although Zhang Luowei's footwork was nimble, Shi Feng was clearly a cut above him. Be it a punch, a chop, or a hammer strike, Zhang Luowei sent fist after fist at Shi Feng. Zhang Luowei's hammer strikes were especially deadly. If a bull received this strike, it would immediately fall to the ground and would not be able to recover within a short period of time. Unfortunately, every strike Zhang Luowei sent at Shi Feng would always rub past the edge of his clothes.

Meanwhile, Shi Feng was constantly drifting around Zhang Luowei's side, revolving around him like a true dragon. No matter how Zhang Luowei tried to move, he could not escape from Shi Feng's shadow.

After exchanging over a dozen moves, Zhang Luowei's heart grew panicked. Never had he imagined Shi Feng to be a martial arts expert as well. When Shi Feng executed the Swimming Dragon Steps, he was like a true dragon traversing the nine heavens, advancing and retreating with ease. However, Zhang Luowei also knew that Shi Feng did not dare take him head-on. Yet, if Zhang Luowei continued his successive attacks, he would sooner or later exhaust himself completely and definitely be defeated.

“Scram!”

Zhang Luowei decided to use his finishing move, Fierce Tiger Pouncing on its Prey[1], springing at Shi Feng like a hungry tiger. Shi Feng immediately moved his feet, effortlessly dodging Zhang Luowei’s attack. Zhang Luowei took this chance to twist his body around, planting one of his feet forward as he swung his fists around, executing Twin Peaks Piercing the Clouds at Shi Feng’s side.

The moment Zhang Luowei’s fists struck out, those close to the fighting ring could clearly hear the sound of wind whistling. If Shi Feng was struck by this move, he would be either dead or crippled.

Contrary to expectations, Shi Feng reacted calmly and unhurriedly. He simply smiled in reply to Zhang Luowei’s vicious attack. Putting strength into his toes, Shi Feng immediately did a flip in mid-air. He then executed the move Swimming Dragon’s Stable Strike, using his body’s momentum to redirect Zhang Luowei’s fists away, letting them strike nothing but air. Immediately afterwards, Shi Feng’s fists opened up, and utilizing the centripetal force of his body’s rotation, he struck the major artery on Zhang Luowei’s neck with his palm.

Before Zhang Luowei could properly react, he suddenly felt a chill at his neck, his breathing becoming difficult. Due to his brain receiving a shortage of blood, Zhang Luowei’s limbs started to stiffen. However, Zhang Luowei was no ordinary person. He instantly knew he had received an attack from Shi Feng, causing the response of his four limbs to lag. As a last resort, Zhang Luowei rammed his head at Shi Feng, who was currently full of openings as he hung in mid-air. Zhang Luowei was fully intent on ending the battle in mutual destruction. If Shi Feng wished to attack him in this situation, Shi Feng would have to receive the ramming attack from him.

“Good!” Shi Feng first felt surprise, then joy.

Contrary to expectations, Shi Feng did not choose to retreat and give Zhang Luowei a chance to catch his breath. Instead, Shi Feng executed the move Dragon's Palm, taking advantage of the situation to send another palm strike at Zhang Luowei's neck. With this strike, Shi Feng immediately redirected Zhang Luowei's all-out charge, completely neutralizing the latter's attack. In addition, Shi Feng's attack was further fueled by the force of his body's rotation. As a result, Zhang Luowei's body spun uncontrollably in mid-air after receiving the strike, just like a rotating arrow that was let loose. Right after that, Shi Feng planted his palm on Zhang Luowei's chest and abruptly struck down. Zhang Luowei's body landed heavily, a web of cracks appearing on the marble floor beneath him.

At this time, Zhang Luowei fell flat on his back, blood spewing out of his mouth. Shi Feng's attack had fractured many of his ribs, and at this moment, he did not possess even the strength to speak. Zhang Luowei's eyes were filled with disbelief as he lost consciousness soon after.

Although this series of complex actions sounded slow when described, in reality, everything had happened within an instant.

The audience was stunned into silence. Every one of them looked at the fighting ring with dumbfounded expressions.

The two in the ring were clearly locked in battle before.

Before anyone could react, Zhang Luowei's body was already falling to the floor, his body not even twitching as he landed.

"He actually defeated Zhang Luowei? My eyes aren't playing tricks on me, right?" Zhao Jianhua rubbed his eyes, thinking that he was hallucinating. However, the fact that Zhang Luowei lay on the floor, unmoving, proved that he was not imagining things.

A plain and ordinary person that did not possess the presence of an expert had actually defeated a combat genius. Who could believe such a thing?

“Second Uncle, how are Shi Feng’s skills?” Zhao Ruoxi proudly asked Zhao Jianhua, who was sitting beside her, her tone making it sound as if Shi Feng’s victory was her own victory.

“Strong, very strong. However, I still feel strange when I look at him. Even though I myself am a martial arts practitioner as well, I couldn’t tell what kind of technique he used to defeat Zhang Luowei,” Zhao Jianhua said, his heart filled with questions. He then asked, “Master Chen Wu, do you know what kind of technique he used?”

TL Notes:

[1] Fierce Tiger Pouncing on its Prey: one of the moves in Luohan Quan (or Arhat fist)

No. 17

Chapter 259 - Surging Situation

The first thing Shi Feng did after entering God’s Domain was to contact Gentle Snow and conduct the transaction for the Arclight Shields.

Currently, he had exhausted most of his supply of Magic Crystals to forge the Arclight Shields. Moreover, during this period of time, the various large Guilds had already started raiding the three Level 10 large-scale Team Dungeons.

Although the elite members of these Guilds had already reached Level 13 or Level 14, it was still impossible for them to raid even the Normal Mode of the three large-scale Team Dungeons.

Even though these were only Level 10 Dungeons, in reality, the Bosses inside were not limited to just Level 10. The highest leveled Boss inside the Normal Mode Dungeon reached Level 13. There was nothing special about the loot of the Normal Mode Dungeon; the best items players could get were a bunch of Level 10 Secret-Silver Weapons and Equipment, and also some number of materials needed by Lifestyle players.

However, the Hard Mode of the large-scale Team Dungeon was markedly different.

The main reason why they were titled the Three Great Dungeons was because of the fact that, along with the increase in difficulty, the levels of the monsters inside the Dungeon would also increase. For the Hard Mode of the Three Great Dungeons, the Bosses inside were all Level 15. Hence, it would not be an easy endeavor for players at this stage of the game to obtain the First Clear of the Three Great Dungeons.

In addition, the loot obtainable from the Hard Mode of these Dungeons was significantly different, as a majority of the weapons and equipment dropped were of Fine-Gold rank. Moreover, they were Growth-type Weapons and Equipment; they were capable of growing from Level 10 to Level 15. However, they were bound to players upon equipping.

As for Hell Mode, the Bosses inside were all Level 18, and the weapons and equipment they dropped were mostly Dark-Gold rank. These items were also capable of growing from Level 10 to Level 18, and similarly were bound to players upon equipping. The Hell Mode of the Three Great Dungeons was also the most difficult among Dungeons below Level 20.

After Level 20, there would be new large-scale Dungeons available to players within the White River City region. There were a total of four such Dungeons, and among them, three were 50-man Dungeons, while the remaining one was a 100-man Dungeon. The difficulty of a 100-man Dungeon was on an entirely different level when compared to a 50-man Dungeon. The main reason being, as long as someone managed to obtain the First Clear of a 100-man Dungeon, the achievement would be announced to the entire God's Domain. The announcement wasn't just limited to a single country. In other words, this achievement would be seen by the two billion players that were playing God's Domain.

In addition, the achievement would be recorded in the Epic List of God's Domain, allowing everyone in God's Domain look at it.

However, it was extremely difficult for players to obtain the first Clear of a 100-man Dungeon. Even Shi Feng himself did not have a strategy to raid it.

Gentle Snow pushed open the doors of one of the parlors of the Starstreak Trading Firm and entered the room. Gentle Snow's equipment now was quite different from the last time Shi Feng had met with her. Most of the equipment she had on were of Secret-Silver rank. Among them, the silvery-white greatsword that she carried on her back was even of Fine-Gold rank. Currently, Gentle Snow had already reached Level 16. It was obvious that she had been grinding nonstop, night and day, to reach such a level.

"Let's hurry up and make the trade," Gentle Snow said impatiently, not bothering to even take a seat.

"It seems that you are in quite a hurry, Miss Snow. Did something happen?" Shi Feng asked curiously.

This was a transaction involving Fine-Gold ranked shields. It was definitely a matter of utmost importance. However, it seemed that Gentle Snow had an even more important matter to attend to.

"It's nothing much. I just heard that Dark Star has already reached the second-to-last Boss of the Land of Death, so I wish to be done with this trade quickly. In a moment, I'll need to head to the Land of Death as well." Gentle Snow did not try to hide the reason for her distress.

The number one Guild in White River City was actually a step behind Dark Star, a third-rate Guild, in terms of raiding one of the Three Great Dungeons. How could she not feel anxious?

“They sure are fast. Since when did Dark Star possess such powerful experts?” Shi Feng felt something fishy about Dark Star.

First, it had annexed over ten unrated Guilds. Now, a group of experts had appeared in its ranks. Its raiding progress of the Three Great Dungeons was even faster than Ouroboros’s. It should be known that Ouroboros was the current number one Guild in White River City. Moreover, in order to better develop the Guild in White River City, Gentle Snow had transferred over many experts stationed at Star-Moon City. She had even requested for a party from the God-Slaying Army to be sent to White River City, and each and every member of the God-Slaying Army was a top-tier expert. Yet, even when these top-tier experts were led by great experts such as Gentle Snow and Zhao Yueru, they still were not a match for Dark Star.

Each of the Three Great Dungeons had five Bosses. Meanwhile, Dark Star had already cleared up to the fourth Boss, while a powerful team like Ouroboros was only at the second Boss.

No matter how Shi Feng thought about it, Dark Star’s progression was simply unbelievable.

The difference between second-rate Guilds and first-rate Guilds lay in the quality of their experts. In order to nurture these experts, first-rate Guilds had spent over a decade researching and gaining experience. Meanwhile, for a Guild like the Assassin’s Alliance, although it was a second-rate Guild, in terms of nurturing experts, it was still at the stage of accumulating experience. Compared to a first-rate Guild, they were on entirely different levels.

However, what did Dark Star amount to?

Moreover, Shi Feng had made Dark Star an enemy of the first-rate Guild Twilight Echo. Yet, nothing had actually happened to Dark Star; Shi Feng had received no news of anything happening to it. On the other

hand, Twilight Echo had done something so unbelievable that even Shi Feng himself was shocked. The Guild had actually paid the 50 million Credits willingly to Shi Feng.

Thinking up to this point, Shi Feng felt that the power supporting Dark Star from behind was far stronger than he had imagined. Twilight Echo must've discovered something about Dark Star for it to willingly pay up the 50 million Credits.

“Here are 200 Magic Crystals.”

“Here are the four Arclight Shields, please verify them.”

Gentle Snow was no longer in the mood to discuss Dark Star. She immediately called out her trade window. Shi Feng, likewise, tactfully stopped speaking of this topic. Seeing Gentle Snow in such a hurry, it seemed that Dark Star was putting quite a pressure on her. It was possible that Gentle Snow's worries were not just limited to the Dungeon; there should be some other matters troubling her. In any case, this had nothing to do with Shi Feng.

Of course, if Gentle Snow was willing to reveal her troubles to him, Shi Feng would naturally offer a helping hand, as a friend. However, Gentle Snow chose to keep quiet about them, so Shi Feng could only remain silent as well. Moreover, these four Arclight Shields should provide quite an upgrade to the MTs of Gentle Snow's team. They should have no problems surpassing Dark Star if they had these shields.

The moment Gentle Snow inspected the Attributes of the Arclight Shields, her eyes immediately glowed, a hint of joy surfacing on her face.

“Excellent! The Attributes on these Arclight Shields are simply too good! I will need two more of these items. I wonder when you will be able to finish them for me?” At this time, excitement was evident on

Gentle Snow's face. With these four shields, they would definitely have no problem clearing the second Boss.

"The success rate for producing these shields is simply too low. I will need around half a day's time to complete two of them," Shi Feng replied after giving it some thought.

"Then, I'll visit again in half a day's time. You better not sell them to anyone else!" Gentle Snow nodded her head. She then left the parlor hastily.

Shortly after Gentle Snow departed, Fire Dance arrived at the Starstreak Trading Firm.

"Guild Leader, we've already finished our Dungeon-raiding preparations. We can head to the Demon's Castle at any time." Fire Dance looked at Shi Feng with passionate eyes. She couldn't help but wish she could immediately show Shi Feng how amazing the team she managed was.

"It's a little too early for that right now. The Demon's Castle is a 20-man Team Dungeon. You should also know that Zero Wing Workshop has recently recruited a new batch of members. On average, the level of these players are quite low. There are even some who have just made their accounts and entered the game. I want you guys to power-level some of them, bring them up to Level 15 quickly, and form a main team to raid the Demon's Castle," Shi Feng said with a smile, passing Fire Dance a namelist.

Originally, Shi Feng had intended to have Aqua Rose send some of her subordinates over to aid them. However, most of her subordinates were currently managing the new recruits of the Guild. In addition, Aqua Rose's group was also in the midst of raiding 10-man and 20-man Dungeons to upgrade their equipment, preparing themselves to raid the Three Great Dungeons. They had neither the time nor energy to help him raid the Demon's Castle.

Hence, Shi Feng planned to form a main force for the Guild. He could not let the nine top-tier experts he just recently recruited go to waste, so he decided to let Fire Dance and the others carry them.

“I understand,” Fire Dance answered with disappointment. However, when she thought about how Shi Feng was willing to let her lead even more players and, in addition, become the leader of the Guild’s main team, she couldn’t help but grow joyous. After all, this showed that Shi Feng acknowledged her abilities.

“Oh, right. I nearly forgot to give these things to you.”

Just as Fire Dance was about to turn around and leave, Shi Feng tapped his head and suddenly called out to her.

Chapter 260 - Top Six

Fire Dance halted her steps and turned around to look at Shi Feng. She immediately noticed that Shi Feng had brought a few items, and each and every one of them had a golden glow surrounding them. They certainly did not look like ordinary items.

“This pair of daggers is for you. There’s also this shield for Cola. Tell him to make sure he lives up to this shield.” Shi Feng traded the three items to Fire Dance.

Of these, the pair of daggers were none other than the Fine-Gold ranked Ice Thorn and Raging Flames Dagger that Shi Feng won at the Blackwing Auction. As the team leader of the Guild’s main force, Fire

Dance's equipment naturally should not lose out to others. These two daggers were just right to give a boost to her current equipment.

In addition, there was also the Dark-Gold ranked Arclight Guard. If Cola equipped this shield, no other Guardian Knight in White River City could even hope to match him.

"This..." Fire Dance was instantly mesmerized by the Attributes of the two daggers.

Although the daggers she currently used were of relatively good quality, when compared to the Ice Thorn and Raging Flames Dagger, the difference was like silver and gold.

Fire Dance swapped out her old daggers for the new ones right away. The streaks of white and red hanging on the sides of Fire Dance's willowy waist looked extremely captivating.

"I've already instructed the nine players to head to the appointed location. You just need to fetch them and help them level up," Shi Feng said.

"I understand, Guild Leader." Fire Dance nodded her head, a smile on her face. She then took hold of her new daggers, brandishing them, the impatience in her eyes clearly showing her eagerness to test out her new weapons.

After Fire Dance left the parlor, Shi Feng headed to his Forging Room on the fourth floor.

Now that he had received a new batch of Magic Crystals, he would naturally resume forging more Arclight Shields.

As time slowly passed, unknowingly, the competition at the Three Great Dungeons of White River City grew even more intense.

Dark Star, which was at the forefront in terms of progression, finally started raiding the final Boss of the Land of Death. Meanwhile, Ouroboros, which was placed second, started raiding the fourth Boss. The advance of these two Guilds greatly shocked the other Guilds in White River City.

“What did that woman, Gentle Snow, eat? How could their progression suddenly increase so rapidly?!” The Guardian Knight, Lone Tyrant, felt pressured after receiving the latest report from his subordinate.

“Don’t worry. We spent almost five hours raiding the fourth Boss. At the very minimum, Gentle Snow would need two to three hours to finish it. We will definitely clear the Dungeon a step ahead of her,” the burly-looking Ranger standing beside Lone Tyrant said.

“That’s true. We’ve sent all our elites out this time, and our battle prowess is clearly stronger than Gentle Snow’s team by a notch.” Lone Tyrant also felt that he was being oversensitive to things. They would definitely be the first one to clear the Normal Mode of the Land of Death. Although there would be no announcement for being the first to clear a Normal Mode Team Dungeon, it would still make other Guilds know how fearsome Dark Star was, solidifying their position in White River City.

“Guild Leader, I’ve just received news that Gentle Snow has somehow managed to obtain four Arclight Shields. The addition of these four shields to their team has greatly reduced the burden placed on their healers, giving more time for the damage dealers to attack. Hence why they could conquer the Bosses so easily.”

“Arclight Shield? Isn’t that the Forging Design Black Flame got? How could he possibly manage to produce them in such a short amount of time?” Lone Tyrant had not even been able contain his drool when he had heard about Black Flame obtaining the Forging Design for the Arclight Shield. If possible, he had planned to buy one of those Arclight Shields as well. However, contacting Black Flame was simply too difficult, making the Arclight Shield almost impossible to obtain.

Meanwhile, the matter of Ouroboros obtaining the Arclight Shields had also quickly spread to the other Guilds. They couldn’t help but grow envious at this piece of news.

The victory or defeat of a Boss battle was usually determined by the strength of the MT. Meanwhile, the prerequisite for a powerful MT was equipment. It was especially true for the shield the MT used.

Currently, only a few main MTs of the various large Guilds possessed Secret-Silver ranked shields. However, despite having such a shield, these MTs still had a very hard time tanking the Bosses of the Three Great Dungeons. If they could swap it out for a Fine-Gold ranked shield, it would undeniably reduce the pressure placed on them, instantly reducing the difficulty of the raid by a large margin.

Ouroboros was the best proof.

After all, during today’s competition for the Land of Death, although a latecomer, Ouroboros had still managed to clear the Normal Mode Dungeon ahead of Dark Star. This achievement dumbfounded every Guild in White River City.

As for Dark Star’s Lone Tyrant, he was currently burning with rage over this matter. He had secretly prepared so much, all in order to surpass Ouroboros. In the end, however, he was instead given a big slap to the face by Ouroboros.

Soon after, the various large Guilds in White River City started asking around, hoping to find out from the members of Ouroboros what method they used to obtain the Arclight Shields. Some Guilds had even directly created forum posts offering several hundred thousands of Credits to purchase an Arclight Shield.

Looking at this scene, many players felt that these Guilds had gone insane. They were actually willing to spend so much money just to buy a Fine-Gold ranked shield.

However, this bottom line was, very quickly, broken by a Guild.

One million Credits!

It was a number that inspired awe in ordinary people. Meanwhile, the goal of spending such a large sum of money was to purchase the Arclight Shield.

How could this piece of news not bring shock to others?

At the same time, the Guild offering such an insane price was none other than Dark Star.

The players who discovered this matter thought the people of Dark Star were idiots with too much money in their pockets. However, when Shi Feng saw Dark Star's offer, he couldn't help but inwardly praise them for their shrewdness. Aside from trying to purchase the Arclight Shield, they had also made the post with the intention of directing players' attention towards Dark Star. If they truly managed to purchase the shield for one million Credits, it would definitely become the subject of conversation for many players. This method they were using was much more effective than directly spending money to create advertisements.

“A million? Unfortunately, I’m not lacking in Credits right now.”

Shi Feng did not intend to let Dark Star gain both fame and fortune by selling the Arclight Shield to them. However, this incident also revealed to Shi Feng the fact that the various large Guilds were starting to pay more importance to the First Clear of the Three Great Dungeons.

If Shi Feng had sold the Arclight Shields at an earlier time, he definitely would not have obtained such a high price for them.

However, due to Ouroboros’s efficiency, the various large Guilds thought that they could easily clear the Normal Mode of the Three Great Dungeons so long as they possessed the Arclight Shield. They could also have a better chance at obtaining the First Clear of the Three Great Dungeons.

After working for half a day, Shi Feng managed to produce six Arclight Shields in total. He had also made a large number of Basic Mana Armor Kits. Out of the six shields he made, he stored three in the Guild Warehouse, allowing Guild members to exchange for it. However, it would not be easy to exchange for these shields. After all, if sold outside, one could get at least 25 Gold for it.

The sight of three Arclight Shields appearing in Zero Wing’s Guild Warehouse brought the newly recruited members even greater hope, despite their not being able to obtain it for themselves.

At the same time, Shi Feng’s actions nearly caused the other Guilds in White River City to vomit blood in anger.

After all, instead of letting the MTs of the Guild use these excellent shields, Shi Feng had chosen to put them on display. It was as if these Arclight Shields meant nothing to Zero Wing.

Just recently Zero Wing created a sensation throughout White River City. Now, its member count had already exceeded 5,000. It also had the eight great experts holding down the fort for them; Zero Wing's strength could no longer be categorized within the levels of only second-rate or third-rate Guilds.

Now that Zero Wing caused another sensation in White River City, many players could not help but reevaluate their opinion of Zero Wing.

When players tried to further investigate Zero Wing, they were immediately shocked by what they found.

Not only was Zero Wing home to the eight great experts, it also had Aqua Rose, a great expert who was no weaker than the Snow Goddess, Gentle Snow. In addition, there was also a rumor that the leveling expert, Shi Feng, was overseeing the Guild. With so many experts there, Zero Wing's strength within White River City did not lose out to the three first-rate Guilds in the slightest. Although it was weaker than the first-rate Guilds in terms of Dungeon-raiding, it had an extremely huge potential for growth.

Unwittingly, Zero Wing had become publicly acknowledged as one of the top six Guilds in White River City.

The top six Guilds were Ouroboros, Emperor's Light, World Dominators, Dark Star, Assassin's Alliance, and Zero Wing. Among these Guilds, Ouroboros, Emperor's Light, and World Dominators were all first-rate Guilds, and each of them possessed very powerful backgrounds. Even if only a portion of their actual strength was stationed in White River City, second-rate and third-rate Guilds were still far from being comparable to them.

Shortly after this incident, Shi Feng exchanged another two Arclight Shields with Gentle Snow. He then placed the remaining one for sale at the Starstreak Trading Firm.

Thirty Gold, no negotiations.

If converted to Credits, one could obtain 30 Gold Coins simply by spending around 600,000 Credits. However, it would still require some effort to fully gather 30 Gold Coins.

Meanwhile, Shi Feng had reached Level 17 unawares just by forging items. Although his leveling speed was not as fast as that of Blackie and the others, who grinded on monsters on a higher level, nobody else in White River City could be a match for him.

“Guild Leader, they’re now all Level 15 already. Moreover, we’ve also raided a few Hard Mode Team Dungeons, so their equipment are all of acceptable quality now. What should we do next?” Fire Dance spoke through the communicator.

“Nicely done! Gather up everyone from the main team. Let’s meet up at the Demon’s Castle half an hour from now.” Shi Feng was a little surprised by Fire Dance’s revelation. He never imagined that Fire Dance would bring him results so quickly. Originally, Shi Feng had estimated that she would take a full day’s time to complete the task. In the end, she barely took half a day to complete his request. It was completely beyond his expectations.

Chapter 261 - Magnificent Lineup

“What? You’re saying Starstreak is selling an Arclight Shield right now? Are you sure about this?” Lone Tyrant grew excited when he received this piece of news.

“Boss, how could I be mistaken? The Arclight Shield is being sold at a special counter on the second floor, but they’re selling it for 30 Gold Coins. Many people were stunned by the price, and they could only drool as they looked at it,” an Assassin that kept watch on the Starstreak Trading Firm affirmed.

“I understand. I’ll go purchase the Coins we need right now. You can stop lining up for the Mana Armor Kits for now. Go keep an eye on the Arclight Shield for me. You’re not allowed to take even a half step away from it! As soon as I gather enough money, I’ll send someone over to buy it,” Lone Tyrant said.

Although 30 Gold Coins was not a small sum for any Guild, Lone Tyrant did not hesitate as he made this decision.

The reason being, Lone Tyrant knew how vital the Arclight Shield was. If one wished to clear the Three Great Dungeons, one must first possess a sufficiently powerful MT. Meanwhile, the best shield available to players was currently the Arclight Shield. Hence, he needed to obtain it no matter what.

Just as Lone Tyrant received this piece of news, the other Guilds based in the eight cities where the Starstreak Trading Firm had shops also received this information, because all items sold by the Starstreak Trading Firm were interconnected. As long as an item was sold in one of the shops of the Starstreak Trading Firm, the item would also appear in the seven other shops.

As a result, the competition to purchase the Arclight Shield was made even more intense now.

Just as the many Guilds were desperately raising Coins, Shi Feng had already arrived in front of the Demon’s Castle.

The Demon's Castle was once a lord's territory. However, the lord of this place had been bewitched by a demon and turned into a demon himself, gaining tremendous power in return. The lord had then turned this place into a demon's lair. Now, the area surrounding the Demon's Castle was filled with Level 15 or so Demonkins.

Compared to other monsters, demon-type monsters were born with very high magic resistance, and they also possessed very high magical perception. Hence, their magic attacks were very powerful. Even a normal Fireball from a Level 15 Demonkin could take away a quarter of a Level 15 Berserker's total HP. If it was a skill that possessed great destructive force such as the Great Fireball or Flame Explosion, then a single attack could take away half of a Level 15 Berserker's total HP.

To make matters worse, these Demonkins never acted alone; they normally moved around in groups of three or four. If a solo player met a group of these Demonkins, the result would be an instant kill. Hence, players normally only came to the Demon's Castle after forming a party or a team. However, even though this was a dangerous location, many players still chose to come here.

As Demons were greedy by nature, they were very fond of money and Gemstones. In general, demon-type monsters had a much higher drop rate for money and Gemstones than normal monsters. Hence, plenty of players would grind here.

A Tier 1 Gemstone could sell for roughly 1 Silver Coin on the market; it was neither too cheap nor too expensive. However, many players were not willing to inlay their equipment with these Gemstones. After all, Gemstones were one-time use items; they would be gone once inlaid into equipment. Hence, it would be a huge waste to do so if the quality of their equipment was too poor. Generally, players would only choose to inlay Gemstones into their equipment if it was of Mysterious-Iron rank or above. However, how many players could actually get their hands on Mysterious-Iron Equipment? A majority of the players at this stage of the game were still using Bronze Equipment.

Who would be willing to inlay Gemstones into Bronze Equipment?

Normally, players would either sell the Gemstones they obtained or exchange them for items to further enhance their own strength. After all, grinding monsters would exhaust a significant amount of their resources with equipment repairs taking up the majority.

However, this situation was exactly what Shi Feng had been hoping for, hence why he had been secretly purchasing Gemstones all this time.

A Tier 1 Gemstone only increased Attributes by a trivial amount; they only increased one point in specific Basic Attributes. Even if a player inlaid every piece of equipment they wore with Gemstones, they would not see any significant improvement. However, in the case of Tier 2 Gemstones, it was an entirely different story.

Tier 2 Gemstones increased specific Attributes by two to three points. If players could fully inlay all their equipment with Tier 2 Gemstones, then they could obtain an additional 20 to 30 Attribute points. The difference between the benefits provided by a Tier 1 Gemstone and a Tier 2 Gemstone was as clear as day. Such an increase was the equivalent of possessing an additional piece of equipment, thus, the prices for Tier 2 Gemstones would naturally be high.

Although Tier 1 Gemstones could only sell for around 1 Silver, a Tier 2 Gemstone could sell for at least 10 Silvers.

Also, Shi Feng knew of a secret that nobody else knew right now: Tier 1 Gemstones could be used to synthesize Tier 2 Gemstones. Moreover, only three Tier 1 Gemstones were needed to do so.

In truth, this wasn't any great secret at all. As long as someone managed to clear the Three Great Dungeons, the Alchemy Synthesis System would be unlocked for White River City. Players could then just head to an Alchemist to synthesize Tier 2 Gemstones.

At that time, the prices of Tier 1 Gemstones would abruptly soar. They would sell for at least 3 to 4 Silvers.

For now, however, nobody but Shi Feng knew of this secret.

Meanwhile, Shi Feng had been hoarding Tier 1 Gemstones nonstop as he waited for someone to activate the Alchemy Synthesis System. Once that happened, he could easily earn back double or triple the original cost. However, Shi Feng hoped that this time the activation of the Alchemy Synthesis System would come a little later. That way, he would have more time to hoard even more Tier 1 Gemstones.

Through the Starstreak Trading Firm, not only could Shi Feng obtain Tier 1 Gemstones from White River City, he could also purchase them from seven other cities. His current acquisition rate was much faster than before he became the manager of the Starstreak Trading Firm. Naturally, the longer it took for players to clear the Three Great Dungeons, the more money he could earn.

“Guild Leader, what did you call me here for all of a sudden?” Aqua Rose asked in a confused tone as she arrived at the entrance of the Demon’s Castle Dungeon.

As a 20-man Level 15 Team Dungeon, there were very few Guilds that possessed the strength to challenge this place right now. However, even if these Guilds did possess the strength to do so, they would not attempt to raid this Dungeon. The reason being, they were all held up by the Hell Mode of the Level 10 Team Dungeons, and also the Three Great Dungeons. Moreover, the level requirement for the Demon’s Castle was simply too high. Also, if they were unable to clear the Hard Mode of the Demon’s Castle, raiding it would bring little improvement to their team’s equipment, making it a waste of time. It would be much better for them to place their focus on the Hell Mode of Level 10 Team Dungeons.

Hence, Aqua Rose felt curious as to why Shi Feng would call her to this place.

“Of course, it is to raid the Demon’s Castle,” Shi Feng said, chuckling.

Aqua Rose was shocked by his words. Immediately, she said, "Guild Leader, isn't it a little too early to raid the Demon's Castle? It would be better for us to focus on raiding the Level 10 Hell Mode Team Dungeons. Although our Guild started slower than the others, we can still try to compete with the other Guilds over the Three Great Dungeons."

"No. Aqua, our Guild will not be competing over the Three Great Dungeons. Our goal is the Level 20, 100-man Dungeon, the Thunder Palace. So, we need to start preparing for it now. Once we're done with this raid, you should get everyone to level up as quick as possible. Don't intentionally suppress their levels. It won't be a worthwhile thing to do," Shi Feng said, confidence filling his eyes as he shook his head.

Aqua Rose was rendered speechless by Shi Feng's words. She couldn't help but sigh as she felt pessimistic about Shi Feng's whimsical thoughts. Let alone the 100-man Dungeon, Thunder Palace, it was not even possible for them to obtain the First Clear of the Demon's Castle. Although she believed in Shi Feng's strength, the equipment of their team was simply insufficient.

"They're here." Shi Feng looked towards a group of a dozen or so players walking over. They were none other than Fire Dance and her team.

"They?" Aqua Rose turned towards the direction Shi Feng was looking at and was immediately shocked by what she saw.

She discovered more than ten players walking over, each of them looking extremely dazzling. It was especially true for the sexy beauty walking in the lead. The two daggers by the woman's waist were actually giving off the glow of a Fine-Gold ranked weapon. In addition, quite a few members of this team also possessed gorgeous-looking equipment; they all wore Secret-Silver Equipment. Although the Cursemaner of this team had hidden the special effects of his staff, judging by the delicate make of the weapon, it should be of Fine-Gold rank at the very least. As for the team's Guardian Knight, the equipment he wore were mostly of Secret-Silver rank, with two pieces of Fine-Gold Equipment mixed in. Although the Guardian Knight had likewise hidden the special effects of his shield, based on looks alone, it shouldn't be lower than Secret-Silver rank.

It was possible that not even the main force of Ouroboros could compare to this dazzling team.

When Aqua Rose took a closer look at this group of players, she was surprised to discover that each and every of them sported a six-winged emblem. They were actually members of their Zero Wing.

Aqua Rose's delicate mouth suddenly parted in disbelief.

"Guild Leader, I've brought everyone here," Fire Dance said, walking up to Shi Feng. She and the other core members of Zero Wing already knew about Shi Feng's secret identity. Hence, they were not confused by his appearance as Black Flame.

"Good. Leave your teams and I'll send an invite to all of you." Shi Feng nodded in reply.

Chapter 262- We Are Very Strong

Aqua Rose was shocked.

"They are the eight players at the top of the Ranking List?" Aqua Rose whispered in silence.

Although she did not use any identification skills on these players, aside from the top eight players, she could think of no other members of Zero Wing that could possibly possess such excellent equipment.

“Yeah.” Shi Feng nodded his head. He then started inviting Fire Dance and the others into his team.

There were a total of 17 players in Fire Dance’s team. Aqua Rose had also brought along a good friend of hers, Icy Fruit. Aqua Rose had chosen her upon Shi Feng’s request for a healer who was Level 15 or above.

Shi Feng had exactly 20 members in his team now. Of them, two were MTs. One of them was the Guardian Knight, Cola, while the other was Ye Wumian, who was a Shield Warrior. There were also a total of four healers in the team. It was a standard composition for a 20-man Dungeon-raiding team.

Just as Shi Feng was about to enter the Dungeon, another team came walking over to the Dungeon’s entrance.

The members of this team were out of the ordinary. Let alone possessing Mysterious-Iron Equipment as their lowest ranked equipment, there were also several of them with Secret-Silver Equipment. This was a sight impossible to be found in an independent team.

Yet, contrary to expectations, these players were not Guild players but independent players. None of them wore a Guild Emblem on their bodies.

“War Wolf!” Fire Dance said in astonishment when she saw the slim-looking man walking over.

“Oh? Is it an acquaintance?” Whether it was his memory of this life or his past life, Shi Feng had no recollection of the man who looked to be the leader of this team.

However, if these players were able to come into possession of such quality weapons and equipment, they could definitely be considered an expert team. In theory, they should not be unknown existences.

Could they have stopped playing midway in the past? Shi Feng inwardly wondered.

“Hello. We meet again,” War Wolf said in greeting, looking at Fire Dance. “After not meeting for some time, I never imagined that Miss Fire Dance would have joined a Guild.”

“No. In truth, we were originally members of this Guild. It was only due to some complications that we did not establish the Guild before,” Fire Dance explained. “Let me introduce you. This man here is our Guild Leader, Black Flame.”

“What a shock. So it turns out that Your Excellency is none other than the famous Chief Forger of Star-Moon Kingdom, Black Flame.” War Wolf was somewhat taken aback by this revelation. Although he had long since known that Fire Dance and the others were not ordinary players, never would he have thought that their Guild Leader would be such a well-known character.

“Team leader War Wolf is the one who has left me in shock. You are actually starting to raid the Level 15, 20-man Team Dungeon already. The teams that are capable of diving into the Demon’s Castle at this time definitely belong to the apex of White River City.” Although Shi Feng had never heard of War Wolf before, a person capable of leading such a team definitely would not be a mediocre person. Shi Feng suddenly had the urge to recruit this team of players.

“Fortunately. We are only an independent team, and it’s impossible for us to compete with those Guilds over the First Clear of the Three Great Dungeons. So, we can only choose to come here. Since Guild Leader Black Flame has something to do, we won’t continue bothering you.” War Wolf did not possess any good feelings towards Guilds, so he immediately brought his team into the Dungeon after speaking a few perfunctory words.

“This person’s attitude is really weird. The previous time we met, he was welcoming when he spoke to us. Now, he only said a few words before taking his leave. Isn’t this change in attitude a little too much?” Blackie said in an unhappy tone.

“He probably doesn’t like Guilds too much.” Shi Feng revealed a helpless smile as he looked at War Wolf entering the Dungeon.

There were all kinds of people in God’s Domain, and naturally, there were bound to be some who disliked Guilds. After all, most Guilds usually acted in an overbearing manner. Many players just wanted to experience the world of God’s Domain, so they weren’t all that interested in Guilds.

Meanwhile, many of these players who were wholeheartedly chasing after adventure were surprisingly powerful. Among them, the most famous adventurer team in the past was the Midnight Tea Party. Although there were only twenty-plus members in the team, not a single Guild in God’s Domain dared to underestimate this adventurer team. Even Super Guilds had to draw a clear line with the Midnight Tea Party, both sides minding their own businesses.

Obviously, War Wolf belonged to this type of adventurer.

I guess it can’t be helped. Everybody has their own aspirations, Shi Feng silently lamented.

“There sure are a lot of powerhouses in White River City.” Aqua Rose was astonished to find that there were actually so many crouching tigers and hidden dragons in White River City.

Soon after, Shi Feng and the others had also entered the Demon’s Castle. However, Shi Feng had chosen a different difficulty from War Wolf’s team’s.

Hell Mode, a difficulty that made all players pale when they talked about it. Yet, Shi Feng had chosen it without much thought.

Aqua Rose was momentarily rendered speechless. She couldn't stand it anymore. Shi Feng was always taking unconventional actions.

This was the Hell Mode of a 20-man Team Dungeon! At the very least, they should have started with Normal Mode to familiarize themselves with the Dungeon. They could then start accumulating better equipment from Hard Mode, before finally challenging Hell Mode. However, Shi Feng had started with Hell Mode right from the very beginning. Just what did he think of a Hell Mode Dungeon?

Even if they had powerful experts in their team, they couldn't just be so reckless. Did Shi Feng forget the fact that almost half of the members in this team still didn't possess particularly good equipment?

Meanwhile, these players in question were none other than the Five Demon Generals and the four experts from Green Leaf Workshop. Although they had already reached Level 15, and were also fully geared in Mysterious-Iron Equipment, they were still far from reaching the requirement to raid the Hell Mode of the Demon's Castle. Hence, these nine players reacted with panic when they realized Shi Feng's decision.

As this was Hell Mode, the monsters inside the castle all received an upgrade. Even the normal Elite monsters could cause one to tremble. Meanwhile, such monsters were wandering around in groups inside the castle corridors.

[Demon Maid] (Elite Rank)

Level 15

HP 80,000/80,000

Good at magical attacks, particularly fire-type damage.

[Demon Butler] (Elite Rank)

Level 15

HP 100,000/100,000

Good at melee attacks.

Of these two types of monsters, the Demon Butlers were more difficult to deal with, as they would ignore aggro when they used Charge. In addition, when their Charge connected, they would also inflict a DoT debuff called Blood Curse, causing players to continuously lose HP. Also, due to this being Hell Mode, the debuff was further strengthened. When afflicted with this enhanced Blood Curse, players would lose 300 HP every three seconds, and receive 10% additional magic damage for 30 seconds. The debuff was also stackable up to 10 times.

To make matters worse, demonic beings were born with high magic resistance, making them extremely difficult to deal with.

“Alright, Cola, go pull some monsters. Ye Wumian, you’ll act as support for Cola. Healers, pay attention to the MT’s HP and remember to cast Dispel when necessary. As for everyone else, just focus on your damage output,” Shi Feng instructed casually.

“Guild Leader, I suggest that we should take things slowly. After all, this is a Hell Mode Dungeon, not a Normal Mode. Even if Cola’s equipment is excellent, we still can’t act so recklessly.” Aqua Rose was close to collapsing from Shi Feng’s carefree attitude.

“It’s okay,” Shi Feng said, smiling. “We are very strong!”

Shi Feng had a clear grasp on the strength of this team, hence his carefree and confident attitude.

Cola was currently Level 18, and with the Arclight Guard equipped, his HP had already reached 3,340 points. His Defense was even a frightening 2,300 points. In terms of Attributes, not a single MT within White River City could match him.

The Elite monsters inside the Dungeon were only at Level 15. With three levels of suppression, these monsters could hardly harm Cola at all.

Meanwhile, Cola did not hesitate in carrying out Shi Feng’s orders. Immediately, he rushed at a group of monsters, raising his shield and throwing it at them. In a blink of an eye, the shield struck five Elite monsters, causing over 300 damage and placing a Silenced effect on each of the monsters, preventing them from using magic for six seconds. Shortly after, the shield returned to Cola’s hands.

Before coming to this Dungeon, Cola had experienced luring over a hundred Level 25 monsters. Of them, there had been no lack of Elite monsters. Compared to those times, the few Elites before him were hardly worth mentioning. These demonic monsters simply had slightly higher HP and slightly more powerful skills.

“All of you, come over!”

Cola executed Justice Roar, compelling monsters within a fixed range to attack only him. Letting out angry roars, the Demon Maids at a distance had no choice but to attack Cola. As if he had transformed into a steel wall, Cola fully blocked the charge of the three Demon Butlers and four Demon Maids. Cola then used the group aggro skill Devotion. As the sacred aura provided by the skill dealt holy damage, it inflicted amplified damage on the seven demons. Every second, the seven demons would receive 200 holy damage. Before long, the aggro Cola had on these monsters was unshakably stable.

On the other hand, the Demon Butlers only dealt around -240 damage with each of their attacks, while the Demon Maids dealt around -400 damage with their magical attacks. However, Cola managed to dodge the majority of these attacks by utilizing his nimble footwork, greatly reducing the damage he received. As a result, only Violet Cloud was actually required to maintain Cola's HP above a safe threshold.

Meanwhile, the other healers and Ye Wumian could only watch helplessly on the sidelines.

"No way."

Aqua Rose's delicate body trembled slightly. Currently, the excitement she felt could no longer be described with words.

Chapter 263 - Like a Hot Knife through Butter

The task that originally required two MTs to accomplish was now handled by Cola alone. Moreover, it was obvious that Cola still had energy to spare.

“Fire Dance, go lure another wave. Ye Wumian, assist Cola and attract the aggro of the Demon Maids.” Shi Feng determined that they would have no problems handling two waves of monsters at once, and that it would be much more efficient to do so.

Although the Demon Butlers would frequently inflict the Blood Curse on Cola, with two Clerics taking turns casting Dispel on him, the debuff was not a particularly big problem. Moreover, the two Clerics in the team were very skilled. It was especially true for Violet Cloud. After undergoing the baptism of the Trial of Gods, it was as if she had been reborn anew.

It was no wonder she had become a Tier 6 Cleric God shortly after clearing a six-colored trial.

Although she had only cleared a four-colored trial this time, it was already a remarkable feat. The rewards she obtained from the trial also included permanent Attribute increases, enhanced skills, weapons, equipment, and other precious items. Currently, in terms of healing power, no other healer in White River City could match Violet Cloud.

After Fire Dance lured another wave of monsters, Cola immediately aimed his shield at the three Demon Butlers and threw it, executing the Shield of Vengeance. The skill caused over -300 damage to the Demon Butlers, and their aggro instantly switched from Fire Dance to Cola.

Immediately after, Ye Wumian used Flame Charge on the four Demon Maids at the back, stunning them. He then followed up with a Thunderclap, lightning flickering and electrocuting the four Demon Maids and causing close to -100 damage to them; Ye Wumian’s damage was clearly much worse than Cola’s. The Demon Maids grew furious at being attacked, and one of them shot a Flame Explosion at Ye Wumian right away, engulfing the Shield Warrior in brilliant flames.

Ye Wumian had to retreat two steps before he could shake off the attack. His HP abruptly decreased by a large chunk as a damage of over -700 appeared above his head.

Ye Wumian had a maximum HP of 2,580 points, while his Defense was 1,875 points. When compared to all the other Shield Warriors in White River City, he could definitely be counted as a top-tier expert. After all, Ye Wumian was originally the boss of Jin Hai City's number one Workshop; the original equipment he used was already of good quality. In addition, Fire Dance had also helped them upgrade their equipment by raiding a few Hard Mode Dungeons. Currently, most of Ye Wumian's equipment were of Mysterious-Iron rank, while three were of Secret-Silver rank; the items that were of Secret-Silver rank were his shield, breastplate, and leg guards. Yet, even with such equipment, his Attributes were still far from being comparable to Cola's.

"Strong!" When Aqua Rose witnessed the difference between Cola and Ye Wumian, she could not help but look at Cola, who was handling ten monsters simultaneously, in shock.

Before, when Aqua Rose watched how effortlessly Cola had lured and tanked the monsters, she had even believed for a second that they were not actually in a 20-man Hell Mode Dungeon. However, now that she had witnessed Ye Wumian tanking, she immediately woke up from her stupor. This was indeed Hell Mode. Cola was simply too powerful, making the monsters look weak instead. It was no wonder Shi Feng was confident enough to challenge the Hell Mode of the Demon's Castle right away. With such a powerful MT, it was not impossible for them to start from Hell Mode.

"Healers, prioritize healing Ye Wumian. Everyone else, focus your attacks and kill the Demon Maids first." Shi Feng immediately rushed into the fray after saying so, aiming for one of the Demon Maids.

"Leave it to me!" Blackie said excitedly; it was finally his turn to display his strength. He then waved his Epic ranked staff, Mavis's Guard, sending a bombardment of spells at the Demon Maids.

Blackie's firepower spoke for itself. Each one of his Dark Arrows caused -964 damage to the monsters, and critical hits caused -2,106 damage. If the effect of his staff, Spear of Light, triggered, he could also deal around -800 additional damage.

Blackie then used Hell Flame, dealing over -1,000 damage every second to all targets within a 10-yard radius of the targeted location. If demons did not possess high magic resistance, the damage of this spell would have been even higher.

Compared to Blackie, Aqua Rose's damage as an Elementalist was much weaker. Every time she used Flame Explosion or Chain Explosion, she could only deal -670 damage or so. Aqua Rose felt slightly depressed at this scene. After all, she used to be an honorary elder of Twilight Echo, yet her damage was actually lower than Blackie's by over 300 points.

However, Aqua Rose did not know that Blackie held an Epic ranked staff in his hands. If she were to find out about it, she would definitely jump in shock.

As for the other mages in the team, the damage they dealt was all above -500 or so.

As for the melee players, Fire Dance stood out the most. Although she only dealt around -280 damage with her normal attacks and her skills dealt around -460 damage, her Attack Speed with the two daggers was extremely fast. When she attacked a Demon Maid, not only was the Demon Maid unable to use any spells, its HP also madly decreased. After Fire Dance accumulated eight stars' worth of energy, she immediately used Eviscerate on the Demon Maid, dealing over -2,400 damage to the monster.

As for Lonely Snow the Berserker, although his weapon was only a Level 15 Secret-Silver ranked two-handed axe, his normal attacks still dealt over -500 damage; his attacks that achieved a critical hit dealt over -900 damage. However, when compared to an Assassin, his attack rate was much lower.

In regard to the damage output of the eight great experts of Zero Wing, the newly joined Five Demon Generals and the four experts from Green Leaf Workshop had long since grown numb of it. Not to mention, the power the experts of Zero Wing showed right now was only the tip of the iceberg.

Just as Aqua Rose and Icy Fruit were getting over their shock, Shi Feng's damage once again blew their minds away.

Shi Feng looked just like the Grim Reaper when he brandished the Abyssal Blade and the Silver Lake, sweeping through the monsters like a violent tornado. Just his normal attacks alone dealt over -350 damage. However, that was not the end. When his attacks achieved a critical hit, they dealt over -700 damage. Sometimes, triple critical hits would even appear, dealing over -1,000 damage in a single attack. Meanwhile, due to Shi Feng's high attack rate, the chances for double critical hits were also very high. It was a very pleasing sight to behold.

Shi Feng then used Thundering Flash, three arcs of lightning passing through all the elite monsters. Instantly, damages of -510, -721, and -1,020 appeared above the monsters' heads. Some of the monsters had even received critical hits, multiplying the damage they received by twofold, and even threefold.

Immediately after, Shi Feng activated Dark Violent Dance, the skill enabling him to spread 40% of the target damage towards enemies within a 12-yard cone in front of him. Every time he slashed his sword, the 14 Elite monsters behind his main target would receive over -100 damage. If he executed the Level 10 Chop, the 14 monsters would instantly receive over -300 damage.

Although Shi Feng's damage was frightening, it was not his most amazing aspect. Instead, the area he excelled at the most was his perfect grasp of timing and the overall situation. As long as these Elite monsters showed the slightest signs of leaving the group, he would immediately execute Thunder Flame Explosion, placing all these Elite monsters into a Fainted state. As a result, the two MTs would have more time to react to the situation, readjusting their positions and retaking the aggro of the monsters.

Although Aqua Rose had long since known of Shi Feng's strength, she still could not help but be shocked when she personally witnessed Shi Feng's damage output.

After killing these two waves of Elites, Shi Feng took a look at the team's Damage Output List.

“Hah, I’m no good anymore. It’s been too long since I upgraded my equipment. I never thought I would deal only this little damage.” Shi Feng smiled bitterly.

Although Shi Feng’s total damage ranked at the very top of the team, his damage exceeding even Blackie’s, in terms of single-attack output, he was far from being Blackie’s match.

All this time, Shi Feng had been busy making money and increasing his Guild’s backing. Hence, he did not get much of a chance to upgrade his own equipment. Presently, he was still using the Level 10 Mysterious-Iron Set Equipment, the Wind Extinguisher set. He only had three pieces of Secret-Silver Equipment on his entire person, and they were even Level 10 equipment only...

Shi Feng depended mainly on the Abyssal Blade and his Pseudo-extraordinary item, the Blazing Meteor, to produce his frightening damage. Without them, he would only rank around fifth or sixth place at best within the team.

However, Shi Feng’s words had immediately earned him the contemptuous gazes of everyone in the team.

If Shi Feng, who ranked first in terms of damage output, said he was no good, then what were they supposed to be?

Following which, under Shi Feng’s command, everyone advanced deeper into the castle, killing hundreds of Elites and a dozen or so Special Elites. Of the latter, the Demon Hounds were extremely ferocious. Moreover, these Demon Hounds moved in groups of four. Fortunately, Cola was capable of tanking three of these monsters at once, leaving the remaining one to Ye Wumian. If Cola had not been sufficiently strong, they would have definitely team-wiped.

Naturally, the team's harvest was also bountiful. Aside from a few Tier 1 Gemstones, and Bronze and Mysterious-Iron Equipment, they had also obtained two pieces of Secret-Silver Equipment. One of them was a cloth-armor chest piece for Elementalist, which was promptly distributed to Aqua Rose. The other item was cloth-armor shoes for Clerics. As Violet Cloud already had excellent equipment, she had no need for the shoes at all. Hence, the equipment was given to the other Cleric in the team, Icy Fruit.

"The profits of a 20-man Hell Mode Team Dungeon is truly high. We have obtained so many Mysterious-Iron Equipment just from the Elite monsters. The Special Elites even drop Secret-Silver Equipment," Aqua Rose exclaimed. Just the harvest they reaped from arriving at the first Boss was already comparable to the harvest of raiding a Hard Mode Team Dungeon. If they could kill one or two Bosses this time, they would definitely make a huge profit.

"It's still too early to get excited. Save your joy for after we finish raiding this Boss before us." Shi Feng's pupils contracted, focusing his gaze towards the center of the arena. A tall heavy-armored knight with bloodshot eyes stood there, an aura of bloodthirst surrounding it.

[Knight Captain Justin Freed] (Demonic Being, Lord Rank)

Level 16

HP 880,000/880,000

Chapter 264 - Nemesis

"Such a high HP!" Aqua Rose couldn't help but wrinkle her brows at this sight.

The amount of HP a Boss was correlated with the amount of time needed to kill it, and the more HP a Boss had, the higher the demands on the damage dealers. The Bosses of Level 10, 20-man Hell Mode Team Dungeons would have 700,000 HP at maximum. Even so, not a single team in White River City had managed to clear one such Dungeon yet. Meanwhile, the Boss before them had 880,000 HP. Aqua Rose instantly felt despair at this sight.

Fire Dance and the others, on the other hand, felt nothing much about it. They were simply waiting for Shi Feng's orders.

Feeling everyone's fervent gaze on him, Shi Feng smiled as he said, "Cola, go test the waters. Gluttonous Mouse, you'll be responsible for healing him. Everyone else, pay close attention to the Boss's movement patterns and habits; be sure to take a video recording. Afterwards, we'll think of a way to raid it."

As the Knight Captain of the Demon's Castle, Justin Freed excelled in melee combat. Even though Cola boasted excellent equipment, he could survive three hits at most from this Boss. If it were any other MT, they would definitely die in two hits.

Aside from possessing high Attack Power, Justin Freed was a heavy-armored knight and his Defense spoke for itself. Now that he had been converted into a demon, his natural magic resistance was also very high. Justin Freed was practically a Boss without weaknesses.

Justin Freed had two major skills, and if not taken with caution, either one of these skills could easily wipe out their entire team.

Moreover, these two skills were further strengthened by the Hell Mode difficulty, making them extremely hard to deal with.

The first skill was called Demon Summoning. Periodically, Justin Freed would summon three Demon Guards. If players failed to kill these three Demon Guards within a set amount of time, they would be absorbed into Justin Freed's body, replenishing the Boss's HP. In the Hard Mode difficulty of the Dungeon, each Demon Guard would heal Justin Freed of 3% of his maximum HP, while in Hell Mode, that percentage was increased to 5%. Hence, players needed to kill these Demon Guards no matter what.

The second skill was called Death Blow. When using this skill, Justin Freed would randomly mark a player and throw a spear at them, dealing large amounts of damage. Players struck by this spear would also have their Movement Speed reduced by 60%, and Defense reduced by 100%. Justin Freed would then charge towards this marked player. During this charge, players had to avoid standing between Justin Freed and the marked player. Otherwise, both the marked player and the players standing in Justin Freed's way would die without question. Hence, when a player was marked by Justin Freed, they needed to run as far away from everyone else as possible. The marked player would be fine as long as they could survive Justin Freed's onslaught for 10 seconds.

Just these two skills alone would already cause many challengers to despair. However, Justin Freed also possessed multiple other minor skills, although those would not be a huge problem if players made sure to dodge them.

After Cola and Gluttonous Mouse battled with the Boss a few times, everyone fully understood just how amazing Justin Freed was. If struck by Justin Freed's greatsword, even a powerful tank like Cola would lose over 1,400 HP. It would take Justin Freed only two attacks to finish off anyone else within the team. Moreover, Justin Freed had a very high Attack Speed; he had no problems brandishing his greatsword twice in one second. If they wished to successfully clear this Boss, they needed to cooperate with each other properly. Not only did the MTs have to know when to dodge Justin Freed's attacks, the other melee classes also needed to know how to interrupt the Boss's attack pattern.

"Start the raid!"

After Shi Feng finished giving out his instructions, everyone went to their assigned positions, making a perfect encirclement around Justin Freed. Once ready, Cola immediately rushed towards Justin Freed, while Ye Wumian waited at one side for the appearance of the three Demon Guards.

Compared to attacking an Elite monster, the damage Cola dealt to Justin Freed was much lower; his normal attacks only dealt slightly more than -100 damage to the Boss. After Cola solidified his aggro of the Boss, everyone else promptly barraged Justin Freed with attacks.

However, the team quickly discovered a crucial matter—Justin Freed's Defense was seriously too high. During the trial runs, Cola had been the only one attacking. Hence, everyone had not really noticed how high Justin Freed's Defense was.

Take Lonely Snow for example. As a Berserker, every time he struck Justin Freed's back with his two-handed axe, he could only deal slightly more than -200 damage. Even after using Armor Break on the Boss, his damage only barely reached -300.

As for the newcomers, the damage they dealt was far less.

"His Defense is too high!" Even with her most powerful spells, Aqua Rose only managed to deal around -500 damage to the Boss.

"Shadow Burst!"

Blackie didn't dare hold back, immediately using the new skill he received for clearing the four-colored trial. Five black streaks of light immediately shot out from his staff, landed on Justin Freed's back, and exploded.

Damages of -736, -741, -726, -732, -738 appeared above Justin Freed's head.

Shi Feng was also slashing madly at Justin Freed's back. However, the damage he dealt was far lower than Blackie's. Each of his basic attacks only dealt over -100 damage. However, this damage was further increased when Shi Feng triggered one of the Abyssal Blade's effects, inflicting the Doom Curse on the Boss. There was also the Damage Amplification effect from Thundering Flash.

As Justin Freed was a Hell Mode Boss, both the Abyssal Blade's Doom Curse and the effect of Thundering Flash were greatly weakened. Overall, the two debuffs had weakened Justin Freed by 15%.

Simultaneously, Shi Feng swapped out his Might of a Thousand title for his Demon Hunter title, further weakening Justin Freed.

Now, Justin Freed only possessed 80% of his original strength. This result undeniably reduced the burden placed on everyone in the team.

"Guild Leader, the additional passive skill of your weapon and also the effect of your title are simply too amazing! Thanks to you, the difficulty of this Boss has been forcefully brought down a notch!" Cola said with a smile. Undeniably, he was the person who profited the most from these debuffs.

Aqua Rose's eyes glowed with joy as well when she witnessed this scene. Thanks to Shi Feng's skills and title, they now had hope of defeating this Boss.

It seems that I, too, should get more of such titles in the future. It would make Boss raids a lot easier. Aqua Rose looked at Shi Feng's title in envy. However, she knew it would be very difficult to obtain such a title. Aqua Rose made a note to herself to ask Shi Feng how she, too, could obtain such a title when they left this Dungeon.

When Justin Freed's HP fell to 90%, Shi Feng immediately shouted through the team chat, "Ye Wumian, get ready to aggro the monsters! Everyone, focus fire on the spawns the moment they appear! Fire Dance and I will help Cola cope with the Boss!"

"Damnable trespassers! Guards! Get rid of them!" Justin Freed bellowed.

Suddenly, three Demon Guards ran in from outside the arena. Every one of these Demon Guards were Elite monsters. Moreover, each of them possessed 40,000 HP.

Fortunately, the Demon Guards had much lower Defense compared to the Boss. The team took no time at all to finish all three, especially when they had a powerhouse like Blackie.

Everyone then returned their focus to the Boss.

During the entire battle, Shi Feng did not get many chances to deal damage. Possibly due to there being many more people attacking him, Justin Freed's attack pattern right now was slightly different from when only Cola and Gluttonous Mouse were raiding him. The Boss could always accurately force Cola into a corner whenever he brandished his greatsword, preventing Cola from effectively dodging his attacks. To make matters worse, aside from Shi Feng, nobody else in the team could accurately find a way to interrupt the Boss's attack rhythm. Although Fire Dance managed to react to the situation and find a suitable location to attack, due to her low Strength as an Assassin, she failed to interrupt Justin Freed's attack. Hence, Shi Feng had no choice but to focus all his attention on interrupting the Boss's attacks. Otherwise, if Cola were to make a mistake and eat any of the Boss's minor skills, he would definitely lose his life because the healers would not be able to keep up with their healing. Concurrently, Cola's death would also mean everyone else's death.

When Justin Freed's HP fell to 78%, he finally used Death Blow in a fit of rage.

Meanwhile, the target of this skill was none other than Shi Feng.

Shi Feng's first reaction to the activation of this skill was to turn tail and run. After being marked by this skill, unless players activated skills that provided invincibility, they would unquestionably die when Justin Freed closed in on them.

Justin Freed retrieved a silver spear and abruptly threw it at Shi Feng. Instantly, a silver flash streaked across the sky and flew at Shi Feng, producing a boom as it broke the sound barrier.

Players were unable to dodge this silver spear, so they could only try to block it. Hence, just as the spear was about to reach him, Shi Feng immediately spun his body around and activated Parry.

The spear smashed into the Abyssal Blade, generating brilliant sparks as metal clashed against metal. Shi Feng was forced to retreat over a dozen steps before he could shake off the attack and stabilize his body. Both his hands felt numb after blocking Justin Freed's attack, and he had very nearly lost his grip on his swords. He then took a glance at the Abyssal Blade, finding a clear scar on the blade of the sword.

Unbelievable. To think that this move could even damage a Magic Weapon... If it were a Secret-Silver Weapon taking this hit, wouldn't it get destroyed instantly? Even a Fine-Gold Weapon might not survive this attack. Shi Feng secretly rejoiced that he had not used the Silver Lake to block this attack. Otherwise, the sword would have been finished.

After seeing his spear blocked, Justin Freed grew furious. Ignoring Cola, he charged at Shi Feng with large strides.

Without hesitation, Shi Feng immediately activated Windwalk, increasing his Movement Speed by 30%. He then started moving in circles around the arena.

As Shi Feng did not receive any damage from Justin Freed's spear, he also did not receive the Movement Speed reduction debuff. Hence, no matter how hard the Boss tried to chase Shi Feng, he simply couldn't catch up. In the end, Shi Feng kited the Boss around the arena for the full ten seconds.

With both of Justin Freed's major skills dealt with, everyone returned to their positions and resumed their attack on Justin Freed. Later on, no matter how many times Justin Freed used his major skills, the end result was still the same. After a dozen minutes passed, even when Justin Freed entered his berserk state, he still could not change the inevitable. The reason being, Cola had Protection Blessing to stave off the Boss's increased damage. Cola also had the Arclight Guard's additional skill, Time Arc. The effect of this skill was the equivalent of providing Cola with nine seconds of invincibility. It also allowed him to reset the Cooldown of any skills he had used during Time Arc's duration. One way or another, Cola had managed to endure and survive through the 20-second duration of the Boss's berserk state.

In the end, Justin Freed let out a scream of resentment as he fell to the ground, his body leaving behind a pile of dazzling items as it disappeared.

Chapter 265 - Dark Knight Gaia

"It's a jackpot!"

"Our karma must be too good!"

"I wonder what we'll get?"

"This is the Hell Mode of the Demon's Castle. A jackpot should give us at least a Dark-Gold Weapon, right?"

Justin Freed's death allowed everyone to breathe a sigh of relief. However, when they saw the pile of items on the ground, everyone knew that their luck had come. Just a brief glance told them that Justin Freed had dropped more than ten items. It was an obvious sign that this was one of those rare karmic jackpots.

"Alright, don't get too excited right now. Rest and recover for now." Shi Feng simply smiled when he looked at his teammates' excitement. However, he knew that the jackpot this time around was no coincidence.

Others might not know this, but the Demon's Castle was actually the hardest Dungeon out of all the Level 15, 20-man Team Dungeons, although everyone believed that it was simply a 20-man Dungeon with above average difficulty. In the past, countless Guilds had suffered team-wipe after team-wipe in order to raid the Demon's Castle. According to Shi Feng's understanding, the Bosses of every Hell Mode Team Dungeon that possessed the highest difficulty out of all Hell Mode Team Dungeons of the same level would always yield a jackpot when it was being raided for the first time. This was a reward by the system for pioneering the Team Dungeon with the highest difficulty.

While Shi Feng was counting up the loot from Justin Freed, a group of players revived at the entrance of the Demon's Castle.

"Boss, that Justin Freed's Defense and Attack are simply too high. Compared to a Level 10 Dungeon, the Demon's Castle is far more difficult. Moreover, this is only the Normal Mode Dungeon. Even a powerful MT like yourself could not survive three hits from the first Boss. I don't think there's any way we can raid this Dungeon right now," a Druid said.

"It seems that two MTs are required for this Boss, to share the damage. We can just let a Ranger kite the three summoned monsters." After experiencing a battle with Justin Freed, War Wolf fully realized just

how powerful the Boss was. Every time Justin Freed attacked, War Wolf would be forced into a corner and prevented from dodging; he had no choice but to take the full brunt of the Boss's attack.

If he only had to endure Justin Freed's basic attacks, War Wolf was confident he could make do with the heals he received. However, one of Justin Freed's minor skills, Thousand Sweep, dealt at least -1,000 damage to all targets within an 8-yard radius. Meanwhile, the activation time for this skill was practically instantaneous, so War Wolf had no chance at dodging it. When War Wolf ate this minor skill in addition to a basic attack, he would instantly lose at least 2,000 HP. Only with all four healers in the team focusing their heals on him could they barely manage to get his HP back up to a safe level before Justin Freed's next attack connected. However, shortly after, the Boss summoned three Demon Guards.

Once the healers spread their focus to the other members of the team, War Wolf was promptly slain by Justin Freed.

The end result? A team-wipe.

As War Wolf's team was about to enter the Demon's Castle for the second time, Shi Feng had already started distributing the loot.

The jackpot this time had yielded 11 weapons and equipment in total. There were also quite a number of Magic Crystals and precious materials.

Among the weapons and equipment dropped were three Secret-Silver Equipment: leg guards for Rangers, a hat for Druids, and shoulder guards for Summoners.

As this was a Guild-only team, and also a pioneer raid, the distribution of items this time was not done using the contribution-auction method. Instead, Shi Feng assigned the items to specific players while placing priority on increasing the overall battle prowess of the team.

Meanwhile, Fine-Gold ranked weapons and equipment numbered the most. There was a total of six of such items dropped by Justin Freed. The Attributes of these items spoke for themselves. The items dropped from the Hell Mode of the Demon's Castle were all of the finest quality.

Lonely Snow received a Level 15 Fine-Gold ranked greataxe, while Cola received a Level 15 Fine-Gold ranked shortsword. Meanwhile, the Secret-Silver Weapons the two previously used were passed on to their teammates. The remaining four items were Fine-Gold Equipment: shoes for Swordsmen, arm guards for Cursemancers, a chest piece for Oracles, and a chest piece for Elementalists.

Shi Feng kept the shoes for Swordsmen for himself, exchanging it with his Level 10 Mysterious-Iron ranked boots.

[Triumph Boots] (Shoes, Plate Armor, Fine-Gold Rank)

Level 15

Defense +184

Strength +17, Agility +20, Endurance +12

Movement Speed +5

Restricted to Swordsman.

Additional Passive Skill-

Light-footed: Increases Movement Speed by 5%.

Shi Feng then handed the Fine-Gold ranked arm guards to Blackie, the chest piece for Oracles to Gluttonous Mouse, and the chest piece for Elementalists to Aqua.

The final two items were of Dark-Gold rank. One was a pitch-black longsword, while the other was a dark-gray colored staff that emitted black mist.

[Demonbane] (One-handed Sword, Dark-Gold Rank)

Level 15

Attack Power +183

Strength +20, Agility +21, Endurance +10

Attack Speed +3

Durability 100/100

Additional Passive Skill-

Demonbane: Deals 20% additional damage towards darkness-type monsters.

Although the Demonbane was only at the level of being satisfactory in terms of Attributes, the passive skill that came along with it was perfect for raiding the Demon's Castle. Shi Feng just happened to be able to replace his Level 10 Dark-Gold Weapon, the Silver Lake.

Although the Silver Lake was a Personal Exclusive Weapon, in terms of Attributes and Attack Power, it was much weaker than the Level 15 Demonbane. The reason being, there would be a huge increase in the performance of weapons and equipment every five Levels. Moreover, when taking into consideration the convenience of the upcoming battles, Shi Feng had even more reason to exchange the Silver Lake for the Demonbane.

As for the Dark-Gold ranked staff, it was also of extremely good quality.

[Black Mist Staff] (Two-handed Staff, Dark-Gold Rank)

Level 15

Equipment Requirement: Strength 40, Intelligence 60

Attack Power +154

Intelligence +42, Vitality +28, Endurance +33

Chanting Speed +6

Durability 100/100

Elemental Spell Damage increased by 10%

Elemental Spells have 18% chance to achieve a critical hit.

Ignore Levels +3

Cast Range +2

Elemental Spell Levels +1

Restricted to Elementalist.

“Wow! The Attributes on this staff are insane! It’s practically tailored for Elementarlists!” Even though Blackie already had an Epic ranked staff, he still couldn’t help but exclaim when he saw the Attributes on this staff.

The eyes of the two Elementarlists in the team immediately glowed upon seeing the Attributes of this staff.

“This staff will go to Aqua.” Shi Feng handed the staff over to Aqua Rose without hesitation. Although Taciturn Goose, who was one of the newly recruited Five Demon Generals, was also an Elementarlist, Aqua Rose was the Vice-Leader of the Guild.

It would not look well if the Vice-Leader of the Guild continued using only a Secret-Silver ranked staff. Moreover, Aqua Rose’s techniques and strength was far above Taciturn Goose’s, and she would be able to display the staff’s true power better.

“For me?” Although Aqua Rose indeed liked this Black Mist Staff very much, she had only recently joined the Guild. She would feel very awkward if she were to receive such an amazing staff so quickly.

“Take it. You’re the Vice-Leader of our Guild. We can’t have other Guilds looking down on Zero Wing now, can we?” Shi Feng said, a grin on his face.

“That’s right, Vice-Leader! Our Guild is acknowledged as one of the six major Guilds right now! If the other Guilds were to find out that our Vice-Leader was still using a Secret-Silver ranked staff, they would definitely make fun of us!” Blackie said.

“Alright, then. I’ll take it.”

Aqua Rose felt that their words were logical. As one of the top management of the Guild, every action she took affected the Guild's reputation. If others were to discover her poor quality equipment, although they might not outright slander them with insults, they would definitely look down on Zero Wing. It would make others think that Zero Wing was not as good as it seemed to be.

After equipping this exquisite staff, Aqua Rose suddenly felt the responsibilities placed upon on her shoulders growing heavier.

Following which, after everyone was rested, they resumed advancing towards the heart of the Demon's Castle.

Due to the jackpot from Justin Freed, the team's overall strength was greatly increased. They had a much easier time now when they fought against the Elites and Special Elites, and very quickly, they arrived at the main hall of the Demon's Castle. The final Boss, the Dark Knight Gaia, sat high above on the throne inside the hall.

The moment everyone set foot inside the hall, the atmosphere of the room suddenly changed, and even the air started feeling heavy.

Everyone in the team sucked in a mouthful of cold breath at the scene inside the hall.

"This is a joke, right?" Blackie looked at the throne in the distance, his mouth gaping wide open in shock.

"What is going on here? Why are there two more Bosses with Dark Knight Gaia?" Astonished, Shi Feng stared at the two beauties standing beside the throne. The two beauties had a pair of pitch-black wings on their backs, and both of them were giving off an imposing aura that was no weaker than Dark Knight Gaia's.

Chapter 266 - Holy Light

Just Dark Knight Gaia alone was a challenge for them to deal with. Yet, there were two more Bosses of equal strength now.

Even Shi Feng felt powerless at this sight...

However, the fact that there were three Bosses in this hall was not the most important point. The key point was that even a single Boss was enough to cause everyone to despair.

The difficulty of this quest is too high. Shi Feng's head ached when he looked at the three Bosses. He never imagined that Weissman's quest would be so difficult.

If it were the normal Hell Mode Demon's Castle, Shi Feng would still have a way to clear it. However, if he had to face the three Bosses before him simultaneously, then there really was no hope for clearing this Dungeon at all.

[Dark Knight Gaia] (High Lord Rank)

Level 16

HP 4,000,000/4,000,000

[Fallen Angel Ayr] (High Lord Rank)

Level 16

HP 3,600,000/3,600,000

[Fallen Angel Lara] (High Lord Rank)

Level 16

HP 3,600,000/3,600,000

Not only did the quest increase the number of Bosses, it had also greatly increased their strength. With a frightening 4,000,000 HP, even if their healers exhausted all their Mana, they still wouldn't be able to kill Dark Knight Gaia.

It was also highly possible that Cola would die with a single stab from Dark Knight Gaia's spear.

"Guild Leader, I think we should withdraw. There must be a problem with the System. Four million HP is just ridiculous..." Cola said, shaking his head while sighing.

"I think so as well, Brother Feng. Maybe we should go out and reset the Dungeon," Blackie said.

The others had similar thoughts as well. Even if this was Hell Mode, the difficulty of these Bosses was simply preposterous.

“Since we’ve already come this far, let’s give it a try. There should be a special mechanism in place if the Bosses are set to be so powerful.” Shi Feng did not think there was an error with the System. It definitely had its own reasoning for making the Bosses this powerful. So, they might as well test the water. Who knows? They might even discover some secret trick that will allow them to defeat these Bosses.

Since Shi Feng had already spoken, the others naturally did not oppose his decision. At worst, they would simply waste some of their EXP, and EXP was something they could easily obtain.

Hence, like the previous time, Cola and Gluttonous Mouse went ahead to gauge the standards of the Bosses. Like before, Cola threw his shield at the three Bosses, activating Shield of Vengeance. Yet, the moment Cola’s shield struck the three Bosses, everyone in the team was stunned by what they saw.

-1...

-1...

-1...

Only one point of damage appeared above each of the three Bosses. Their frightening Defense rendered everyone in the team speechless.

“You are seeking death!” Dark Knight Gaia spoke in a tone that was neither enraged nor arrogant. Rather, his voice was only filled with coldness and indifference. He spoke just like a machine—

emotionless. Gaia then slowly got up from his throne. He did not rush to attack Cola, instead choosing to abruptly focus his eyes on Cola.

Cola instantly felt a chill overcome his body. Although this was a game, the pressure he felt was nothing but real.

Similarly, the two Fallen Angels by Gaia's side did not take any action. They did not even give Cola a single glance, as if saying Cola was not worth their attention at all.

"I refuse to believe it yet."

Cola summoned up his courage as he used Punishment on Dark Knight Gaia. However, just like before, his attack only dealt one point of damage to the Boss. Everyone cringed at this result.

This time, Dark Knight Gaia finally retaliated against Cola's attack. Gaia casually retrieved a spear from his side, aimed it at Cola, and threw it. Before anyone could react, a flash of light pierced through Cola's chest, followed by a sonic boom reverberating throughout the hall. The attack caused over -2,900 damage to Cola, leaving him with only several hundred HP remaining. This casual attack had nearly taken Cola's pitiful life.

Just as Dark Knight Gaia was about to attack for the second time, a pillar of holy light descended from the sky, enveloping Cola.

When Gaia's spear clashed against the holy light, it was as if the spear had struck an impenetrable wall—the spear could not advance by even an inch.

“There was a trick to it as expected.” Shi Feng smiled faintly when he saw the holy light descending from the sky. He also discovered the silhouette of a person floating amidst the pillar of holy light. Hence, Shi Feng shouted in the team chat, “Everyone, together! Healers, get Cola’s HP back up first!”

Previously, everyone merely had the intention of giving the Bosses a try; they did not hold any hope of actually killing them. Now that a chance had appeared, how could they easily give it up?

The atmosphere surrounding the team instantly changed. No longer were they shrouded by despair.

Huh? Why is it her? When the person inside the pillar of light walked out, Shi Feng discovered a familiar face. When he caught a clearer view of that saintly appearance, his mind immediately turned sluggish.

The person that walked out of the pillar of holy light was actually the Tier 3 Divine Official Sharlyn.

“Wow! My Goddess!” Blackie’s eyes widened upon seeing Sharlyn, his drool nearly leaking out of his mouth.

Putting aside Sharlyn’s peerless appearance and graceful figure, just that extraordinary aura that she exuded would attract others to her. Gifted with both appearance and aura, Sharlyn was even more mesmerizing than the Snow Goddess, Gentle Snow.

After Sharlyn descended into the hall, she did not look at the people behind her. Instead, she focused her attention on the black throne, at Dark Knight Gaia and the two Fallen Angels by his side.

Dark Knight Gaia no longer maintained his look of indifference when he noticed Sharlyn’s appearance. Instead, a hint of fear showed on his face.

“Gaia, leave that woman to us. You take care of those ants and activate the teleportation gate. It is about time we let this continent be filled with fear and death once more,” Fallen Angel Ayr said.

“Yes, Lady Ayr,” Dark Knight Gaia answered respectfully.

At the same time, Sharlyn whirled around to look at everyone, saying, “Adventurers! For his selfish gains, Gaia has turned the past inhabitants of this castle into demons, letting them live a life that is worse than death! Now, he is even trying to open a gate to the Demon World, summoning the Legion of Dead to attack White River City! You must stop Gaia from doing so at all costs and prevent a terrible fate from befalling the inhabitants of White River City!”

Finished speaking, Sharlyn immediately chanted some divine incantations. She then pointed a finger at the players before her. Suddenly, everyone in the team received a buff.

[Blessing of Holy Light]

Increases all Attributes by 200 points.

“This blessing is insane! My Magic Damage is over a thousand points! My HP is also over 5,000! This feels awesome!” Blackie said in exhilaration.

Everyone else shared Blackie’s feelings. Their bodies felt full of power, and they felt that they could easily go back and trample the previous Boss, Justin Freed.

Just the HP of the ranged players had already exceeded the 5,000 threshold. The other melee players also had their HPs increased past the 6,000 threshold. As for the monstrous MT of the team, Cola, his HP had already gone past the 7,000 threshold. Cola was practically a mini Boss now.

After Sharlyn and the two Fallen Angels departed to do battle, Dark Knight Gaia immediately charged towards the team of players, intending to massacre them quickly.

At this time, everyone in the team no longer looked at Dark Knight Gaia with fearful eyes like before.

Even if Cola received close to -3,000 damage from a single spear throw from the Boss, the Guardian Knight presently had over 7,000 HP. Moreover, the healers also had their Magic Damage increased from the blessing. Now, a casual heal from any one of them could replenish over a thousand HP for Cola. They had no problems coping with Dark Knight Gaia's frightening damage.

Taking the lead, Cola immediately slashed his sword at Gaia, following up the attack with a Punishment.

-328, -641.

Two damages appeared above Dark Knight Gaia's head.

Meanwhile, Shi Feng had used Silent Steps and arrived at Dark Knight Gaia's back. Executing Chop, he slashed his sword down at Gaia's neck, immediately causing more than -1,200 damage to the Boss. His follow-up normal attacks also caused around -600 damage.

However, compared to physical damage classes, the mages had a much greater improvement.

Each of Blackie's Dark Arrows caused over -2,000 damage to the Boss; over -4,000 damage if it was a critical hit. As for Aqua Rose, her Flame Explosion dealt over -1,500 damage to the Boss.

The other mages in the team could also deal over -1,200 damage with each of their attacks, which was very impressive.

On the other hand, Dark Knight Gaia's damage towards Cola was slightly reduced. Each of his attacks only dealt slightly over -2,400 damage to Cola now.

One side was strengthened, while the other, weakened. Even if Dark Knight Gaia had 4,000,000 HP, everyone still felt confident of defeating him.

As Dark Knight Gaia's HP continuously fell, his attack rate also grew fiercer, and the damage he dealt also became greater. From the initial -2,400 damage, Cola now received around -2,700 from each of Gaia's attacks.

Chapter 267 - Legendary Power

This won't do. The damage we're dealing is still too low. If this keeps up, we will definitely be the ones to die. After several exchanges with Dark Knight Gaia, Shi Feng had already deduced the most likely ending of this raid. His mind immediately started churning for a solution to this problem.

When Dark Knight Gaia's HP fell to 70%, everyone else detected that something was wrong.

The spear Gaia brandished was like a python, containing both power and agility. Gaia had a more relaxed time responding to everyone's attacks now, successfully blocking and rendering many of the attacks sent at him ineffective. Currently, Gaia was like the reincarnation of the spear god.

Dark Knight Gaia abruptly swept his spear in a circle, sending Shi Feng and the others, who were attacking his back, flying. Shi Feng reacted quickly and used Parry without hesitation, preventing any harm from reaching him. Unfortunately, everyone else in the team was not as quick to react. As a result, each of them received over -2,000 damage from the attack, suddenly increasing the burden placed on the healers.

Meanwhile, the main target of Dark Knight Gaia's attack, Cola, had to retreat a handful of steps before stabilizing his body. A frightening damage of -4,300 also appeared above his head.

"Guild Leader, the Boss is getting more powerful the longer we fight! I don't think I will last long if this situation continues!" At this moment, the Guardian Knight, Cola, was no longer as calm and composed as he was before.

Currently, the Dark Knight Gaia would deal around -3,000 damage each time he attacked Cola. If the Boss triggered a critical hit or used a skill, he would deal over -4,000 damage. Even if Cola had over 7,000 HP, the pressure placed on him was huge. His HP constantly hovered around the safety threshold, which was a very dangerous situation.

This was exactly where the Dark Knight Gaia excelled. The longer he fought, the braver he got.

On the surface, Dark Knight Gaia did not seem to use any major skills. However, in reality, he had been using them constantly.

Blood Rage. With this skill, the longer Dark Knight Gaia battled, the higher his damage would become. His Attack Speed would also rise as time passed. Just this skill alone was already sufficient to make any team that dared challenge him kneel and accept defeat.

In addition, Dark Knight Gaia also possessed an AOE skill, Blood Domain. The skill had an effective area of 100 yards. When used, a Blood Demon would spawn behind all enemies within this range. These Blood Fiends each had 10,000 HP. Contrary to expectations, these Blood Fiends would not attack players. Instead, if these Blood Fiends came within 3 yards of their locked target, they would self-destruct. The resulting explosion had an effective radius of 20 yards, and in Hell Mode, the explosion would deal -2,000 damage.

However, due to Shi Feng's quest, the current Boss the team faced was an enhanced version of the Hell Mode Dark Knight Gaia. Hence, Shi Feng did not know how much damage the Blood Fiends would deal if they exploded; it was bound to be more than -2,000 damage.

If they could not deal with these Blood Fiends quickly, leaving the monsters to self-destruct without control, the end result would, without a doubt, be a team-wipe. Yet, if everyone were to run around the hall while having the Blood Fiends chase after them, it would disrupt the team's formation; any mistake made during this confusion would easily lead to a team-wipe. Hence, the moment these Blood Fiends appeared, they needed to deal with them within the shortest amount of time possible.

Just depending on the Blessing of Holy Light won't be enough to deal with this Boss. If we can't increase our damage output, we will die sooner or later. Shi Feng took a look at the Mana levels of the four healers and discovered that all of them only had around half remaining. However, Dark Knight Gaia still had 65% of his HP left. If this situation continued, they wouldn't be able to last until the end. Not to mention, Dark Knight Gaia hadn't used Blood Domain yet. At that time, the burden on the healers would definitely be huge.

"Brother Feng, we'll definitely be team-wiped if this continues! Should I use Stars of Light now?" Blackie secretly sent a private message to Shi Feng.

Stars of Light was the most powerful skill of the Epic ranked staff, Mavis's Guard. Its might surpassed even that of a Tier 2 spell. It was a spell that could devastate both heaven and earth. Unfortunately, this powerful spell had a Cooldown time of half an hour. Hence, it was a trump card that could only be used once in a Boss battle.

As a result, whenever Blackie was in a party together with Shi Feng, he would always seek Shi Feng's advice, letting Shi Feng decide when he should use the skill.

"No, it's still too early for it." Shi Feng had long since planned for Blackie to use Stars of Light when Gaia used Blood Domain. The might of the skill would instantly evaporate the Blood Fiends that spawn.

Yet, if they did not use the skill now, they might not even survive to see Dark Knight Gaia use Blood Domain.

With two difficult options at hand, Shi Feng was at a loss which to pick.

In the end, we still aren't strong enough. Shi Feng smiled bitterly. Even though their team was already so powerful, it was still not enough to clear this quest. Shi Feng truly did not know how those players in the past had managed to complete this quest.

However, it was also a fact that the players had already completed their Tier 1 class promotion when they completed this quest. With a team of Tier 1 players with top-tier Level 20 equipment and weapons, it would be a simple walk in the park for them to conquer the enhanced Hell Mode of the Demon's Castle.

Also, even if nobody in the team had reached Level 20, if everyone's weapons and equipment were of Dark-Gold rank or above, Dark Knight Gaia would still have no choice but to submit to them.

To put it bluntly, they were lacking in preparations.

As expected, our current equipment is still too weak. Shi Feng could not help but lament as he watched the Boss getting stronger as time passed.

Suddenly, however, a flash of realization came to Shi Feng.

That's right! If it's equipment, don't I have the Fragmented Legendary item? Shi Feng thought of the ring that had been left asleep inside his bag.

The Heavenly Dragon's Breath. As a Fragmented Legendary item, it possessed the strength to change a player's Tier. Yes, Tier, not Level.

Previously, Shi Feng had never managed to reach the requirements of the Fragmented Legendary item. Now, however, he had already achieved it.

[Heavenly Dragon's Breath] (Ring, Fragmented Legendary Rank)

Equipment Requirement: Strength 200, Agility 200, Intelligence 120

Strength +40%, Agility +40%, Intelligence +30%, Endurance +30%

Movement Speed +20%

Attack Speed +30%

Ignore Levels +10

All item level requirements reduced by 10 Levels.

Additional Skill 1: Dragon's Authority. Suppress all enemies in the surroundings with the might of the Heavenly Dragon, inflicting the Fear status onto enemies within a 30-yard distance, reducing their Attack Power by 20%, Attack Speed by 20%, and Movement Speed by 20% for 1 minute.

Cooldown: 3 minutes

Additional Skill 2: Dragon Breath. Inflicts 6X damage in a 30*5 yard line in front of you. There is a 20% chance to induce the Fainted state for 2 seconds.

Cooldown: 5 minutes

Additional Skill 3: Heavenly Dragon's Power. Allows the user to temporarily possess the power of the Heavenly Dragon, increasing HP by 300%, Strength by 100%, and Defense by 300%, and grants immunity to all controlling effects for 2 minutes.

Cooldown: 3 hours

The Dragon Slayer Mekaseru once owned the Heavenly Dragon's Breath. It was originally a Legendary Ranked Item possessing the suppressed strength of the dragon tribe. Due to damage resulting from a

war between Gods, its might has greatly decreased. However, the Heavenly Dragon's Breath possesses an incomparably strong magic power and possesses the potential to restore itself. Its past glory may be restored with three Magic Stars and one Dragon's Heart. Current restoration (0/4).

[Blessing of Holy Light]

Increases all Attributes by 200 points.

This blessing had allowed Shi Feng to instantly surpass the daunting requirement of having 120 Intelligence.

Without wasting any more time, Shi Feng immediately retrieved the Heavenly Dragon's Breath from his bag.

The instant he wore the ring, he immediately felt it transmit a boundless power into his body. Not even the Blessing of Holy Light could compare to this power.

"Good. The raid officially starts, now!"

Shi Feng looked at the silver dragon-shaped ring on his finger, a smile on his face. Whether it was his past life or his present life, this was the very first time he was feeling the strength of a Legendary item, even if it was only a fragment. He then shifted his gaze towards Dark Knight Gaia, his eyes abruptly focusing.

Dragon's Authority!

Instantly, everyone felt Shi Feng's transformation. They could feel the might of an ancient dragon coming off him, and even their souls quivered in the face of this power.

Meanwhile, as if stuck in a deep quagmire, Dark Knight Gaia's movements turned sluggish. Gaia's Attack Power was greatly reduced as well, letting Cola gain a breather. Cola no longer felt overwhelmed by Gaia's attacks, and he could even dodge the Boss's attacks now.

It wasn't just limited to Cola. Everyone else started attacking with greater efficiency as well.

Originally, they were on the verge of being team-wiped. Yet, the situation suddenly had a huge change. It was simply unbelievable.

"What happened?" Aqua Rose was shocked.

Chapter 268 - Everything is Insubstantial

Although everyone was shocked by Dark Knight Gaia's weakening, they were even more shocked by the person who activated Dragon's Authority, Shi Feng.

Currently, raging winds surrounded Shi Feng's body, swirling in all directions and creating a dazzling sight.

Shi Feng had now become the focus of this hall.

When Shi Feng took a step forward, his body instantly disappeared and reappeared in front of Dark Knight Gaia. Brandishing both the Abyssal Blade and the Demonbane, Shi Feng sent over a dozen slashes at the Boss, the afterimages of his swords creating an impression of a lotus flower.

Due to the Heavenly Dragon's Breath, Shi Feng's Attributes were greatly increased once more. Currently, his Strength had already exceeded 500 points, while his Attack was well over 1,200 points. His Agility had also exceeded 600 points. Whether it was his Attack Power or Attack Speed, both were far above the standards of even a Tier 1 Swordsman. Right now, Shi Feng could even give a Tier 2 Sword Master a run for his money.

This was the power of a Legendary item. Even though Shi Feng only had a fragmented version of it, the increase in combat power he received could allow him to challenge enemies of a higher tier.

Damages of over -1,000 appeared one after another. Some of his attacks had even dealt over -2,000 and -3,000 damage.

Dark Knight Gaia, who had previously been like an immovable mountain, was currently being forced to retreat step after step by the torrent of sword slashes. He could not even enter a basic stance due to the incessant attacks. Meanwhile, Cola was having a relaxed time going against the Boss, expending almost no effort on evading the Boss's attacks.

However, Shi Feng's onslaught had yet to end.

Thundering Flash!

Chop!

Double Chop!

Earth Splitter!

Thunder Flame Explosion!

Every skill dealt over -2,000 damage. Of them, the Level 8 Thunder Flame Explosion had even achieved a critical hit, dealing over -6,000 damage to the Boss.

Shi Feng's damage far surpassed even that of Blackie now.

"Guild Leader, what sort of potion did you take? How did you suddenly become so awesome?" Cola was extremely curious about Shi Feng's sudden transformation. Previously, Shi Feng's single-output damage was even below Blackie's and Aqua Rose's. Now, however, his damage had completely left that of the two in the dust. If Shi Feng said it was nothing, not even a ghost would believe him.

"Potion? Cola, you're thinking too highly of potions. This is the trump card of our Guild!" Blackie said, a grin on his face. He had a fair idea of what was actually going on. After all, he had also been present when Shi Feng obtained the Heavenly Dragon's Breath.

"Brother Black is right. Cola, you're looking down on Guild Leader too much," Lonely Snow chimed in with a proud tone.

The matter of the Fragmented Legendary item had always been a secret between the three of them. Shi Feng had previously told them not to leak any information about it, so nobody else, other than them, knew about it.

After all, just an Epic ranked item alone could entice a first-rate Guild to take action. If it was known that their Guild possessed a Fragmented Legendary item, rivers of blood might start to flow in White River City.

“It’s not a potion?” Aqua Rose was also surprised. However, after she gave it a thought, their words felt right. It should not be possible for potions to provide such a powerful upgrade. Yet, if it was not a potion, what else could allow Shi Feng’s battle strength to increase so tremendously?

Suddenly, Aqua Rose started growing more confused about the Guild known as Zero Wing.

It was clearly a recently established Guild. It could even be described as a blank slate. Yet, shortly after she had joined the Guild, she received one shock after another.

Aqua Rose had even begun to suspect that Shi Feng was an elder of one of those Super Guilds, and that he had come to White River City to play the role of a pig to devour the tiger.

Only a dozen seconds passed since the battle resumed, and already, Dark Knight Gaia had lost 5% of his HP. Currently, he only had 54% of his HP remaining. If this trend continued, his life would end before three minutes even passed.

However, Shi Feng was still not satisfied with this result.

The reason being, along with the passing of time, Dark Knight Gaia would grow stronger and stronger. Moreover, Dragon's Authority lasted for only one minute. After the minute was up, Dark Knight Gaia would once again be like the reincarnation of a spear god. With Cola's equipment, he would not last long under the Boss's onslaught.

Just as Dark Knight Gaia was about to recover his battle strength...

"I wonder how well this move will perform?"

The Abyssal Blade in Shi Feng's hand suddenly ignited in flames, the fire-type mana within a 30-yard radius frantically gathering around the weapon.

The light from the scorching flames illuminated the dark hall, while the heat evaporated the moisture in the air. Currently, the Abyssal Blade in Shi Feng's hand was like a miniature sun.

This was none other than Shi Feng's ultimate move, Flame Burst.

Due to his increased Attributes, the current Flame Burst was much stronger than the last time Shi Feng used it.

Before anyone could react, the Abyssal Blade turned into a shooting star, smashing into Dark Knight Gaia's chest.

Gaia's previously impenetrable armor was like tofu when it met with the Abyssal Blade. The Abyssal Blade easily pierced Gaia's steel armor and body like a hot knife through butter, creating a large hole in Gaia's chest. However, this was not the end of Shi Feng's attack. Shi Feng then followed up with five more slashes, each of his slashes dealing over -6,000 damage. Some of them had even achieved a critical

hit, dealing over -13,000 damage. Meanwhile, the armor on Dark Knight Gaia's body was instantly shattered, the sundered metal fragments smashing heavily against the stone pillars at the sides of the hall. These stone pillars completely collapsed at the impact of the metal fragments.

Receiving these six continuous attacks, Dark Knight Gaia instantly lost over 60,000 HP. This scene absolutely dumbfounded everyone in the team.

Right now, Shi Feng looked more like the Boss here with Dark Knight Gaia as the player.

The situation was so shocking that Cola and everyone else in the team even forgot to attack Dark Knight Gaia.

"Oi! Stop daydreaming! The Boss is still alive!" Shi Feng smiled helplessly as he received everyone's fervent gazes.

After Shi Feng's reminder, Cola and Ye Wumian quickly reacted and charged at the Boss.

Maybe because he no longer had his armor, Dark Knight Gaia was actually receiving an additional 30% damage from everyone's attacks now. The raid progressed at a much faster rate right away.

"You ants have angered me! Accept the punishment of darkness!"

The moment Dark Knight Gaia bellowed, the entire hall turned bloody red. Immediately, 20 ferocious-looking Blood Fiends appeared within the hall. Meanwhile, these Blood Fiends each had 20,000 HP, and each of them quickly ran towards their locked targets after being summoned.

“Blackie!” Shi Feng said in the team chat.

“Got it! It’s finally time for me to show off!” Blackie chuckled as he waved his staff. A gigantic magic circle appeared above the hall, and in the blink of an eye, a dazzling star emerged from the magic circle and crashed downwards.

The Stars of Light had a very wide coverage. Hence, Blackie easily enveloped all the Blood Fiends within the skill, the enraged Dark Knight Gaia included.

Each star caused over -5,000 damage. After over a dozen stars came crashing down, not even ashes remained of the Blood Fiends. As for Dark Knight Gaia, he was left in a miserable state after the duration of the skill ended.

Everyone else in the team took this chance to use their most powerful moves on the Boss, holding nothing back.

Before even a minute passed, Dark Knight Gaia’s HP fell to 30%. Instantly, the Boss went into a berserk state, his body doubling in size. In this state, both his Attack Power and Defense were greatly increased.

Even when Cola had Protection Blessing activated, the skill reducing any damage he received by 50%, he lost over 3,000 HP the instant Dark Knight Gaia’s spear connected with his body.

“Just in time.” Shi Feng had been waiting for this moment all along.

Did he think going berserk was amazing?

In front of a dragon, everything was insubstantial!

Shi Feng immediately activated Heavenly Dragon's Power, increasing his HP by 300%, Strength by 100%, Defense by 300%, and also becoming immune to all controlling effects for two minutes.

After the activation of Heavenly Dragon's Power, Shi Feng's body underwent a transformation. Dragon scales suddenly covered his skin, making him look as if he was wearing dragon-scale armor. With the addition of these dragon scales, Shi Feng's originally ordinary appearance suddenly became tyrannical.

Chapter 269 - Violent Conclusion

Originally, everyone was still worried about how they should deal with the berserk Boss. However, Shi Feng's shocking transformation immediately attracted their attention.

Leaving aside Shi Feng's new handsome and gorgeous appearance, just by standing there, he was already giving off an insurmountable pressure.

This was no longer an oppression due to strength. Instead, this pressure was the instinctive reverence for a primordial life form.

"Just what is going on here?" Aqua Rose asked in shock.

It was a known fact that players could not transform their bodies. Yet, Shi Feng had actually transformed in defiance of that notion. Moreover, that frightening pressure he was giving off was much more terrifying when compared to the berserk Dark Knight Gaia.

Let alone the others, even Blackie and Lonely Snow, who knew about the Fragmented Legendary item, were greatly astonished by Shi Feng's sudden transformation.

They never thought that a player could actually become so powerful after activating the Heavenly Dragon's Power.

"I think the Guild Leader can kill me in a single hit now," Lonely Snow said, a bitter smile on his face.

"Let alone you, even Cola might not survive a single hit from Brother Feng." With the activation of the Heavenly Dragon's Power, Shi Feng's Strength received a severalfold increase, which meant that his Attack Power had increased as well. When Blackie thought about how his most powerful skill, Stars of Light, already failed to match Shi Feng's previous strength...

If Shi Feng used a skill, even Cola, who had over 7,000 HP, would be reduced to ash.

The Heavenly Dragon's Power is strong, as expected, Shi Feng thought as he shook his fists. He could feel boundless power coursing through his body. In addition, after activating this skill, Shi Feng could feel his mind becoming much clearer than before, allowing him to reach a peak condition that he had never experienced.

Shi Feng's Strength now exceeded 1,000 points. His Attack Power was also over 2,300 points, while his HP was over 15,900. In addition, his Defense had gone past 4,500 points—almost twice that of Cola's. Currently, he could easily be considered a mini Boss.

“Cola, leave tanking the Boss to me.” Shi Feng wanted to test his new body. Moreover, it would be much more effective for him to tank the Boss instead of Cola right now. Apart from having higher Attack, Defense, and HP, Shi Feng’s current dodging capabilities were miles ahead of Cola’s.

“Alright.” Although Cola was still shocked by Shi Feng’s transformation, he managed to muster a reply.

With more than 15,900 HP, nobody was a more reliable MT than Shi Feng.

After relieving Cola of his duties, Shi Feng immediately slashed a sword at Dark Knight Gaia. Like a lightning bolt, Shi Feng’s sword smashed into Dark Knight Gaia’s body with the might of a thousand. The attack dealt over -2,000 damage to the Boss, and the strength behind the attack forced the Boss to retreat three steps. Each step the Boss retreated left behind a deep footprint on the hard tiled floor.

This was the benefit of increasing one’s Strength. Compared to increasing just Attack Power, if players with physical damage classes increased their Strength, not only could they gain additional Attack Power, their increased Strength would also create a suppression effect during battle. This effect would further raise the damage they dealt their enemies. When attacking, players could also cause their enemies to lose their balance. In a battle, if one could not maintain a proper stance, it would be very easy for problems to arise. Hence, compared to purely increasing one’s Attack Power, it would be much more beneficial to increase one’s Strength instead.

This was a kind of invisible support, and many players only discovered the importance of Basic Attributes after playing the game for a long time.

Currently, Shi Feng’s battle with Dark Knight Gaia was in full swing, and the other melee classes had no chance to get close to the Boss at all. The reason being, aside from MTs like Cola and Ye Wumian, the other melee classes could not even survive a single hit from Dark Knight Gaia. In this situation, only the ranged players could continue attacking without worry.

Although Dark Knight Gaia had gone berserk, he was merely an insignificant being in the face of the Shi Feng who had the Heavenly Dragon's Power activated.

The battle between the two of them was just like a battle between two Boss monsters. Although Shi Feng's HP was only a tiny fraction of Dark Knight Gaia's 4,000,000 HP, in this battle, Shi Feng was the only one doing actual damage. Whenever Dark Knight Gaia attacked Shi Feng, the latter would either dodge the attack or block it. Dark Knight Gaia was unable to deal any real damage to Shi Feng.

Moreover, every time Shi Feng brandished his two swords, Dark Knight Gaia would be forced to retreat. Each of Shi Feng's attacks dealt over -2,000 damage, but more often than not, his attacks would achieve a critical hit and deal over -4,000 damage. A critical Chop also dealt over -6,000 damage.

On the other hand, Dark Knight Gaia could only deal around -2,000 damage to Shi Feng with each attack. With close to 16,000 HP, the healers could take their sweet time healing Shi Feng; they had no need to fear stealing the aggro of the Boss at all. As a tank, Shi Feng was currently far stronger than the Guild's number one MT, Cola.

After the 30-second berserk period was over...

Dark Knight Gaia's body shrank back to its original size. Even though he still had Blood Rage in effect, he no longer possessed the previous ferocity he had possessed in his berserk state.

Meanwhile, the Heavenly Dragon's Power had a duration of two minutes; there were still 90 seconds left before Shi Feng's transformation ended.

Without the berserk effect, Dark Knight Gaia was like a venomous snake that lost its fangs. He could only receive a one-sided beating from Shi Feng now. Whenever Shi Feng slashed his sword, Dark Knight Gaia would have to retreat a handful of steps. The gap between the two of them simply rendered one speechless.

“Throw in everything you’ve got. We need to end the battle as quick as possible,” Shi Feng said in the team chat.

Upon Shi Feng’s reminder, the others who hadn’t dared to approach the Boss before immediately rushed up in a hurry. As a result, the damage rate to the Boss instantly soared.

When Dark Knight Gaia’s HP fell to 15%, he used Blood Domain once more, summoning another group of Blood Fiends. However, unlike the first group of Blood Fiends, these newly summoned monsters each had 30,000 HP.

“As expected, even his skills have changed.” Shi Feng had been afraid of something like this happening, hence why he wanted to end the battle as quickly as possible.

Since the quest had altered the raiding difficulty of the Dungeon, a change to the skills of the Boss would naturally occur. Since there wasn’t much of a change in Dark Knight Gaia’s Blood Rage, then the only skill that remained was Blood Domain.

“Everyone, gather in the center!” Shi Feng immediately shouted.

When Blood Domain was previously used, the team had a wide-range AOE skill like the Stars of Light to depend on. However, they had no such skill that could quickly deal with all the Blood Fiends this time. Stars of Light had a 30-minute Cooldown, so there was no way of using it for the second time in this battle. Hence, they could only hope to group up and concentrate their attacks on the monsters.

Everyone in the team reacted fast. Before three seconds had passed, all of them were already standing together.

Having the shape of a demonic beast, the blood-red monsters revealed malicious expressions upon being summoned. After locking on to their respective targets, the Blood Fiends let out frenzied roars as they charged forward.

By the time the Blood Fiends started moving, Aqua Rose had already finished chanting an incantation. First, she summoned an Ice Wall to block off all the Blood Fiends from closing in on their group. The Ice Wall also placed an additional debuff on the Blood Fiends, slowing the monsters' Movement Speeds. Right after that, Aqua Rose shot an Ice Sphere at the group of monsters, reducing their Movement Speeds even further. With the successive use of these two skills, the group of Blood Fiends now moved as slow as snails.

However, Aqua Rose was still not done with her spells. She then followed up with a third spell called Blizzard. Not only could this spell deal high amounts of damage, it also had a very good Movement Speed reduction effect...

Without staying idle, the other ranged players started throwing out attacks at the monsters as well.

Blackie had also taken this chance to use the most powerful AOE skill currently available to him.

Hell Flame!

Pillars of dark green flames shot up from the ground, repeatedly dealing over -2,000 damage to the group of Blood Fiends for five seconds.

However, such an amount of damage was still not enough to deal with the Blood Fiends.

Just as the Blood Fiends were about to close in on the team, Shi Feng suddenly appeared in front of everyone, blocking the Blood Fiends' path of advance.

"Die!" Shi Feng bellowed at the group of Blood Fiends.

Shi Feng used Thundering Flash, causing damages of -3,125, -4,321, and -6,040, and also inflicting the Damage Amplification effect to all of these Blood Fiends. However, these monsters were still not dead. Next, Shi Feng inhaled abruptly and executed Dragon Breath.

Before anyone noticed, countless wind blades transformed into streaks of silver light, piercing through everything that stood in Shi Feng's path. These Blood Fiends instantly turned into minced meat, and not even Dark Knight Gaia, who was charging at the team, was spared from this attack. Dark Knight Gaia was sent flying by the attack, and his body was embedded into the distant wall. However, an instant later, the wall behind him shattered, and Dark Knight Gaia was again sent flying for more than ten yards. Dark Knight Gaia's body was filled with bloody injuries now. Meanwhile, Dark Knight Gaia had received over -15,000 damage from Dragon Breath.

The amount of violence this skill displayed was far above Blackie's Hell Flame.

Without the threat of Blood Domain, the battle continued for only 30 more seconds before Dark Knight Gaia died in the middle of the hall, letting out an agonized roar as his life faded away.

Immediately, many people in the team leveled up. Shi Feng had also risen from Level 17 to Level 18.

White River City Region System Announcement: Congratulations to Zero Wing for becoming the first team to conquer the Hell Mode Demon's Castle. All players within the team will be rewarded with 40 Reputation Points in White River City, 10 Reputation Points in Star-Moon Kingdom, 300,000 EXP, and 10 Silver Coins.

White River City Region System Announcement: Congratulations to Zero Wing for becoming the fastest team to conquer the Hell Mode Demon's Castle. All players within the team will be rewarded with 40 Reputation Points in White River City, 10 Reputation Points in Star-Moon Kingdom, 300,000 EXP and one Tier 2 Gemstone of random Attribute.

System: Hell Mode Demon's Castle has been cleared for the first time. Loot increased by 100%.

Chapter 270 - Ennobled

Outside one of the Three Great Dungeons, the Land of Death, there were many Guilds that had established a base of operations to facilitate raiding the Dungeon.

Meanwhile, inside Dark Star's base of operations...

"The Arclight Shield is already in our hands now, so the MT problem has been dealt with. The next thing we need to do is to snatch the First Clear of the Land of Death right in front of everyone," Lone Tyrant said in high spirits.

Lone Tyrant had spent a lot of effort in order to acquire the Arclight Shield. In order to quickly collect the required 30 Gold Coins, he had played the role of the gullible fool and purchased them at an overpriced value of 700,000 Credits. However, now that the actual item was in his hands, Dark Star would officially

become the second Guild in White River City to start raiding the Hard Mode of one of the Three Great Dungeons.

Previously, the main reason why Dark Star had been surpassed by Ouroboros was the insufficient strength of their MT. Now, however, the situation was different. With their newly acquired Arclight Shield, Dark Star would be competing with Ouroboros on a level playing field.

As for the other Guilds, Dark Star had no reason to be fearful of them.

Even if Zero Wing already had their own Arclight Shields, they were only a recently established Guild. They did not possess the backing required to raid the Three Great Dungeons.

At this moment, however, a System Announcement rang out...

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...

The announcement was repeated three times.

Lone Tyrant was dumbfounded by this announcement.

He was very clear about what sort of Dungeon the Demon's Castle was. If not for the fact that the First Clear of the Three Great Dungeons was too important to them, Dark Star would have long since started raiding the Demon's Castle.

However, Zero Wing had gotten the drop on them and secretly taken the First Clear of the Demon's Castle. Moreover, it was the First Clear of the Hell Mode Demon's Castle...

Currently, Ouroboros was the only Guild in White River City that could successfully raid a 20-man Hard Mode Dungeon. However, that capability was limited to the Level 10 low-difficulty Dungeons, and not a Level 15 high-difficulty Dungeon.

"How did they do it? Aren't they just a recently established Guild?" Lone Tyrant could not make sense of the situation. "Did that Ye Feng help them in secret? Even so, they still shouldn't be able to clear it. That's a 20-man Dungeon; there is a limit to one person's strength."

"Boss, do you want us to go investigate?" an Assassin asked.

"No need. The Three Great Dungeons takes priority. Zero Wing has only obtained the First Clear of the Demon's Castle. By the time we obtain the First Clear of the Land of Death, Zero Wing would only serve as a foil to make Dark Star look even better." Lone Tyrant shook his head, a contemptuous smile on his face.

Although Lone Tyrant acted dismissively towards Zero Wing's achievement, the other Guilds in White River City did not. In addition, the independent players in White River City were also greatly astonished by Zero Wing's achievement.

Before, not everyone felt that Zero Wing really deserved to be ranked as one of the top six Guilds of White River City. After all, the only real achievement of the Guild was its monopoly of the top eight positions on the Ranking List; nothing else about the Guild was worth mentioning. Now that they had obtained the First Clear of the Hell Mode Demon's Castle, it showed that Dungeon-raiding was no longer a weakness of Zero Wing.

This situation had caused many gaming experts who were previously hesitant about joining Zero Wing to change their minds.

The reason being, Zero Wing was the second Guild in White River City to have successfully cleared a 20-man Hell Mode Dungeon. Moreover, the Dungeon they had cleared was a Level 15 Dungeon, the highest-leveled Dungeon that players could currently enter. This showed that their strength had surpassed the other Guilds by a large margin.

Just as the players in White River City were fervently discussing this matter, Shi Feng's team started distributing their spoils of war.

Originally, aside from the Hell Mode Bosses of the Three Great Dungeons, Dark Knight Gaia could be considered as the strongest Boss below Level 20. After receiving the frightening enhancement from Shi Feng's quest, Dark Knight Gaia had become even stronger than the final Boss of the Hell Mode of the Three Great Dungeons. Hence, the loot he dropped would naturally be excellent.

Dark Knight Gaia had dropped a total of 27 items: nine weapons and equipment, one Forging Design, one Tailoring Design, one Potion Recipe, one Cooking Recipe, three precious production materials, ten Magic Crystals, and one Demon's Heart. The last item was also Shi Feng's quest item this time around.

Among the nine weapons and equipment, five were of Dark-Gold rank, and all of them were items that could level up from Level 15 all the way up to Level 20. Of the five items, one was a staff for Clerics, and one was a cloth-armor chest piece for Clerics. Both items were given to Violet Cloud. Meanwhile, Blackie received a hat for Cursemancers, Aqua Rose received shoulder guards for Elementalists, and Ye Wumian received arm guards for Shield Warriors.

The remaining four weapons and equipment were of Fine-Gold rank. The leather-armor chest piece and shoulder guards were both given to Fire Dance. There was also a longbow for Rangers, which was given to Sentimental Memories, one of the Five Demon Generals. Lastly, the Berserker, Water Buffalo, received a greatsword.

After having distributed all the equipment, the team's battle power greatly increased once again.

With such equipment, no other team in White River City could even hope to compare to them.

As for the other items, Shi Feng promptly kept them for himself.

We've got a good harvest this time. Shi Feng felt exhilarated when he looked at the designs and recipes in his bag.

In the hands of others, these items would only be worth a small sum of money. In his hands, however, these items would be money-making machines.

Most importantly, the Forging Design he obtained was meant to produce the Gemstone Buckle. This item could allow players to equip an additional Gemstone onto equipment that were of Bronze rank or above. Meanwhile, players could apply up to three Gemstone Buckles on their characters, meaning they could have up to three additional Gemstones.

The value of this item was no less than the Advanced Whetstone.

As for the other recipes and designs, they were relatively valuable as well. Only, they were not as valuable as the Gemstone Buckle.

After leaving the Demon's Castle, Shi Feng allowed everyone to go ahead with their own agendas while he headed to the City Hall of White River City.

When Shi Feng arrived at the reception room of the City Hall, the Tier 4 Wizard Weissman was still as leisurely as he was before. Weissman currently stood by the window, a peaceful expression on his face as he observed the plaza outside the City Hall.

"Young man, you're here. I've already heard about your achievements from that little girl, Sharlyn." Before Shi Feng had even entered the room, Weissman had already detected his presence. At this time, Weissman moved away from the window and walked towards Shi Feng. He then nodded his head, a smile on his face as he said, "Not bad! Truly not bad at all! I never imagined a day would come when this old man would misjudge somebody! Hahaha!"

"Not only have you slain Gaia, you have also saved the entire White River City. I don't even know how I should reward you for your efforts.

“How about this? With the power vested in me, from this day onwards, you are a Viscount of White River City!

“With your strength, I believe you should be able to protect that place. Take this Blacksteel’s Contract here and head over to that place, then.”

System: Unique Quest “Demon’s Heart” completed.

Quest rewards: Position of Viscount in White River City, Blacksteel’s Contract, 500,000 EXP, 50 Free Mastery Points, and 2 Gold Coins.

Shi Feng was momentarily dumbfounded by the unexpected rewards. These rewards were simply too bountiful, especially the position of Viscount. In the entire White River City, perhaps only Shi Feng would understand the importance of this position.

“Right, I nearly forgot to mention, that little girl, Sharlyn, said she has some matters that she needs to speak with you about. She is at the Stargazing Tower right now. If you have nothing else to do, you should go see that little girl. You don’t want to miss out on a rare opportunity,” Weissman said, giving Shi Feng a meaningful smile.