

## The Strongest

### Chapter 69 – Lunatic

In the real world, the sky slowly darkened as the sun went under the mountain. On the other hand, players in God's Domain were welcoming the rise of the morning sun.

Red Leaf Town was currently brightly lit as if it were daytime. In the Trade Area, players could be found everywhere as they pushed their way through the streets. Compared to yesterday, there were a lot more players currently in Red Leaf Town, and a lot of them were new players who were Level 0.

After being officially active for two days, many people started to notice the difference between God's Domain and other virtual reality games. The battling alone was extremely attractive, not to mention other sources of entertainment. The monsters in God's Domain improved with the increase in Levels, making the battles seem increasingly real. It was no longer the usual simple bouts where players and monsters would take turns fighting each other. The battles in God's Domain were more similar to the fighting competitions in real life.

This was the age where the world's entire population would exercise. In the real world, people had already reached a level of obsession in regards to fighting competitions, making such competitions extremely popular.

Everyone wished for a battle in which they could fight to their heart's content, and even more so when exchanging blows with an expert. They wanted to chase after the intense feeling of excitement that made one's blood boil. It was an addicting feeling that was impossible to give up. Meanwhile, God's Domain had all of this, and there were no dangers to a person's life.

Moreover, God's Domain contained great adventures that were both fascinating and thrilling. There were also countless unknowns waiting to be discovered and explored. Time in the game was also double that of real life. Many players wished they could stay inside God's Domain for the rest of their lives, living their second life within the game.

It was also because of this reason that many players were attracted to God's Domain. Many virtual gaming companies, after seeing this irreversible situation, declared bankruptcy, one after another, as they prepared to invest in God's Domain. Such a situation also caused some unwilling veteran gamers to enter God's Domain, greatly increasing the number of players.

Just after returning to Red Leaf Town, Shi Feng received a bunch of System Notifications.

Almost all of them were sales notifications from the Auction House. Within an instant, the money Shi Feng possessed increased to over 500 Silver Coins or 5 Gold Coins.

Shi Feng still remembered having recently registering 3 Gold Coins at the Virtual Trade Center. After less than a day's worth of effort, he now possessed an additional 5 Gold Coins. Those Guilds obtained all this money after much difficulty, yet, they all contributed to him in the end.

Currently, there might not be another player in White River City who was wealthier than he was. The Guild Leaders of first-rate Guilds were no exception.

However, this was only the tip of the iceberg. The real moneymaking moment was just starting.

Shi Feng first stored all the items that were in his bag into his warehouse. He was not planning on selling them but instead, kept them for future use. After all, items such as Gemstones and skill books were hard currencies[a]; their prices would never depreciate. On the contrary, it was equipment that would depreciate along with the increase in player levels.

Soon afterward, Shi Feng started doing his old business again. Nighttime was the best period for doing business. Seeing that the sun was soon to rise, Shi Feng set aside his Quest for now and set up a street stall, purchasing Stones, Magic Essences, Hard Stones, and Card Sets.

Due to previous similar occurrences, many players would deliberately stay here and await Shi Feng's arrival. Now, just a casual shout from Shi Feng was enough to cause a crowd of players to come running towards him.

In such a way, Shi Feng bought materials while listening to the conversations of players nearby.

"The Assassin's Alliance has obtained great glory this time. They completed the Insurrection of the Little Fishmen Quest and earned a lot of Guild Reputation. It won't be long before the Assassin's Alliance will become a Level 2 Guild."

"What's the big deal? I've heard that a major event occurred in the capital city. The Guild Leader of a first-rate Guild, Star River Federation, completed a major Quest and has already become a First Class Citizen. Just a little more and he will become part of the nobility. When he obtains the status of a noble, what would a little Guild Reputation matter? After becoming a noble, he could go to the Army Camp and City Hall to ask for Guild Quests. Star River Federation could catch up and surpass the Assassin's Alliance at any time. Including the various privileges available to nobles, their accumulated advantage is huge. Just the current Star River Federation was enough to suppress Ouroboros. When the fight for the capital city begins, the city would most likely fall into the hands of the Star River Federation."

"Those are just small matters. Now, the most popular matter would have to be the showdown between that Black Flame Forger and Hammer Trading."

"Who doesn't know about that? Right now, there is most likely not a single person in the White River City Area that doesn't know of it. However, I never truly imagined that the victor would be so quickly determined. Even further, I never thought that the final winner would be Hammer Trading. Hehe, thankfully I was quick-witted and borrowed some money to buy a Glimmer Chestplate. Many people are currently buying them at high prices. I could easily earn 3 Silver Coins as long as I resell the one I have."

"Exactly! Regardless of Attributes or design, the Glimmer Chestplate is way better, so its cost must be extremely high. It only sold for such a low price because of the competition with Hammer Trading. Black Flame must have lost that battle after constantly losing money. Unfortunately, he is not selling even a single piece of the equipment right now. Otherwise, I would definitely borrow money to buy one. Right now, Hammer Trading's fame has exploded. On the forums, he had even started proudly scolding the mysterious forger as incompetent, calling the mysterious forger a son of a bitch for not daring to

compete with him. To increase their fame and influence, those first-rate Guilds will certainly invite him. Hammer Trading must already be discussing contract terms with them right now.”

“The Chief Forger of a first-rate Guild, people would drool just thinking about such a position. However, we can only look on in envy because we don’t have a Forging Design for Bronze Equipment. If I had such an item, even if I were to go bankrupt, I would definitely compete with Hammer Trading to the end. When I get the Chief position of a first-rate Guild, my future will be filled with fame and fortune.”

When Shi Feng heard their conversation, his brows slightly wrinkled. He then called up the official forum.

Sure enough, Hammer Trading was ridiculing him with all sorts of insults.

Son of a bitch, weren’t you so awesome? Why have you turned into a coward? Let’s continue competing if you have the ability! See how I’ll flatten a blackhearted forger like you!

Looking at Hammer Trading’s inferior shenanigans, Shi Feng smiled calmly. He could not help but admire Hammer Trading. To become famous, he turned into a lunatic that was willing to use any means. Just like in Shi Feng’s previous life, to join World Dominators and become their Chief Forger, Hammer Trading was willing to sell out their entire Guild.

After he finished purchasing the materials, Shi Feng headed towards the Auction House.

After all the clamor Hammer Trading made, the Glimmer Chestplate had thoroughly become famous. Shi Feng could now start his next moneymaking operation.

In the current stage of the game, a majority of the average players were already Level 3, while many veterans were Level 4 and experts were Level 5. The average player could not afford a Glimmer Chestplate. Whereas veterans would have to borrow some money to purchase a piece for themselves. As for experts, the usage of the Glimmer Chestplate was not that great. There was a lot of equipment inside Level 5 Dungeons that was far better than the Glimmer Chestplate.

That meant that the Glimmer Chestplate could no longer earn Shi Feng a lot of money. After all, the major buyers of the equipment were mostly those Guilds. Maybe there were some nouveau riche who could afford to buy one to toy around with, but they were in the extreme minorities amongst the average players.

Shi Feng walked into the Auction House, into the large hall that was packed with people. Without a better option, Shi Feng looked for a corner and silently brought up the display screen of the Auction House. He then placed twenty copies of the Forging Design for the Glimmer Chestplate on auction. The base price for each Forging Design was set at 30 Silver Coins, and they would be sold one by one at intervals of half an hour.

It was not because Shi Feng did not wish to sell them in bulk, but because doing so would result in their price staying low. Only through hunger marketing would he be able to reap the greatest profit. Let those Guilds slowly fight amongst themselves.

Afterwards, Shi Feng cleaned out the accumulated Hard Stones and Card Sets from the Auction House. He then left the Auction House and headed towards the Library.

## Chapter 70 – Success or Failure Boils Down to the Same Person

Kuruk Fields, this was the playground for the Level 6 Grassland Lion Cubs. At this stage of the game, there were very few players who would come here to grind and level up.

That was because the level here was slightly higher. Moreover, the monsters were numerous and concentrated, making them hard to kill.

These Grassland Lion Cubs hunted in groups of three to five. Sometimes, they would even be followed by a fully grown Elite Grassland Lion, making them very hard to deal with.

However, there was currently a six-man party on these fields, fighting a group of lions. A girl dressed in water-blue armor brandished her greatsword, directly confronting an Elite Grassland Lion. Not only did she easily evade the Grassland Lion's sharp claws, she even took the chance to attack and deal damage. Her valiant appearance could captivate even women.

This girl was the Snow Goddess, Gentle Snow. She had already reached Level 5, and she wore the Level 4 Bronze Set Equipment, Azure Scar. In her hands, she held the Mysterious-Iron ranked Conqueror's Sword. Compared to before, her current strength had greatly increased.

Also, there was also a Shield Warrior who was not any weaker, tanking four Grassland Lion Cubs at once. The party's healer, Xiao Yue'er, chanted a prayer, her delicate hands tracing divine texts in midair. Xiao Yue'er took care of the Shield Warrior while also healing Gentle Snow, allowing both their HPs to remain above the safety line.

The Flame Witch, Zhao Yueru, was also wearing the Level 4 Fantasy Flame Set Equipment. Large Fireballs constantly shot out from her hand, causing a frightening amount of damage to appear above the Grassland Lion's head.

Within moments, they massacred the group of Elite-led lions.

Gentle Snow picked up the loot from the Grassland Lion, discovering that it was a skill book. No equipment dropped. She then looked towards Xiao Yue'er, saying, "Xiao Yue'er, it's your Sacred Light Shield; learn it quickly. After some rest, we will continue looking for another Grassland Lion. We absolutely must get the Revival skill."

"Great! With this skill, healing won't be so intense anymore," Xiao Yue'er happily said as she received the skill.

Currently resting, Zhao Yueru suddenly asked in a curious tone, "Snow, that Hammer Trading has already garnered a huge amount of fame. We should at least send a person to recruit him. We can still increase our Guild's fame if we're successful. Moreover, his forging skills are not bad. It would be unfortunate if we were to let some other Guild snatch him away."

“No need. It won’t be long before Level 3 Bronze Equipment is of little value. He only knows how to forge Level 3 Bronze Equipment and doesn’t possess any Forging Designs for higher level equipment. Why should we spend a large sum of money fighting over him? We would just lose out on earning a little money. Moreover, we don’t even know when our Guild would be able to obtain a Forging Design for high-leveled Bronze Equipment. What would we need him for?” Gentle Snow shook her head. She held no particular interests towards a person like Hammer Trading. Instead, she said, “On the contrary, I’m more interested in the Black Flame Forger, especially the forger’s actions. I can not see through his intentions.

“If he wanted to attract the attention of first-rate Guilds and stand out, then he has no reason to hide his name. There would be plenty of large Guilds contacting him. However, he has hidden his name, preventing anybody from contacting him. That means that he does not wish for others to know of his identity. Yet, he still competed with Hammer Trading, lowering the price for his equipment and letting everyone know of him once more. Now that he has entered our eyes, at the most heated moment, he suddenly withdraws from the competition and fades out of our sight once more.

“He has continuously brought us three different kinds of forged equipment. Being able to obtain that many Forging Designs for Bronze Equipment shows that he has great strength. Yet, why would he suddenly withdraw? What is this Black Flame Forger’s goal? Or did he withdraw because he already achieved his goal?

“Until now, I still don’t know what that Black Flame Forger is trying to do. He is filled with mystery in all aspects.”

“Snow, how about I have someone research this forger? Hearing you say so, even I want to see what kind of person he is.”

After hearing Gentle Snow’s analysis, realization struck Zhao Yueru. She suddenly grew an interest towards this Black Flame Forger. She also felt this person was not simple. Her interest towards the Black Flame Forger’s identity overflowed. Just the thought of being able to expose this person’s identity made her feel slightly excited.

Meanwhile, inside an Intermediate Forging Room on the second floor of the Forging Association...

“Everyone, how goes your consideration?” Hammer Trading sat cross-legged, casually asking as he looked at the representatives of the first-rate Guilds with narrowed eyes.

However, the conditions set out by Hammer Trading caused these first-rate Guilds to go silent.

Hammer Trading’s conditions were too harsh. Just the villa he wanted in the city he lived in and the annual salary of five million Credits would cause these Guilds to take a step back, not to mention that he wanted all resources to be prioritized to him. Such treatment was most likely only enjoyed by the Guild Leader and the Vice Leader. Meanwhile, Hammer Trading wanted the same treatment as them. Then, didn’t that mean he would be on equal footings with the Guild Leader and Vice Leader?

“You guys have to think through this clearly. It isn’t easy for me to earn such a great reputation. As long as I join your Guild, your popularity will immediately soar and surpass the other Guilds. You won’t have a shortage of Bronze Equipment and will be able to earn a large sum of money because of my forging techniques. The price I’ve given shouldn’t be considered much,” Hammer Trading said with a smile. His

face held an expression that said, "If you don't recruit me, there will be others who will. Don't regret it when that time comes."

Hammer Trading had these first-rate Guilds eating out of the palm of his hand. Right now, each of these first-rate Guilds wanted to be a step ahead of the others. If so, they would be able to have a larger advantage in taking hold of a City. The wealth that came with possessing control over a virtual City was not something a mere five million Credits and a villa could compare to. Hammer Trading's asking price could be considered low.

Looking at the representatives of these first-rate Guilds, although their expressions held hesitation, their eyes flashed with the conviction of recruiting him. Hammer Trading suddenly felt his action of investing all of his possessions into the competition this time was truly wise. If he hadn't steeled his heart to borrow money from loan sharks at the last second, he might have actually lost to the Black Flame Forger. Fortunately, the Black Flame Forger bit the dust a step earlier than he did, allowing him to taste the final fruit of victory.

Just as Hammer Trading was being pleased with himself, the expressions of the numerous representatives around the conference table suddenly changed. Each and every one of them revealed expressions of shock and ecstasy.

"Brother Hammer Trading, I am truly sorry, but our Guild has decided to withdraw from this competition and yield to the other Guilds. Our Guild won't be joining anymore, and I still have matters to attend to, so I'll be leaving," Star River Federation's representative suddenly said.

"This price is just too high. Our Guild can only give up as well. We can only hope to cooperate with you in the future."

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For a moment, all the Guild representatives started leaving. Moreover, every one of them seemed to be in a hurry. It was as if they could not help but to immediately run to some other place, not wanting to waste even a little time.

"What do you all mean? Not negotiating anymore? You guys better not regret it. I'm a Forger that can craft Bronze Equipment! I won't join in the future, even if you all beg me!"

"Is being able to forge Bronze Equipment amazing? Right now, the Auction House is selling Forging Designs for Bronze Equipment. With the Forging Design, we can nurture our own forgers. We don't need to spend as much as five million Credits at all," one of the representatives coldly laughed at Hammer Trading before leaving the Forging Room.

"What did you say? Speak clearly before you leave!" Hammer Trading abruptly stood up after hearing this. He thought he had heard wrong.