

## The Strongest

### Chapter 901 - Silent Blade

Inside the bustling dojo, hundreds of people had gathered around the arena.

"This dojo is pathetic. These instructors are just garbage. They're completely misguiding the students here. With such skills, they even dare start up a dojo?"

"Hey, you guys, you're better off training somewhere else. With these trash instructors teaching you, you won't get anywhere in a fighting competition, no matter how long you train. It's no wonder why, after so many years, this city has not produced a single, decent professional fighter. Of course, you're not to blame. Rather, it's these garbage instructors' fault.

"If it were up to me, I would pack up and leave after finding out how crappy these instructors are. I wouldn't waste my youth here."

Over a dozen youths in their twenties wearing dark gray martial artist robes glanced at the middle-aged instructor who had just been defeated, disgust filling their gazes. These gray-robed youths then sent sympathetic gazes towards the hundreds of teenagers training inside the hall.

Although the Big Dipper Dojo's trainees were furious, none of them dared to speak up, remaining silent as they watched this scene play out.

These dozen or so people who had suddenly shown up were just too strong.

Among these people, one indifferent youth, who looked to be roughly the same age as they were, had single-handedly defeated six of their highly-skilled instructors. Moreover, none of their instructors had landed a finger on this indifferent youth. Even someone who knew nothing of martial arts could see the disparity in their strengths. If they had to challenge that youth, they probably wouldn't last one move.

It was extremely difficult to defeat an opponent in a single move. It was even more so in an actual battle. Generally, such situations only occurred when martial artists fought an ordinary person. To put it simply, it was only possible if there was a massive difference between the fighters' strengths.

The hundreds of teenage trainees felt an immense pressure weigh on them when they looked at the thin, indifferent youth.

Seeing the quiet trainees, the fierce, bald man standing at the forefront of the grey-robed youths smirked with satisfaction.

"How about it?"

"You've seen the difference in our abilities for yourselves. We have come from the White Tiger Dojo. Recently, our dojo has considered establishing a branch in this city. This is a chance for all of you. If you perform well in the branch dojo, you might even get the chance to train in the main dojo. At that time, you will be the star of tomorrow's fighting competition. You won't have to waste your lives in this tiny place."

Hearing the bald man's offer, everyone was momentarily stunned. They immediately understood why even Master Chen Wu was no match for these youths.

They had heard about the White Tiger Dojo. Anyone who wanted to join the world of fighting knew about it. Many famous contestants, who had taken part in past national fighting competitions,

originated from the White Tiger Dojo. The dojo had even nurtured well-known, international fighters in the past. Countless youths that wanted their own fame in the fighting world dreamed of joining the White Tiger Dojo.

However, they had never imagined that the White Tiger Dojo would open a branch in their city...

Before the bald man could say more, the dojo's doors swung open.

Having captured everyone's attention, Shi Feng and Liang Jing approached the bald man. Immediately, the trainees grew excited.

Shi Feng was the Big Dipper Dojo's Head Instructor. Despite being so young, he had attained this position by relying on his own strength. He was their revered idol.

In fact, many among them had specifically joined the dojo because they had heard Shi Feng was an instructor here. However, Shi Feng normally lived in the Greenwater Villa, only occasionally venturing to the dojo. Hence, they did not see him often.

"You are the Head Instructor?" The bald man's lips twisted into a sneer, glaring at Shi Feng with disdain.

He had heard that the newly-established Big Dipper Dojo had a twenty-something-year-old martial artist who guided the students.

He had thought it had been a joke. Now, however, it seemed that the rumor was true.

The man before him wore cheap, dark-blue sportswear, and he didn't appear strong. Not only did the man seem a little pale, but he also lacked the aura of a martial artist. It was hard to imagine how such a weakling had wormed his way into the position of Head Instructor. In his opinion, Shi Feng was weaker than the instructors that had already been defeated. At the very least, their auras had been passable.

"Mhm, that's right. Why have you come looking for me in such a hurry?" Shi Feng swept a glance over the dozen or so members from the White Tiger Dojo, becoming more confident in his conjecture.

In the past, after God's Domain launched the Mind Space System, the well-known dojos throughout the nation had begun to expand. These dojos had set up branches in various cities in an attempt to poach members and expand their influence, hoping to attract major corporations' investments. Although some dojos had received these investments, the majority had not.

These corporations' intentions had been obvious. They had all wanted to nurture a powerful Guild of their own in God's Domain. However, compared to recruiting ordinary players, it was far more efficient to recruit fighters from dojos, who were already familiar with actual combat. Moreover, God's Domain wouldn't impact these fighters' daily routines. These people only needed to play God's Domain while they slept.

With this, not only would the fighting world and virtual gaming world remain separate, but they would also form a mutually beneficial relationship, helping each other improve. Both sides would make more money. Knowing this, the major corporations that had been interested in the Mind Space System had refused to ignore such a valuable opportunity.

Among the country's dojos, the White Tiger Dojo had chosen to set up branches in over a dozen third-tier cities. Jin Hai City had been one of those cities. Back then, the city's various dojos had despaired upon hearing the news. These dojos had originally chosen to develop in a third-tier city precisely because they could not compete with the dojos in first- and second-tier cities. When the major dojo's had targeted their cities, they had been forced out of business.

In the end, many of Jin Hai City's dojos had been forced to cooperate with the White Tiger Dojo.

Once Shi Feng saw the White Tiger Dojo's members, his gaze stopped on the indifferent youth behind the bald man.

Shi Feng knew this youth. He had been extremely famous in Jin Hai City. Moreover, after joining God's Domain, he had become unstoppable. In the past, he had been known as "Silent Blade" in God's Domain. At his peak, he had been a Tier 5 Berserker who ranked 58th on the God's Domain Experts List. Unfortunately, his entry into God's Domain was somewhat late. Otherwise, his achievements in the game would've been even greater.

"Our White Tiger Dojo is thinking of opening a branch in Jin Hai City, so we've come to say hello. We were also hoping to spar with you. I wonder if Instructor Shi is interested?" the bald man laughed.

"Spar?" Shi Feng's lips hooked up slightly. Shaking his head, he said, "Why doesn't it look like that to me? The White Tiger Dojo is so famous that even a layman such as myself knows of it. Is it necessary to venture all the way here to poach our members?"

"Don't say it like that. We are just trying to conduct honest business. Naturally, we have to provide better options to those who wish to join the fighting world." The bald man laughed. He didn't take Shi Feng seriously in the least. In his opinion, Shi Feng was merely a puppet that Big Dipper had employed to run this dojo. The man didn't qualify to speak to him at all. "I've heard that you are quite powerful. I have always admired those with strength. I wonder; would you be willing to spar with me? We can show everyone whether or not your strength is superficial!"



The bald man's sarcasm earned the displeasure of many within the dojo. Just as Liang Jing was about to step forward and say something, Shi Feng held her back with a hand.

He was also familiar with this bald man. The man's name was Gan Xingteng, and he was one of the White Tiger Dojo's advanced disciples. The man was quite strong, even stronger than Chen Wu. He was very active in all sorts of fighting competitions and had earned himself some fame. Hence, he had the confidence to wipe the floor with every martial arts instructor in Jin Hai City.

"What's wrong? Afraid?" Gan Xingteng sneered.

In Gan Xingteng's opinion, Shi Feng's pale complexion was definitely due to fear. With this thought, he became even more certain that Shi Feng was afraid of sparring with him.

"I'm not particularly opposed to a sparring match. However, if I catered to every random person who burst into our dojo to challenge me, wouldn't I die from exhaustion?" Shi Feng responded softly.

Shi Feng's retort didn't fluster Gan Xingteng in the least. Rather, he laughed as he continued to run his mouth, saying, "The high and mighty Head Instructor of the Big Dipper Dojo only knows how to make up excuses. Instructor Shi, aren't you afraid that you might become a laughingstock if others in our industry heard about your cowardice?"

Initially, he had thought that the Big Dipper Dojo's rumored martial arts master was truly quite powerful. Now, however, it seemed that those rumors had been nothing but lies.

"I see that the Big Dipper Dojo only amounts to so much. If even its Head Instructor is too afraid to spar, what's the point of starting a dojo? Might as well switch professions; start a dance hall instead!"

"You and I are closer in age. If you don't want to spar with Senior Brother Gan, how about my challenge? Do you dare to accept it?"

Although Gan Xingteng was not angry, the intermediate disciples behind him were more than raring to fight. Wrathful flames filled their eyes when they looked at Shi Feng, and they wanted nothing more than to teach him a lesson, showing him exactly how powerful the White Tiger Dojo was.

Any one of the White Tiger Dojo's advanced disciples could easily serve as a dojo's Head Instructor in a second-tier city. Even Chen Wu, Jin Hai City's top expert, had lost to Senior Brother Gan, yet Shi Feng had actually implied that their Senior Brother wasn't qualified to fight him. It was an insult to the White Tiger Dojo and their Senior Brother Gan.

In their opinions, even one of the White Tiger Dojo's basic disciples could easily defeat Shi Feng with a few moves. Sparring against their Senior Brother Gan was too much of a privilege for this man.

"Don't misunderstand me. I did not refuse your invitation to spar. However, since you are White Tiger Dojo members, I can't use my status as an instructor to bully you, right? I intend to allow our disciples to spar with you. What do you think?" Shi Feng asked as he glanced at Gan Xingteng.

The entire dojo fell silent as Shi Feng finished his question.

The crowd from the White Tiger Dojo looked at Shi Feng as if he were an idiot. If even the Big Dipper Dojo's instructors were no match for them, why would the disciples have any chance?

Even with one hand tied behind their backs, they could easily defeat any of Big Dipper's disciples.

Meanwhile, when the Big Dipper Dojo's disciples heard Shi Feng, they were all dumbfounded.

They had already learned how terrifying the White Tiger Dojo was when they had watched the previous fights. Even if they fought together in groups of five or six, they wouldn't be a match for one of the White Tiger Dojo's fighters, much less in a one-on-one.

"Sure. Only, once every Big Dipper disciple has been defeated, I hope that you will stop giving me excuses and spar against me yourself," Gan Xingteng sneered and nodded.

"Rest assured; if you win, I will step up." Shi Feng laughed. He then turned to Liang Jing and said, "Fetch Fire Dance and the others."

"Fetch them? But aren't they..." Liang Jing was momentarily stunned by Shi Feng's order.

After she had become Shi Feng's assistant, he had often enlisted her help to manage some of Zero Wing Workshop's affairs. Hence, she knew Fire Dance and the others' identities. None of these people were professional fighters; they were professional gamers. Rather than having them fight the White Tiger's members, it would be more effective if the dojo's disciples fought.

"Go. It's about time they take part in an actual battle." Shi Feng understood the reason for Liang Jing's shock. However, he still had her summon Fire Dance and the others.

Fire Dance's group might not be professional fighters, but after such a long stay in the Greenwater Villa, they had undergone various training. Lei Bao had even guided their foundations. In addition, they received an endless supply of A-rank Nutrient Fluids and the occasional S-rank Nutrient Fluid. Their current physiques were already many times stronger than when they had first arrived at the Greenwater Villa.



Fire Dance and the others had even surprised a martial artist like Lei Bao, and the man often praised the group for being martial arts geniuses. Lei Bao had even wanted to accept them as his personal disciples. Unfortunately, Shi Feng had rejected his requests.

A short moment later, Fire Dance and the others entered the dojo. Immediately, their appearance caused a great commotion.

When the White Tiger Dojo group saw Fire Dance and the others, their jaws nearly hit the floor. Rage flashed in their eyes as thoughts of murdering Shi Feng surfaced in their minds.

Originally, they had thought that Shi Feng had summoned a group of powerful experts to spar against them. Now, however, it would seem that he was simply ridiculing them.

The group Shi Feng had called to face them actually included girls.

Although there was no lack of female disciples in the various dojos, and there were female-only competitions in major fighting competitions, males and females were simply on different levels. The fact that Shi Feng had sent for a female disciple trampled on their glory and pride. Why wouldn't they be angry?

"Instructor Shi, are you trying to insult the White Tiger Dojo?" Gan Xingteng asked Shi Feng with a frosty tone.

Gan Xinteng intended to wait for an answer. However, Fire Dance walked up to the arena and pointed at the White Tiger's members, issuing her challenge, "One-on-one matches will be too boring. I want to take on all of you at once!"

Before the White Tiger Dojo's members could react, Liang Jing nearly fainted.

Just who did Fire Dance think these people were?

This wasn't a game!

They were all bona fide fighting experts. They were not random monsters that one could casually defeat in a game...

Liang Jing had thought of warning Fire Dance. However, seeing the murderous looks from White Tiger Dojo members, she rushed up to Shi Feng and said softly, "Master Shi Feng, please ask her to stop! These people are from the White Tiger Dojo! If she angers them and they stop holding back, someone will end up in the hospital!"

"You're right," Shi Feng nodded. He then looked towards Fire Dance and said, "Hold back. We shouldn't hospitalize them."

If it were Cola or Ye Wumian, they could've played with their opponents without hurting them too badly. If it were up to Fire Dance, however, her opponents would be in danger. After all, Fire Dance had never fought ordinary people before. After reaching the Refinement Realm, she usually only trained with Lei Bao. If she fought an ordinary person, she could miscalculate her opponent and use too much strength.

"I understand." Fire Dance nodded and smiled.

Shi Feng's instructions left Liang Jing speechless. Although she wanted to inform him that that was not what she had meant, the indifferent youth from the White Tiger Dojo had entered the arena. As for the other White Tiger members, they shouted their indignation.

"You Ziping, you better not hold back just because she's pretty! Show them the strength of the White Tiger Dojo!"

"You Ziping, if you can't defeat her with a single move, I'll mock you forever!"

The visiting fighters' eyes were all bloodshot with anger. They all wished they were in the cold You Ziping's place, eager to show these bumpkins from the Big Dipper Dojo the extent of their strength.

Meanwhile, Gan Xinteng laughed out of anger. He even wondered if Shi Feng acted out of desperation after realizing the hopelessness of the Big Dipper's situation.

You Ziping nodded seriously as he turned to Fire Dance with a chilling expression.

Since You Ziping was already prepared, Shi Feng promptly initiated the fight, "Alright, then. Since you have decided, let the match begin."

When Shi Feng announced the start of the battle, You Ziping shot the man a glance, surprise flashing in his eyes.

Shi Feng was simply too calm.

He had participated in many fighting competitions before and had met people of various standards, so he could tell that Shi Feng's serenity was not an act. Rather, his calm originated from absolute confidence as if everything were within his control.

However, in his opinion, his match against Fire Dance was unbalanced. Fire Dance had no chance of winning against him.

After all, females were generally weaker than males.

It was especially true for a great beauty like Fire Dance. Although Fire Dance wore a set of dark blue sportswear, her clothing couldn't hide her curvaceous body. She looked nothing like a muscular gorilla. On the contrary, she looked like someone who often practiced yoga. Her perfect figure only contained charm, not strength.

In the face of absolute strength, all trickery was useless. All martial artists knew this.

In terms of strength, although he was not at the peak of the White Tiger Dojo's intermediate disciples, he was still considered above average. Currently, he had a punching strength of 422 kg. Although he barely qualified to participate in the national youth championship, in a third-tier city like Jin Hai City, he could definitely rank among the city's top fighters.

In an actual fight, it was not easy for one to make up the difference in strength. That required a wealth of combat experience and techniques. However, while he might only be 18 years old, he had already participated in over a dozen large-scale competitions; he possessed a considerable amount of combat experience. He even frequently sparred with the dojo's advanced disciples. In terms of combat techniques, he was already on their level.

With the advantage of strength, experience, and techniques, losing was impossible.

So, why was Shi Feng so calm?

Where was his confidence coming from?

However, You Ziping quickly shook these questions away as he returned his gaze to Fire Dance. He no longer wanted to think about what might be going through Shi Feng's mind. Defeating Fire Dance was his priority.

With this match, he would teach Shi Feng the meaning of a true professional fighter.

"Fall!"

You Ziping shouted, his voice as cold as snow. Like an arrow, he dashed to Fire Dance and sent a fierce punch towards her abdomen.

His attack was both fast and precise. He did not hold back in the least.

"Ziping sure is vicious. No matter what is going on, his opponent is still a great beauty, yet he's not showing any mercy," Gan Xingteng muttered with sympathy. With this, the match would end as quickly as it had begun.

Even in the White Tiger Dojo, You Ziping was looked upon favorably. However, the boy had one shortcoming; he did not know how to hold back. To a youth, however, this was a benefit. If one were frequently distracted, it would be very difficult to improve.

Peng!

The sound of a collision radiated from the arena.

"She blocked it?! How is that possible?!" The people below the arena stared at Fire Dance in disbelief.

The impact should have sent Fire Dance flying, yet she had actually blocked You Ziping's fist with one hand.

It was truly hard to imagine just how that thin, frail arm could endure so much force. Logically, her arm should've been knocked away; no one would have been surprised if her bones had cracked or shattered.

However, Fire Dance showed no sign of pain. On the contrary, she had received You Ziping's full-power punch as if she had reached out to say hello.

You Ziping was also momentarily stunned. Hurriedly, he tried to withdraw. However, he suddenly discovered that his fist would not budge no matter how hard he tried. Fire Dance's tender fingers clasped his fist like chains.

With no other choice, You Ziping raised his left leg and swept it towards Fire Dance's neck.

Peng!

However, Fire Dance caught his iron-like leg with her other hand.

As if he had predicted this, You Ziping quickly sent a follow-up punch with his other hand.

Just before You Ziping's fist struck Fire Dance's face, a creak echoed throughout the dojo. In the next moment, You Ziping released an agonizing scream, his fist halting as he suddenly tumbled to the ground. The fist and ankle that Fire Dance had caught had already begun to turn purple.

The various spectators were flabbergasted. Having forgotten about the pale-faced You Ziping, everyone stared at Fire Dance with awe.

Fire Dance's performance was simply too shocking.

Nobody could believe their eyes.

Among the crowd, the White Tiger Dojo members were the most affected. They knew just how strong You Ziping was. Among their group, only two or three people were stronger than him.

Yet, in front of Fire Dance, You Ziping was as powerful as a child.

What technique?

What combat experience?

In front of absolute strength, they were nothing.

Does she have some kind of godly strength? Gan Xingteng's expression was somber as he looked at the injured You Ziping.

Fire Dance was merely a young girl. However, even he was far weaker than her. He couldn't compete with her strength in a fight. He could only rely on his speed and techniques to secure victory.

Liang Jing, who stood beside Shi Feng, was similarly stunned. She had assumed that Fire Dance would be hospitalized after this match. She had never imagined that Fire Dance was actually this powerful.

Is she a hidden master like Shi Feng? Liang Jing could not help but wonder. There was no other way to explain this overwhelming victory.

However, there was one factor that confused Liang Jing; if Fire Dance possessed such skills, why hasn't she participated in any fighting competitions?



With her skills, she would even perform excellently in the national competition. If she could earn herself a victory, she would earn an unimaginable amount of money. She wouldn't need to continue working as a professional gamer.

As for Shi Feng, he glanced at the stunned Liang Jing before shifting his gaze to You Ziping, who was still on the ground. He shook his head and sighed, saying, "Of all the things you could've relied on, you chose physical strength."

After Fire Dance had reached the Refinement Realm, her body's physique had improved rapidly. Moreover, with Lei Bao's guidance, she had already grasped the technique to utilize internal force. To Fire Dance, a punching strength four or five hundred kilograms was not difficult to achieve.

You Ziping had been looking for a beating by relying on physical strength. If the boy had simply used his combat experience, he might've lasted a little longer.

"I believe that the outcome has been decided. Take him away," Shi Feng said, pointing at You Ziping as he looked at Gan Xingteng.

Only now did the White Tiger members recover from their daze.

This match was over. They had even forgotten that one of their companions was injured and needed immediate medical attention.

"Relax, I didn't use that much force. His bones should be intact. After some treatment, he just needs to rest for a few days to recover," Fire Dance explained as she looked down at the silent You Ziping. She then turned to Gan Xingteng, who stood below the arena, and quietly asked, "The first match is over. Who's next?"

## Chapter 904 - Difference in Experience

Fire Dance's voice was like a jade bead falling to the ground as it resounded throughout the dojo. Although her voice was not loud, her words had ingrained themselves into everyone's minds, making them impossible to forget.

The White Tiger Dojo members instantly paled at these words.

Every one of them silently turned to their companions, lacking their previous confidence.

You Ziping's overall strength could rank second among their group; only Gan Xingteng was slightly stronger. They would only suffer if they fought Fire Dance.

In contrast, the Big Dipper's disciples stared at Fire Dance with reverence.

Even You Ziping, who had beaten their instructors, had been defeated in less than a handful of moves. Fire Dance's strength was astounding.

Moreover, when they saw the visiting fighters' fear, a bliss sprouted in their hearts.

So what if the White Tiger Dojo was impressive?

In the end, its disciples had still lost against their Big Dipper Dojo.

Aside from helping them vent their stress, Fire Dance's victory reassured them of their decision to join the Big Dipper Dojo.

Before they had joined the Big Dipper Dojo, they had already heard some rumors.

They heard that, in the Greenwater Villa, there were some people who were undergoing special training. However, they had no idea about what that special training entailed. Looking at it now, however, they were absolutely sure that the villa was a training ground for martial arts masters.

If they performed well, they might even have a chance to participate in that special training.

If they could have even half of Fire Dance's abilities, they could nurture a powerful reputation for themselves within Jin Hai City. They might even make a name for themselves in the large-scale competitions in their province.

After all, even Gan Xingteng, who had defeated Hall Master Chen Wu, wore a grim expression. His fear of Fire Dance was obvious.

In the past, Chen Wu had become Jin Hai City's champion fighter, and his results in the provincial competitions had been impressive.

"Is nobody willing to face me?" Fire Dance asked once more as she swept a glance over the White Tiger Dojo members.

Before she had come to the dojo, she had heard from Liang Jing just how powerful the White Tiger Dojo's members were and had been warned to be careful against them. However, after that first match, she did not consider these people particularly strong. On the contrary, she thought they were pitifully weak.

When You Ziping had attacked, he had left several holes in his defense. There had just been too many excess movements. Even Violet Cloud could defeat You Ziping easily, not to mention someone like her, who knew how to use internal force.

What Fire Dance did not know was that, during her time in the Greenwater Villa, her strength had long since surpassed ordinary people. However, since she was usually cooped up inside the villa, she hadn't had much contact with the outside world. Hence, she had not noticed these tremendous changes.

"I'll be your opponent!" Gan Xingteng had already realized that this opponent was more than he could handle. However, to preserve the White Tiger Dojo's glory, he had to take center stage even if it meant humiliation.

Before coming to Jin Hai City, the main branch had made it clear that his group needed to wipe the floor with every dojo in Jin Hai City, paving the way for their branch dojo.

Even You Ziping could deal with these bumpkins easily, not to mention a Senior like him. Chen Wu should have been the only troublesome opponent they encountered. As for the martial arts master that governed the Big Dipper Training Center, he did not believe the rumor.

Even their White Tiger Dojo had to treat martial arts masters with respect. How could an exalted figure possibly be content in a third-tier city like Jin Hai City?

Although Gan Xingteng was unsure if Jin Hai City actually housed a martial arts master, he was certain that Fire Dance was an expert who shouldn't be taken lightly. At the very least, if they wanted a high chance of defeating her, they needed one of the White Tiger Dojo's instructors to take her on.

However, not all hope was lost yet. No matter what was said or done, he was an advanced disciple from the White Tiger Dojo. His combat experience and strength far surpassed You Ziping's. Previously, You Ziping had sparred against Fire Dance without knowing anything about her. Now that he knew that Fire Dance was extraordinarily strong, he would not make the same mistake. As long as he maintained a certain distance from Fire Dance and waited for her to reveal a flaw in her defense, he could defeat her.

Moreover, based on Fire Dance's appearance, the girl only looked to be in her early twenties. She didn't have much combat experience. No matter how much she trained, actual combat was different. She would reveal her flaws when she attacked.

As Gan Xingteng considered the upcoming fight, Shi Feng announced the start of the sparring session.

As soon as Shi Feng shouted "start," Fire Dance crossed the distance of five yards like a leopard and arrived before Gan Xingteng in the blink of an eye. She proceeded to send an open-palm strike towards Gan Xingteng's chest; the wind whistled as her palm sliced through the air.

So fast!

Surprised, Gan Xingteng abruptly retreated.

Fortunately for Gan Xingteng, he had evaded Fire Dance's fast attack in the nick of time, with the latter's palm stopping just a few centimeters from his chest. This single exchange struck fear into Gan Xingteng's heart. He hadn't expected her to have explosive speed in addition to an absurd amount of physical

strength. Had that attack struck, with Fire Dance's strength, he would have had some trouble breathing in the best case scenario. In the worst case scenario, his ribs would have broken, and he would have lost consciousness on the spot.

However, Fire Dance's sudden attack had revealed a hole in her defense.

When she had thrust her palm forward, she had left her side exposed. As long as he attacked that location, Fire Dance wouldn't be able to defend against his attack.

Hmph. In the end, a youngster is still a youngster. Because you're so eager to win, you've exposed such a basic flaw. Gan Xingteng inwardly laughed. He then sent a roundhouse kick at Fire Dance.

Both this kick's speed and power were far more refined than You Ziping's.

Just as Gan Xingteng's leg was about to connect with Fire Dance's side, Fire Dance moved, her other hand snaking out to grasp the man's leg. Suddenly, she jumped and twisted in the air, and with Gan Xingteng's leg as a pivot point, she planted her feet straight onto his face.

Immediately, Gan Xingteng's face flattened, blood spurting from his nostrils and his eyes rolling as his head was thrown back.

Gan Xingteng felt the world spin. He couldn't even feel pain. After taking a few steps back, his body abruptly fell to the mat as he fainted.

"Senior Brother Gan!"

The White Tiger Dojo's members cried out; none of them could believe what had just happened.

They all felt as if they were dreaming.

Just how fast had Gan Xingteng's kick been?

They had only seen an afterimage of his leg, yet Fire Dance had managed to grab it and use it as a pivot point, utilizing the flaw she had exposed to land a finishing blow.

How much combat experience and how much reaction speed was required to carry out this feat?!

Even their instructors couldn't replicate Fire Dance's counterattack.

You Ziping, who rested below the arena, was dazed when he saw this. He finally understood that his loss had not been a simple lack of strength. Fire Dance had only chosen the simplest, most efficient method to deal with him because the gap between them was simply too massive...

However, there was one point that he could not make sense of.

How did Fire Dance gain such a frightening amount of combat experience?!

To perform that kind of counterattack, one needed extremely precise control over their bodies. Any mistakes could easily put one in peril. Only those who frequently dealt with such situations could execute such an accurate strike at such a crucial moment.

Yet, how old was Fire Dance? How could she possibly possess that much life-and-death experiences?

"Are you wondering why there is such a huge disparity between your combat experience?" Shi Feng asked as he walked up to You Ziping. As if he knew the boy's thoughts, he smiled and said, "If you wish to know, I can tell you."

#### Chapter 905 - Workshop Expands

"Are you seriously willing to say it?" You Ziping eyed Shi Feng suspiciously.

Accumulating combat experience was not something easy to do—especially combat experience involving life-and-death situations. Training under such circumstances was practically gambling with one's life. There were quite a number of martial artists who had destroyed their own futures as a result of such training.

If there actually was a method to accumulate life-and-death combat experience, improving rapidly within a short time would be an easy task.

This rapid improvement was also the reason why so many martial arts experts liked to challenge their own limits.



"Of course. However, I have a condition," Shi Feng laughed.

"I knew it. Forget it. I won't be joining your dojo." You Ziping let out a soft snort. He had long since known that a person like Shi Feng wouldn't reveal such a huge secret without conditions.

However, Shi Feng's attempt at poaching him would only end up in failure.

Many major dojos in first-tier cities had come scouting You Ziping ever since his talent became known. Some had even offered very excellent treatment, much better than what he was currently receiving from the instructors of the White Tiger Dojo. However, he had still rejected them all. He was not someone who would betray his benefactor. When he was at his lowest, the White Tiger Dojo had given him an opportunity. Had the White Tiger Dojo not nurtured him, he would not have his current achievements today.

Simply put, he would not abandon the White Tiger Dojo just for his own benefit.

"This kid sure thinks highly of himself. I really don't know what the chief sees in him, to actually want to nurture someone like him." Standing a short distance away, the bearlike Cola clicked his tongue when he overheard You Ziping's response, highly annoyed by You Ziping's attitude.

Whether it was in God's Domain or Jin Hai City, as long as Shi Feng said that he was looking to nurture someone, tons of people would definitely come swarming.

"The boss might have his own thoughts," said Ye Wumian standing beside Cola. After taking a look at You Ziping, he continued, "However, that kid indeed possesses some talent. Otherwise, he wouldn't have been able to become an intermediate disciple of the White Tiger Dojo at such a young age. Even his fellow intermediate disciples are looking at him with respect."

Although Cola and the others spoke softly, their voices still failed to escape Shi Feng's ears.

The human brain ruled everything in the body. After Shi Feng's brain activity improved, his five senses had also become much more acute.

The trials of the Battle Tower, in particular, had further honed his five senses. Not to mention a distance of over a dozen yards, even if Cola and the others stood over twenty yards away from him, so long as he focused slightly, he would still hear their whispers.

Meanwhile, regarding his companions' sotto voce discussion, Shi Feng could only laugh inwardly in understanding.

After all, not everyone was a reincarnator like he was; they did not know the things that would happen in the future. Not to mention, You Ziping was currently still a diamond in the rough. Who could possibly expect him to become an expert ranked within the top 50 of the God's Domain Experts List in the future?

Seeing You Ziping rejecting his offer righteously, Shi Feng laughed and said, "You misunderstood. I'm not trying to scout you into the Big Dipper Dojo. I'm only inviting you to join the Zero Wing Gaming Workshop. Doing so won't affect your daily life in any way."

"Join a Gaming Workshop?" Surprised, You Ziping asked, "For real?"

In the current era, there were many Gaming Workshops in society. There were also plenty of professional gamers. Although not comparable to the fighting industry, the gaming industry was still an increasingly important business sector.

Moreover, the majority of Gaming Workshops operated in the wee hours of the night, so joining one would not affect one's daily life.

If he could really increase his life-and-death combat experience just by joining a Gaming Workshop, this would definitely be a worthwhile exchange.

Shi Feng nodded before turning to look at the members of Big Dipper and White Tiger and announcing, "This offer isn't just for you but for everyone present. As long as you are below the age of 25, all of you have an opportunity to join Zero Wing's Workshop."

Zero Wing was already developing quite well. Originally, Shi Feng had planned to wait a little while longer before recruiting for Zero Wing's internal training program. Now that a major dojo like the White Tiger Dojo had already started making its move and begun poaching talents en masse, he naturally could not fall behind.

Previously, he had only intended to nurture a few core members of Zero Wing at the Greenwater Villa, so he had not bothered dragging in the disciples of the Big Dipper Dojo. Now that he had such an excellent opportunity, he could use this chance to recruit a few good talents and start internally nurturing experts in large numbers just like the various major powers of God's Domain. With this, he wouldn't have to worry about lacking experts or talents getting poached away.

Everyone was momentarily stunned when they heard this.

Liang Jing was also at a loss for words.

This place was a dojo, a place that nurtured experts for the world of fighting, yet Shi Feng was actually recruiting these people to become professional gamers. Doing so was simply ludicrous.

If Director Xiao learned of this matter, he was sure to fly into a rage.

"Instructor Shi, if we join Zero Wing's Workshop, will we really become stronger?" a few disciples asked curiously.

Hearing these disciples asking such a question rendered Fire Dance and the others speechless.

They were the high and mighty Zero Wing!

Moreover, when all was said and done, Zero Wing was extremely famous in Star-Moon Kingdom, and even possessed some fame in the world of God's Domain. Despite all that, these people actually did not know anything about them.

Of course, they also understood that, although these disciples might know about virtual reality games, their lifelong goal had always been to achieve fame in the world of fighting. Hence, they rarely came into contact with pleasure-seeking activities, focusing their all into training their bodies, instead.

How could a bunch of people who had precious little exposure to virtual reality games possibly have heard of Zero Wing's name?

"Let's put it this way. If you can pass the test and join the Zero Wing Workshop, I can assure you that it won't be long before you become much stronger than your present selves," Shi Feng said definitively.

"I want to take part in the test!"

"I want to try as well!"

Immediately, many disciples in the dojo raised their hands and voiced their intent to apply for Zero Wing's Workshop, every one of them firmly believing Shi Feng's words. After all, Fire Dance was the best example. Even Gan Xingteng, who had managed to defeat Hall Master Chen Wu, suffered a quick defeat at her hands.

"What about you guys?" Shi Feng asked as he looked at the youths of the White Tiger Dojo.

"No! Absolutely not!" shouted Gan Xingteng, who had just regained consciousness. "As long as you are a member of the White Tiger Dojo, you are not allowed to join any kind of workshop! Otherwise, you will be expelled!"

Some of the White Tiger Dojo members, who had initially been entertaining thoughts of taking the test, immediately lowered their heads at these words.

"Senior Brother Gan, why is this so?" a short youth asked curiously.

Logically, there should not be any clash between a dojo and a Gaming Workshop. Disciples would normally take on part-time jobs. After all, not everyone could make a living out of participating in competitions, and the dojo did not provide everyone with financial support. They still needed to live.

Joining a Gaming Workshop could be considered a part-time job. Moreover, it was more lucrative than any other part-time job.

## Chapter 906 - You Will Regret It

Shi Feng was also somewhat surprised by Gan Xingteng's yelling. He then shot a curious look at Gan Xingteng, whose countenance had completely distorted.

Something occurred to Shi Feng.

The White Tiger Dojo might've already entered into a partnership with a corporation, and instead of recruiting more members to attract investors, it was already preparing to enter God's Domain.

Meanwhile, in reply to the questions posed by the disciples of the White Tiger Dojo, Gan Xingteng simply sent them a glare and said strictly, "If you want to join a Gaming Workshop, be my guest. When the time comes, don't blame me for not warning you."

Immediately, the crowd from the White Tiger Dojo fell silent.

In all dojos, there were two kinds of disciples. The first kind had to pay an exorbitant fee to join and was usually there just to train their body and learn some combat techniques. The dojo didn't place them under any restrictions. The second kind was under contract. They were subject to relatively strict restrictions. However, they paid only a small fee or, depending on their rank, nothing at all to receive nurturing from the dojo. Disciples under this category were all aiming to become professional fighters, and they were more like contracted artists working for an agency.

The White Tiger disciples who had come to the Big Dipper Dojo this time all fell under the latter category.

They had undergone multiple examinations just to get accepted as a contracted disciple of the White Tiger Dojo. After all, the White Tiger Dojo was renowned in the industry, having produced many famous industry professionals. Just being able to get selected as a contracted disciple proved that one was already among the cream of the crop.

If they were expelled from the White Tiger Dojo, the consequences would be unimaginable.

Faced with that sort of pressure, everyone naturally no longer dared to harbor thoughts of joining the Zero Wing Workshop.

"The White Tiger Dojo sure is overbearing. Their contracted disciples don't possess any freedom at all."

"If it were me, I wouldn't stay in such a dojo at all. It's not even a guarantee that I'd become a top-tier professional in the future."

"Sure enough, our dojo is much better. Aside from the usual training, we can do whatever we want during our free time."

The disciples of the Big Dipper Dojo were shocked at the restrictions the White Tiger Dojo placed on its disciples. Previously, they still felt relatively envious of the White Tiger Dojo members. Now, however, rather than envious, they felt fortunate that they had not joined such a tyrannical dojo.

Moreover, Shi Feng had already assured them that anyone who managed to join Zero Wing's Workshop would definitely gain significant improvements in the future.

Not only would they be able to earn money, but they would also be able to improve their strength.

Compared to joining the White Tiger Dojo, they would have a much better life staying at the Big Dipper Dojo and joining Zero Wing's Workshop.

When the White Tiger Dojo members heard the Big Dipper disciples' words, their complexions turned extremely ugly. At this moment, none of the pride they had before was evident on their faces.

At the White Tiger Dojo members' silence, Shi Feng simply smiled and said, "The choice is yours. I won't force you to make a decision. If you guys really want to join, you are welcome to come here and take the test any time."

Although the White Tiger Dojo's interference made it more difficult for him to poach You Ziping, now that the boy had come to Jin Hai City, the White Tiger Dojo would naturally come into conflict with the Big Dipper Dojo. At that time, he would still have plenty of opportunities to scout You Ziping. Having already cast his bait, all he needed to do was wait patiently.

As far as Shi Feng knew, You Ziping had chosen to develop himself at the White Tiger Dojo because he liked the daughter of one of the White Tiger Dojo's branch heads. Unfortunately, this branch head had not favored You Ziping and had given her daughter to a genius fighter called Xie Qiwen, instead.

Xie Qiwen was very amazing. At just the young age of 25, he had already managed to qualify for an international fighting competition. Meanwhile, You Ziping had been a mere advanced disciple of the White Tiger Dojo back then, mingling only at the bottom ranks of national competitions.



With such a great disparity between the two young men, it was obvious which person the branch head would choose.

After that incident, You Ziping had left the White Tiger Dojo and joined the Super Guild Pantheon. Afterward, his achievements had skyrocketed.

According to the current timeline, that branch head should not have given her daughter to anyone yet. You Ziping and Xie Qiwen were still competing with each other for her hand. However, if You Ziping did not present any outstanding performances to that branch head, then trying to gain her daughter would definitely be a pipe dream.

Currently, Xie Qiwen was a big celebrity in the White Tiger Dojo. He was already a famous fighter on the national level. You Ziping simply stood no chance the way he was right now.

If You Ziping wanted to have a fighting chance against Xie Qiwen, then the opportunity to strengthen himself that Shi Feng was extending to him was his only chance.

Even if the current You Ziping did not wish to join Zero Wing, once he felt that he could not outcompete Xie Qiwen, he would surely think back to the absolute strength Fire Dance showed today. At that time, he would naturally consider joining Zero Wing.

Just as Gan Xingteng thought that no one would dare to join the Zero Wing Workshop, a White Tiger Dojo member suddenly raised his hand.

"I want to take the test!"

Gan Xingteng and the other White Tiger Dojo members promptly turned to look at the origin of this voice.

The person speaking was a young man around 20 years old. To those aiming to become professional fighters, his body was slightly too thin. It was truly hard to imagine how such a person had managed to become an intermediate disciple of the White Tiger Dojo.

"Lu Ping, have you lost your mind?!" You Ziping was filled with shock as he turned to look at the young man currently taking care of him.

In the White Tiger Dojo, Lu Ping's talent was considered merely average. The only reason he had managed to become an intermediate disciple was his having trained at the dojo for many years. Currently, he was already 21 years old, yet he had been promoted to an intermediate disciple just recently.

He could also be considered one of the few friends You Ziping had in the White Tiger Dojo.

You Ziping never imagined that...

Lu Ping would actually forsake his future at the White Tiger Dojo just to join a Gaming Workshop.

Although You Ziping wanted to dissuade his friend, Lu Ping forestalled him.

"I'm different from you. You are a genius, while I'm just an ordinary person. I know my own limits. It would be a miracle if I can even become an advanced disciple by the time I reach thirty. Rather than continue walking on this path, I would rather take a gamble," Lu Ping explained.

Hearing these words, You Ziping inwardly ridiculed himself. At the same time, he also understood that Lu Ping was firm on his decision.

The other members of the White Tiger Dojo could more or less understand Lu Ping's feelings as well when they heard his explanation.

Gan Xingteng, however, had an extremely ugly expression on his face right now.

He had originally come to the Big Dipper Dojo, representing the White Tiger Dojo, to humiliate the people here as well as poach some of its disciples. He had never imagined that he would end up on the receiving end of this plan, instead. If news of this matter were to spread, the White Tiger Dojo's reputation would fall into ruin.

"Hahaha! Good! Very good!" Gan Xingteng could not help but laugh madly at this development. He then turned to Lu Ping and said, "I won't hold you back if you want to leave. However, you will definitely regret this decision in the future! We're leaving!"

Seeing that several more people in his group were starting to show signs of hesitation, he no longer dared to remain here any longer. He hurriedly called for everyone to leave the Big Dipper Dojo.

At this time, Cola walked up to the somewhat dazed Lu Ping and patted the young man's shoulders. In a very welcoming tone, Cola then said, "Brother, I have high hopes for you! I can assure you that, if you manage to join the Zero Wing Workshop, it will be—without a doubt—the wisest decision you make in this lifetime! I mean, take myself for example. Before I joined Zero Wing, I was far weaker than your current self. As long as you work hard, you will certainly become much stronger than you would ever be if you stayed in the White Tiger Dojo!"

"May I know how long Big Brother has been with Zero Wing?" After Lu Ping took a close look at the tall and robust Cola, as well as considered the feeling he got when Cola had patted his shoulders, he could tell that Cola possessed immense physical strength. He estimated Cola's strength to be equal or above that of Gan Xingteng's.

After making a rough calculation, Cola answered honestly, "It's been roughly a month since I've started training officially."

"Just over a month?! And you say you were weaker than me before?! You're not lying to me, right?!" Lu Ping's eyes widened in shock. He simply could not believe Cola's words.

Cola rolled his eyes at Lu Ping, feeling that the young man was getting overly excited over nothing. He then pointed to Fire Dance and the others and said, "Why would I lie to you? All of us here started taking part in the special training at the same time. If you don't believe me, ask them yourself!"

"That's right. All of us did indeed start training here only a month ago, more or less. And before Cola began the special training, he really was weaker than your current self." Fire Dance nodded and laughed.

Hearing Fire Dance's confirmation, Lu Ping was immediately dumbfounded.

Or to put it in another way, the amount of information was just too much for his brain to process.

Right now, he felt as if he had wasted all his life training for nothing.

Just what kind of place did he come to?

## Chapter 907 - Strength Changes

After leaving the Big Dipper Dojo with miserable expressions, Gan Xingteng and the other members of the White Tiger Dojo returned to the high-class hotel where they were temporarily lodging. Disregarding his injuries, Gan Xingteng immediately reported what had happened at the Big Dipper Dojo to the main branch of the White Tiger Dojo upon arrival.

"What did you say? There's an expert who's even stronger than you at the Big Dipper Dojo?" the white-robed middle-aged man on the other side of the video call repeated in surprise. "Could that person be that rumored internal force expert?"

"Master Jiang, that Head Instructor called Shi Feng did not take action. The one who fought was a woman. Judging from her appearance, she should be around the same age as Shi Feng. However, she is extremely powerful. Even Xie Qiwen would have difficulty defeating her. I suspect that the real behind-the-scenes boss is that woman," Gan Xingteng reported carefully as he looked at the man in the screen. "Moreover, I believe that the Big Dipper Dojo has plans similar to ours."

Although Jiang Tianyuan, the man before him, was not the main dojo master of the White Tiger Dojo, he was still a very powerful branch master. The man had been famous for more than 20 years already. One should not take his appearance at face value. While he might look like someone in his mid-thirties, in reality, he was already 50 years old this year.

"This is interesting. Even Xie Qiwen wouldn't be able to defeat her easily? It's no wonder the Big Dipper Group has constantly been expanding its influence recently. But it doesn't matter. The mindset of that bunch from the Big Dipper Group is too simple. What do they think they can accomplish with just one expert?" Jiang Tianyuan laughed. "I recall that Jin Hai City is going to hold a city-wide competition soon. I'll send Xie Qiwen and Tang Jingyao to help you secure both male and female championship titles in Jin Hai City. At that time, even if the Big Dipper Dojo tries to recruit members, it won't be able to outmatch us. For the moment, just focus on properly dealing with the matters of the branch dojo."

"Understood!" Gan Xingteng nodded hurriedly, shock filling his heart.

He had never imagined that Jiang Tianyuan would get so serious as to actually send both Xie Qiwen and Tang Jingyao over. The two of them were the pride of the White Tiger Dojo. Both of them usually took part only in national-level competitions, and they were also very famous fighters within the country. Having them participate in such a small competition was simply a waste of time.

At that time, a commotion would definitely arise in Jin Hai City.

As long as those two people took action, none of the other dojos in Jin Hai City would have any hopes of securing the championship title.

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Inside the Big Dipper Dojo, Shi Feng had Fire Dance and the others preside over the assessment of the new applicants. Meanwhile, Shi Feng himself discussed with Liang Jing the matters of recruitment and advertising for Zero Wing's Workshop.

Shi Feng's approach to these problems was simple: advertising through the Big Dipper Training Center's connections. The advertisement would state that Zero Wing was trying to recruit internal elites, as well as some application conditions such as only men and women below the age of 25 were allowed to apply. It was simply a recruitment advertisement.

Originally, Liang Jing thought that even if a Gaming Workshop utilized Big Dipper's connections to disseminate an advertisement, there would not be many applicants.

Although the application conditions Shi Feng proposed were not particularly strict, the criteria for passing the assessment itself was very high. As proof of this, only 10% of the disciples of the Big Dipper Dojo had managed to pass the assessment—and every single one of these disciples had been handpicked by Big Dipper. If ordinary people, who only exercised occasionally, were to apply to the Zero Wing Workshop, it would be great if even 1% managed to pass the assessment.

Moreover, the treatment Shi Feng offered was only average at best. She expected that anyone who saw the advertised benefits would directly give up on applying altogether.

However, when the next day arrived, everyone in the Big Dipper Training Center was stupefied.

There were actually tens of thousands of people swarming into the Big Dipper Training Center, every one of them wishing to take Zero Wing's test. These people had very nearly destroyed the entrance of the training center.

The lively scene was even more exaggerated than Jin Hai City's annual fighting competition.

Meanwhile, the only thing these people talked about as they filled the hallways of the Big Dipper Training Center was Zero Wing, their eyes filled with excitement and admiration as they spoke.

In Liang Jing's opinion, these people had all lost their minds. Since when did Big Dipper possess such powerful advertising capabilities? With this, there would be no need to run any training center or dojo. Big Dipper could simply start an advertising company and make a fortune.

Wasn't Zero Wing just a Gaming Workshop? It was not as if these people were applying to join one of the Fortune 500 companies.

When Xiao Yu found out about this flood of visitors, he thought that a major incident had occurred at Big Dipper. As a result, even though he resided in another city, he hurriedly took a flight back to Jin Hai City. When he arrived at the Big Dipper Training Center and heard what the crowd was discussing, his mind stopped completely.

He had never imagined that a game like God's Domain could actually garner such popularity as well as possess such massive influence.

Previously, he still considered God's Domain to be like any other game. Even if those major corporations invested in it, they were only doing so to raise their prestige and help promote the game.

Now, however, it would seem that was not the case.

"It looks like I'll have to find some time to have a discussion with Shi Feng." At this moment, Xiao Yu finally understood why Shi Feng was so intent on playing a virtual reality game. Otherwise, with the young man's abilities, he could easily become a star in the world of fighting.

Meanwhile, the large number of applicants also made the extremely confident White Tiger Dojo impatient.

"Just what kind of trick did they pull?! Why are all these people trying to join that place?!" No matter how many times Gan Xingteng looked through Zero Wing's flyer, he could not figure out why so many people were trying to join Zero Wing's Workshop.



Meanwhile, the instructions from the White Tiger Dojo's main headquarters were also very simple: speed up the construction of the branch dojo. At the same time, the main headquarters also withdrew some funds to start advertising as well, refusing to believe that they could not outcompete Big Dipper with the fame of the White Tiger Dojo.

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After learning of the White Tiger Dojo's actions, Liang Jing suggested Shi Feng either increase his scope of advertising or reduce the difficulty of the assessment. However, Shi Feng rejected her suggestions.

In his opinion, the people of the White Tiger Dojo were truly fools. He was currently recruiting members for a Gaming Workshop, not a dojo. No matter how much the White Tiger Dojo advertised itself, it would not affect his recruitment campaign in any way.

Following which, Shi Feng handed over all the tasks related to the recruitment to Liang Jing to handle, which kept her extremely busy. Not only did she have to go through the applications of tens of thousands of people as well as manage their assessments, but crowds of new applicants also continued coming in every day. If she did not mobilize every staff member of Big Dipper, she would've died from overwork already.

Fortunately, becoming an internal elite of Zero Wing was not easy, and the passing rate of the assessment was exceedingly low. At the moment, the passing rate was not even 1%.

As for Shi Feng himself, he continued training at the Battle Tower. At the same time, he shared some of his Battle Points with Fire Dance and the others, allowing them to fight with the simulated experts for long periods of time.

During the two days that God's Domain's system update took to finish, Fire Dance and the others received massive improvements.

Violet Cloud, in particular, had finally set foot into the Refinement Realm after training at the Battle Tower, becoming Zero Wing's third expert to set foot into the Realms of Refinement. As for everyone else, they had all reached the Half-step Refinement Realm standard already.

"When Big Sis Aqua finds out about this, she will most likely be very shocked at our improvement speed during this period," Violet Cloud said over the public channel, after entering her virtual gaming cabin, her heart full of anticipation as she prepared to log into God's Domain. "Oh, right. Guild Leader, please don't tell Big Sis Aqua about this matter right after you log in. She was always bullying me before. This time, I must give her a surprise!"

"Sure," Shi Feng laughed as he shook his head. After Aqua Rose obtained her Epic Staff, although she was still a bit inferior to Violet Cloud in terms of techniques, she became far superior in terms of Basic Attributes. As a result, when the two sparred with each other, Violet Cloud was usually the one who got the worst of it. "After you guys log in, gather at White River City. I have something important to tell you all. In addition, there is also the matter of these newcomers."

Following which, when the countdown timer for God's Domain's system upgrade ended, everyone logged into the game simultaneously.

## Chapter 908 – 3-Star Shop

As soon as Shi Feng returned to God's Domain after forty hours of waiting, the sound of a system notification entered his ears.

System: The environment of the area you are in has changed.

System: You have 30 seconds of invulnerability to look for a safe zone.

“Isn’t this transformation a little too much?!” Shi Feng was surprised as he observed his surroundings.

At this moment, the previously lush, green valley was nothing more than scorched earth. He could even faintly see streams of magma flowing nearby. This place had already turned into a volcanic hell.

When the waves of hot air blew over Shi Feng, even with his high Fire Resistance, his skin still registered a burning sensation.

The pungent smell in the air was almost unbearable.

After God’s Domain underwent its fourth evolution, the five senses of players had evidently become much more acute. As a result, such severe external environments would have a greater impact on the combat power of players.

Likewise, monsters also had their senses heightened. With their enhanced senses, monsters would now have significantly greater perception ranges.

This change was extremely disadvantageous for players who grinded at night. After all, while players would have their acuity reduced at night, monsters would not. Now that the senses of monsters were sharper, most likely, players would be under attack even before they could detect these monsters.

This change was a nightmare, particularly for players who were usually active in high-level maps, which were already very dangerous to adventure in, in the first place. Now, things just became even more dangerous.

Although Shi Feng had already chosen a safe zone to set up a teleportation point before he logged out, with such drastic changes to the environment, his previously safe zone was now infested with extremely fierce Level 40 monsters. If not for the invulnerability provided by the system, he would've long since become dinner for these monsters.

He immediately activated Wind Rider and continued searching for a safe zone to set up a teleportation point.

After looking for about half an hour or so, he finally found an elevated location for the teleportation point. He also set up a protective barrier using the Ancient Abyssal Book.

Aside from the monsters that were originally in the valley, one could also frequently see abyssal monsters flying overhead. These monsters were much higher-leveled than those residing in the valley, with the lowest being Level 80. To current players, these monsters were practically invincible existences.

Without the barrier set up using the Ancient Abyssal Book, any player that came here would only become food for the abyssal monsters.

However, it was also thanks to these abyssal monsters that he could get an opportunity to make a fortune.

Eventually, he would only need to pay out some Magic Crystals in order to rake in large sums of Coins.

After he was done with all of his tasks here, Shi Feng took out a Return Scroll and left the valley.

At White River City, Shi Feng discovered that the city's defensive magic array had already been activated, as soon as he walked out of the Teleportation Hall. There were also thousands of abyssal monsters hovering about in the air beyond the magic array, with the lowest-leveled among them being Level 180 and the highest being Level 200 Grand Lords.

With the appearance of such terrifying monsters, the atmosphere within White River City had become subdued. The players walking around the street all felt extremely stressed, all of them fearing that the defensive magic array in the sky would suddenly crumble.

"We're doomed this time! With so many monsters here, will our White River City be captured as well?"

"That can't be possible, right? Although White River City is not comparable to the capital, it is still a major city in the kingdom's eastern region. If even White River City falls, won't the surrounding cities fare even worse?"

When everyone thought about the gigantic monsters flying in the sky above the city, their scalps involuntarily numbed. In this situation, they couldn't grind and level up within the region of White River City.

At the same time, the Guilds based in the eastern region of Star-Moon Kingdom were also holding urgent meetings one after another.

The various Guilds had initially believed that the Abyss Invasion would only affect the Twin Towers Kingdom. They never thought that it would embroil the surrounding countries as well. Now, these Guilds had no choice but to decide whether or not they should relocate to another city. However, the consequences of doing so were something that no Guild could accept.

It had taken them a lot of time and resources to establish themselves in their current respective cities. If they were to leave the city they controlled and choose to start developing all over again in another city, the cost of doing so would be much higher than the first time.

The number two Guild in Star-Moon Kingdom's eastern region, Overwhelming Smile, was currently extremely busy.

Over a hundred people were seated inside its spacious meeting room. These people were all members of Overwhelming Smile's upper echelon, and they were existences that ordinary players would rarely get to meet.

"Hahaha! The timing of these abyssal monsters is simply impeccable! I want to see just how Zero Wing is going to continue strutting around in this situation!" Feng Xuanyang could not help but smile when he received the latest report.

Based on the information from Underworld, the eastern region of Star-Moon Kingdom wasn't the only part of the kingdom affected by the Abyss Invasion. These abyssal monsters were already showing signs of spreading throughout the entire realm. By the time that happened, it would be relatively dangerous for players to go out and grind.

Along with this report, the upper echelon of Underworld had also given the command for Overwhelming Smile to move its elites temporarily to the Black Dragon Empire, which did not receive any harassment from the abyssal monsters.

Underworld's influence spread across multiple kingdoms. A pause in its operations in Star-Moon Kingdom would not affect the entire organization too significantly. It definitely possessed the ability to transfer its elites to the cities of other kingdoms and empires that were under its control.

Small and upstart Guilds with no background, on the other hand, did not possess this ability. These Guilds generally had their foundations in only one country and could not afford to move their base of operations in a hurry. Even if they did relocate, they would have to start from scratch. However, how could these Guilds compete in a foreign city against the entrenched local Guilds, which had already developed for months?

For Zero Wing, the tyrant of Star-Moon Kingdom, things were even more severe. The amount of capital and number of advantages it would lose by migrating its base of operations would be unbearable even for a first-rate Guild. With such a loss, Zero Wing's development would no doubt suffer a significant setback. When that happened, it would be nearly impossible for the Guild to catch up to the major powers of God's Domain.

In contrast to Feng Xuanyang's joyful reaction, Youlan currently had a slight frown on her face.

Zero Wing is really unlucky, but I guess this is also part of life. Youlan could not help but sigh inwardly.

Zero Wing's rise was already a legend in Star-Moon Kingdom. Ultimately, however, it couldn't save itself from falling due to external factors.

Who could've possibly imagined that the system would play such a trick? This development had thoroughly ruined Zero Wing.

Of course, Youlan was also feeling very fortunate about the appearance of the abyssal monsters.

This invasion was both a disaster and an opportunity.

Currently, due to the abyssal monsters, the players belonging to countries neighboring the Twin Towers Kingdoms would definitely shift to other kingdoms and empires. Moreover, the possibility of players migrating to the Black Dragon Empire was the greatest. With so many players swarming into the Black Dragon Empire, the player population of the cities there would naturally soar. Hence, the market there for items would expand in spades.

If she could nurture a batch of her own Advanced Lifestyle players now, her authority in Underworld would surely grow as well.

Thinking up to this point, Youlan could not help but wish she could take action sooner.

At this time, every minute and second was money!

Unfortunately, while today should have been the day they went to the Holy City of Titan, due to the system upgrade, the operation had been delayed.

While every Guild was busy holding meetings and deciding on how they should develop in the future, Shi Feng himself arrived at the City Hall of White River City.

“How may I help you, sir?” the NPC beauty standing behind the VIP counter asked with a smile.



In response, he calmly took out a purple-gold, diamond-shaped token and said, "I wish to upgrade the Candlelight Trading Firm into a 3-star Shop."

## Chapter 909 – Shocking Star-Moon Kingdom

After the female receptionist accepted the purple-gold token and confirmed that there were no problems, she looked at Shi Feng and said, "Sir, if you wish to promote your Shop to 3-star status, you still have to pay an additional 3,000 Gold reconstruction fee."

Without hesitation, Shi Feng handed 3,000 Gold over to the receptionist.

Previously, he had been busy with setting up a teleportation point. There had also been the matter of the Mutated Dragon. Back then, he simply had no time to check how much he had earned from the Blackwing Auction House.

Although Shi Feng had spent 20,000 Gold to purchase the Engineering Locomotive Design from Sinned Heart, the 5,000 Strengthening Devices he sold at Blackwing City had made him a fortune.

After deducting all the miscellaneous fees, he currently had close to 30,000 Gold Coins sitting in his pockets right now. If those first-rate Guilds were to learn of this, they would definitely be green with envy.

In truth, Shi Feng had never imagined that the Strengthening Devices would be so welcome; the final 1,500 devices sold at a minimum price of 13 Gold 15 Silver. The Combat Guilds at Blackwing City had gone nuts over the devices.

It's a pity that the number of people who can produce the Strengthening Device is limited. Otherwise, with just the Strengthening Device, I could probably earn enough money to construct a city, Shi Feng sighed inwardly.

While the Strengthening Device Forging Design itself was already extremely rare, the forgers capable of producing the item at a profitable rate were even rarer. As a result, the number of designs he had on hand was much more than the number of forgers he had who were capable of producing the item right now.

As players reached higher levels, their chances of obtaining the Strengthening Device Forging Design would rise. As the number of Strengthening Devices on the market increased, its price would definitely fall. By then, it would be very good if he could sell one for eight or nine Gold. In another few months' time, even selling a Strengthening Device for five Gold would be an extravagant dream.

After Shi Feng paid the fees and completed all the necessary procedures, as soon as he walked out of the City Hall's entrance and was about to head back to the Guild Residence...

A commotion broke out among players on the street.

"Did you hear? The Candlelight Trading Firm's Shop has transformed again!"

"Transformed? Could there be a new product?"

“No, that’s not it. The entire trading firm itself has undergone a transformation! Before, it was only a five-story building. Now, it is seven stories tall! Currently, it is only second to the NPC-operated Starstreak Trading Firm in terms of floors!”

“What? Aren’t the number of floors for Shops fixed?”

“That’s right! That’s why everyone suspects that Candlelight’s Shop has been promoted to a 3-star Shop!”

“What!? Even the Black Dragon Empire had a 2-star Shop appear in its imperial capital only recently! How can the Candlelight Trading Firm possibly upgrade to a 3-star Shop so quickly?!”

News of the Candlelight Trading Firm obtaining a 3-star Shop spread like wildfire. Very quickly, every Guild in the entire Star-Moon Kingdom had found out about it.

This incident completely offset the depression and silence brought on by the abyssal monsters.

“Just what is Zero Wing thinking?”

“The abyssal monsters have already started to spread throughout the entire kingdom. White River City is even under siege right now. To upgrade a Shop in White River City to 3-stars, isn’t Zero Wing throwing good money after bad?!”

“Doesn’t Zero Wing know that players have already begun migrating to other kingdoms and empires? Rather than constructing a 3-star Shop in a city with a rapidly decreasing population, they might as well construct it in a small city in the Black Dragon Empire.”

When the various Guilds received this news, their first reaction was to comment on Zero Wing’s foolishness.

Meanwhile, the Guild that was the most excited about this news was naturally Overwhelming Smile, Zero Wing’s long-time rival; some Guilds that wished to overtake Zero Wing also got a kick out of this development.

“Hahaha! Zero Wing is done for this time! It won’t be able to rise back up even if it wanted to now!” Initially, when Feng Xuanyang received news of the Candlelight Trading Firm’s promotion, he had been both shocked and envious. Overwhelming Smile had yet to possess even a single 2-star Shop up to now, yet the Candlelight Trading Firm already had a 3-star Shop. Shortly after, however, he started gloating over Zero Wing’s misfortune.

If not for the invasion of the abyssal monsters, the fact that the Candlelight Trading Firm possessed a 3-star Shop would have indeed dealt a heavy blow to Overwhelming Smile’s Overwhelming Trading Firm.

With the Special Workshop of 2-star Shops as an example, even a fool could imagine just how many more additional benefits a 3-star Shop could bring. Even a meager increase in the number of Special Workshops would still greatly enhance the Candlelight Trading Firm’s ability to nurture Lifestyle players.

In the current God’s Domain, economic battles between Guilds were becoming increasingly important. This change in trend also led to Feng Xuanyang loathing Youlan to the extreme. He deeply regretted not contesting for the rights of the Overwhelming Trading Firm, allowing Youlan to obtain them, instead. Right now, Youlan was already a very important figure in Underworld; even he had to treat her with respect.

Before Shi Feng even walked into Zero Wing's Residence, he could already hear the merriment coming from inside.

Just moments ago, Melancholic Smile had even directly contacted Shi Feng to report every functionality of the Candlelight Trading Firm's new 3-star Shop, her voice bubbling with excitement.

Although the building itself had increased by only two floors, the difference between the functions of a 2-star Shop and 3-star Shop made Melancholic Smile think that she was dreaming.

That was right: dreaming.

In order to develop itself, the Candlelight Trading Firm had recruited many Lifestyle players. Some of the new hires had very good potential. The only thing they lacked was experience. Unfortunately, the Candlelight Trading Firm had only five Special Workshops. With three rooms reserved exclusively for Melancholic Smile, Cream Cocoa, and Roasted Ironheart, only two were left for the others to use in turn and increase their production experience.

With this, the amount of time allotted for each Lifestyle player was not calculated in hours or days, but in minutes. Generally, a Lifestyle player with good potential would have roughly 30 minutes to learn and train inside a Special Workshop, once every several days.

Now, they had a total of 12 Special Workshops. Aside from the three reserved, they now had nine Special Workshops for those with excellent potential to use. This would increase their efficiency over fourfold.

Finally, there was the Basic Meditation Room, which was what truly shocked Melancholic Smile.

Out of curiosity, she had spent 300 Magic Crystals to activate the room. Although the price was indeed costly, the effects of the room left her speechless. While inside the Meditation Room, her mind experienced a calm like never before. In that calm state, even the most complicated production procedures became very simple for her. As a result, her production success rate had risen by roughly 10% while her production speed had improved by at least 30% as well.

Although this improvement might not seem like much, to Lifestyle players like herself who frequently produced items, this improvement was extremely staggering. Currently, items that could raise production success rate by just 1% were selling for astronomical prices; something that could offer an increase of 10% would be priceless. There was also the improvement in production speed.

Not to mention spending 300 Magic Crystals a day, even spending 500 crystals would be worth it—so long as the Meditation Room was used to produce high-value items. If it were used only for items such as Advanced Whetstones, they would never be able to make up for the cost of using the room.

Shi Feng only gave some simple instructions regarding the Meditation Rooms and Special Workshops. At the same time, he also had Melancholic Smile start recruiting more Lifestyle players from the general public.

The fourth evolution of God's Domain was not as simple as it appeared to be.

Rather than the combat system, the Lifestyle production system was the part that had truly evolved. Soon, Lifestyle players would play a pivotal role in God's Domain, just like combat players.

Otherwise, a Master Forger wouldn't have attained such a high standing in society in the past, to the point where even the Guild Leader of a second-rate Guild like himself had to treat them with respect. Back then, even the members of Shadow's board of directors had treated the Guild's Master Forgers like their own babies.

## Chapter 910 – Killing Multiple Birds with One Stone

While the Candlelight Trading Firm was causing a huge commotion...

Over a hundred people were currently gathered inside the meeting room of Zero Wing's Guild Residence.

Every person present was a core member of Zero Wing. Not only did everyone possess very high Levels, but even the equipment they wore could easily make expert players of God's Domain envious. While the general public considered Level 35 Dark-Gold Equipment rare, it was just basic equipment for them. As for their combat standards, every one of them could easily reach the fifth floor of the Trial Tower or higher.

Experts capable of reaching the Trial Tower's fifth floor could easily become a first-rate expert in a city with a player population of over 100,000.

Nevertheless, all these experts were gazing at the figure seated on the Guild Leader's throne with eyes filled with reverence and shock.

The reason for their reverence was the identity of the man before them. He was a legendary character who had single-handedly established Zero Wing and developed the upstart Guild to its current overbearing state. The man was even the publicly acknowledged number one expert of Star-Moon Kingdom, and until now, he still maintained his indomitable record.

As for the reason for their shock when they looked at Shi Feng, it was his Level.

At this moment, Shi Feng had not done anything to hide his Level. As long as one paid a little attention, they would be able to see it.

Level 42!

Even the current top players in empires were only Level 39 at best. They were also still relatively far from reaching Level 40. Previously, when Fire Dance and the others had revealed themselves to be at Level 40, the other core members had already been flabbergasted. Although there was just a difference of one Level between them and the top players of empires, the amount of EXP required to cross this gap was massive.

Now, Shi Feng was even more terrifying. He was actually two Levels higher than Fire Dance and the others.

Not to mention the other core members present, even Fire Dance and her team were staggered. After all, when they had last met, Shi Feng was only Level 40. In just a short time, Shi Feng had actually managed to pull ahead of them by two Levels. His leveling speed was simply ludicrous.

“Guild Leader, everyone’s here already,” Aqua Rose said softly to Shi Feng after checking the entire meeting room.

Nodding, Shi Feng swept a glance at everyone present and said seriously, “I’ve asked you all to gather here for two matters. The first matter is that Zero Wing is going to start branching out and developing at



the Twin Towers Kingdom and the Black Dragon Empire. The exact locations where we'll be setting up the branches have also been determined already. When the time comes, I'll have you all split up to these two locations. I'll also set up a new main force in both of these locations. As for who will become part of this main force, I'll be choosing them from the Guild's elite members. Of course, you all can put in your recommendations as well. The treatment provided will be the same as Star-Moon Kingdom's main force."

Truthfully speaking, Shi Feng did not wish to develop outwards so quickly. However, now that God's Domain had experienced its fourth evolution, the economic war involving Lifestyle classes had also officially begun. Even if he did not wish to develop Zero Wing in other kingdoms, he had no choice but to do so. Without sufficient resources, it would be impossible for them to contend against other large Guilds.

Before Shi Feng was done speaking, everyone present had already fallen into a daze.

Even Aqua Rose, the Vice-Leader of Zero Wing, was shocked at this news.

Although Zero Wing expanding to other countries was something that was bound to happen sooner or later, she had never imagined that that day would come so quickly!

Or to put it in another way, they had long since grown impatient waiting for the arrival of this day.

Currently, Zero Wing simply had too many members. While playing virtual reality games, Guilds always had one big problem to face: the limited amount of resources in an area. If a Guild wished to develop and grow stronger, it needed to secure more resource-rich areas for itself. Otherwise, sooner or later, it would face resource-deprivation due to their constantly increasing member count. Then, the amount of resources each Guild member could receive would decrease, which would affect the overall development speed of the Guild members.

This problem was also the reason why first-rate Guilds would spread their roots throughout multiple kingdoms and empires. The influence of the major powers of the virtual gaming world spanned several dozens of countries.

However, one thing that confused everyone was Shi Feng's choice to develop at the Twin Towers Kingdom and the Black Dragon Empire.

Setting aside how muddy the waters were at the Black Dragon Empire and the fact that the Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion was Zero Wing's enemy, just the Twin Towers Kingdom was already a huge problem.

The Twin Towers Kingdom was infested with abyssal monsters. The players living there were scrambling to leave, yet Zero Wing was actually choosing to charge into the kingdom.

The situation in the Twin Towers Kingdom was much more severe than Star-Moon Kingdom's. There was simply no way for them to level up there. Just how were they supposed to develop themselves?

"Guild Leader, abyssal monsters have already conquered the Twin Towers Kingdom. Why don't we consider developing at the Purple Thorns Kingdom, the kingdom west of Star-Moon Kingdom? The abyssal monsters haven't reached there. Moreover, the two first-rate Guilds in that kingdom have constantly been at each other's necks all this time. With our Guild's strength, we can easily make a place for ourselves there. In addition, the Purple Thorns Kingdom is rich in herbs. Our Guild will have a much easier time procuring herbs if we develop there," Aqua Rose suggested hurriedly.

She had long since made ample preparations regarding Zero Wing's development, only she never bothered making suggestions, as Shi Feng had always said that the time was not right yet.

The Candlelight Trading Firm was the largest source of economic power for Zero Wing. With the Purple Thorns Kingdom's abundance of herbs, they could definitely advance the Candlelight Trading Firm a step

further. They would no longer have to rely on external sources to obtain their herbs. If they developed properly, they could definitely achieve self-sufficiency in herbs and greatly reduce the expenses of the Candlelight Trading Firm.

The players in the room voiced their agreement with Aqua Rose's suggestion one after another.

The current combat power of Zero Wing's elite members was in no way inferior to a first-rate Guild's. In addition, they also had quite a number of experts in the Guild now. Even if they sent only a portion of their forces, they should not have any problem handling the threats present in the Purple Thorns Kingdom. Moreover, Zero Wing already possessed several plots of Land in the cities of the Purple Thorns Kingdom. With this foundation, they would be able to construct a Guild Residence in that kingdom right away. One could say that the Purple Thorns Kingdom was the best option by far.

"While the Purple Thorns Kingdom is indeed a good option, the Twin Towers Kingdom is much better," Shi Feng replied, shaking his head.

"Better?" All the core members were filled with questions as they looked at Shi Feng.

They simply could not figure out what exactly was good about branching out to a place infested with abyssal monsters.

"I know that you all are worried about the abyssal monsters, but that is also the greatest opportunity for Zero Wing." Shi Feng naturally understood everyone's worries. In their shoes, he, too, would've chosen to branch out to the Purple Thorns Kingdom. However, he now had both the Ancient Abyssal Book and the Teleportation Magic Array in his possession.

Regarding the threat of powerful abyssal monsters, he could just set up multiple barriers and allow his Guild members to grind at high-resource maps safely. There was also no need to worry about other Guilds and players coming to contest for those locations. In addition, they could also gain Honor Points by killing low-level abyssal monsters.

Now that the Guilds originally residing in the Twin Towers Kingdom had left, although the Lands of the kingdom's capital remained in the hands of these Guilds, as long as Zero Wing paid some Coins, it could still buy one or two plots of Land located near the heart of the city without any difficulty. Had he chosen to branch out to other kingdoms, Zero Wing couldn't even dream of obtaining the central Lands of the top ten major cities in these kingdoms, much less the central Lands of the capital city. Nobody would be willing to sell them anything at all.

Even if there was a willing seller, that price would not be one that Zero Wing would be willing to bear.

Furthermore, the Twin Towers Kingdom was a country of ore. In terms of ore-related resources, it was only slightly inferior to the Storm Empire. At the end of the day, the Candlelight Trading Firm focused mainly on forging. Ore was something that it could not lack.

Hence, developing at the Twin Towers Kingdom was akin to killing multiple birds with one stone.

Following which, Shi Feng cleverly hid the matter of the Ancient Abyssal Book, simply telling everyone that he had discovered many special areas not assaulted by the abyssal monsters. Afterwards, as long as he set up teleportation points at these locations, they would be able to level up without worrying about abyssal monsters or other players, essentially turning those locations into Zero Wing's backyard.

When they heard Shi Feng's reason, everyone's eyes sparkled, anticipation filling their hearts.

Nobody present was a noob. They knew full well just how valuable an uncontested high-resource map was. Otherwise, the various large Guilds would not fight over these high-resource maps.

However, no one knew that Shi Feng had actually concealed another important reason for his choice to develop at the Twin Towers Kingdom.

The large-scale Regional Dungeon, Tower of Time!

## Chapter 911 – Tower of Time

The Twin Towers Kingdom was named such because of its two ancient towers within the kingdom's boundaries.

These ancient towers had existed in God's Domain for a long time; their age could no longer be verified.

Among these two towers, one was the Tower of Time. It was also the Twin Towers Kingdom's sole, large-scale Regional Dungeon. Like the Dungeon in the Stoneclaw Mountains, this Dungeon was set to Asura Mode. However, the Tower of Time's Level was much higher; thus it was more difficult to raid.

Meanwhile, the Tower of Time's fame throughout God's Domain had not only been due to its abundance of Magic Crystals, but its Bosses also had a chance of dropping the Seven Luminaries Crystals.

The Level requirement just to enter the Tower of Time was Level 50.

In the past, when mainstream players had been around Level 50, the Mind Space System had not yet launched in God's Domain. As a result, everyone had treated the Tower of Time like an ordinary Regional Dungeon that produced large quantities of Magic Crystals. Even when people killed the many Bosses inside the Dungeon and obtained the Seven Luminaries Crystal, nobody knew their true value.

The various large Guilds had simply treated as the Seven Luminaries Crystal as a high-end item to use or trade. Only after the Mind Space System launched did everyone realize their blunder. The Guilds that used or traded their Seven Luminaries Crystal had nearly choked to death with anger.

Regional Dungeons all had level limits that prevented anyone below or above a certain Level from entering. When the Mind Space System had been introduced, God's Domain had been operating for over a year. Players' average Level had already been beyond the Tower of Time's limit of Level 70. Hence, it had been practically impossible for Guilds to rely on their main forces to grind the Bosses for Seven Luminaries Crystals.

Meanwhile, when one wanted to enter the Tower of Time, aside from the level requirement, one needed a Space-time Crystal. A single Space-time Crystal could allow 100 players into the Tower of Time. However, only the monsters near the tower dropped the Space-time Crystals, and its drop-rate wasn't very high. This greatly restricted the number of players who could enter the Dungeon.

In this life, before everyone knew the importance of the Tower of Time, Shi Feng intended to take advantage of the situation and grind for Space-time Crystals. Once Zero Wing's core members reached Level 50, they could get a headstart over the other Guilds, raiding the Tower of Time.

After Shi Feng explained his plans for the Guild's expansion to everyone, he continued with notifying everyone about Zero Wing's preparation to nurture a large batch of internal experts.

"Guild Leader, if we try to recruit members now, it will be far less effective than our past recruitment campaigns. After all, nobody knows if White River City will hold off the abyssal monsters. Moreover, even if the magic array holds, it is still extremely dangerous for players to go out to level up. On the off chance that one encounters a high-level abyssal monster, a team-wipe is practically a guarantee. Based on my investigation, a portion of players have already moved to the Black Dragon Empire.

“Moreover, many of our Guild members are worried about this crisis. This really isn’t a good time to recruit members. We would be better off holding a mass-recruitment campaign after we secure a foothold in the Black Dragon Empire. It would be more effective to wait.”

Saying so, Aqua Rose handed Shi Feng a statistics report, which clearly displayed White River City’s situation.

Due to the abyssal monsters, the city’s teleportation fee had been temporarily removed. Currently, over 5% of White River City’s player population had relocated. Among these players, the majority had migrated to the Black Dragon Empire. As time passed, more players would relocate to continue their development.

“Don’t worry about it. Start preparing for recruitment and assessment work. We will soon make up for those who chose to head elsewhere to develop,” Shi Feng said as he read the report. The situation was much better than his initial prediction.

“Make up for?” Aqua Rose was slightly confused. However, since Shi Feng had already spoken, she did not probe into the matter any further. She trusted Shi Feng’s judgment.

Shi Feng simply smiled at Aqua Rose’s confusion. He then issued further instructions regarding the recruitment campaign.

Everyone’s worries about the abyssal monsters capturing the city were unnecessary.

The Abyss Passage had been activated in the Twin Towers Kingdom. The powerful NPCs guarding the border had held back most of the strongest abyssal monsters. As for the remaining powerful abyssal monsters, almost all of them were busy besieging the various major cities. Hence, when the players belonging to the neighboring kingdoms and empires ventured out to level up, they just needed to be a little more careful of their surroundings. Things were not so severe that their livelihoods in their countries had been severed.

This was just like an addition of several Bosses, which should not be provoked, in everyone's leveling maps. The abyss invasion was not as severe as everyone thought.

On the contrary, due to the temporarily removed teleportation fees in affected cities, players now had more affordable leveling spots to choose from.

Moreover, even if everyone failed to notice this, he could stealthily spread the message himself. In addition, there would soon be a teleportation array linked to a grinding area in the Twin Towers Kingdom. By then, the countless players who wanted to change classes would swarm to White River City. They didn't need to worry about a lack of players in the city.

Once the teleportation array was set up, they also wouldn't need to worry about lacking development funds.

As Shi Feng arranged for Blackie to lead the Dark Gods Legion's elites to power-level the newcomers from the Big Dipper Dojo, Aqua Rose approached and whispered, "Guild Leader, Miss Phoenix Rain has arrived and is waiting in the reception room. She says that she has brought what you requested."

"She's finally here." Shi Feng nodded. He then left the remaining matters to Aqua Rose while he met Phoenix Rain.

—



Inside the elegant, stunning reception room, Phoenix Rain sat quietly by the windowsill, a Black Cloak draped over her back. When Shi Feng entered the room, her gaze promptly moved away from the Zero Wing members walking around the first-floor hall and to Shi Feng.

*Level 42?!* Phoenix Rain was stunned.

Currently, she knew of several people who had reached Level 40 in the empire. However, these people had used special methods to achieve their level. Take herself for example. She was an Elementalist. Not only had she learned several AOE Attack Spells, but she also had a large number of elite members to assist her leveling progress. Her leveling speed was already fast. However, even now, she was over 30% away from reaching Level 40, yet Shi Feng had already reached Level 42.

“Phoenix Pavilion Master, may I see the Lake Heart City’s Deed?” Shi Feng asked. He smiled in response to Phoenix Rain’s surprise.

“Here; take a look,” Phoenix Rain quickly recovered her composure and took out a Deed for a Land in Lake Heart City. “This is the only Deed I can give you. Even if you’re not satisfied, I cannot change it.”

“Mhm, not bad. Although it cannot compare to a golden Land, it still has relatively high potential,” Shi Feng said with satisfaction after examining the Deed.

With this Deed, Zero Wing could secure a foothold in the Black Dragon Empire.

What followed next would depend on how things progressed on Melancholic Smile’s side. Once they were ready, Zero Wing would officially start pushing its way into the Black Dragon Empire.

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Elsewhere, a large crowd of players had gathered before the seven-story-tall Candlelight Trading Firm. It was even more lively than during normal times.

While many among the crowd were Lifestyle players, the majority consisted of sightseers.

After all, nobody had ever seen a 3-star Shop before. They were all quite curious about the differences between a 3-star Shop and a 2-star Shop. This was especially true for Lifestyle players.

Not long ago, the Candlelight Trading Firm had published a shocking message.

The Candlelight Trading Firm was currently recruiting Lifestyle players, regardless of rank. It did not care if one was an Apprentice, who had just started, or someone far along the path of their Lifestyle. As long as they could pass the simple entrance test, they could become an official member of the Candlelight Trading Firm. High achievers would even get the opportunity to improve themselves in the Special Workshop. This was a benefit that could not be found anywhere else throughout the entire Star-Moon Kingdom and even God's Domain. After all, Special Workshops were simply too rare. Most trading firms only allowed their most skilled and trustworthy members to utilize their limited Special Workshops. Ordinary people had no hope of enjoying this particular benefit.

## Chapter 912 – Bottomless Candlelight Trading Firm

The news of the Candlelight Trading Firm mass-recruiting Lifestyle players spread like wildfire.

It wasn't just limited to White River City; very quickly, everyone throughout Star-Moon Kingdom heard about the opportunity. The official forums buzzed with activity.

“What? This can’t be true, right? The Candlelight Trading Firm is actually recruiting members without any rank restrictions?”

“I heard that Candlelight wants to recruit a lot of people this time. I wonder if an Intermediate Apprentice like myself has a chance?”

“I remember that, when Heaven’s Burial recruited Lifestyle players, applicants needed to be at least Advanced Apprentice rank with a 65% success rate or higher to pass their assessment. However, Heaven’s Burial still doesn’t have a 2-star Shop. Candlelight’s assessment will probably be extremely difficult.”

Currently, Lifestyle players grew more important by the day. However, it was extremely difficult for a Lifestyle player to make a name for themselves if they had to rely on their own strength. This was because Lifestyle players needed a lot of resources for their practice. The more important a Lifestyle class was, the more resources they needed to improve. Moreover, the further a Lifestyle player progressed, the more valuable were their required resources.

Hence, if a Lifestyle player did not join a Guild, it would become extremely difficult for them to grow stronger.

Just hours after the Candlelight Trading Firm announced its recruitment campaign, thousands of players had lined up outside the firm’s 3-star Shop in White River City, and the crowd was still growing.

Melancholic Smile arranged for these Lifestyle players to take the firm’s assessment, one after another.

The test was very simple. Lifestyle players were required to produce a tool or item corresponding to their ranks, and they would be given a pass as long as they achieved a success rate of above 60%.

“What, exactly, is Zero Wing trying to do?” When the various large Guilds heard the news, they immediately assumed that Zero Wing had gone nuts.

Although Lifestyle players were important, one needed to invest a lot of resources to nurture profitable Lifestyle players. Moreover, a loss was guaranteed during the early nurturing stages. Hence, when Guilds like themselves recruited Lifestyle players, they set their requirements very high and would only recruit a limited number. Otherwise, the expenditure would do more harm than good.

Yet, not only was Zero Wing recruiting Lifestyle players regardless of rank, but it had also significantly lowered the assessment’s difficulty. During Zero Wing’s previous recruitment campaigns for Lifestyle players, it had required a success rate of 70% or higher.

In just half an hour, Zero Wing had recruited over 30 Lifestyle players. Among them, only seven were Advanced Apprentice rank, while the others were below that. This outcome worried the Lifestyle players still outside of the Candlelight Trading Firm. They were afraid that the available slots would be taken up before their turn arrived.

Contrary to expectations, however, more Lifestyle players were accepted. Very quickly, over a hundred players had been accepted into the firm. However, the Candlelight Trading Firm showed no signs of stopping its recruitment...

Seeing this, the spies the various Guilds had sent reported this information to their respective Guilds.

“What?! They have accepted over a hundred Apprentices?! Has Zero Wing’s upper management lost their minds?!”

“Could a 3-star Shop really be that powerful?”

The various Guilds that had received this message were stunned. Normally, they would only recruit around 40 Lifestyle players when they gained an additional 1-star Shop. If they recruited any more, there wouldn't be enough Workshops and resources to go around.

After the Candlelight Trading Firm upgraded one of its 2-star Shop to 3-star status, the building had only gained two floors. Generally, it would be a miracle if they could recruit 200 players.

—

“Big Sis Melancholic, should we raise the assessment bar? At this rate, we'll fill the new Workshops. It will be a pity if we miss out on any talented newcomers later on,” Cream Cocoa asked worriedly as she watched the thousands of people lined up outside of the building.

“Relax. I'm actually concerned that we won't be able to recruit enough people.” Melancholic Smile smiled bitterly.

“Not enough people? How is that possible? There are thousands of people outside right now. If we leave the bar at a 60% success rate, at least four or five hundred of them should pass. How is that not enough people?” Cream Cocoa was no longer the noob she had been when she had first started playing God's Domain. She knew that, although Lifestyle players who could achieve a 60% success rate were rare, with the base number being so high, a frightening number of people could pass the assessment.

Five hundred Lifestyle players was not a small crowd. Even an ordinary second-rate Guild could not afford to nurture so many.

Furthermore, the Candlelight Trading Firm was already saturated with Lifestyle players.

With the extra Workshops that came with the two additional floor spaces, the most they could afford to recruit was around 300 Lifestyle players. Any more and they would have to rent Workshops from the Lifestyle Associations.

However, renting Workshops would massively burden their finances.

“Four or five hundred really isn’t enough. The Guild Leader has already determined that we need to recruit 1,200 players,” Melancholic Smile chuckled. “With just the Lifestyle players in front of us, we will probably won’t reach that goal. Hopefully, more players will show up.”

Cream Cocoa was rendered speechless.

Lifestyle players were only a small minority of the player population in God’s Domain. In addition, the various Guilds often held recruitment campaigns of their own. Gathering 1,200 qualified Lifestyle players was a colossal task.

Unfortunately, Cream Cocoa had another concern.

Where were they going to house all of these Lifestyle players?

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Elsewhere, Shi Feng had completed his trade with Phoenix Rain in the City Hall and officially gained the Deed to a plot of Land in Lake Heart City.

“This is the information we have obtained on the Evil Dragon Battle Team. Take a look. The match is in two days. I look forward to the Asura Battle Team’s performance,” Phoenix Rain said, smiling pleasantly as she handed Shi Feng the information she had collected on the enemy battle team and the time, venue and rules for the next battle. She was in a good mood after obtaining the 10,000 Gold from Shi Feng.

“Oh? The Miracle Guild?” Shi Feng was slightly surprised after a general glance through the information.

“We have only discovered this after the system upgrade,” Phoenix Rain said solemnly. “You mustn’t underestimate the Miracle Guild. Although it is a super-first-rate Guild like the Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion, Miracle’s foundation is much stronger than ours. It can even contend with Super Guilds. When the time comes, the Evil Dragon Battle Team’s roster will undergo a complete change. You best prepare for the match.”

Although Phoenix Rain had said as much, she did not think that the Asura Battle Team had any chance of winning.

After all, the Asura Battle Team had exposed too many of its trump cards. The Miracle Guild would definitely come prepared. If Miracle went all out in this match, the Asura Battle Team would be overwhelmed. After all, the difference between each side’s strength was immense.

Phoenix Rain only prayed that the Miracle Guild would not take the match too seriously. This way, she could haul in another fortune.

Shi Feng nodded silently in response to Phoenix Rain’s advice.

In truth, even without Phoenix Rain's warning, Shi Feng knew just how powerful the Miracle Guild was.

In his previous life, when a Tier 3 Mysterious Flame had appeared in God's Domain, the various large Guilds had employed all sorts of methods to obtain it. In the end, however, a dozen or so experts from the Miracle Guild had secured the flame. Among the Guilds experts that had fought for the Mysterious Flame, two other Super Guilds' top combatants had been present.

That battle had become a classic within God's Domain.

To put it simply, defeating the Miracle Guild-led Evil Dragon Battle Team would be extremely difficult for the Asura Battle Team.

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As Shi Feng hurried towards the Candlelight Trading Firm, a party of six arrived in the Teleportation Hall in White River City. The instant these players appeared, they became the main focus within the hall. Their equipment was too gorgeous to ignore. Even the lowest quality equipment was Dark-Gold rank. As for these players' Levels, that was even more impressive.

Of the six players, two were Level 40, while the remaining four were Level 39. Even in an empire, this group would be a force to be reckoned with, much less White River City.

"So this is White River City? The standard of the players here is quite high."

"We're not here to sightsee; focus on the task at hand. Let's head over to Zero Wing to have a look."



## Chapter 913 – Intermediate Shop

After these six players conversed among themselves, they left the Teleportation Hall and stepped onto the busy street as everyone watched.

As soon as the group left the building, the leading white-haired, middle-aged man carrying a black-and-white spear summoned a giant snow-white wolf. The wolf was even larger than a lion.

An Assassin, wearing dark-gray leather armor with two blood-red daggers hanging from his waist, summoned a black warhorse beside the middle-aged man. The warhorse sported silver armor and looked far more majestic than the horses NPC soldiers used.

The instant these two Mounts appeared, they had immediately attracted the attention of every player on the street.

“Damn, who are those people? Their Mounts are definitely not Common rank.”

“You’re right. I’ve never seen any Common Mounts that look that cool. At the very least, they should be Bronze, maybe Mysterious-Iron, Mounts.”

To current players, even Common Mounts were a luxury, not to mention Mounts ranked Bronze or above.

Hence, when the players on the street saw these Mounts, both envy and admiration filled their hearts. Some beautiful female players even sent the white-haired man on the giant wolf flirtatious glances.

Nowadays, God's Domain was increasingly popular. One frequently saw the game mentioned in the news. Moreover, powerful Guilds were offering annual salaries ranging from 500,000 Credits to 6,000,000 Credits, depending on a player's strength. To ordinary people, this was an astronomical amount of money.

Seeing as the white-haired man rode a Bronze Mount or greater at this stage of the game, his salary must have been in the seven-digit range.

"Hahaha! Boss Blood, I think those beauties are interested in you!" an Elementalist, who wore a robe embroidered with runic symbols and exuded a refined air, poked fun at the white-haired Berserker leading his group.

"It's a pity that these beauties will never catch Boss Blood's eyes. After all, his heart already belongs to someone. Why won't these beauties look at me instead?" a Level 39 skinny, male Swordsman said as he sighed.

"Masked, you really should learn a thing or two from the Boss. If you put more effort into your improvement, you would've already reached Level 40 and could a Mount to woo those beauties." the male Assassin on the black mare snorted.

"How can I possibly compare to Boss Blood? Even now, I have not passed the test or obtained a title, unlike you, Kirin, who obtained your title half a year ago," the Swordsman named Masked Angel said enviously.

“Alright, that’s enough chit-chat. Focus on our task. I will head to Zero Wing with Kirin. The rest of you, catch up with a carriage,” the leading Berserker named Bloodsucker ordered sternly.

Immediately, everyone fell silent and did as they were told. The four Level 39s rode an advanced horse carriage and followed Bloodsucker and Kirin towards Zero Wing’s Guild Residence.

Although the advanced horse carriage was fast, it was still slightly slower than the snow-white wolf and black warhorse. As a result, the gap between the two groups gradually increased.

The party caused a Commotion everywhere they went.

—

Meanwhile, the Candlelight Trading Firm’s entrance was overcrowded.

Before anyone knew it, the Candlelight Trading Firm had recruited over 300 Lifestyle players. With this number, everyone could see how powerful the Firm’s foundations were. The other trading firms in Star-Moon Kingdom could not compare to this.

“Guild Leader, we’ve reached our recruitment limits for the moment. Any more and we’ll have to send these people to the Lifestyle Associations,” Melancholic Smile reported worriedly as she looked at the numerous files on the newcomers.

One thousand, two hundred people—this was already beyond what the Candlelight Trading Firm could handle. If they really recruited this many people, they would lose money each day, rather than make it.

“It’s fine. Bring all of the information you have on the Candlelight’s branch Shops,” Shi Feng instructed, waving his hand dismissively and chuckling.

In God’s Domain, Shops were officially categorized by star-ranks. However, one could also categorize a Shop by its size. Players in his previous life had realized this and summarized the differences. There were a total of four categories.

Basic Shop, Intermediate Shop, Advanced Shop, and Special Shop.

To begin with, 1-star and 2-star Shops fell under the Basic Shop category. A Basic Shop could only accommodate a limited number of Lifestyle players, and a firm had to rely on numbers to make up for the lack of space. A Basic Shop’s assistance it could provide to Lifestyle players was also quite limited.

The Intermediate Shop category included 3-star Shops to 5-star Shops. In terms of size, Intermediate Shops were massively different than Basic Shops. As long as a Shop reached 3-star status, it gained far more room than a 2-star Shop. Hence, when the various Guilds opened their own Shops, while it was relatively easy to upgrade a 1-star Shop to 2-star status, it was many times more difficult to upgrade a 2-star Shop to a 3-star Shop.

Naturally, upgrading from an Intermediate Shop to an Advanced Shop was even more difficult.

Meanwhile, the benefits an Intermediate Shop could provide became more obvious. The Basic Meditation Room was a primary example.

After Shi Feng’s command, Melancholic Smile compiled all of the information she had on every Candlelight’s branch Shop and handed the files to Shi Feng.

Not only was the compiled information detailed, but it was also easy to understand.

So far, the Candlelight Trading Firm had a total of 25 Shops. Among them, 24 were branch Shops. These branch Shops covered 22 cities. The fact that the firm had expanded so much was partly due to Phoenix Rain's secret assistance. Her help had allowed the Candlelight Trading Firm to set up Shops in the cities of a few neighboring countries. Moreover, she had only sold the Shops to Shi Feng at a price slightly higher than the initial cost.

*Phoenix Rain is certainly dedicated in her work.* Shi Feng smiled slightly after reading the information.

Among the many Shops, six were within the Black Dragon Empire. Moreover, five of these Shops were in cities with a player population in the millions. In addition, there were six Shops in the kingdoms neighboring Star-Moon Kingdom. Among them, four were in the Purple Thorns Kingdom. All four of these Shops were in the top ten most populated cities in the kingdom. As for the remaining two branch Shops, they were in the Twin Towers Kingdom. Unfortunately, most of the kingdom had fallen into ruin, and only the capital city remained standing.

Shi Feng had to admit that it was beneficial to cooperate with a major power. Without Phoenix Rain's help, Shi Feng would have to exhaust himself to no end to achieve a similar result, and this would have greatly impacted his personal growth.

Based on this alone, one could see how frightening the foundations of God's Domain's major powers were. Currently, Zero Wing's advantage only lay in the fact that it had a lot of liquid funds. However, this did not mean that the game's major powers were poorer than Zero Wing. Rather, these powers reinvested most of the money they earned into valuable Lands. Although Zero Wing had a lot of money on hand, it didn't have anywhere to invest.

In terms of capital turnover, the difference between Zero Wing and these major powers was obvious at a glance.

*I will have to thank Phoenix Rain. I would have had a hard time using up these five slots otherwise.* Shi Feng then chose five branch Shops and upgraded them to 2-star Shops. When upgrading these Shops to 2-star status, he saved far more money by using the special rights of a 3-star Shop than when he had used a Promotion Order. Each Shop only cost 600 Gold to upgrade. With this, he only needed to spend 3,000 Gold to obtain five 2-star Shops.

Meanwhile, of the five Shops Shi Feng chose, three were in the Black Dragon Empire, with one of them in Lake Heart City. As for the remaining two slots, he used one on a Shop in the Purple Thorns Kingdom, and the other on the Shop in the Twin Towers Kingdom's capital.

#### **Chapter 914: Engineering Locomotive**

The reconstruction of the five branch Shops completed fairly quickly.

Only ten minutes after Shi Feng chose to upgrade them, the five 1-star Shops evolved into 2-star Shops.

Although the number of items that the Shop could sell had not changed, it could accommodate far more Lifestyle players. The additional space was more than enough for the 1,200 Lifestyle players the Candlelight Trading Firm wanted to recruit.

God's Domain was already developing faster than Shi Feng had expected.

When Shi Feng had first obtained the 3-star Shop Promotion Order, he had not intended to recruit so many Lifestyle players. At most, he had planned to recruit around five or six hundred players. However, after the game's fourth evolution, items became more complicated to produce, and this, in turn, would impact production speeds.

After the system upgrade, Melancholic Smile had calculated the statistics of everyone's production speed within the trading firm.

To put it simply, the more advanced an item was, the more its production speed had been affected.

For common items such as Whetstones, production speed had experienced roughly a 15% reduction. As for items such as Advanced Whetstones, their production had slowed by around 20%. In other words, if a Lifestyle player was capable of producing five Advanced Whetstones within a certain time before the system upgrade, then now, they were only capable of producing four Advanced Whetstones within the same period.

As for items that only Intermediate Forgers or higher could craft, such as the Strengthening Device, their production speed had decreased by roughly 40%. Before the system upgrade, the Candlelight Trading Firm had not been able to produce many Strengthening Devices each day; now, the item's output was pitifully low. Unfortunately, Shi Feng had already agreed to hand over ten Bronze Mounts and 2,000 Strengthening Devices to the Secret Pavilion within five days, as well as the rest of the items within twelve days after the system update completed.

If he failed to do so, not only would he have to return the ten black cards he had received, but he would also be out of the items he had already paid.

Hence, Shi Feng was very short on time.

If he wished to increase production speed, he had two options: increase his current workforce's success rates or grow his workforce.

As there was a limit to how much he could raise a Lifestyle player's success rate, his only viable option was to bolster his workforce.

However, Shi Feng did not have much hope of nurturing a large batch of excellent Lifestyle players from the new recruits.

Rather, he wanted the new Advanced Apprentices to take on the workload of the firm's Basic Forgers, while the Basic Forgers would take on the Intermediate Forgers' work. In turn, the Intermediate Forgers would take care of the Advanced Forgers' workload.

This way, he would have a higher chance of completing his task within the allotted time.

Following which, Shi Feng explained his plans to Melancholic Smile and had her begin preparations. After all, it would not be easy to sort so many people in a short time.

"Guild Leader, I'm afraid that this will be very difficult to accomplish. Even with the help of the Special Workshop, Cocoa, Uncle Ironheart, and I only have a 40% success rate with the Strengthening Devices. Even if the firm's Intermediate Forgers have the help of the Special Workshop, they will only have, at most, around a 15% success rate. With such a low success rate, we'll be lucky if we break even, let alone make a profit." Melancholic Smile was very familiar with the success rates of the trading firm's forgers as she usually analyzed the trading firm's statistics.

Although a 15% forging success rate seemed relatively high, when one started the actual work, they would most likely fail ten out of ten tries.



Based on her analysis, only with a 20% success rate would a forger have a chance of succeeding once out of ten tries. Only after reaching a 25% success rate would a forger notice a qualitative change. Once a forger reached that milestone, they would generally succeed once or twice out of ten tries.

If they allowed Intermediate Forgers to produce the Strengthening Device, they would be pushing their luck.

Cream Cocoa, who stood beside Melancholic Smile, nodded her agreement. After a long period of research and experimentation, she decided that, as long as the system-calculated success rate was below 20%, she would give up on making the item. After all, her chances of successfully crafting the item were too low. Even if she did produce the item, the firm would only take a loss. Wasting money was one thing, but wasting resources was another thing altogether.

The resources in God's Domain were limited. The materials required to produce advanced items were even rarer. It would be foolish to produce an item without guaranteed success.

"Look at this," Shi Feng said, chuckling as he retrieved a fist-sized, aqua-blue ingot and placed it on the table.

Immediately, Melancholic Smile and Cocoa were stunned.

The Mana the ore faintly emitted was actually denser than the Mana from the Magic Crystal.

When the two forgers clicked to read the item's introduction, their jaws dropped.

“Guild Leader, where did you get this?!” Melancholic Smile locked her eyes with Shi Feng’s, excitement evident on her face. “Do you have a lot of them?!”

Mysterious Flames were extremely rare in God’s Domain. They were so rare that, even after a long investigation, Melancholic Smile had not found any clues leading to a single Mysterious Flame.

She only knew about Mysterious Flames to begin with because of the Ice-Blue Devil Flame in the Candlelight Trading Firm’s Special Workshops. Shi Feng had left behind this Mysterious Flame. However, after one obtained a Mysterious Flame, they could only place it in up to three Workshops.

If not for the Ice-Blue Devil Flame, they would not have reached a 40% success rate with the Strengthening Devices.

However, the Mana Source Ore was the perfect item to make up for their lack of Mysterious Flames.

The Intermediate Mana Source Ore Shi Feng had revealed could grant an ordinary flame the effects of a Tier 3 Mysterious Flame. The only downside was that, unlike true Mysterious Flames that could be used indefinitely, the ore was only effective for 30 minutes.

With the aid of a Tier 3 Mysterious Flame, the Intermediate Forgers could at least reach a 25% success rate with the Strengthening Devices. If they had a large stock of Intermediate Mana Source Ore, these Intermediate Forgers could definitely produce the Strengthening Devices. Currently, the Candlelight Trading Firm had close to 20 Intermediate Forgers, more than their Strengthening Device Forging Designs. If they allowed three Intermediate Forgers with the highest success rates to learn their three remaining forging designs, they could double their production team.

Meanwhile, if the three of them utilized the Intermediate Mana Source Ore, their success rate might even exceed 50%. Including the Basic Meditation Room's effects, if they forged Strengthening Devices nonstop, they might achieve a production volume of more than 700 devices. Rather than suffering a slower production rate due to the system upgrade, they could significantly increase their production. They could absolutely hit the target Shi Feng had requested.

"Relax. I have enough for your needs." Shi Feng nodded, laughing. He then took out a table-sized design and unfurled it. This was none other than the Bronze Engineering Locomotive Design that he had purchased from Sinned Heart. "Melancholic, you're the most familiar with the trading firm's people. Look for a few trustworthy engineers and alchemists and work with them to produce this item."

After glancing at the design and its name, Melancholic Smile was thoroughly stupefied.

Cream Cocoa stared at the design as if she were looking at a priceless treasure, her eyes sparkling brightly.

Although the design before them was an engineering design, the manufacturing procedure involved three classes: engineers, forgers, and alchemists—the three major Lifestyle classes. Moreover, the manufacturing procedure required a lot of its crafters. The Engineering Locomotive was far more difficult to manufacture than the Strengthening Device. One mistake could lead to failure.

## **Chapter 915: Difference in Mounts**

Mounts' importance to players went without saying.

Even Melancholic Smile and Cream Cocoa understood the importance of any Mount, not to mention Bronze Mounts. Currently, God's Domain's elite and expert players moved ever closer to Level 40.

However, how could Common Mounts possibly satisfy these experts? Unfortunately, obtaining a Bronze Mount was easier said than done. Even large Guilds could only get their hands on a few, and these Mounts were usually reserved for the Guild's upper echelons. The other members could only dream of riding one.

If it were truly possible to produce Bronze Mounts, they would sell tens of times better than the Strengthening Device.

However, the Engineering Locomotive was extremely difficult to manufacture.

At the very minimum, they needed an Advanced Engineer, an Advanced Forger, and an Advanced Alchemist to have any possibility of success. Even if they were equipped with a variety of support tools, they'd be lucky if they had even a 30% success rate of producing the Locomotive.

In addition, manufacturing the Engineering Locomotive was a tedious process. It would take a very long time just to produce one. Producing one per day would be an impressive feat.

"Guild Leader, this Engineering Locomotive is too difficult to manufacture. It also requires so many materials. Even if we successfully produce one, the cost will be astounding. Are we really going to make this, regardless of the cost?" Melancholic Smile's lips twitched slightly as she read the listed materials recorded on the design.

The hardest part of crafting the Engineering Locomotive would be the power unit. The power unit alone required 30 Magic Crystals. Other components, such as alchemy arrays, also required Magic Crystals. After taking all of the miscellaneous components into account, they needed a total of 50 Magic Crystals to produce one Engineering Locomotive. In addition, the Mount's manufacturing required certain rare materials such as Fine Steel Ingots. A Fine Steel Ingot was the product of refining Fine Iron with other materials, and one only had a chance of obtaining Fine Iron from mining Hematite Ore.

On the market, a Refined Steel Ingot cost around 30 Silver. That was practically the equivalent of a piece of Level 30 Bronze Equipment. However, there were fewer Refined Steel Ingots available on the market than Level 30 Bronze Equipment.

Meanwhile, the Engineering Locomotive required 20 Refined Iron Ingots—a total cost of 6 Gold!

Based on market value, producing a single Bronze Engineering Locomotive cost roughly 25 Gold. In reality, though, as most of the materials could be sourced from their Guild, they wouldn't have to spend that much. Even so, the final cost would still be around 20 Gold...

Based on their current success rate, it could cost anywhere from 100 Gold to 160 Gold to craft one Engineering Locomotive. Meanwhile, a single Bronze Mount currently sold for around 300 Gold. It was not nearly as profitable as the Strengthening Devices. The only advantage the Engineering Locomotive had was its demand. If they offered the Mounts for sale, someone would buy them if the price were reasonable.

If they wished to save more money, they would need the help of a Master Engineer.

Although there was only a single rank difference between an Advanced Engineer and a Master Engineer, the latter could increase the success rate of producing the Engineering Locomotive by around 30%. After including the bonuses from various tools, they could achieve a success rate of 60% or higher. With such a high success rate, they could reduce their total cost to 40 Gold or lower. They could also produce the Mounts much faster.

“How many Advanced Engineers do we have right now?” Shi Feng realized how high the production cost was. However, he had already signed an agreement with the Secret Pavilion. They had to manufacture the Engineering Locomotives regardless of the cost. Moreover, producing the Engineering Locomotive would allow Lifestyle classes to rapidly gain Proficiency.

“We only have two people at the moment. There are three others who are close to reaching the Advanced Engineer rank,” Melancholic Smile replied.

“Two?” Shi Feng frowned. Based on their current manufacturing speed, producing ten Engineering Locomotives in five days would be cutting it very close. “Have them begin the process. I’ll help to produce some of the components as well.”

“I’ll contact them right away,” Melancholic Smile said. She was momentarily stunned when she heard that Shi Feng would also take part. Hurriedly, she continued, “If they find out that our Guild Leader will be leading this project, they will die from excitement.”

In Star-Moon Kingdom, the majority of players addressed Black Flame by his title as the Sword King. Most had probably forgotten Black Flame’s past identity.

However, while ordinary players had forgotten his past fame, to Lifestyle players, the title of Star-Moon Kingdom’s Chief Forger still resounded in their ears.

Moreover, Melancholic Smile understood one thing very clearly; Shi Feng had been the first to become an Advanced Forger.

Suddenly, Aqua Rose contacted Shi Feng and said, "Guild Leader, two people have entered our Guild Residence. Both are Level 40 players. Moreover, their Mounts are high quality. They are saying that they have something very important to talk to you about."

"Two people with high-ranking Mounts?" Shi Feng was slightly surprised. Reaching Level 40 was still very difficult at this stage of the game, much less obtaining high-ranking Mounts. "Do you know their identities?"

"I've never met either of them. Moreover, they aren't wearing a Guild Emblem. Although, it is possible that they purposely removed it," Aqua Rose said as she shook her head. She had seen most of God's Domain's mainstream experts at least once. However, she had zero recollection of the two people that had arrived. Even after sending her subordinates to investigate, she had not obtained any information on these players.

"This is interesting. Alright, I'll head over right away." Shi Feng could not help his curiosity. After disconnecting the call, he rode the Demonic Flame Tiger back to Zero Wing's Residence.

—

In front of Zero Wing's Residence:

As Zero Wing had announced another mass-recruitment, players crowded around the Guild's Residence. However, there was a clearing within the crowd where players had given two people a wide berth. Two massive Mounts rested beside these players. Nobody dared to approach either of them.

"Who are these people? They look so strong!"

“They aren’t here to cause trouble, right?!”

When the players who had come to apply to Zero Wing saw the Berserker Bloodsucker and the Assassin Kirin, they were shocked by the two’s auras and equipment.

“The advanced horse carriage is so slow! When will Masked and the others get here?” Kirin exclaimed as he looked at the time, paying no attention to the surrounding crowd.

As soon as Kirin finished speaking, an advanced horse carriage approached from one end of the street.

A moment later, the advanced horse carriage stopped before Zero Wing’s Residence, and four people stepped out.

“Mysterious-Iron Mounts are wonderful. Once I reach Level 40, I will have to find one of my own.”

“Masked, don’t even think about obtaining a Mysterious-Iron Mount. They aren’t weeds that sprout up everywhere. Even those with titles in the Guild are struggling to get their hands on one, let alone someone like you.”

The four people that had emerged from the carriage chatted merrily amongst themselves. However, when the crowd saw these four newcomers, they were flabbergasted. All four were Level 39. Although the pressure these four people gave off was not as strong as the two that had already arrived, when these four players stood together, they felt like four ferocious beasts. A single glance from them was enough to give one shivers.



“This is Zero Wing’s Residence? It’s quite big, but it’s rather shabby. The standard of the Guild members isn’t much to look at, either.” Masked Angel gave a rough evaluation after a cursory examination of Zero Wing’s Residence.

The other three agreed with Masked Angel.

However, the Zero Wing members coming and going were somewhat annoyed when they heard the comment.

Zero Wing’s Residence had cost a lot of Gold to build. Even if it did not rank number one in Star-Moon Kingdom, it ranked near the top. However, these people spoke as if their Residence belonged in the Slums.

These Zero Wing members had intended to argue with these people. However, when they saw a black figure appear at the entrance, they immediately fell silent. Even the independent players lining up outside the Residence stared at this figure with admiration.

Although the giant, snow-white wolf and pitch-black warhorse in front of the entrance were quite attractive, they were on an entirely different level from the Demonic Flame Tiger that had appeared like lightning. In front of the Demonic Flame Tiger, the wolf and warhorse were practically newborns...

## **Chapter 916: Dark Players**

“What rank is that Mount?”

Masked Angel was shocked, his eyes widening as he stared at the towering, majestic Demonic Flame Tiger.

Although he already knew that Zero Wing possessed this Mount, after witnessing it personally, he could not help his surprise.

Both Bloodsucker’s and Kirin’s Mounts were Mysterious-Iron Mounts. However, when comparing their Mounts to the Demonic Flame Tiger, he finally understood something.

The difference between their Mounts was not just one rank.

Standing there, he could feel the Demonic Flame Tiger give off a significantly powerful pressure. Generally, he only felt this pressure from Chieftain ranked monsters.

*Could it be a Fine-Gold Mount?*

This question simultaneously surfaced in Masked Angel and his companions’ minds.

Even God’s Domain’s major powers did not have a single Fine-Gold Mount. Currently, the best Mount they had was of Secret-Silver rank.

However, what truly shocked them was Shi Feng's Level.

Shi Feng was not currently using the Demon Mask to disguise himself as Black Flame. He did not even bother hiding his Level, so if one paid attention, they would discover that Shi Feng had already reached Level 42. He was actually two levels higher than Bloodsucker and Kirin.

There was not a single player with such a high level throughout the various empires.

It was hard to imagine that such an expert resided in a kingdom.

"I am Ye Feng, an Honorary Elder of Zero Wing. Our Guild Leader has some urgent matters to attend to, so he can't meet with you right now. I can represent Zero Wing in any matters you wish to discuss. May I know what business you have with Zero Wing?" Shi Feng asked, chuckling as he swept a glance over Bloodsucker and the others as he remained on the Demonic Flame Tiger.

Even an Elementalist like Phoenix Rain had only reached Level 39, yet among these six people, not only had two surpassed Phoenix Rain, but the other four were the same Level. Achieving such a high Level was impossible without a special method or a powerful team.

To Aqua Rose, these players might be strangers. To Shi Feng, however, they were extremely familiar.

All six players were Super Red Names belonging to the Dark Guild known as Raven.

Raven had appeared in the virtual gaming world in the past. It was an upstart Guild that had only established after God's Domain had launched. Moreover, even now, Raven was not famous in the least.

Dark Guilds could not compete against normal Guilds in terms of member count. However, the Raven Guild's member count was impressive with less than 1,000 members. Even a decade after God's Domain had launched, the Guild had less than 3,000 members.

However, nobody in God's Domain dared to underestimate Raven.

In the past, Raven had been one of the top six Dark Guilds in God's Domain. The Guild was extremely powerful; even Super Guilds had avoided provoking it.

While the six people before him looked like ordinary players, this was only a disguise. Without an advanced identification Skill, one could not uncover any of their information. This disguise was similar to the Demon Mask. It could even hide one's aura.

However, under Shi Feng's Omniscient Eyes, nothing would remain hidden.

*Such dense Blood Auras. How many people have they killed already?*

When Shi Feng used Omniscient Eyes, he discovered that their names were no longer red. Rather, they were thoroughly black.

In God's Domain, when one actively killed other players, aside from their IDs changing color, a faint red Blood Aura would surround their bodies. However, this Blood Aura was barely visible. Generally, only after one had killed hundreds of players would this Blood Aura become more evident. Even so, this Blood Aura would gradually fade with time.

However, the Blood Aura surrounding the six before him was powerful enough to make one's hair stand on end. Currently, their Blood Auras had thickened into a bloody mist that enveloped a radius of four to five yards around them.

Shi Feng could not even begin to fathom just how many players these six people had killed to achieve such a dense Blood Aura.

However, this was still not why their IDs had turned black.

In God's Domain, only players who had committed unforgivable sins would sport pitch-black IDs. This was a type of curse. This curse could allow players to grow stronger; in return, however, cursed players were restricted to areas controlled by the dark forces. If NPC guards in an ordinary NPC city found them, the consequences would be unimaginably severe.

"Hello. My name is Bloodsucker. This place isn't suited for our discussion. Why don't we look for somewhere more private to talk?" Bloodsucker suggested, smiling faintly as he looked at Shi Feng.

"Alright, follow me," Shi Feng nodded. He then led Bloodsucker and the others into Zero Wing's Residence.

After Shi Feng entered the Guild Residence, the crowd outside of the Residence grew excited. Their eagerness to join Zero Wing grew.

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Inside the reception room of Zero Wing's Residence...

As Shi Feng was about to prepare some refreshments for Bloodsucker and the others, Bloodsucker stopped him.

“I believe that Elder Ye Feng has already used an advanced Identification Skill on us, right?” Bloodsucker said, smiling. “I’m certain that you already know who we are. As you’ve seen, we are Red Players, or to put it another way, Dark Players.”

Shi Feng nodded without attempting to hide his actions.

Now that God’s Domain had already been operating for so long, most Guilds had a few people with advanced Identification Skills. Hence, there was no point in hiding his actions.

“We are members of the Dark Guild Raven. You might not have heard of us as our Guild has only recently established, but as for Raven’s strength, you have seen for yourself. We have come here today seeking to cooperation with Zero Wing,” Bloodsucker explained.

“Cooperation with Zero Wing? How do you wish to cooperate?” Shi Feng asked curiously.

Generally, Dark Guilds and Adventure Guilds minded their own businesses and tended to avoid each other. Moreover, Raven possessed powerful financial backers. The Guild did not have that many members, either, so it should be very easy for the Guild to develop. Raven shouldn’t need to cooperate with any other Guild.

“That’s right. We’ve investigated Zero Wing thoroughly. On the surface, while it might look like Zero Wing has a lot of experts, there are only a few true experts in the Guild. If Zero Wing wants to progress in the Dark Arena, relying on these few experts is not nearly enough. Even the Asura Battle Team’s victory in the next match is unlikely. Furthermore, since the system upgrade, the various major powers

have begun to invest heavily into the Dark Arena. It will be very difficult for Zero Wing to earn money there in the future.

“You’ve already seen our strengths for yourself. If Zero Wing has Raven’s assistance, your Guild will have a fighting chance for the position of the Dark Arena’s organizer. Not only can Zero Wing earn an astronomical sum of money each day, but you can also gain various rare materials. With these resources, Zero Wing will be able to expand easily and afford to nurture its Lifestyle and expert players. I’m sure you can see the benefits of such an outcome.”

When Bloodsucker finished his proposal, he snapped his fingers.

Immediately, several pieces of Bloodsucker and Kirin’s equipment revealed the special glowing effect of Epic Equipment. Bloodsucker and Kirin’s weapons, in particular, were Epic Weapons. With this array of equipment, they could rank at the peak of God’s Domain.

“What do you want in return?” Shi Feng asked, somewhat interested.

Just as Bloodsucker had said, in the eyes of ordinary players, Zero Wing seemed like a Guild full of experts. However, in the elite Dark Arena, Zero Wing was bland. Currently, only he, Fire Dance, and Violet Cloud could reliably win a fight. Unfortunately, Aqua Rose was still a little off the mark.



## **Chapter 917: Proof of Strength**

The Dark Guild Raven maintained a relatively low profile during the early stages of God's Domain. The Guild always moved covertly. The Guild's desire to maintain a low profile was evident by the lack of Guild Emblems on Bloodsucker and his companions.

If not for Raven trying to display its strength to gain Zero Wing's trust, the group would never act so flamboyantly.

Shi Feng had to admit that this was one of the benefits that Zero Wing enjoyed as it moved closer to the top of God's Domain.

Whenever he had an issue, people would oftentimes take the initiative to offer their cooperation.

If Zero Wing were a third-rate Guild or an unrated Guild, meeting people like Bloodsucker would be impossible, not to mention inspiring these people to find him.

Shi Feng's straightforward question had left Bloodsucker slightly stunned.

He had initially thought that Shi Feng would play with words, driving him to state his conditions. After all, during negotiations, the side that revealed their terms first would be at a disadvantage.

However, he had never imagined that Shi Feng would ask him so blatantly; he wasn't used to this. The Guild had sent him, specifically, to negotiate with Zero Wing because he was one of the Guild's stronger members. Now, however, all of his subtle arguments he had prepared to persuade Shi Feng and his efforts to show off Kirin and his team's strength had gone to waste.



“What? You don’t have any conditions?” Shi Feng chuckled.

“No, it’s just that your straightforwardness surprised me a little. After all, Raven is only a small, unknown Guild,” Bloodsucker said, shaking his head. “Since Elder Ye Feng has said as much, I’ll tell you Raven’s conditions.

“In return for Raven assisting the Asura Battle Team, we want 50% of the income you gain from the Dark Arena!”

“You guys sure are ballsy. Fifty percent is too much. I can offer you twenty percent at most.”

Shi Feng instantly rejected Bloodsucker’s offer. He was already splitting the income from the Dark Arena with Phoenix Rain. If the Raven Guild took another 50%, Zero Wing would be left with nothing.

“I’m guessing that you don’t fully understand Raven’s strength. How about we prove ourselves first? We can negotiate afterward,” Bloodsucker frowned when he heard Shi Feng’s offer. However, he was not surprised by it. Their Guild had remained in the shadows. As of now, practically nobody knew how terrifying Raven was. If not for the resources the recently-launched Mind Space System required, they would not have sought out Zero Wing for cooperation.

In his opinion, Shi Feng had only offered such a low percentage because he didn’t know Raven’s true power. However, once they showed Shi Feng that, with Raven’s assistance, Zero Wing’s chances of becoming the Dark Arena’s organizer would improve, he would agree to 50%. After all, this was a sure-profit exchange.

“Proof?” Shi Feng understood Bloodsucker’s train of thought. However, he really could not afford to lose 50%. As Shi Feng considered rejecting Bloodsucker’s offer, he suddenly had a good idea. Previously, his head had ached over the lack of experts. Now that he had a chance to gain the help of six top-tier experts, it would be a waste not to put them to good use. Following which, he nodded and smiled, saying, “If Raven wants to prove its strength, I just happen to have a very difficult quest that I need some expert help with. If you can show me that you are sufficiently powerful during this quest, there might be room for further negotiations. Of course, I’ll pay you for your help.”

“No problem. You can leave this quest to Raven. As for the remuneration, there’s no need. Consider this Raven’s gift to Zero Wing,” Bloodsucker confidently stated. From the beginning, proving Raven’s strength had been their goal in coming here. When the time came, they would shock Zero Wing’s members.

“I still need to prepare. It’ll take around three hours. You should do the same. This quest is very difficult. I just need you to send a party of six experts,” Shi Feng said.

“No need. The six of us will be enough,” Bloodsucker assured.

Seeing Bloodsucker’s determination, Shi Feng ended the conversation. After leaving the reception room, he contacted Youlan, telling her that they could challenge the Holy City of Titan’s entrance trial immediately. Both sides would send 50 experts each, and Zero Wing would lead the team.

Youlan agreed upon receiving Shi Feng’s message.

Her original plan had been to challenge the entrance trial in three days. However, the system upgrade had wasted nearly two days, so they had no choice but to delay the operation by two more. However, after the system upgrade, Lifestyle players’ production speed had slowed significantly. As a result, the various large Guilds now urgently needed a batch of Advanced Lifestyle players. Naturally, the sooner she got her hands on Titan City’s slots, the better.

After confirming the plan with Youlan, Shi Feng contacted White Night, having him send 14 of their experts over. Zero Wing's members would fill the remaining 30 slots.

Although Shi Feng did not know what kind of experts Youlan would dispatch, he had a true gathering of experts.

With these experts' combat power, they had a very high chance of clearing Titan City's trial as long as everyone followed his commands.

After two hours, 50 players had gathered inside a high-class restaurant in the Noble's District.

These players consisted of three groups: Zero Wing, Raven, and Owl.

Needless to say, Raven's members were absurdly strong regarding Level and equipment. However, Owl's members had shocked both Zero Wing and Raven.

Everyone's jaws hit the floor after Owl's members, led by White Night, joined them in the restaurant and discarded their cloaks.

They were all Level 42!

One could easily rank among an empire's top ten players in terms of levels at Level 40. Moreover, these top ten included those who hid their levels. Yet, White Night and his team were all Level 42.

Aside from their high levels, every member of White Night's team wore absurdly powerful equipment. Among them, four possessed equipment on par with Bloodsucker and Kirin. As for White Night, the group's leader, his equipment surpassed Bloodsucker's. The Ranger's aura was also incomparably sharp.

Due to this, Bloodsucker felt pressured.

*Who are these people?* Bloodsucker watched White Night and the others, shock filling his heart. *Are they Zero Wing's hidden experts?*

Kirin and the others also felt immense pressure from Owl's members. Previously, they had felt nervous when they met Fire Dance and Zero Wing's other top-tier experts. Now, an even more frightening group had arrived.

Their hearts, which had brimmed with confidence, now faltered.

Theoretically, Level 40 players should stand at the very forefront of God's Domain, yet so many Level 42 experts stood before them. They even began to wonder if there had been a flaw in the reports they had received.

Shortly after White Night and the others had arrived, Youlan led a large group of players into the high-class restaurant.

## **Chapter 918: Holy City of Titan**

The high-class restaurants in the Noble's District were famed for their luxury. Even large Guilds' elite members were reluctant to dine in these restaurants. These players would rather have a few drinks at a bar or eat their fill of ordinary food to get more bang for their buck.

Upon joining Shi Feng and the others in the restaurant, Youlan glanced at the various players. Immediately, she was shocked.

*How does Zero Wing have so many experts?!* Youlan had already thoroughly investigated Zero Wing, so she was very aware of Zero Wing's current combat power. She had never imagined that Zero Wing still had secrets.

Owl's and Raven's members were the source of her surprise.

Even the lowest among them was Level 39, with the majority having reached Level 42. Zero Wing's team composition overwhelmed the team she had struggled to establish.

Among her players, the highest was only Level 39, while the others were Level 38...

Although there was only a difference of two or three levels, the gap between Level 39 and Level 40 was like the difference between heaven and earth.

Unless one had equipment that could reduce level requirements, otherwise, they could only wear Level 40 equipment upon reaching Level 40. However, such equipment was extremely rare. Generally, only Epic items had such an Attribute.

There was a huge difference in terms of Basic Attributes between Level 35 and Level 40 equipment.

If they had so many high-level experts working together, clearing Titan City's entrance trial would be much easier.

Moreover, Youlan could tell that, even if White Night and Bloodsucker were members of Super Guilds, they would be considered apex experts. It would be very difficult to find an expert in Underworld that could contend with these two.

"Big Brother Wolf, do you that Ranger and Berserker?" Youlan asked War Wolf quietly.

The pressure she felt from White Night and Bloodsucker was extremely powerful. They were like beacons in absolute darkness. Even if she fought it, it would be hard not to notice them.

Among the information she had on God's Domain's experts, nothing had been recorded on these two individuals.

Although she did not know who these two were, War Wolf might know them. After all, War Wolf had once shone brightly in the virtual gaming world. Although he had later stepped away, he knew far more hidden experts than she did.

"I don't know them. However, I am sure that both of them are martial artists. Extremely powerful ones at that," War Wolf replied, his thoughts a little complex as he examined Shi Feng's team.

A few months ago, Zero Wing had merely been an unknown, upstart Guild in White River City. Even Zero Wing's experts at that time weren't worth his attention, yet now, the Guild had several people on-par with him in terms of combat standards.

As for White Night and Bloodsucker, who he had never seen before, even he had to admit that he was weaker than them.

War Wolf could not help but wonder what kind of charm an upstart Guild like Zero Wing had to attract so many experts. Even first-rate Gods weren't capable of this feat.

...

"It really makes you wonder just where the Guild Leader has found so many experts. Overwhelming Smile's members must be scared stiff right about now." Blackie giggled when he saw Youlan and her Overwhelming Smile team's shock.

The rest of Zero Wing's members agreed with Blackie.

When White Night's group had arrived, even they were surprised.

Shi Feng stepped forward and said, "Miss Youlan, now that everyone is here, should we reform the team?"

"Alright. Everyone, leave your teams," Youlan nodded as she pinned Shi Feng with a penetrating gaze.

Although she had already known that Ye Feng would lead the expedition to Titan City, she had been somewhat surprised to receive this news.

She thought that Black Flame would lead this expedition.

This was not because she doubted Ye Feng's strength. However, Black Flame was far more experienced with commanding a team.

It was of the utmost importance that they cleared Titan City's entrance trial. After all, once they could enter the Holy City of Titan, they could rapidly nurture Advanced Lifestyle players. In the future, they would have a greater advantage when competing with other trading firms.

"I'll start dividing the workload. I want everyone to send me a list of your Skills," Shi Feng instructed Youlan and the others after inviting them to his team.

"That is a Guild's secret! How can we just reveal that information to an outsider?!" Overwhelming Smile's members immediately complained.

All Guilds kept their players' Basic Attributes and Skills secret. It was especially true for Guild experts. If others discovered this information, it would be very easy to exploit their weaknesses.

Shi Feng then looked towards Youlan and said seriously, "I believe you know how difficult Titan City's entrance trial is. If I don't know everyone's abilities, I can't guarantee our success."

After giving it some thought, Youlan nodded and said, "It's alright. Tell him."



Titan City's entrance trial was much harder than a 100-man Hell Mode Team Dungeon. If the team leader did not even know what Skills his members possessed, it would be hard for him to issue effective commands.

After receiving Youlan's instructions, Overwhelming Smile's members sent their Skill lists to Shi Feng, albeit reluctantly.

As for the Skills Owl's and Raven's members possessed, the two groups had long since notified Shi Feng.

Owl's members had not held back in the least. However, Shi Feng was certain that Raven's members had held back some information. Regardless, though, it would not affect the overall situation.

After Shi Feng examined the Skills of Overwhelming Smile's members, he was a little surprised.

Twenty-three of these players wielded Berserk Skills. Among them, Youlan had learned a large-scale destruction Spell and a large-scale buff Spell. This would be of great help to the team.

"Before we enter Titan City, I'll give everyone certain responsibilities. Make sure you understand your tasks. When the time comes, you just need to do your part." Shi Feng then called up his system interface and split everyone into groups.

Shi Feng had split the team of 100 players into five teams of 20. Among them, one team would serve as the main force while the remaining four would serve as support.

Raiding Titan City's entrance trial was different from raiding a 100-man Team Dungeon, where players only had to deal with one Boss at a time.

The entrance trial resembled a field battle. Only, the team would face far more danger. In the entrance trial, one could encounter a powerful Boss at any time. It was even possible for multiple Bosses to appear at once. It would not come as a surprise if one mistake led to a team-wipe. Hence, they needed to prepare before they challenged the trial.

There was only one MT on the main team—Cola.

This decision confused Youlan and the others. Cola was only Level 40, while the Guardian Knight White Night had brought was Level 42. In terms of techniques, the Guardian Knight was also much stronger than Cola. No matter how they looked at it, Cola should not be the main team's MT.

Even if Shi Feng placed Cola on the main team, he should include another MT. Wow was a single MT going to tank a Boss?

However, Shi Feng did not bother to explain his decision. He had chosen Cola because he had previously passed the Epic ranked Dragonscale Shield to the MT. With this shield alone, none of the other MTs could compete with Cola. Not to mention, Cola was using the Tier 1 Set Equipment for Guardian Knights. Comparing Basic Attributes, he was stronger than Moonlight Knight, Owl's Level 42 Guardian Knight, by a large margin. He was the best choice to serve as the lead MT.

After the various tasks had been distributed, Youlan took out a golden key and began to chant an incantation.

In the next moment, a pair of tightly shut, black stone doors appeared in the hall. The stone doors towered over three-meters high, and there were countless magical runes carved into the door's stone. As the thick, heavy doors slowly parted, a terrifying aura surged out, and everyone immediately felt a powerful mental suppression weigh on them.

This mental suppression could rival that of Grand Lords.

However, every player here was an expert. Even if the mental suppression affected them, the effects were minimal.

After everyone calmed their nerves, Shi Feng took the lead and stepped through the doors. One after another, the other players followed him.

### **Chapter 919: Titan's Legend**

The Holy City of Titan was buried in God's Domain's underground. Complex terrain surrounded Titan City, forming a natural maze. Players could easily get lost within the maze as they searched for Titan City.

Although Titan City was underground, crystals that radiated a bright, blue glow covered the cavern's ceiling. Hence, visibility was not an issue.

After Shi Feng and the others entered the transfer gate, they had been teleported to this maze's entrance.

"This place is spectacular!"

As this was Aqua Rose and Zero Wing's other members' first time here, they were captivated.

Even experts like White Night and Bloodsucker found the scene awe-inspiring.

Aside from the spectacular scenery, ten, towering statues of Titans loomed at the entrance. All ten radiated a boundless aura. In front of these statues, players like themselves were no more significant than insects.

Although they had known that the quest Shi Feng had called them to help with was not simple, after witnessing this, they grew serious.

With their sharp senses, they felt warnings of death from their surroundings the instant they reached this area.

It was especially true for the entrance. It felt more like the maw of a gigantic beast.

"These are just statues, yet they have such powerful auras. Are these statues alive?" Aqua Rose's slender brows creased slightly as she swept her gaze over the statues before her. She could feel the surrounding pressure originating from these ten statues. If they had to fight while bathed in this aura, they would suffer a disadvantage.

"Relax. Those are just statues. Their purpose is to frighten monsters and prevent them from approaching," Shi Feng explained.

These ten statues were the sculptures of the ten saints who had founded the Holy City of Titan.

According to legend, every saint possessed enough strength to rival Gods. Before they had died, these ten saints had used their remaining power to construct Titan Armaments. As long as one equipped the Titan Armaments, one could rival the Gods themselves. However, after several catastrophes struck Titan City, these Titan Armaments had been lost.

In his previous life, Shi Feng had been fortunate enough to see one of these Titan Armaments. Although it had only been a pair of gloves, the gloves were Legendary rank. The gloves greatly increased the wearer's Strength Attribute. Even while using a Fragmented Legendary Weapon, the player that had owned the Titan Gloves had fought a player wielding a Legendary ranked battle axe to a standstill.

Among the equipment in God's Domain, weapons provided the most benefits to a player's combat power, yet this pair of gloves had provided enough Strength to rival a Legendary Weapon. One could just imagine how powerful the Titan Armaments were.

In Shi Feng's opinion, it was possible to rival a God if a player obtained the complete set of Titan Armaments.

Unfortunately, the Titan Armaments were a mystery to players. Even after ten years, players had only discovered three Titan Armaments. Moreover, three different players had owned them. These players had been the targets of numerous assassination attempts in the past.

"Alright, let's head inside," Shi Feng said as he clapped his hands. After everyone took up their formation, they officially entered Titan City's entrance trial.

After several minutes of traveling down the straight pathway, the team halted.

“Leader, there are four paths ahead. Which one should we take?” Aqua Rose asked Shi Feng. “Should we send someone to scout ahead?”

Each path felt equally dangerous to her, so it was impossible to determine which path they should take.

“Which path did you take last time?” Although Shi Feng knew which path they should take, he still asked Youlan.

“We investigated all four paths the last time we were here. Among them, a Great Lord guards the first path, while the next two are littered with traps and ambushing monsters. A large number of mobs guard the last. After we had killed those monsters, we discovered that the path led to another crossroad. In the end, we took the path with the Great Lord. However, after a short distance, three Great Lords annihilated us,” Youlan explained.

Truth be told, they had gathered almost no information before they reached an abrupt end.

Hence, Youlan had thought to search for experts to challenge the three Bosses.

When Overwhelming Smile’s members recalled the three Great Lords that had ganged up on them, a chill ran down their spines. There were not many players who could face a Great Lord, not to mention three Great Lords simultaneously. Moreover, even a 100-man team would be hard-pressed to deal with one Great Lord here because, aside from the Great Lord itself, there were many monsters traveling with the Great Lord.

Before they had dealt with the three Great Lords, the weaker monsters had swarmed and slaughtered them...

“So, that’s the case. Let’s go down the path with the crossroad, then,” Shi Feng nodded.

“Generally, the path with a Boss it should be the correct option. Taking the path with the crossroad is a waste of time,” Youlan explained.

“That might be true in other virtual reality games, but in God’s Domain, it is only half correct,” Shi Feng said, chuckling. “This is an entrance trial. Our ultimate goal is to pass through the maze, not to defeat the Bosses, isn’t that right?”

In reality, all four paths led to Titan City.

If a team were strong enough, they could choose the most difficult path, which contained various Bosses. This path was also the most direct and would save the most time. In contrast, the path with the crossroads, as Youlan had said, would be time-consuming. However, it was the safest path among the four.

Youlan’s group had grown comfortable with the mindset of using brute force to resolve issues. Hence, they had chosen to challenge the most difficult path after entering the entrance trial. It was no wonder why they had only traveled a short distance before team-wiping.

The first time Shi Feng had come here in his previous life, he had been just as ignorant. He and his team had insisted on taking the most difficult path and killing all of the Bosses. In the end, they suffered team-wipe after team-wipe.

Fortunately, unlike Youlan’s group, his team was not as simple-minded. When they challenged a Boss, they had a Cleric stay some distance away from the team to revive everyone in the event that the Boss slaughtered them. This way, they could challenge the Bosses endlessly. Moreover, as this was an

entrance trial, no matter how many times players died here, they would not lose any EXP after reviving; although, they would lose some Skill Proficiency.

After Youlan and the others heard Shi Feng's reasoning, realization dawned on them.

Following which, Shi Feng led everyone down the path with the crossroads. As they progressed through the maze, Shi Feng often deliberately took the wrong path, leading the team into difficult situations and traps. However, with the team's abilities, overcoming the traps and Level 40 or so Elemental Beings wasn't an issue.

After walking for nearly two hours, the team arrived before a large temple. The temple was as big as five football fields, and a pair of tightly shut iron doors sealed its entrance. A steel statue with glowing red eyes that stood over ten meters tall walked back and forth before these iron doors. There were also groups of smaller steel statues patrolling the temple grounds like trained soldiers.

[Steel Slaughterer] (Elemental Being, Grand Lord) Level 44 HP 50,000,000/50,000,000

[Steel Guardian] (Elemental Being, Lord) Level 42 HP 7,000,000/7,000,000

[Steel Watcher] (Elemental Being, Elite) Level 40 HP 120,000/120,000

"Cola, you'll tank the Steel Slaughterer later. The other MTs will each handle one Guardian. White, lure those Elite monsters to us first. All magical classes will assist to clear out the Elites. Go!"



## Chapter 920: Epic Shield's Effects

"Sister Youlan, should we go?"

"Why is a Grand Lord here?! It's stronger than any of the Bosses we faced before!"

"Trying to fight that is suicidal."

Shi Feng's commands had left Overwhelming Smile's members speechless.

Although Shi Feng's orders sounded simple, carrying them out would be very difficult.

Monsters surrounded the temple. There were at least over 400 Steel Watchers. Moreover, there were as many as six Steel Guardians.

Any 20-man elite team would struggle against a Lord ranked monster.

Just luring a fraction of the Steel Watchers would be a challenge. These monsters stood too close to each other; if they attacked one of these monsters, they would alarm them all. Over 400 Watchers would chase them down.

“Everyone, get ready.” Youlan understood exactly what Shi Feng was trying to do. However, while realizing this plan was difficult, she had committed to Shi Feng’s leadership. Since he had not voiced any concerns with his plan, they had to believe in him.

A short moment later, everyone fell into formation and prepared. Now, they only had to wait for the Ranger White Night to lure the monsters.

White Night did not rush in luring the Elite monsters. Rather, he stood to one side and waited patiently for the patrolling Steel Watchers to move past before he attacked.

However, White Night did not attack the Elite monsters directly. Instead, he set up a trap along the Steel Watchers’ path.

Rangers were not just adept at ranged attacks. The class was also capable of setting various kinds of traps.

White Night had set a Poison Trap. When a monster stumbled into it, it would suffer a Poisoned debuff and lose some HP every three seconds for 15 seconds.

Traps were not limited by range, but by time. Even if a player were 100 yards away from their trap, it would still trigger.

After setting up a series of traps, White Night distanced himself from the temple and waited for the patrol of Steel Watchers to return.

After another few minutes, the Steel Watchers came back along their previous path. Without any suspense, one of the Steel Watchers triggered White Night’s trap, and its entire body took on a dark-

green hue. Although the remaining 19 Watchers noticed the abnormality, White Night was outside of their perception range. Hence, the 19 Steel Watchers stood there ignorantly as they searched for the enemy.

However, the poisoned Steel Watcher was different. Not only had the trap inflicted damage, but it also now suffered a DoT debuff. It charged towards White Night immediately.

Traps were like curses. When a monster fell into a trap, it would detect its target after a certain amount of time regardless of how far the target was from it. Only, this period wasn't long. After the time passed, the monster would similarly lose its target if the player were still outside its perception range.

However, once the poisoned Steel Watcher had moved ten yards closer to White Night and just before the allotted time passed, it triggered another Poison Trap. As a result, the Steel Watcher confirmed White Night's whereabouts and continued to charge towards the Ranger.

In such a way, the Steel Watcher triggered a series of three traps, the traps luring it roughly 30 yards away from its companions. When the other Steel Watchers saw this, they cautiously followed the poisoned Watcher. Moreover, because of this Steel Watcher, four nearby patrol squads of Steel Watchers also began converging on White Night's position. However, after a dozen or so yards, they abandoned their advance.

After all, these monsters couldn't detect an enemy. Without a clear target, these Steel Watchers could not react properly.

As for the Steel Guardians and Steel Slaughterer, they ignored the incident.

"Damn, that's possible?!" Minor Wind was stunned upon seeing this method.

Minor Wind wasn't the only person present surprised. Youlan and the others also wore shocked expressions.

With a single move, White Night had lured the Elite monsters away from the troublesome Lords and Grand Lord. With this, they didn't have to fear pulling the Bosses' aggro while they wiped out the Elite monsters. Dealing with the Bosses afterward would be much easier.

After moving into the Watchers' perception range, White Night nocked his arrows and fired three Frost Arrows at the poisoned Steel Watcher.

The three arrows sped through the air and struck the poisoned Elite.

-6,618.

-6,627.

-13,216.

...

Not only did the poisoned Steel Watcher instantly lose a large portion of its HP, but its Movement Speed and Attack Speed had also been reduced.

Just before the poisoned Steel Watcher reached White Night, the Ranger had depleted its 120,000 HP, and its heavy body fell to the ground with a loud boom. As for the Steel Watchers following closely behind, at Shi Feng's command, the team's ranged classes bombarded the monsters with AOE Attack and Control Skills. After a moment, every Steel Watcher died without any need for an MT, granting everyone EXP.

After dealing with the first wave of Steel Watchers, the following waves became much easier.

Once the team had cleared over half of the Steel Watchers around the temple, the Steel Slaughterer and Guardians could no longer remain idle as they charged towards the team. Unlike the low-intelligence Steel Watchers, however, the Grand Lord and Lords immediately targeted the healers.

"Cola, intercept the Grand Lord! Other MTs, lead the Guardians away!" Shi Feng hurriedly shouted.

Cola, who resembled a grizzly bear, raised his Dragonscale Shield and charged at the Grand Lord.

The Steel Slaughterer towered like a mountain. In front of its gigantic stature, Cola was an insignificant ant. Moreover, no player could stand against the power of a Grand Lord's charge; they had to dodge it if they wanted to survive.

Contrary to expectations, however, Cola moved straight towards the Steel Slaughterer's feet, raising his shield and bellowing a war cry.

Tier 1 Skill, Justice Bash!

Immediately, Cola's body released a golden glow as he doubled in size. He then crashed into the Slaughterer's calf.

*Boom!*

The powerful impact generated a strong wind that swept over the other players.

Cola had only managed to stabilize his body after taking three steps back, a damage of more than -6,000 points appearing above his head. To Cola, who had 22,400 HP, the damage was acceptable. After the healers sent him a few heals, Cola's HP instantly recovered to full. As for the Steel Slaughterer, its charge had been abruptly halted, and it trembled slightly.

The watching team members were stupefied.

"He blocked it? Just like that?" Youlan's mind froze.

No MT could even stand against a Level 40 Great Lord's Strength. They needed at least three to five MTs blocking to stop one of its attacks. But this was a Grand Lord, and even sending five MTs would be tantamount to suicide.

Yet, Cola had stopped the Steel Slaughterer's charge without any help. It was unbelievable.

*So, Zero Wing has such a powerful MT. I see why Ye Feng said that one person would be enough. White Night, Bloodsucker, and the others were similarly shocked. Although they had not tested the Steel Slaughterer's Strength personally, they could make an educated guess.*

Most likely, no other MT on their team could replicate Cola's feat of tanking a Grand Lord by himself.

*This Epic Shield is the best!* Cola was ecstatic as he looked at the shield in his hand.

Initially, he had been prepared to be thrown when he charged at the Steel Slaughterer. In the end, however, he was only forced back by three steps.

However, Cola quickly regained his focus and proceeded to use Shield of Vengeance against the Steel Slaughterer's calf, causing -3,475 damage.

Shield of Vengeance came with a shock effect. Although its damage was not particularly high, the Skill felt powerful to others and would draw a monster's attention to the Skill's user.

In the blink of an eye, the Steel Slaughterer switched focus to Cola.