

The Strongest

Chapter 961: Sword Emperor Ryan

In the garden-like mansion, Shi Feng followed the Level 150 NPC steward to the mansion's observation deck.

As Star-Moon Kingdom's only Grand Duke, Hartfield's status was only beneath the King's.

Naturally, his mansion was astonishing.

The observation deck was awe-inspiring. Not only did it float high in the air, but its floating elevator had also been crafted from Seven Luminaries Crystals. Even Star-Moon Restaurant's rooftop view could not compare to the view from this observation deck. Furthermore, only the Palace and Star-Moon Auction House were higher up than the Grand Duke's observation deck.

Shi Feng felt as if he were standing atop the clouds as he looked out. He had an unobstructed view of Star-Moon City. The gentle breeze touching his face relaxed him. Despite the relatively normal Mana Density, he felt utterly carefree.

Enjoying a meal here would be the epitome of luxury.

In the past, many major Guilds had attempted to construct similar observation decks in their own cities, not excluding Shadow. However, only after the attempt did people realize how expensive it was.

The floating deck required incomparably precious materials. Although they were not as rare as the Seven Luminaries Crystals, the Floating Stones were rare throughout God's Domain.

On the market, a fist-sized Floating Stone would sell for dozens of Gold. One could imagine just how much it would cost to construct an observation deck the size of a basketball court. Crafting the necessary floating elevator also required Seven Luminaries Crystals. Those crystals were the core components of Mind Spaces, and players were more than reluctant to part with them. Very few people could afford to use them to craft a floating elevator. Moreover, the moment the floating elevator was complete, other players would likely attempt to steal it.

Next to the Level 200, Tier 3 Grand Duke Hartfield stood a middle-aged man in silver armor. A white mantle had been draped over the man's back, and a sword with a gem-encrusted hilt hung from his waist. Golden, divine runes had been engraved on the sword's scabbard, giving it both a sacred and magnificent appearance.

Seeing this treasured sword, Shi Feng had no doubt that, when this man walked down the street with that blade, he attracted a lot of attention. Countless female players and sword enthusiasts would hover around him like flies.

Oddly enough, Shi Feng recognized this man.

The man's name was Ryan Reiter, and he was the Captain of Star-Moon Kingdom's Royal Guard. He was also a Level 200, Tier 4 Sword Emperor. He was even stronger than White River City's powerhouse, Weissman, and was known for being the closest person to becoming a Sword Saint in Star-Moon Kingdom.

Although there were Tier 5 NPCs in Star-Moon Kingdom, none of these NPCs were affiliated with the kingdom. They originated from the several major NPC organizations in God's Domain. Ucarus, the Temple Lord of Star-Moon Kingdom's War God's Temple, was one such example. Even the King had to show Ucarus respect.

There was also the incomparably mysterious Sharlyn. Although Shi Feng did not know which NPC organization Sharlyn belonged to, he was certain that she did not belong to Star-Moon Kingdom.

Hence, aside from the Grand Marshal Adolf Cerrett, one could say that Ryan Reiter was the strongest NPC in Star-Moon Kingdom.

In front of the Grand Duke and the Royal Guard Captain standing side-by-side, any ordinary player would be petrified. Surprisingly, Shi Feng approached them casually. The NPC steward respectfully moved to the side.

Two of Star-Moon Kingdom's VIPs are here together. It seems that something serious is really happening in the kingdom. Seeing the two NPCs before him, Shi Feng was more confident of his assumptions.

The appearance of the Evil God's Temple hinted that something major would happen soon. This was practically a natural law in God's Domain.

Shi Feng could remember that nearly half of Lion's Heart Empire had been destroyed in the past due to the Evil God's Temple's appearance. Even the ruling Super Guild in the Lion's Heart Empire had suffered severe losses, not to mention the empire's smaller Guilds. This incident had shocked all of God's Domain.

No one had expected an NPC dark organization to be so powerful.

After that incident, players exploded into action to remove the Evil God's Temple the moment any related issues occurred. Even so, every country in which the temple appeared suffered heavy damages.

After all, when the Evil God's Temple appeared, all life and land were forfeit. Even after the threat was eliminated, the area took a long time to recover.

Such situations impact on local players and Guilds was massive.

Hence, Shi Feng had hurried here.

It was very difficult to gain entry into Star-Moon Palace. Meeting with Grand Duke Hartfield, however, was easier. Everything would be fine as long as he reported the matter regarding the Evil God's Temple to Hartfield; the Grand Duke could then travel to the Palace and inform the King.

With the power of the kingdom's army, eliminating the one-horned monsters should be easy.

"Young adventurer, we meet again," Grand Duke Hartfield greeted Shi Feng as he approached. Caressing his goatee, Hartfield chuckled lightly before continuing, "Weissman has told me much about you. I would never have imagined that, despite being so young, you were capable of helping Lady Sharlyn with various matters. If my two sons were as outstanding as you, I could retire without worry."

As Hartfield finished his praise, Ryan Reiter could not help but look at Shi Feng.

This made Shi Feng feel somewhat strange.

He had not expected his fame to spread to NPCs. Moreover, these two influential characters in Star-Moon Kingdom had heard of him.

“Lord Hartfield, I have come with an urgent message that must reach His Majesty the King. However, I cannot enter the Palace, so I was hoping that you might transmit the message for me,” Shi Feng requested respectfully.

“Alright, then. If your news is as important as you say, I will pass on the message.” Hartfield nodded, sternly agreeing to Shi Feng’s request.

“I have found traces of the Evil God’s Temple in the Starfield Forest. The forest is currently devoid of life. If we don’t stop the Evil God’s Temple in time, it will quickly become a threat to the capital,” Shi Feng said after considering his words. “As for the validity of my claim, Lord Hartfield simply needs to send someone to investigate Starfield Forest.”

High-ranking NPCs in God’s Domain were incredibly intelligent. Oftentimes, players were not required to present proof when reporting an incident. The NPC would take action as long as they reported the facts, initiating their own investigations. Once the report was verified, players would receive a reward. If the report were proven false, players would be punished.

However, players needed to earn these NPCs’ trust before they could report various issues. If a player lacked credibility, NPCs wouldn’t bother to investigate the situations even if the player told the truth.

Previously, Shi Feng had gained some Favorability with the Grand Duke. His words alone could prompt an investigation. If he were dealing with any other NPC, however, they wouldn’t even give him the light of day.

“The Evil God’s Temple?”

“The Evil God’s Temple has appeared so close to the capital?”

When Hartfield heard “Evil God’s Temple,” he tensed. The energy around him also changed.

“Captain Ryan, like the report you’ve recently received, it seems that those damnable evil cultists are on the move again,” Hartfield said, anger filling his eyes. “After their failed attempt fifteen years ago, they are going after *that* item again. This time, I will erase them from Star-Moon Kingdom!”

After the Grand Duke’s statement, the sound of a system notification reached Shi Feng’s ears, with Star-Moon Kingdom’s System Announcement following closely.

Chapter 962 – Legendary Necromancer

System: Congratulations! You have accepted the Epic ranked Main Storyline Quest “Evil God’s Birth.”

Quest content: Exterminate the Evil God’s believers in the Star-Moon Kingdom. If you fail to exterminate the Evil God’s believers before they summon the Evil God, Star-Moon Kingdom will fall into ruin.

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As the system was notification repeated three times, Shi Feng was momentarily stunned.

He had only been the messenger, yet he had triggered an Epic ranked Main Storyline Quest in Star-Moon Kingdom. This was not good news for Zero Wing.

Shortly after the system notifications, the system announcements followed.

Star-Moon Kingdom System Announcement: New expansion pack, "Disaster of the Evil God," has been activated.

Star-Moon Kingdom System Announcement: Ruins of the Evil God's Temple has been discovered in the Undead Gorge. Asura Mode Regional Dungeon, the Undead Gorge, has been activated. Players Level 35 and above may enter the Dungeon.

...

The system announcement also repeated three times, creating a stir in Star-Moon Kingdom.

"Awesome! Who triggered the new expansion pack?"

"An Asura Mode Regional Dungeon? The loot will be amazing!"

"It's actually an Asura Mode Regional Dungeon. I bet the Dungeon's monsters will drop Magic Crystals. I won't have to continue fighting for kills in the Stoneclaw Mountains."

The majority of the kingdom's players were incredibly interested in the new Regional Dungeon.

Originally, the only Regional Dungeon that offered Magic Crystals was the Stoneclaw Mountains. However, it had become a haunt for Star-Moon Kingdom's various large Guilds. Even though the area provided abundant resources, ordinary players' share was very small. Moreover, the competition for those resources grew with each day.

The new Asura Mode Regional Dungeon's appearance was definitely a cause to celebrate for the majority of Star-Moon Kingdom's players. At the very least, there was now another area in which they could obtain Magic Crystals.

Moreover, the Undead Gorge was much closer to Star-Moon City than the Stoneclaw Mountains. Only a single map separated the Gorge and the capital. The only problem was that the monsters in said map were somewhat high-leveled, all above Level 50. If one crossed the map without being strong enough, the risk of death would be quite high. However, this could also help disqualify some players, reducing the competition in the Regional Dungeon.

The only downside was equipment repairs. Unlike in the Stoneclaw Mountains, none of the Undead Gorge's adjacent maps had a town. It would take four hours to run there from the nearest teleportation point.

While this was a huge problem for independent players, the various large Guilds found this acceptable. At the very least, they wouldn't have to pay Zero Wing with Magic Crystals if they grinded in the Undead Gorge. Moreover, once their Guild members obtained Mounts, they could save time when traveling.

For a time, Star-Moon Kingdom's various large Guilds began to prepare to garrison troops in the Undead Gorge.

A new Regional Dungeon hinted that there would be undiscovered resources. If they entered the Undead Gorge immediately, they could obtain more than their competition.

“Young adventurer, I would like you to help me with something,” Hartfield sternly told Shi Feng. “Now that the Evil God’s believers have appeared, I suspect that Byrne, the Legendary Necromancer from fifteen years ago, is up to something new. I want you to locate him for me. If Byrne is trying to hold a summoning ritual, he will need to slaughter many to gather enough power to summon the Evil God’s doppelganger. I have a Tracking Crystal that has recorded the Evil God’s power. It will help you search for the Evil God’s power within an area. If Byrne is absorbing the power of the area’s creatures, the Tracking Crystal will detect him. Once you discover their nest, all you need to do is report back.

“However, be careful in your search. Byrne is a Legendary Necromancer, and with the aid of the Evil God’s power, he can summon extremely powerful monsters. Summoning the Evil God’s doppelganger will require a lot of power, so he will have certainly nurtured many powerful monsters to help him gather what he needs. If you want to deal with these monsters, you should head to the remains of the Evil God’s Temple in the Undead Gorge. You might find some method of dealing with them.”

Once Hartfield finished speaking, he passed Shi Feng a blue crystal block.

[Tracking Crystal]

When activated, will scan 5,000 yards in every direction for the Evil God’s power. Each use consumes one Magic Crystal.

Cooldown: 30 minutes

What an inconvenient item. Shi Feng said nothing as he stared at the crystal block in his hand.

Fortunately, it would require time to gather the necessary power to summon the Evil God. The one-horned monsters would continue to massacre everything in their path. He would, soon or later, find them; then, he only needed to follow them back to their nest.

Following which, Shi Feng left the Grand Duke's mansion with the Tracking Crystal in hand. He notified Aqua Rose to send some men to search the maps near Stone Forest Town for clues about the one-horned monsters. After completing that task, he teleported to Blackwing City.

Meanwhile, inside Ouroboros's Guild Residence in Star-Moon Kingdom, a meeting was being held. Usually, only the Guild's upper echelons were invited to such meetings. This meeting, however, included three outsiders.

"Guild Leader Snow, there are many benefits to becoming one of the Blackwater Corporation's subordinate Guilds. Won't you consider it?" the gloomy, short-haired youth, who headed the group of outsiders, asked, smiling at Gentle Snow.

"Many benefits?" Zhao Yueru, repeated from beside Gentle Snow, anger tingeing her words. "You're asking for management of Ouroboros and 90% of its shares, yet you're offering us less than one-tenth of the market price. These are your so-called benefits?"

"Oh, don't put it like that. With Blackwater Corporation's fame and influence, I am sure that you know how much our management will benefit Ouroboros. The Guild will become immensely strong," the short-haired youth said, chuckling. "Joining the Blackwater Corporation now is your best choice. Otherwise, you'll run into a dead-end in the future. You won't get anything at all."

"Are you threatening me?" Gentle Snow frowned.

“It is not a threat. I am simply offering a suggestion. I doubt that your investors will want to make an enemy of Blackwater,” the youth said. He then turned to Ouroboros’s Elders, saying, “Your Guild Elders are aware of this. Did they not tell you yet?”

“What is going on?” Gentle Snow shifted her gaze towards the several Guild Elders beside her. Each Elder represented one of Ouroboros’s investors. Their words were the investors’ will.

“Our companies have already reached a consensus and decided to join the Blackwater Corporation. Snow, please don’t blame us. We don’t have a choice. Blackwater has been putting pressure on our companies as of late, so our profits are in jeopardy. If this continues, our companies may go bankrupt. We had to compromise,” an Elder explained softly.

Chapter 963 – Three Days

“The Blackwater Corporation employs impressive tactics!” Gentle Snow glanced at the short-haired youth sitting opposite of her listening to several Elders’ explanations.

In the virtual gaming world, third-rate or greater Guilds typically split their shares among multiple shareholders. Zero Wing was unique in this as Guilds were rarely under the control of a single entity, much less first-rate Guilds.

Although a first-rate Guild was the equivalent of a corporation and capable of earning its own money, when a Guild of such caliber joined a large-scale virtual reality game, it needed a lot of capital to begin developing.

God's Domain was peculiar among large-scale virtual reality games. Even with a first-rate Guild's financial strength, investments from various companies were needed for a Guild to spread its influence throughout God's Domain as it attempted to dominate one, or multiple, kingdoms.

This was precisely the reason that multiple companies held the majority of Ouroboros's shares.

If these companies came to an agreement, even she, the Guild Leader, was forced to accept the decision.

However, Gentle Snow had never imagined Blackwater to be despicable enough to force Ouroboros into submission. Generally, major international corporations disdained such tactics as doing so would only make them a laughingstock.

"Guild Leader Snow, what is your decision?" the short-haired youth ignored the Snow Goddess's ridicule. On the contrary, he sneered and said, "I know this is a very difficult decision to make. How about this? We'll give you three days to consider your options. If you insist on rejecting our offer in three days, we'll be forced to put someone else in the Guild Leader's seat."

After making his threat, the short-haired youth left the meeting room. The two Level 39 expert players followed him closely.

"Big Brother Wave, why don't we just get rid of Gentle Snow? It would make it easier to take over Ouroboros."

"Now that you've given her three more days, she might persuade those on the fence or purchase their shares. If she does, it'll be harder to occupy the Guild."

The two robust men asked the gloomy, short-haired youth.

The Blackwater Corporation's goal from the very beginning was to take control of Star-Moon Kingdom. After turning Star-Moon Kingdom into the corporation's playground, they would use it as a stepping-stone to dominate the Black Dragon Empire.

Even if Gentle Snow agreed to their conditions, they would not let Ouroboros survive. Rather, Blackwater would establish its own Guild and absorb Ouroboros, gaining complete control. Hence, they did not need Gentle Snow's consent.

"Do you really think I will give her three days to make a decision?" the short-haired youth clicked his tongue. Sneering, he continued, "I am just giving Ouroboros's members time to adapt. If I remove Gentle Snow from her position suddenly, it will cause quite a stir in the Guild. Not only will it decrease the Guild's morale, but I will also have a lot of trouble rectifying the problem. Now that I am giving Gentle Snow three days, however, news of this matter will spread throughout the Guild. We'll encounter less resistance when we take over the Guild's management.

"Most importantly, Young Master Jing has not yet sent me enough experts to take Ouroboros over. In three days, we should have enough personnel to assume control. At that time, we will gain control of Star-Moon City, and it won't be long before we possess all of Star-Moon Kingdom."

"Big Brother Wave, what about Star-Moon Kingdom's number one Guild, Zero Wing? Are we not negotiating with them? I've heard that Zero Wing is particularly stubborn, and the Guild Leader alone controls the Guild. It will be more difficult to take over."

"We won't need to worry about that. Young Master Jing has other plans for Zero Wing," the youth named Abandoned Wave responded nonchalantly. "How are the people that Young Master Jing sent adapting?"

“Big Brother Wave, rest assured; with our guidance, they’re improving each day. I believe they will adapt to God’s Domain’s combat style very quickly with the help of the battle videos we procured and the Trail Tower. As long as their Levels are brought up to speed, they will be the Guild’s greatest trump card,” one of the robust men reported excitedly.

The Blackwater Corporation was not like other corporations. It could actually fit quite well in God’s Domain.

After all, Blackwater was an international corporation that dealt with fighting competitions. The corporation’s dojos spanned the globe. Moreover, the corporation was also one of the World Fighting Competition’s main hosts.

With the amateur fighters in God’s Domain, it would be a piece of cake for Blackwater to dominate the game.

If not for the recent launch of the Mind Space System, the Blackwater Corporation wouldn’t have harbored the slightest thought of investing in God’s Domain.

Once Abandoned Wave’s group left, pandemonium swept through Ouroboros. The Guild was no longer focused on the new Regional Dungeon.

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Meanwhile, Shi Feng had arrived in Blackwing City’s Magic District.

Unlike ordinary NPC cities, which were generally divided into the Noble District and the Commoner District, the NPCs and players that reached Blackwing City were extraordinary. Moreover, even if other kingdoms and empires' nobles ventured to this city, they were ordinary here.

In the Magic District, NPC-owned Magic Shops were everywhere. There were at least a hundred such Shops in the district. Not only did these Shops sell all kinds of daily-use magic items, but they also sold Magic Scrolls. Some even sold rare Magic Scrolls that could not be found in ordinary NPC cities. The Monster Repellent Scroll was one such Magic Scroll.

Initially, players had assumed that the Monster Repellent Scroll had no particular value. After all, it was only capable of driving off low-intelligence monsters. Moreover, as players reached higher levels and explored higher-leveled maps, they encountered fewer low-intelligence monsters. Hence, there was rarely a need for the Monster Repellent Scroll. Furthermore, the scroll was expensive.

The Monster Repellent Scroll had only gained popularity after players discovered its ability to protect towns.

However, as one of the rare Magic Scrolls sold in Blackwing City, the Monster Repellent Scroll was not infinitely available. Only a limited quantity could be purchased each day. Moreover, only one Magic Shop sold the scroll, so it wasn't easy to obtain.

Overall, only twenty Monster Repellent Scrolls were available in Blackwing City each day.

When Shi Feng entered the Magic Shop that sold the Monster Repellent Scrolls, he discovered numerous waiting players. These players turned towards Shi Feng.

Why are people from the Sacred Temple here? Shi Feng was somewhat surprised when he saw these players.

Chapter 964 – Extraordinary Nobody

Conner's Magic Shop was an unassuming Shop in Blackwing City. The Shop was hidden deep in an alley, making it difficult to spot. Moreover, the goods sold in the luxurious Magic Shops lining the Magic District's main street were already more than enough to satisfy players' needs. Hence, very few went out of their way to look for Conner's Magic Shop.

Shi Feng had never expected to meet members of the Super Guild Sacred Temple here.

Aside from the glaring Sacred Temple members, a familiar woman chatted with the NPC shopkeeper.

"Sister Melody, should we chase this player away?" a male Summoner wearing light blue mage robes asked quietly.

This male Summoner looked relatively young, around 20 years old, yet he was already at Level 39. The aura of strength and arrogance he exuded revealed him as more than an ordinary expert. Moreover, his staff was a Tier 1 Weapon unique to Summoners, the Illusion Staff.

Tier 1 Weapons were the most suitable for Tier 1 classes, aside from Epic Weapons. They could maximize a Tier 1 player's combat power, which even the best Dark-Gold weapons could not accomplish.

At the moment, even first-rate Guild only had one or two Epic items; some had none at all. Although Super Guilds were slightly better off in this regard, they could not arm every one of their apex experts with Epic items. Generally, these experts only used Dark-Gold items.

Wielding a Tier 1 Weapon in the Sacred Temple spoke volumes of the youth's combat standards.

"No need. It just so happens that I have a reason to seek him out. Since he has presented himself, things couldn't be better." When Quiet Melody saw Shi Feng, a faint smile appeared on her beautiful, charming face, her smile mesmerizing several of the Sacred Temple members.

Seek him out? The Summoner youth was slightly stunned. Doubtful, he turned to look at Shi Feng as he wondered, Who is he?

Quiet Melody was the Sacred Temple's Vice Temple Master. She was also one of the Guild's apex experts. Very few in the virtual gaming world could attract her attention.

Seeing the Summoner's confusion, Quiet Melody chuckled as she explained, "Fantasy, you might not know of him since you've recently graduated from the newcomer's training, but he is none other than Zero Wing's Ye Feng."

"So, you're the Ye Feng that defeated Sirius." The youth named Lonely Fantasy addressed Shi Feng, envy blooming in his heart.

However, rather than envying Shi Feng's strength, he was jealous of the attention Quiet Melody gave Shi Feng.

He was a genius that had been nurtured by the Sacred Temple. Of the many newcomers who had recently graduated from the Temple's training program and become internal members, he ranked within the top five.

The Sacred Temple was a Super Guild, and it chose the newcomers it nurtured from the Guild's elite members. Those who stood out among these elites were the cream of the crop. In any first-rate Guild, these individuals could easily become the strongest combatants. These individuals were the virtual gaming world's blueblood experts.

Yet, a lowborn individual like Shi Feng had defeated one of the Battle Wolves Guild's old monsters. Moreover, Shi Feng received Quiet Melody's attention, whom he admired. Why wouldn't he be jealous?

Unknowingly, a hunger for battle filled Lonely Fantasy's gaze as he watched Shi Feng.

"Ye Feng, we meet again." Quiet Melody took the initiative to greet Shi Feng. "If not for your loan to Hidden Cloud, I might have been unlucky."

During the last Blackwing Auction, the Nine Heavens Pavilion's Hidden Cloud had beaten her in the auction for the golden tablet. In the end, however, a mysterious NPC had assassinated him for that tablet. Moreover, Hidden Cloud had not been able to log into God's Domain for a long period after that incident. He had become a laughingstock among the Super Guilds.

Even now, Quiet Melody broke out in a cold sweat whenever she thought back to how she had fought so hard for the Secret Technique tablet.

Losing money was one thing. Losing time was crucial.

Every minute and second counted to the various Guilds' experts. If they could, these experts would spend every minute in the game. If they couldn't log into God's Domain for several days, their progress would be wounded. The damage might be less severe for someone like herself, who had lost interest in the battle for the Guild Leader's seat and was content as a Vice Temple Master and holding some shares of the Guild. However, for an ambitious person like Hidden Cloud, who vied to become the Nine Heavens Pavilion's First Hall Master, the damage was tremendous.

"You must be here for some rare scrolls, right?" Quiet Melody said, her gaze shifting towards the Magic Scrolls filling the display cabinets. Smiling faintly, she continued, "Unfortunately, I have purchased all of the rare scrolls here. If you wish to buy some, you will have to wait until tomorrow."

"Temple Master Melody is quite impressive. I'm surprised that you've found this place," Shi Feng said as he swept a glance over the display cabinets. Indeed, just as Quiet Melody had said, the rare scrolls were gone. Even the Monster Repellent Scrolls, which had no apparent use at this stage of the game, were sold out.

"It's nothing. I just stumbled upon this Shop," Quiet Melody replied casually. She then revealed a few of the rare scrolls she had purchased. Looking at Shi Feng, she said softly, "Which scroll are you looking for? If you are in a hurry, I can sell a few to you at cost."

The Sacred Temple members were shocked. They thought that they were hallucinating.

Quiet Melody was the Sacred Temple's Vice Temple Master. Even if one disregarded her status, her appearance was enough to make countless men and women swoon. Aside from the required respect for the Guild Leader and the Guild's older generation, she almost never expressed goodwill towards anyone.

Yet, she was doing exactly that for Shi Feng.

Even if Shi Feng was a particularly skilled fighter with astonishing strength, that shouldn't warrant Quiet Melody's warmth. After all, they belonged to different Guilds. Moreover, their Guild possessed many experts who were stronger than Shi Feng.

"Sister Melody, we need these scrolls urgently. If we sell them to someone else..." Lonely Fantasy quickly interjected.

"It's fine. We purchased a few extra as a precaution." Quiet Melody smiled, responding to the Summoner youth's advice with indifference.

However, Lonely Fantasy knew that these rare Magic Scrolls were crucial to complete their quest. On the off chance that they ran out during the quest, they may fall on the very edge of success. If that happened, their previous efforts would go to waste.

He could not understand why Quiet Melody wanted to befriend Shi Feng. What was so good about this Swordsman?

"Many thanks. I only need four Monster Repellent Scrolls." Shi Feng stated, not beating around the bush. His agreement with Bloodfang was extremely important. If the monsters raided the town before he was prepared, without the Monster Repellent Scroll, he would have to pay 30,000 Gold.

Moreover, a person of Quiet Melody's status had no reason to trick him and no need to use this opportunity to learn why he had come to this Shop.

Since the woman wanted to befriend him and there was no enmity between him and the Sacred Temple, he saw no reason to reject her offer.

Afterward, Quiet Melody gave Shi Feng four Monster Repellent Scrolls in exchange for 20 Gold.

After receiving the scrolls, Shi Feng turned to look at Quiet Melody, who had been smiling all this time. Sighing, he said, "Temple Master Melody, just state your business. I'm assuming that you didn't waste so much time talking to a nobody like me just to sell a few unprofitable scrolls."

Chapter 965: Super Guilds' Attention

"It's nothing major. I just wish to purchase an item from Zero Wing." Quiet Melody chuckled at Shi Feng's question.

"What item are you interested in?" Shi Feng began to grow curious.

Generally, any items that Zero Wing sold could be purchased from the Candlelight Trading Firm.

With the Sacred Temple's capabilities, Quiet Melody could even easily afford the limited Intermediate Mana Armor Kits. Rather than seeking him out personally, she could simply issue a command, and her subordinates would fetch the items and deliver them to her doorstep.

"The slots to the Holy City," Quiet Melody responded seriously.

"How do you know about that?" Shi Feng's expression immediately darkened.

Very few people knew of his acquisition of the Titan City entrance tokens. He highly doubted that Youlan's people would have leaked anything.

However, based on Quiet Melody's tone, it was clear that she was certain that he had the entrance tokens.

"There's no need for surprise. In reality, this news has spread throughout the various Super Guilds," Quiet Melody smiled. "I believe you remember Peerless, right?"

"As a result of his major loss at your hands, Peerless advertised your deeds. He even revealed the secret about Titan City. Moreover, he is very certain that you obtained slots to the Holy City.

"Before this incident, I never knew that God's Domain had such a Holy Land. Many Super Guilds are now watching Zero Wing. It is only a matter of time before they contact your Guild. I had intended to visit White River City after I had finished shopping here. However, it seems that won't be necessary."

Hearing Quiet Melody's explanation, the Sacred Temple members were stunned.

Even Lonely Fantasy wondered if he had heard wrong.

They had never imagined that Shi Feng was actually responsible for the Pantheon Elder's suffering.

Even newbies knew about Pantheon's Peerless. He was a big shot on the same level as Quiet Melody, yet Shi Feng had killed such a powerful character. It was unbelievable!

Field battles were different from the PvP battles in the Dark Arena. Although Peerless was not as powerful as Sirius, one could use various tools in a field battle. Many powerful experts had also accompanied Peerless, making it even more difficult to kill him.

Moreover, from listening to Quiet Melody's words, the item in Shi Feng's hands was even tempting to the various Super Guilds, so much so that a Vice Temple Master like Quiet Melody deemed it necessary to make a personal visit.

This was a first in Sacred Temple's history.

Generally, when dealing with a Guild like Zero Wing, it was a miracle if the Sacred Temple even sent someone from middle management, yet the Guild had delegated the negotiations with Zero Wing to a core upper echelon.

Lonely Fantasy was confused.

Zero Wing was merely an upstart Guild in God's Domain, yet it warranted treatment that first-rate Guilds dreamed of. How did it manage this?

"So, he's the one who let it leak." Shi Feng smiled bitterly as a realization struck him. "It seems that had been his final chance."

He now, more or less, understood Peerless's actions during the entrance trial.

It was no wonder why the high and mighty Peerless of Pantheon had tried to negotiate halfway through the battle. Without a doubt, that had been his last chance to challenge the entrance trial. After losing that chance, he would have to wait a long time before he could try to enter the Holy City again. He might not even get another chance.

Since he had lost this opportunity, he wouldn't let the culprit behind his failure get off scot-free. Hence, he had spread the news and pointed the various Super Guilds towards Zero Wing.

"Our Sacred Temple also knows how valuable the slots are, so we won't ask for too many. Ten will be enough. I believe that with how many slots Zero Wing obtained, trading ten shouldn't be an issue. Moreover, we are more than willing to pay a sufficient fee in either money or items," Quiet Melody unhurriedly explained her offer.

In an ordinary Guild, the Holy City's slots would, at most, add a few Advanced Lifestyle players. However, it was a different story for Super Guilds.

Super Guilds like the Sacred Temple had many Lifestyle players who were masters in other virtual reality games. Unfortunately, as these masters were still unfamiliar with God's Domain's Lifestyle classes, they could only utilize a small fraction of their true abilities. However, with access to the Holy City of Titan, these past masters would rapidly become true Lifestyle Masters in God's Domain.

Once these masters could exert their true abilities, rather than just generating limited profits, the Sacred Temple's network of Shops could finally be put to good use.

Hence, to obtain the slots to the Holy City, the Sacred Temple was willing to pay a massive price.

“If Zero Wing is willing to sell the slots, the Sacred Temple is willing to trade Epic items or golden Lands in major cities for them.” Since Shi Feng had remained silent, Quiet Melody decided to use the Sacred Temple’s trump card.

One needed more than just money to afford Epic items and major cities’ golden Lands. It was especially true for the Lands. Even a fool knew that these Lands’ value had room to grow.

If not for how important Lifestyle Masters were to the Sacred Temple, the Temple would never have considered these bargaining chips.

“Although I want to agree to your offer, the Holy City’s slots are too precious. I believe that you know just how important they are. Moreover, to tell you the truth, Zero Wing has already used many of our slots. Even if I wanted to trade them to you, Zero Wing doesn’t have many left. If you wish to buy them, I’ll have to discuss your offer with my Guild Leader.” Shi Feng did not openly reject Quiet Melody’s request. After all, the Sacred Temple offered an impressive price.

Moreover, based on Quiet Melody had said, it seemed that multiple Super Guilds were very interested in the Holy City’s entrance tokens.

Even if he told the truth and claimed that Zero Wing had used all of its slots, none of the Super Guilds would believe him. At which point, Zero Wing would have earned many new enemies for no reason at all. This was all a part of Peerless’s sinister plan.

“I understand. I’ll have to request that you speak with Guild Leader Black Flame, then. If he is willing to trade, our offer will not disappoint.” Quiet Melody nodded, not surprised in the least about this outcome. ()

In her opinion, Shi Feng was merely one of Zero Wing’s upper echelons, and the Holy City’s slots could decide the fate of a trading firm. Naturally, such an important decision fell to the Guild’s leader.

As for whether or not Black Flame would agree to the Sacred Temple's offer, she was unsure.

However, she didn't believe that it was likely that he would refuse the offer. After all, golden Lands in major cities were too valuable. They were also something that Zero Wing needed urgently. There simply was no reason for Black Flame to refuse.

Chapter 976: Sudden Kill

After using the Taboo Skill, Lethal Gale's Attributes and speed both increased by a large margin.

With the inclusion of the speed boost from Charge, everyone only saw the male Berserker leaving behind an afterimage as he crossed over a dozen yards and arrived before Gentle Snow instantly.

"Die!"

Lethal Gale shouted, a bloodthirsty glint flashing across his eyes. Without even waiting for the Fainted effect of his Charge to settle in, he raised his greatsword and used Beheaded.

Although he took less than a breath's time to complete this entire process, Gentle Snow still managed to activate a Control Removal Skill and counter the male Berserker's attack with Chop.

Boom!

Dazzling sparks flew as the clangor of metal resounded throughout the entire forest.

Unlike before, however, Lethal Gale was not sent airborne this time. Instead, he had to retreat just a single step. The impact of the collision also cost him only around 100 HP. To Lethal Gale, who had recovered back to full HP, this loss was barely a scratch.

Although his attack had failed to finish off Gentle Snow, Lethal Gale did not mind one little bit. He had long since figured out how powerful Gentle Snow's current Attributes were. This first attack of his was merely to gauge how much of a difference there remained between their Strength Attributes.

In a quick follow-up to his attack, Lethal Gale's body flashed; then he appeared beside Gentle Snow and abruptly swung his greatsword upwards, the massive weapon slashing straight at her blindspot. U.p. dated by . com

As Gentle Snow was still unaccustomed to her greater Strength, the clash with Lethal Gale had thrown her stance off. Hence, her defense was full of holes right now.

Had Gentle Snow reached the Refinement Realm, even with the suddenness of the increase in Strength, she would have been able to control it skillfully. Unfortunately, that was not the case.

Lethal Gale's greatsword suddenly split into four afterimages, each one striking at one of Gentle Snow's weak points.

Caught off guard, Gentle Snow no longer had the time to adjust her stance to defend against Lethal Gale's attacks. In the end, she forcefully used Whirlwind Slash. In the next moment, a silver whirlwind suddenly formed around her. When the four afterimages of Lethal Gale's greatsword collided against the silver whirlwind, they immediately got dispelled into nothingness. Meanwhile, Lethal Gale himself had to take a step back, giving Gentle Snow a chance to catch a breather.

What a terrifying expert. After Gentle Snow retreated to a safe distance, she could not help breaking out in a cold sweat when she thought back to Lethal Gale's previous attack.

The difference between their combat standards was clear for all to see.

Despite her advantage in Strength, Lethal Gale always managed to maintain his stance after receiving her attacks. Moreover, even after his Attributes had increased significantly, he was still able to receive all her attacks without fail, as well as launch attacks from various positions. On the other hand, it was taking her all just to handle her sudden increase in Strength, which made it very difficult to maintain her stance after a direct clash.

Unlike ordinary computer games, fights in virtual reality games were no different from fights in the real world.

In many cases, an attack that one could easily block while in a proper stance would become very difficult to handle if one lost their stance. This was true even with a very normal attack.

Fights between experts were all high-speed battles. Deciding the outcome took only an instant. Losing one's stance in battle was a fatal matter.

Although Gentle Snow had repelled Lethal Gale, the latter had no intention of letting up on his attacks. He immediately charged at her once more and let loose a barrage of violent strikes.

...

In the main hall, all anyone could see between the clashes of Gentle Snow's one-handed swords and Lethal Gale's greatsword were afterimages.

"Is this a battle between true experts?"

For a time, the players in the main hall even stopped blinking, afraid that they would miss out on the moment where victory and defeat were decided.

If it were any other player going up against either of the two fighters right now, most likely, they would've already fallen numerous times to either Gentle Snow's or Lethal Gale's attacks before they could even react.

...

Inside the combat room, although Gentle Snow seemed to hold the advantage in both speed and Strength, in reality, she was actually at a disadvantage. In order to maintain her combat stance, Gentle Snow kept having to retreat. Otherwise, she would create an opening that Lethal Gale could exploit.

The seconds ticked by slowly.

When Lethal Gale noticed the three pairs of silver metallic wings behind Gentle Snow starting to fade away, one after another, a triumphant smile appeared on his face. At this moment, he could sense that her Strength and speed were both starting to wane.

Will I be able to make it?

Gentle Snow looked at the last remaining pair of wings on her back.

The outcome of this battle was already plenty obvious. With Lethal Gale's combat techniques, even if she did not enter a Weakened state after Starlight Saint ended, she would still end up losing the battle.

However, she was not willing to simply give up.

From the moment Lethal Gale activated the Tier 1 Taboo Skill Life Return, she already knew just how powerful the Berserker was.

The only reason she had fought desperately up until this point was for this final strike!

When the three pairs of metallic wings generated by Starlight Saint started disappearing, it was not a warning to the user that their bonus Attributes were about to expire. Instead, the moment all three pairs of wings disappeared, the Skill would at last display its true power, releasing its final brilliance.

However, this final power only lasted for one attack.

If Lethal Gale managed to deflect or dodge her attack, her fate would be sealed.

Hence, if Gentle Snow wanted to win, she needed to stay calm like never before. She needed far more precise control over her own body. She also had to push her mental concentration to its very limits. Thus, when her wings began fading, Gentle Snow had deliberately repressed her own Strength to the point where she could control it perfectly. Meanwhile, from Lethal Gale's perspective, it seemed as if Gentle Snow's Strength was continuously deteriorating.

Upon seeing the final pair of metallic wings disappear, Lethal Gale immediately used the Tier 1 Skill Energy Slash.

Energy Slash not only increased the power of an attack but also extended the attack range by five yards.

“Six Ultimate Flashes!”

Gentle Snow, on the other hand, had forsaken all her excess power and concentrated the remainder into one final attack.

The collision of swords and greatsword generated a blinding glare, followed by a thundering boom.

Peng... Peng... Peng...

As the glare dissipated, the shrill of metallic armor being pierced echoed throughout the entire forest—as well as the entire main hall of the Divine Colosseum.

Five penetrating cuts appeared on Lethal Gale’s armor. His HP had also instantly fallen to zero.

As for the victor of this battle, Gentle Snow, her complexion looked somewhat pale right now.

The extraordinary concentration she displayed at the final moment depleted her mental strength, so much so that she was on the brink of collapse. With the side effects of the Starlight Saint kicking in, she appeared extremely frail.

The players in the main hall of the Divine Colosseum, however, clamored at this scene.

“It’s over?”

“What happened in that instant!? I didn’t even manage to see anything!”

“Gentle Snow won, just like that?”

“This is a lie, right...?”

“All hail the Goddess!”

Everyone simply could not figure out what had happened in that final moment. Lethal Gale clearly had the upper hand just then and was about to finish her off, yet such a shocking reversal had actually taken place. The tables had turned so suddenly that even Lethal Gale himself did not know how she had defeated him...

With the end of the duel, Gentle Snow and Lethal Gale both walked out of the combat room. Due to their previous agreement, even if Lethal Gale was reluctant, he no longer had the face to look for trouble with Shi Feng at the moment. He could only watch as Gentle Snow slowly walked over to Shi Feng.

...

“Defeated?! Gale was actually defeated?! He even lost while every Guild in Star-Moon Kingdom was watching?!” When Abandoned Wave saw the outcome of the match, he threw the bottle of Witch’s Tear, which was worth 5,000 Battle Points, to the floor. “Immediately notify Gale and the others! Since they’ve embarrassed the Blackwater Corporation, they need to make up for their actions! Have them think of a way to get rid of Gentle Snow within White River City!”

Currently, Gentle Snow’s complexion was pale, and she looked extremely weak. She was clearly suffering the backlash of using that powerful Skill from before. With her in such a weak state, even with the deterrence of the city guards, killing her would be child’s play for Lethal Gale’s party of six.

As long as the Blackwater Corporation killed Gentle Snow inside White River City, they would be able to regain the reputation they lost before in one fell swoop. As for Lethal Gale’s party members getting jailed by the NPC guards, that was irrelevant to Abandoned Wave.

...

“Understood!”

Lethal Gale accepted to the instructions he received without hesitation. A cold glint flashed across his eyes as he shifted his gaze towards Shi Feng and Gentle Snow, who were chatting with each other.

Chapter 966: Candlelight Auction

After Shi Feng finished his conversation with Quiet Melody, he pretended to contact “Black Flame.” In reality, though, he contacted Fire Dance.

After all, he was Black Flame. How could he possibly contact himself? He had only said something about it to hide his identity. Had he made the decision as “Ye Feng,” he would have roused Quiet Melody’s suspicions.

Shi Feng had to admit that the Sacred Temple’s offer was tempting. At the same time, it served as a reminder.

Zero Wing’s number of Lands couldn’t even compare to a first-rate Guild’s, not to mention Super Guilds. It had fewer than an ordinary second-rate Guild.

However, this could not be helped. These Guilds had far stronger foundations than Zero Wing. These Guilds had joined God’s Domain with plenty of starting capital. Their members also spanned across many cities. Moreover, these Guilds had invested almost all of the Coins they earned from their money-farming teams into purchasing various cities’ Lands. Now players had been developing in God’s Domain for quite some time, these Guilds’ advantages were beginning to manifest.

In stark contrast to these Guilds, Zero Wing had started in God’s Domain with absolutely nothing. Its possession of Lands in so many cities was already impressive.

Now that God’s Domain had been operating for so long, even if Zero Wing had a lot of money, the various large Guilds had already bought out the lands in the various NPC cities. These Guilds treated their Lands like their babies. It was practically impossible for Zero Wing to purchase these Lands at a reasonable price without presenting something that these Guilds hungered for.

The Holy City slots provided a golden opportunity.

Currently, the Candlelight Trading Firm had only spread its influence to a few major cities. By the time the Lifestyle players in Titan City reached the Advanced rank, the firm's small corner of the market wouldn't be enough to display its true prowess.

If the trading firm obtained a few plots of Land in empires' top-ten major cities, it would secure a far larger customer base. If he took into account the Strengthening Device and the designs unique to Titan City, Candlelight Trading Firm's profits would make the income from Stone Forest Town look pitiful.

At the moment, however, Shi Feng did not have any Titan City Entrance Tokens on hand. Even if he did, he had no intentions of selling them to Quiet Melody right now. Since there were so many Super Guilds craving their own slots to the Holy City, he had to auction them and obtain the best price. Moreover, by doing so, he wouldn't invoke these Super Guilds' ire, preventing Peerless's plans from coming to fruition.

Currently, his only method of entering Titan City was the Holy City's Emblem. However, the emblem had a seven-day Cooldown. He had used the emblem recently, so if he wanted to enter the Holy City, he'd have to wait.

He could use these seven days to prepare.

After all, purchasing Lands was a significant expenditure.

Even if the Holy City's slots were more valuable, he could not trade a single slot for a major city's golden Land unless the Super Guild had lost its mind.

In the past, a single Holy City slot only sold for several hundred Gold. Even if it sold for more than that at the moment, the most anyone would pay was roughly 1,000 Gold. On the other hand, major cities' golden Lands were worth over 10,000 Gold.

With the slots he had on hand, he could afford, at most, one plot of land. This was not the desired outcome.

He planned to trade the Holy City slots for Lands in major cities, offering one slot and Coins to make up the cost difference. This way, he could purchase ten plots of Lands by selling ten slots. Hence, collecting enough Coins was now a priority.

"Fire, prepare the main force and both the Dark Gods Legion's official members and reserve members to advance on the Undead Gorge. Halt all other quests and activities temporarily," Shi Feng instructed. "Don't forget to collect extra Strengthening Devices and Magic Scrolls from Candlelight as well. Although the Undead Gorge is an Asura Mode Regional Dungeon, its monsters are much stronger than in the Stoneclaw Mountains. Don't carelessly lose your lives in there."

Shi Feng had never heard of the Undead Gorge before. However, as it was related to the new expansion pack, it was definitely not an ordinary Regional Dungeon. It should offer an abundance of resources, particularly Magic Crystals.

Currently, there were too many players in the Stoneclaw Mountains. There weren't enough monsters to go around. On the other hand, not only was the Undead Gorge a new Regional Dungeon, but it also required more to enter than the Stoneclaw Mountains. Guilds wouldn't be able to dispatch as many members to the Dungeon. With this, Zero Wing could farm Magic Crystals far more efficiently.

As long as he had enough Magic Crystals, he could use the teleportation house to turn them into mountains of glittering Gold Coins.

With this, he could earn what he needed to purchase Lands during the next seven days.

“Understood.” Fire Dance nodded.

After Shi Feng finished issuing his orders, he smiled as he turned back to Quiet Melody.

Communication between players could be set to private mode. This way, unrelated parties would not overhear the conversation. Naturally, the surrounding Sacred Temple members had heard nothing Shi Feng had said, so these people assumed that he had been speaking with “Black Flame.”

“Temple Master Melody, I’ve have told our Guild Leader about your offer. Our Guild Leader has considered this problem; hence, he has already prepared and decided to auction off the slots. In seven days, the Candlelight Trading Firm will hold its first auction. Not only will the Holy City’s slots be available, but many other unimaginable items will also be for sale,” Shi Feng said. “To participate in the Candlelight Auction, you will need to hold at least one Deed to a major city’s golden Land. These Lands will be used to bid for the Holy City slots. Of course, Zero Wing will supplement the cost for each Land with Coins. However, Zero Wing will only announce the auction to the public in three days.

“This is all I can say for the moment. As for who obtains the Holy City slots, that will depend on the strength and capital of the various Guilds attending.” ()

The moment Shi Feng finished talking, Lonely Fantasy, who stood beside Quiet Melody, flew into a rage, growling, “What do you guys take those Holy City slots for?! Do you really think our Sacred Temple can’t obtain our own?!”

“Fantasy, that’s enough!” Quiet Melody reproached her subordinate.

Although Lonely Fantasy tried to continue, when he saw the fury in Quiet Melody's eyes, he snapped his mouth closed.

"Since Zero Wing intends to sell the Holy City slots, we are lucky. The Sacred Temple will certainly attend the auction," Quiet Melody said, her eyes carrying a silent apology. She then departed from the Shop with Lonely Fantasy and the others.

Lonely Fantasy still wanted to say something after leaving the Shop, but Quiet Melody's glare silenced him.

"Fantasy, you have just officially joined the Sacred Temple, so there is much about God's Domain that you do not know. Zero Wing is not as simple as you think. It was bold enough to provoke the super-first-rate Guild Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion and the Super Guild King's Return. Do you really think Zero Wing will think much of the Sacred Temple's threats?" Quiet Melody scolded Lonely Fantasy, shaking her head ruefully. "While we wait, rather than following me around, head to the intelligence department and learn about the game's various Guilds. God's Domain is not the shallow game you think it is."

Lonely Fantasy was taken aback by Quiet Melody's words.

He had not realized that Zero Wing was powerful enough to provoke King's Return. Just what kind of Guild was it?!

As for Shi Feng, after obtaining the Monster Repellent Scrolls, he returned to White River City.

As soon as he returned, he headed for his warehouse in the bank.

Previously, too many things had demanded his attention. He hadn't yet had a chance to use the damaged God Crystal he had obtained during the entrance trial.

The Holy Grail already possessed immense power. If he could upgrade it further... The thought alone excited him.

Chapter 967: Damaged God Crystal

At White River City's bank, before Shi Feng had arrived, a crowd of players had formed in front of the building's entrance.

"Selling raw materials in bulk! A stack of Frost Grass for only 15 Silver! A stack of Flame Flowers for 21 Silver! First come, first served!"

"Urgently selling Attribute Gemstones! Tier 1 Gemstones for 7 Silver each! Tier 2 for 75 Silver each! Limited stock available!"

...

Players were selling all sorts of items near the bank's entrance. Level 30 Dark-Gold Equipment was even available for purchase. Current mainstream players were only Level 33, while elite players were generally Level 36.

Even Guild elite players dreamed of owning Level 30 Dark-Gold Equipment. Very few people were willing to sell these items on the market. Generally, only players from small but powerful Workshops sold equipment of such caliber. After all, ordinary teams could not obtain Dark-Gold Equipment.

However, rather than sell Dark-Gold Equipment for in-game currency, these small-scale Workshops generally sold their items to Guilds for Credits, which they used to maintain their Workshop's operations. After all, such Workshops usually didn't have the financial support of a corporation.

"These are so cheap! I want three Tier 1 Strength Gemstones and one Tier 2 Agility Gemstone!"

"Get lost! I want two Tier 2 Strength Gemstones!"

"I want three stacks of Flame Flowers!"

Aside from the group of peddling players, another crowd fought desperately to purchase the items for sale. A majority of these players were Merchant players and Guild logistic members.

Are these people insane? Shi Feng could not help his surprise when he heard the various prices.

Regardless of the herbs and ores, the Gemstone prices alone were astounding.

The current market value for Tier 1 Gemstones was 9 Silver, which was slightly lower than its initial price. He could easily turn a profit of 2 Silver if he bought them for 7 Silver. As for the Tier 2 Gemstone, its prices had not fallen, but had risen instead. Currently, each sold for between 95 Silver and 1 Gold on the market. Moreover, Tier 2 Gemstones were still in high demand.

Even after many players had obtained their Tier 2 classes in the past, the majority of their Gemstones had been Tier 1. Only Guild members or wealthy experts could afford a full set of Tier 2 Gemstones at this stage of the game.

Moreover, many of the herbs and ores sold were relatively rare. They were still extremely difficult to purchase from the market, yet so many players hawked them here.

Shi Feng even wondered if some large Guild had lost its mind.

Regardless, Shi Feng had no intentions of missing this rare opportunity.

He might've just walked away if only the Attribute Gemstones were available for a low price. After all, he could obtain much cheaper Attribute Gemstones from the Dark Den. Moreover, he normally sold these Gemstones through the Candlelight Trading Firm. However, it was a different story for rare herbs and ores.

He had no shortcuts to obtain these items. He had to rely on his Guild members to collect them gradually. Now that someone sold them for 20% below market price, he would be doing the Candlelight Trading Firm a disservice if he didn't purchase them all.

Hence, Shi Feng joined the line of customers.

Most of the players in the queue only purchased one or two stacks of materials. Only Merchant players and Guild players could afford a little more. However, these players focused on hard currencies such as the Attribute Gemstone. Although they would require some time to resell, they were certain to make a profit with such a low cost.

“How many rare herbs and ores do you have?” When it was finally Shi Feng’s turn, he examined the middle-aged vendor. The man was only a little over Level 10. He was obviously a Guild player as only Guilds had such logistic players, yet neither the man, nor the players helping him wore a Guild Emblem.

“Dear guest, let me assure you that we have an abundant supply. We have as much as you could possibly want.” The middle-aged man revealed a businessman’s smile as he glanced at the cloaked Shi Feng.

“I see. Alright, then. I want 3,000 stacks of Ice Dew Flower, 3,000 stacks of Moonlight Grass...” Shi Feng listed various herbs and ores, requesting 3,000 stacks of each.

Ice Dew Flowers and Moonlight Grass were both main materials for producing the Ice Resistance Potion. In addition, Shi Feng had asked for the main materials necessary to craft the Fire Resistance Potion. As long as he had these materials, he could produce Ice Resistance and Fire Resistance Potions in bulk.

By the time White River City grew and the city’s players could travel to the Eclipse Gate, these two potions would sell like hotcakes.

Shi Feng clearly remembered that, shortly after the Flying Ship feature launched, these potions’ prices had skyrocketed. The raw materials also became incredibly popular.

White River City’s current development speed far outstripped that of the past. Based on Shi Feng’s estimation, it wouldn’t be long before the Flying Ships were available in White River City. If he stockpiled Ice Resistance and Fire Resistance Potions now, by the time players could travel to the Eclipse Gate, he would make a fortune.

“Dear customer, are you sure you want so many materials?” Shock lit up the middle-aged man’s face as he listened to Shi Feng’s request. “The bag space of one or two people won’t be enough to hold so many. If you really want them, we’ll need some time to transfer the materials over from other cities.”

Even if he emptied his warehouse in White River City, he wouldn’t come close to fulfilling Shi Feng’s order.

“Sure, I can wait,” Shi Feng said, looking nonchalant. In any case, he had something to do in the bank. If there was money to be made, he could be patient.

Hearing Shi Feng’s confidence, the middle-aged man smiled brightly. Hurriedly, he said in a respectful tone, “Please wait here for an hour. I’ll send my men to fetch the materials. However, we don’t have enough stock of some of the materials you have requested. Do you still wish to purchase them?”

He could make as much money selling Shi Feng these materials as he had made from all of his previous customers.

“So be it. In any case, bring as many of the materials I listed as you can. I’ll buy everything. As a precaution, let’s sign a contract. I’ll return in an hour to find you. If you prepare the items early, you can meet me in the bank’s main hall,” Shi Feng said. He then produced a contract and handed it to the middle-aged man.

“Please rest assured; I’ll have my men bring the materials immediately.” After the middle-aged man read through the contract, he signed it without hesitation. He then began to contact his subordinates.

As for Shi Feng, he entered the bank’s main hall.

“Hello, sir; how may I be of service to you today?” the female NPC behind the front counter smiled as she asked Shi Feng politely.

“I want to enter my Personal Warehouse. Here is the key,” Shi Feng said. He then passed a bronze key to the female NPC.

“Please follow me, sir.” After the NPC received the key, her attitude towards Shi Feng shifted, showing more respect.

The key Shi Feng had produced was paired to a Large Private Warehouse. This made him one of the bank’s VIP guests.

No player could steal information about a Private Warehouse’s contents. This was the reason that Shi Feng had rented one for himself.

Upon arrival, Shi Feng carefully opened one of the warehouse’s safes. The instant the safe opened, the air in the Private Warehouse grew heavy as a powerful aura surged from within the safe. The safe contained none other than the Legendary ranked Holy Grail.

“This is...” Originally, Shi Feng had intended to retrieve the damaged God Crystal from his bag.

However, as if this God Crystal had been summoned, it flew from his bag without his involvement. As the God Crystal hovered before Shi Feng, it radiated a faint, golden glow. The God Crystal, which should have lost its power, seemed resurrected. It radiated a powerful Divine Might that prevented Shi Feng from moving.

Chapter 968: Evolving the Emblem

How is this Divine Might be so powerful?!

Shi Feng could only look at the damaged God Crystal. He could not even move a finger.

The powerful Divine Might could even overpower Tier 5 NPCs.

It was hard to imagine that this was merely a *damaged* God Crystal.

Even the complete God Crystal he had previously snatched from a Tier 4 monster had not been as powerful as this.

If he weren't in his Private Warehouse, the God Crystal's Divine Might might be enough to paralyze every player in the bank, causing a commotion in White River City.

Although this damaged God Crystal was quite powerful, in front of the Holy Grail, it was a sheep for the slaughter. It could only wait for its death.

The Holy Grail then radiated a purple aura that spread throughout the warehouse.

This purple aura ate away at the Divine Might rapidly, and Shi Feng's Private Warehouse was soon void of Divine Magic. As for the damaged God Crystal, it could barely stay afloat while it struggled desperately against the Holy Grail's aura.

Suddenly, the sound of a system notification reached Shi Feng's ears.

System: Do you wish to allow the Holy Grail to absorb the Titan Core?

"This is a Titan Core?" The sudden revelation surprised Shi Feng. He used Omniscient Eyes once more to check the damaged God Crystal.

[Titan Core] The Ten Great Saints of Titan's greatest masterpiece. The Titan Core is capable of supplying a near-infinite amount of energy. It originally served as the Titan Fortress's power core. However, it had been heavily damaged during the war between Gods.

When Shi Feng finished reading the description, he was thunderstruck.

He had heard of this item before. It could be used to construct a war fortress's power core, which was also the most important component in a war fortress.

A war fortress was far more difficult to construct than a city as it was a machine meant for slaughter.

Even Tier 5 NPCs would flee from a war fortress as a single, random strike was enough to end their lives. However, moving a powerful war fortress required an astronomical amount of energy. Hence, one needed a very powerful power source. Among the available materials in God's Domain, the Titan Core was the best option.

Speaking of war fortresses, Shi Feng had seen one in the Physis Canyon. He had also accepted the Unique Quest "Steel Fortress Barrutia."

He had nearly lost his life attempting to power the Steel Fortress Barrutia with the Titan's Heart.

However, although the Titan's Heart could also be used as a power core, it was far weaker than the Titan Core. The Titan Core possessed Divine Might, while the Titan's Heart only possessed power.

If the Titan's Heart were powerful enough to threaten Tier 5 classes, the Titan Core was powerful enough to invoke Gods' fear.

Moreover, unlike the Titan Core, the Titan's Heart's energy was limited.

Even a hundred Titan's Hearts were not as valuable as one Titan Core.

"Do I absorb it?" Shi Feng hesitated.

To a Guild, the Titan Core was leagues more important than a Legendary item.

Of the many components needed to construct a war fortress, the power core was the most difficult to obtain. In the past, this had caused many headaches for many of God's Domain's major powers. Moreover, even if they obtained a power source, they would not mobilize their war fortress due to the immense energy consumption. However, there was no denying a war fortress's extreme power.

If a Tier 5 player could defend a town with a player population over one million, a war fortress could defend nearly half of a kingdom's territory. Moreover, that was with a limited energy source when it could not be moved casually.

Obtaining or producing another power source was immensely difficult.

If he could equip a war fortress with the Titan Core, the war fortress would have no problems defending an entire kingdom. Even the Super Guilds in the past had not had such a weapon of mass destruction.

Moreover, powering a war fortress was only one of the Titan Core's functions. The Titan Core could also be used in a player-constructed city to emulate the Holy City of Titan.

According to legend, eighteen Titan Cores powered Titan City, granting it infinite energy. In the distant past, a large group of Tier 6 Gods had attacked the Holy City. In the end, however, these Gods had failed. Titan City's dense Mana and its floating Lifestyle Association were due to its endless amount of energy.

One could just imagine how precious a Titan Core was.

If he allowed the Holy Grail to absorb the Titan Core now, it would be nigh impossible to obtain another in the future. After all, Titan City's ten saints were long gone. There was no one around who was capable of producing another Titan Core.

In the end, after giving it some thought, Shi Feng decided to withhold the Titan Core from the Holy Grail.

Although the Titan Core was damaged and could not be used, there was hope of repairing it. After all, he had the Holy City's Emblem. He could enter Titan City any time he wanted. As the Titan Core's birthplace, he should be able to learn how to repair it in Titan City.

To stop the Holy Grail from craving the Titan Core, Shi Feng stored the Core in another safe. No one was allowed to open the safes in a Private Warehouse without the user's approval. The items in these safes would also be disconnected from the outside world.

Sure enough, after Shi Feng stored the Titan Core inside a safe, the Holy Grail receded its aura and fell dormant.

It seems I'll have to look for other God Crystals to restore the Holy Grail. Shi Feng sighed as he looked at the Holy Grail, which emitted a purple hue. He suddenly had a realization. *Since the Grail can evolve an item, I wonder if it can evolve the Holy City's Emblem?*

Although there was no indication of the Holy City's Emblem having a rank, the Titan City Entrance Tokens were divided into ranks.

His black-iron entrance tokens allowed wielders to enter the Holy City for three days. If players possessed sufficient Reputation, they could extend their stay.

Silver was the next rank. Wielders of the silver entrance token could stay in the Holy City for six days. Similarly, they could extend their stay with sufficient Reputation.

The highest ranking entrance token was the gold entrance token. It allowed players to stay in the Holy City for up to ten days.

Which token players acquired depended on which difficulty they chose when challenging the entrance trial.

Titan City's entrance trial was not limited to one difficulty setting. Only, as Shi Feng's team was still too low-level and only consisted of Tier 1 players, they had not had any other options.

When the team had Tier 2 players, the entrance trial would provide a Hard Mode difficulty. As long as players cleared the Hard Mode trial, they could obtain silver tokens. When Tier 3 players were present in the team, Hell Mode would be made available, from which players could obtain the golden tokens.

The Normal Mode of Titan City's entrance trial was already as difficult, or more, as the Hell Mode difficulty of a 100-man large-scale Team Dungeon, not to mention Hard Mode and Hell Mode.

Even in the past, Shi Feng had never heard of a team obtaining the gold tokens, and extremely few teams had managed to obtain the silver tokens; most had settled for black-iron. /

Since the entrance tokens were divided by ranks, the Holy City's Emblems should have ranks as well. After all, he had obtained his Holy City's Emblem from Normal Mode. What about those obtained from Hard Mode and Hell Mode?

Thinking up to this point, Shi Feng could not help but click on the Holy Grail and select its Power of Evolution Skill. He chose the Holy City's Emblem as the evolution's target.

Chapter 969: Evolved Effects

“I should be able to evolve it, right?”

Although Shi Feng had chosen to evolve the Holy City’s Emblem, he still wasn’t sure that his plan was feasible. After all, unlike weapons and equipment, the Holy City’s Emblem did not have a rank to differentiate it from others.

Suddenly, a strand of purple mist flowed from the light-blue Holy Grail, gently wrapping around the flashing silver emblem in Shi Feng’s hand as if scanning it.

Three seconds later, Shi Feng heard the sound of a system notification.

System: Do you wish to sacrifice 1,000 HP permanently to evolve the Holy City’s Emblem?

“Sure enough, a Legendary item is amazing!” Excitement lit up Shi Feng’s face.

Although losing 1,000 HP stung, the return was worth the cost. As long as the evolution succeeded, this item would be far more valuable than an Epic item.

Shi Feng agreed to the evolution.

Shi Feng's maximum HP then fell by 1,000, from 26,300 to 25,300.

However, despite the loss, Shi Feng's HP was still much higher than Cola's. If Shi Feng activated the Seven Luminaries Ring's Aura of Earth, he could even become a sturdier MT than Cola...

As Shi Feng's HP decreased, streams of green liquid flowed from his body and into the Holy Grail. In turn, the Holy Grail radiated a dazzling purple glow that gradually melded with the Holy City's Emblem.

Suddenly, the emblem radiated a dazzling golden glow that enveloped the warehouse.

"Was it a success?" Shi Feng stared at the Holy City's Emblem, tension tightening his features.

If the evolution were a success, the Candlelight Trading Firm's future would be limitless.

While other Guilds were expending effort and resources to nurture Advanced Lifestyle players, he could easily nurture one batch after another, giving the Candlelight Trading Firm a massive advantage over other trading firms.

At that time, even if Candlelight lacked Shops, it could easily overwhelm its rivals with a large stock of advanced products.

If they could nurture a Master-rank player, they could earn staggering amounts of money.

If the evolution failed, though, he would have to wait another ten days before he could try again. He would also have to sacrifice another 1,000 HP. The thought soured Shi Feng's mood. However, as depressing as it was, he would gladly sacrifice another 1,000 HP. After all, Titan City held the key to the Candlelight Trading Firm's future.

After the golden glow dissipated, the originally silver Holy City's Emblem shone a pale gold. Moreover, tiny divine runes had been carved on the emblem, which gathered surrounding Mana. It almost seemed like a faint mist had wrapped around the emblem, giving it an aura of mystery.

Following which, Shi Feng inspected the Holy City's Emblem's statistics.

[Holy City's Emblem] Opens a transfer gate to Titan City. A maximum of 20 people may pass through the gate. Each time the wielder of the Holy City's Emblem enters the Holy City of Titan, they can extend their stay by up to two days. Cooldown: 7 days

After Shi Feng finished reading the introduction, he was ecstatic.

Although the evolved emblem did not extend a player's stay like the higher-ranked entrance tokens, it now allowed twenty people to enter Titan City rather than ten. Moreover, the wielder could stay in the Holy City two days more than everyone else. Now, the Holy City's Emblem was practically a permanent residence permit for Shi Feng.

Generally, ordinary players could only stay in Titan City for three days, while Shi Feng, as one of the city's Honorary Citizens, could stay up to five days. Including the emblem's new effects, he could extend his stay in the Holy City to seven days, which was exactly how long the Cooldown lasted.

With this, even if Shi Feng did not raise his Reputation, he could stay in Titan City as long as he wanted. Titan City was heavenly for both Lifestyle players and combat players.

Not bad. With this, I won't have to worry about time constraints when I'm questing in Titan City. Shi Feng smiled at the pale gold emblem in his hand.

Titan City was a Holy Land to both Lifestyle players and combat players. Only, as the slots to enter the city were extremely valuable, most Guilds that possessed them only used them on Lifestyle players who could contribute more to the Guild than combat players.

However, as more players reached Titan City, combat players would discover the Holy City's benefits. They would also discover that they would enjoy just as many benefits as Lifestyle players. Only, the various Guilds had only discovered late in the game. By then, Titan City's benefits were no longer useful to apex experts.

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Star-Moon City, Ouroboros's Guild Residence:

Due to the Blackwater Corporation's visit, the entire Guild was a mess. Many of the players lounged around the Guild Residence's main hall, not in the mood to level up. Instead, they chatted among themselves about the Guild's situation.

At the same time, an argument raged in the Residence's meeting room.

"Do your companies really intend to side with the Blackwater Corporation?! Have you never considered the fact that Blackwater is simply trying to annex Ouroboros and turn it into one of its toys?! At that

time, your companies won't have anything to do with Ouroboros at all!" Zhao Yueru bellowed, furious as she glared at the several Guild Elders beside her. "Won't you reconsider this?"

The Guild Elders not affiliated with a company nodded, showing their support for Zhao Yueru's words.

The Blackwater Corporation was ruthless and cruel. Before it had even obtained Ouroboros, it was asking its Guild Leader to step down and relinquish full management rights. One could only imagine what Blackwater would do once it truly secured the Guild.

Ouroboros's name would vanish from the virtual gaming world.

After the Blackwater Corporation obtained 90% of Ouroboros's shares, it would only be a matter of time before it obtained the remaining 10% and devoured Ouroboros. Aside from the compensation fees, these companies would have nothing left.

Currently, God's Domain's popularity was rising rapidly due to the Mind Space System's launch.

Even a fool could tell what would become of God's Domain in the future. Otherwise, so many companies from around the world wouldn't be investing in the game.

As a first-rate Guild, Ouroboros had a significant advantage. It had already amassed plenty of Lands. However, if they allowed Blackwater to take everything, these companies would never be able to establish another Guild as powerful as Ouroboros, no matter how much money they spent.

By giving in to the Blackwater Corporation, these companies were ignoring long-term profits for short-term gains.

“Regarding the problem of your funds, I have begun to sell the materials in the Guild’s warehouse to collect more. Including the funds I have and based on my estimations, we should be able to fund your companies’ resistance against Blackwater for some time.

“Ouroboros can use this time to capture a few towns. With the income from these towns, the Guild will be able to sustain itself. It will no longer have to purchase Coins from others or hire money-farming teams. Meanwhile, you will retain your shares of Ouroboros. What do you think?” /

Gentle Snow proposed her plan calmly as she shifted her gaze towards the several Elders representing various companies.

Although her plan was effectively cutting off Ouroboros’s means of retreat, this was the Guild’s best option.

Chapter 970: Greatest Advantage

The company representative Elders fell silent after Gentle Snow’s proposal.

They had never imagined that Gentle Snow would take such decisive action, sacrificing the materials their Guild had struggled to accumulate. This would damage Ouroboros immensely and be robbing Peter to pay Paul. In reality, she had not solved the fundamental problem. /

However, if they gathered enough capital to cover their companies’ sudden shortage of funds and endure this difficult period, their companies could make a comeback and slap the Blackwater

Corporation in the face. Moreover, as Gentle Snow had said, if Ouroboros could obtain a few towns within a short time and maintain Ouroboros's profitable state, their companies would hold onto Ouroboros tightly, rather than surrender their shares to Blackwater.

In God's Domain, captured towns were different from NPC cities. Unlike in NPC cities, where players were under many restrictions, players could build as they wished in their own town. Moreover, constructing a house in a town was far cheaper.

Most importantly, players wouldn't be limited in what items they could sell. In the Shops in NPC cities, players were only allowed to sell items that were native to God's Domain. In a player-owned town, however, players could sell foreign products such as cosmetic items.

Unlike weapons and equipment, cosmetic items did not possess Attributes. At the same time, cosmetic items could only be worn within player-owned territory; they could not be worn in the fields or NPC cities.

Moreover, designing cosmetic items in the game was not an easy task. Although it was not as troublesome and meticulous as weaving, leather making, or forging Attributed equipment, and crafting required an Advanced Lifestyle player's skills, cosmetic items could only be crafted using native materials in God's Domain. As a result, players were required to look for suitable materials to create pleasant-looking cosmetic items, which was not easy.

Furthermore, more than one form of currency could be used. In player-owned towns, Shops had the option of selling their items for either Credits or Coins, which was convenient for both players and Shops.

Take Stone Forest Town for example. As the first town to be captured in Star-Moon Kingdom, it had grown considerably. Stone Forest Town's residential player population also increase by the dam. A lack of safety was the only issue as the area was home to high-level monsters. This prevented low-levelled players, who only sought entertainment, from visiting.

Even so, many companies eagerly wanted to cooperate with Zero Wing. It was especially true for companies in the clothing industry. They all wanted to drown Zero Wing in Credits. However, for some unknown reason, Zero Wing had turned these companies down. Instead, it constructed hotels, smithies, bars, and other establishments. The town was nearly out of space already...

Seeing the large numbers of players swarming to Stone Forest Town, many companies had cursed Zero Wing as insane. The Guild was ignoring a golden opportunity to earn a fortune.

“We’ll contact our superiors immediately. However, we cannot guarantee that they will be willing to take this risk.” The several Elders representing companies nodded before logging out of God’s Domain.

Hearing the several Elders’ answer, the other upper echelons relaxed slightly.

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Inside Star-Moon Kingdom’s Divine Colosseum, a large group of players ranging between Level 10 and Level 20 wandered in and out of Trial Tower. Although these players were not very high-leveled, and their equipment was sub-par at best, others were shocked by how many floors they were clearing.

Of these players, the weakest among them had even reached the Trial Tower’s sixth floor.

“Brother Wave, the people that Young Master Jing sent are incredible. Their improvement speeds are astounding. It won’t even be long before they surpass me,” a tall Level 39 Ranger, who sat beside Abandoned Wave, said, smiling bitterly.

No matter what was said or done, he was a famous expert in the virtual gaming world. This time, he had been specially hired to train a group of newcomers who had recently joined the virtual gaming world. He had initially thought that this would be a simple job.

However, the moment he met these newcomers, he sensed the dense killing intent and hostility. Their auras were nothing like an ordinary player's, and he could instantly tell that these experts had been well-tempered in life combat. Among these newcomers, a few even felt stifling.

These newcomers had already surpassed him and reached the realm he had always dreamed of.

"This is all thanks to your guidance. Otherwise, they wouldn't have grasped God's Domain's combat basics so quickly. When more newcomers arrive, I'll have to trouble you again." Abandoned Wave was quite satisfied as he watched the new group enter the Trial Tower. As long as he raised these people's Levels, it would only be a matter of time before Blackwater took over Star-Moon Kingdom.

Before he had joined the game, he would never have imagined that combat in God's Domain was as realistic as real-world combat. The only differences were players' Skills and superhuman physiques.

To the Blackwater Corporation, the game's realistic combat was its greatest advantage. After all, Blackwater was a giant in the fighting world. No one had more combat experts or method of nurturing experts than Blackwater.

Unlike other companies, which struggled to nurture their own gaming experts in God's Domain, it was a simple task for the Blackwater Corporation. Blackwater only needed to assist players in adapting to God's Domain's combat style.

Suddenly, a bald, robust man rushed up to Abandoned Wave and whispered, "Big Brother Wave, a message has arrived from Ouroboros. It seems that Gentle Snow is trying to use the Guild's collected

materials to compensate the companies for their missing funds. Moreover, someone in White River City has already agreed to purchase all of Ouroboros's rare herbs and ores. Should we do something to stop her?"

"Hahaha! Interesting! It seems that Gentle snow is good for more than just her pretty face! She is a daring beauty! It makes me somewhat reluctant to let her go!" Abandoned Wave could not help but roar with laughter. "It's a pity that her efforts are pointless. She doesn't understand Blackwater's power. She doesn't know these companies true intentions, either.

"Gentle Snow has a considerable amount of Ouroboros's shares. Even if those companies pressure her, they can't stop her from selling the materials. However, I can't let her have her way. Notify Gale and the others and have them warn the buyer. I don't want Ouroboros to have a raw material shortage when I take control."

"Understood!"

After Abandoned Wave finished issuing his instructions, the bald man left the Divine Colosseum.

Chapter 971: White River City's Transformation

Star-Moon City, Ouroboros's Guild Residence:

Bursting into the meeting room, the tall, robust Berserker Fierce Snake hurried to Gentle Snow's side and quietly reported, "Guild Leader, good news! You've been worried that we wouldn't be able to sell the materials fast enough, right? Awhile ago, we found someone willing to purchase all of our rare herbs

and ores! Moreover, the Attribute Gemstones' sales in the various major cities are going quite well. We'll collect the necessary funds in no time!"

"Alright." Gentle Snow's expression, which had been tense until now, finally relaxed. "Assemble the materials in the various warehouses immediately."

Selling all of the materials Ouroboros had, even at 80% market value, in such a short time would be a daunting task. After all, there was a limit to how much the market could digest.

If they could not gather the required funds in time, her proposal would have been nothing but talk.

Now that someone wanted to spend the Coins to purchase their stock, they had helped her considerably.

When Gentle Snow finished instructing Fierce Snake, the several company representative Elders came back online.

"How did you manage to get an answer so quickly?" Gentle Snow felt something off when she saw the several Elders.

Such an important decision wasn't easy to make. At the very least, these companies would have had to hold an emergency meeting with their directors before making a decision, yet these Elders had only been gone for less than ten minutes.

"Have you decided to submit to Blackwater in the end?" Gentle Snow's expression darkened.

She had only recently chased away Cao Chenhua after much difficulty and snatched back control of the Guild, which had originally belonged to her elder brother. She had never expected several of Ouroboros's investors to abandon them just as she was starting to push the Guild onto the right track.

With just her family's company, she could not stand against these major companies when they worked together. / update by

"Guild Leader Snow, please understand that this is a world where the strong eat the weak. Our companies simply cannot stand against the Blackwater Corporation. Please prepare to hand over the position of Ouroboros's Guild Leader. We also hope that you will support the new Guild Leader. As for the White Clan Group's Shares, we will buy them back in three days." After the company representative Elders gave their answer, they sighed powerlessly as they logged out of the game.

Although they were only the representatives of their respective companies, they knew that their companies had already signed a private agreement with the Blackwater Corporation. They no longer intended to play with the White Clan Group as they had found a new playmate.

"Despicable! How could they do something like this!?"

"We were blind...to think we actually accepted these companies investments in the Guild."

The dozen or so Elders, who had fought long and hard with Ouroboros, started to bash the investors. To them, Ouroboros was their home. They had worked for Ouroboros for over twenty years. Now that someone else was taking over their Guild, why wouldn't they be angry?

"Snow..." Zhao Yueru didn't know how to console her friend.

The White Clan Group had made its fortune in the virtual gaming world. It had established Ouroboros and gradually developed the Guild, taking over a dozen years to elevate it from a third-rate Guild to a first-rate Guild. Afterward, Ouroboros had dominated over a dozen virtual reality games, yet now it was crumbling in Gentle Snow's hands.

Zhao Yueru did not know what to say.

"I'm fine!" Gentle Snow waved her hand. However, she was extremely pale. After a few minutes of silence, she took a deep breath and said, "Those companies and the Blackwater Corporation are underestimating me! Since Ouroboros cannot be salvaged, the White Clan Group will start a new Ouroboros!"

Although the investing companies had secured Ouroboros's management, and thus, the Guild's Shops, gaming experts were the true key to a Guild's power.

Due to Cao Chenghua's mutiny, the White Clan Group controlled Ouroboros's God Slaying Army; it did not belong to the Guild. As a preventive measure against Cao Chenghua, Gentle Snow had purchased over a dozen plots of Land in Star-Moon City and several other high-population cities under her name. However, she hadn't expected those preventative measures to come into play now.

"Fierce, you don't have to deliver the goods anymore. I'll meet with the buyer personally," Gentle Snow said.

Although the Blackwater Corporation now owned Ouroboros, she was still the Guild Leader. She also possessed a significant portion of the Guild's shares, so she still had the authority to transfer a considerable amount of resources.

Since she was going to leave Ouroboros, she needed to take some things with her.

She wouldn't allow Blackwater to get its hands on the resources under the White Clan Group's management. Although she couldn't transfer the Guild's resources in bulk, Coins were much easier to move. Moreover, upstart Guilds lacked money the most. With the money from selling the materials, she could easily build a sturdy foundation for her new Guild.

Following which, Gentle Snow left the meeting room. At the same time, Zhao Yueru began to mobilize the God Slaying Army and other Guild members. When the time came, she would take as many people with her as possible. Although they could not leave Ouroboros an empty husk, they could at least cause the Blackwater Corporation to pop a vein or two when it took over the Guild's management.

In front of White River City's bank...

"Guild Leader, the buyer is inside the bank." The middle-aged man, who sold items in front of the bank, rushed up to greet Gentle Snow when she arrived.

On her way to the bank, Gentle Snow was greatly surprised by White River City's atmosphere.

Despite Star-Moon City being the kingdom's capital, the vibe in White River City felt as if should be the capital instead. As she traveled through the city, she saw many teams from various first-rate Guilds. There were more and higher quality players in White River City than in Star-Moon City.

She had even seen a few players riding through the city atop Mounts.

One wouldn't see this in Star-Moon City, yet it seemed that White River City's players were already used to these sights...

One would even be hard-pressed to find such happenings in imperial capitals.

When Gentle Snow entered the bank, the middle-aged man guided her to a corner of the main hall. Shi Feng sat there alone, a Black Cloak covering his body. However, even though Gentle Snow could not see Shi Feng's appearance, this man felt familiar.

Gentle Snow? Why is she here? Is Ouroboros the Guild selling the materials? Shi Feng was somewhat surprised when he saw Gentle Snow walking towards him. Could something big have happened to the Guild?

With Ouroboros's financial strength, the Guild shouldn't need to do something so damaging to gather funds.

As Gentle Snow stopped before Shi Feng and the middle-aged man was about to introduce her, six tall, burly men radiating hostility cut past Gentle Snow's group and surrounded Shi Feng.

"Oh, Guild Leader Snow, I'm sorry, but the Blackwater Corporation has some business with this gentleman. Would you give us a moment?" the leading Level 39 Berserker named Lethal Gale subtly demanded, smiling coldly.

As Gentle Snow was pushed aside, the middle-aged man quickly stepped forward to speak up. However, before he could do so, Lethal Gale shot him a penetrating glare.

With the one look, the middle-aged man froze.

Even though the middle-aged man knew that players wouldn't dare attack another in a place like this, Lethal Gale's sharp gaze had left him petrified. The dense killing intent within that gaze felt as if a blade had been pressed against the middle-aged man's throat, and if he moved, his head would leave his body.

This is killing intent! Gentle Snow could also feel the frightening pressure that Lethal Gale exuded, and she could not help but stare at the Berserker.

To put it simply, killing intent was a kind of mental suppression.

Although killing intent couldn't be seen or touched, the human mind could sense the threat of danger. As a person could not perceive the danger with their five senses, the mind employed a self-preservation mechanism, halting the body from making any sudden movements.

It was the same mechanism that was responsible for small animals freezing when surprised.

There was a saying in the real world that looks could kill. Although it sounded like a joke, a person's gaze could indeed transmit certain signals.

Take wild animals for example. When two wild animals faced off against one another, if one of the wild animals received a ferocious glare from the other, the former would hesitate.

Wild animals were born with much keener senses than humans, so they could pick up on these signals easier.

Normally, it was very difficult for ordinary players. However, for experts who had experienced many life or death situations, their will and instincts had already been hardened and sharpened. Hence, they could transmit more powerful signals, which even ordinary people could pick up on.

Lethal Gale was one such expert. / update by

However, Gentle Snow had not focused on Lethal Gale due to his killing intent, but rather because his was somewhat different from other gaming experts'. His killing intent was much colder and sharper. Unlike the killing intent other experts radiated, which only served as a warning signal, the killing intent Gentle Snow felt from Lethal Gale showed that the Berserker truly wanted to murder his target. More importantly, the Berserker wore a calm and natural expression while he radiated such killing intent.

The fact that Lethal Gale could do this told her that his hands were stained with real-world blood.

"One should always act on a first come, first served basis. Do the Blackwater Corporation's people not respect this rule?" Gentle Snow asked as she pulled her subordinate away and glanced at Lethal Gale. Sneering, she continued, "Or do you need me to teach you a lesson in manners?"

Although Gentle Snow's tone was soft and not particularly loud, everyone who heard her trembled involuntarily.

It seems the rumored Snow Goddess isn't just a push-over. Lethal Gale thought, surprised by Gentle Snow's aura. In his eyes, virtual gaming experts did not know what it truly meant to fight and kill. These people were nothing to them, people who had seen hell and walked the boundaries of life and death. However, the aura Gentle Snow radiated showed that she was not one bit weaker than him. He had not expected this revelation. "Sure. Since Guild Leader Snow made the offer, I'm interested to see just how tough you really are. If you can defeat me, my men and I will leave. If I win, however, you will have to wait for us to finish our chat with this gentleman."

Although Gentle Snow's aura had surprised him, that was all. In an actual fight, one could only rely on their own skill. He refused to believe that his skills, which he had honed in true battle, would lose to someone like Gentle Snow, was all style and no substance.

Moreover, if he beat Gentle Snow, Abandoned Wave would have an easier time taking over Ouroboros.

Lethal Gale's companions wore mocking smiles as they watched Gentle Snow. He was absurdly strong. He had even defeated a famous expert from the Dark Night Empire, who ranked 354th on the God's Domain Experts List. As for Gentle Snow, in the latest update of the Experts List, she only ranked within the top 900. Defeating her would be a piece of cake for Lethal Gale.

"Okay, I want to see just what kind of experts the Blackwater Corporation has nurtured," Gentle Snow said. She then turned to Shi Feng, and in an apologetic tone, she said, "Excuse me, sir, but will you wait for a little while longer? I'll finish this match very quickly. We can proceed with the trade once I'm done."

Blackwater's people had not initially been looking to cause Shi Feng any trouble. It was only because of her that these ruffians had done so. Hence, it was only right that she deal with this matter.

Trying his best to hold back a chuckle, Shi Feng said in a deep tone, "It's fine. I am more than happy to watch a good show."

He had to admit that the Black Cloak was an excellent item for hiding one's identity. Even as he stood before Gentle Snow, she didn't recognize him at all. Right now, all she could discern was his gender.

In reality, Shi Feng could've revealed his identity and put an end to this match. However, he was curious to see how strong Gentle Snow was.

Both Gentle Snow and Lethal Gale were Level 39 Berserkers. Both wore equipment of similar standards, with both wearing Level 40 Dark-Gold Equipment. It was obvious that they both possessed top-tier equipment that could reduce item level requirements. Their weapons were the only difference between them.

Although Shi Feng did not know the quality of Gentle Snow's silver greatsword, seeing the greatsword gather traces of Mana from the area, it was definitely stronger than a Dark-Gold Weapon. On the other hand, Lethal Gale's greatsword was slightly weaker. Even so, it was a top-tier Dark-Gold Weapon.

With almost a negligible difference between them, this match would come down to their combat techniques.

Shi Feng had already been observing Lethal Gale. Although he was a Berserker, a class famed for violence, his actions felt light and gentle. It was obvious that his physical control had already reached a very high standard. It was highly possible that he had reached the Refinement Realm.

Refinement Realm experts were considered apex experts in first-rate Guilds. After all, unless one had the benefit of a simulation training system or some miracle, it was extremely difficult to reach the Refinement Realm. Hence, it was quite impressive if a first-rate Guild had a few such experts. As for experts of higher combat standards, that depended on luck.

It was similar to some unrated Guilds' luck as they saw a Refinement Realm expert arise from among their members. Unfortunately, the probability of such at this stage of the game was extremely small unless the player was also an extremely powerful martial artist in the real world.

As for Gentle Snow, Shi Feng did not notice any sign that she had reached the Refinement Realm. In that case, where was her confidence coming from?

Of course, it was also possible that Gentle Snow intentionally hid the subtle signs. If so, even Shi Feng would not be able to determine her combat standard. He could only confirm his doubts by watching an intense battle.

Once Gentle Snow agreed to the match, they all headed for the Divine Colosseum above White River City.

Chapter 973: Match of the Century

Inside the Divine Colosseum, players came and went. It was even more lively than White River City's Auction House. The Divine Colosseum had become the most populated location in the city.

Sitting along the rest bar, many players chatted as they watched battle videos on the screens hovering in the main hall.

"The drinks here are awesome. It's a pity that they're so expensive. Unlike everywhere else, where we can pay with Copper and Silver Coins, can only buy drinks here with Magic Crystals or the points we accumulated in the Divine Battlefield. Each bottle costs 100 points. I need to win at least three team battles to earn that many. I'll never afford more drinks at this rate."

“That’s nothing. A few days ago, someone spent 3,000 Battle Points to buy one bottle of Icefire Spirit. I heard that not only is it calming, but its effects last for five hours. Its calming effects are far better than the Trial Tower’s. It also tastes magnificent.”

“What?! I could drink for half a month with 3,000 points!”

“The Icefire Spirit isn’t the best alcohol available. I heard that if one reached the Trial Tower’s eighth floor, they can purchase the Witch’s Tear. One costs 5,000 points. Some time ago, I heard that a player from another kingdom bought one. I wonder what it tastes like.”

“Stop dreaming. Only God’s Domain’s apex experts can reach the eighth floor. Getting past the fourth floor is difficult enough for us, much less the eighth floor.”

As the Divine Colosseum became a larger factor in players’ lives, players grew stronger. Players also used the Trial Tower’s results as a way to judge someone’s true abilities. As for tycoons who used their equipment to suppress others, they weren’t experts, just rich. Hence, Guilds and independent teams now recruited members using the Trial Tower’s results as a benchmark.

Players who could reach the fifth floor were considered ordinary experts.

Players who reached the sixth floor, even in a large Guild, were experts of the next level.

Players who could reach the seventh floor were of the more powerful experts, even in first-rate Guilds. As for those who managed to reach the second half of the seventh floor, they were top-ranking experts in a first-rate Guild.

One would be hard-pressed to find players in a first-rate Guild who could reach the eighth floor.

While the players in the main hall chatted amongst themselves, Lethal Gale and the others, who had just arrived, immediately attracted everyone's attention. People in their way moved aside as they felt these players' shocking aura.

Shortly after, however, everyone noticed Gentle Snow. Her saint-like beauty even enthralled a few new players.

"That beauty is hot!"

"Damn, is this your first day playing a virtual reality game? You don't even know about the Snow Goddess? She is the Guild Leader of the first-rate Guild Ouroboros! Be careful with what you say. I heard that many wealthy young masters have tried to harass her in the past. In the end, these people had been killed to Level 0 and forced delete their accounts and start all over."

Hearing the veteran players' story, the players new to White River City shut their mouths immediately.

To them, even joining a third-rate Guild would earn them bragging rights among their friends for days. They looked up to players in first-rate Guilds. They were also aware of the massive differences between third-rate and first-rate Guilds.

In the current God's Domain, unrated Guilds were forced to develop in smaller NPC towns; there was no place for a small Guild in a city. Only those acknowledged as third-rate Guilds barely survived in NPC cities.

Meanwhile, first-rate Guilds ruled over several, or even over a dozen, major cities. With a word from Gentle Snow, other Guild Leaders would make their lives hell in God's Domain without hesitation. With their standards, their only option would be to start a new account.

"What are they trying to do? Why is Ouroboros's Guild Leader in White River City's Divine Colosseum?"

"Huh? That man, Lethal Gale, recently defeated the 354th ranked expert from the God's Domain's Experts List. I heard that he even broke the Trial Tower's record in Hot Sand City and reached the eighth floor. Why is he here?"

"Can this be..."

When everyone saw Lethal Gale and Gentle Snow enter the same combat room, the main hall fell silent. They couldn't help but stare at the combat room's closed door, their skin breaking out in goosebumps.

An eighth-floor expert was going to fight Ouroboros's Guild Leader.

"I need to notify my Team Leader and the others! This is the match of the century!"

"Hopefully, they'll broadcast the fight. I'll even be willing to pay for this show!"

"Look! They didn't turn Private Mode on! We can watch the battle on the main screen! Hurry; select this battle!"

Pandemonium swept through the main hall. Every player quickly called up the Divine Colosseum's system interface and clicked to watch Gentle Snow's battle against Lethal Gale.

In the Divine Colosseum, the videos on the main hall's screens depended on the number of viewers. If enough players wanted to watch the fight, the system would automatically display said fight on the main screen.

Following which, everyone in the main hall stared the main screen in rapture. At the same time, many players fervently contacted their companions and Guilds, telling everyone they knew about this shocking development.

Before the battle between Gentle Snow and Lethal Gale began, news of their fight had spread throughout Star-Moon Kingdom. The Guild Leaders and upper echelons of the kingdom's various Guilds received the news at almost the same time.

"Has Gentle Snow lost her mind? She agreed to such a challenge?" The Star Alliance's Purple Eye was surprised when she heard the news. "Lethal Gale is a Refinement Realm expert. Although Gentle Snow is strong, she had only reached the Half-step Refinement Realm. Doesn't she care about Ouroboros's reputation anymore?"

Purple Eye knew just how powerful Refinement Realm experts were from her experience in the Secret Pavilion's simulation training system. Although there only appeared to be a thin line separating a Half-step Refinement Realm expert from a true Refinement Realm expert, with equal levels and equipment, the disparity between their strengths was like the difference between heaven and earth.

Although Gentle Snow had a slight advantage with her equipment due to her status as the leader of a first-rate Guild, she could never close the gap with such a small lead in Attributes.

“No, she is no fool. I also heard about Blackwater purchasing Ouroboros. From what I learned from the Secret Pavilion, that Lethal Gale fellow is an expert that Blackwater has secretly nurtured,” Galaxy Past said, chuckling.

A realization struck Purple Eye.

This was no longer a simple competition of strength. It was a competition between Ouroboros and the Blackwater Corporation. Both of their reputations were on the line.

“Purple, notify our people in White River City immediately and have them record the battle. We must not miss this opportunity,” Galaxy Past commanded.

Other Guilds also burst into action.

Gentle Snow and Lethal Gale’s battle had attracted the attention of Star-Moon Kingdom’s various large Guilds.

Chapter 974: War Goddess

A bald, robust man suddenly burst into an exquisitely decorated room, tension written all over his face.

“Boss Wave, something has happened with Gale,” the bald man reported hurriedly.

Raising his brows, Abandoned Wave asked, “What happened?”

“I don’t know what Gale was thinking, but he’s about to duel Gentle Snow. News of the fight has already spread throughout the kingdom,” the bald man said.

“Gale is dueling Gentle Snow?” The news surprised Abandoned Wave somewhat. A moment later, however, he started laughing before he said, “Good, very good! Gale’s performance this time is excellent! Who would have imagined that, just as I was struggling to think of a way to take over Ouroboros, Gentle Snow delivered herself to my doorstep? Send someone immediately to livestream Gale’s battle! I want to see the look of despair on Gentle Snow’s face.”

Although he was not certain of Gentle Snow’s true strength, he knew how powerful Lethal Gale was. It was common knowledge that, although Lethal Gale had beaten the 354th ranked expert on the God’s Domain Experts List, it had been a hard-fought battle. Hence, in the public’s opinion, that must have been the limit to Lethal Gale’s strength.

In reality, however, Lethal Gale had held back.

After all, he was a member of the Battle Team that the Blackwater Corporation was nurturing. How could he afford to expose his true strength to the public? He needed to save that trump card to deal other Battle Teams a critical blow.

Although Abandoned Wave had no idea how much strength Gentle Snow had hidden, she was a hundred years too early if she thought she could defeat Lethal Gale.

—

Inside White River City’s Divine Colosseum, every player in the main hall watched the main screen as if hypnotized.

It's finally starting. Sitting at a corner of the rest bar, Shi Feng looked at the timer displayed on the screen, his heart thumping with anticipation.

In the past, the strength Gentle Snow displayed during the early stages of the game had been extremely frightening. Many experts had considered her disappearance from God's Domain a shame as they all believed that she had the potential to become a Tier 6 God-ranked player. Her abilities were clear for all to see just from how she had managed to nurture the Cleric God Violet Cloud.

The main screen currently displayed a dense forest, which was the perfect environment for Assassins and Rangers. However, it was an entirely different story for Berserkers.

Berserkers were the epitome of Strength. The Berserker class was a class that solved all problems with overwhelming Strength.

Unlike a duel between other classes, the one between Gentle Snow and Lethal Gale would undoubtedly be a short battle. Either Gentle Snow would quickly defeat Lethal Gale or the other way around. There was no third possibility. Hence, everyone in the main hall paid close attention to the screen, afraid of missing out on any details of the battle.

"Let me properly experience the strength of Ouroboros's Guild Leader! Hopefully, you won't disappoint me too much!" As soon as Lethal Gale let out a low shout, a bone-chilling glint flashed across his eyes as he unsheathed the gigantic greatsword slung over his back and entered a fighting stance. However, contrary to everyone's expectations, he did not use Charge straightaway and rush at Gentle Snow. Instead, he slowly closed in on the female Berserker step by step.

However, with each step Lethal Gale took, the surrounding air grew heavier.

Even the players watching in the main hall could feel the frightening pressure the male Berserker radiated.

As for Gentle Snow, she unsheathed her silver greatsword and pointed it directly at the approaching Lethal Gale. Her actions were as if victory was already in her grasp. Her calm appearance made her look just like the War Goddess of a battlefield.

When only twelve yards separated the two Berserkers, everyone suddenly saw a shocking scene.

Gentle Snow's entire body started releasing a silver glow. In the next moment, three pairs of silver metallic wings sprouted from her back. The equipment she wore also underwent a transformation.

Her original silver armor turned into a set of pure white robes. In the blink of an eye, Gentle Snow had changed from a plate armor class to a cloth armor class. This sudden development made it seem as if an angel had suddenly descended onto the battlefield. In the next moment, golden divine runes manifested on her robes and even on her unblemished cheeks, adding a few hints of holiness to the War Goddess.

Meanwhile, the silver greatsword in her hands had also transformed into two thin, sharp blades. Golden arcs of electricity were faintly visible, wrapping around the blades of the one-handed swords.

Before anyone even reacted, Gentle Snow dashed straight towards Lethal Gale.

"What?!"

"What just happened?!"

“Is she really a Berserker!?”

Gentle Snow’s sudden transfiguration riveted everyone in the main hall. None of them had expected her to undergo such a change.

She’s so fast ! At this moment, even Shi Feng was surprised. He had never imagined that Gentle Snow had hidden her strength so deeply.

Gentle Snow’s current speed was already above his.

Watching through the large screen, everyone only saw Gentle Snow leaving behind an afterimage in her original position before appearing right before Lethal Gale.

“Hah! Come!”

Lethal Gale laughed as he activated his Berserk Skill, Beastification, his skin suddenly turning a deep red. Both his Strength and speed also soared. Immediately, he sent a Cross Slash at Gentle Snow.

In response, Gentle Snow swung the sword in her right hand, the blade transforming into an arc of light as it struck at Lethal Gale’s greatsword.

...

What a fool. Gale has already activated Beastification. Although the Skill's duration is very short, it increases his Strength Attribute by 120%. In addition, Cross Slash is a Tier 1 Sure-kill Skill. Even Great Lords won't be able to block this attack, yet Gentle Snow actually dares to receive it directly? Could she have abandoned herself to despair because of losing Ouroboros? Abandoned Wave's lips curled into a smile as he watched Gentle Snow's actions. He could already see the scene of Lethal Gale heavily injuring the female Berserker.

...

Has Gentle Snow really lost her mind?! She actually made such a rash counter! Purple Eye looked at Gentle Snow with eyes filled with worry. Gentle Snow was a rival of hers. She did not wish to see her losing to anyone but herself.

At this moment, Purple Eye was wondering whether Gentle Snow truly understood just how powerful a Refinement Realm expert, who had activated a Berserk Skill, was.

...

As for Shi Feng, he simply chuckled at this scene.

Among everyone present in the Divine Colosseum, most likely nobody—aside from himself—knew what kind of state Gentle Snow was in at present.

If one were to say that Lethal Gale was in a Berserk Mode right now, then the current Gentle Snow was in a Twofold Berserk Mode.

The reason for Gentle Snow's transfiguration was her obtaining the Holy Warrior class, one of the Five Great Legacies of Star-Moon Kingdom.

The Five Great Legacies of Star-Moon Kingdom. Not to mention completing them, just being able to accept the quest for these Legacies showed that one was a favored child of the Main God System.

In the past, only Gentle Snow in the entire Star-Moon Kingdom had managed to complete this quest.

Shi Feng had never imagined that she would actually succeed in class-changing into a Holy Warrior ahead of time.

The Five Great Legacies were all Peak Legacies. The Legacy Skills that Gentle Snow learned were naturally extraordinary.

At this moment, the Skill that Gentle Snow had used was one unique to the Holy Warrior class, the Legacy Berserk Skill Starlight Saint. Not only did the Skill increase her Attributes significantly, but it also altered the external appearances of her weapons and equipment at the same time. Currently, although it might seem as though Gentle Snow was equipped in cloth armor, in reality, it was holy armor. The soft, white robes she was wearing were tougher than even adamantite. The defensive capabilities of those robes far surpassed those of plate armor.

Chapter 975: Taboo Skill Life Return

Although Twofold Berserk could give players the strength to combat existences of a higher Tier, it also had a glaring weakness.

Legacy Berserk Skills all shared the same problem.

And that was the side effects!

Unlike ordinary Berserk Skills, all Legacy Berserk Skills would place its user into a Weakened state once their durations ended.

Moreover, the duration of Twofold Berserk was very short. Even Shi Feng, who possessed one of the Ten Great Saint Legacies, could maintain it for only twenty seconds. Once Twofold Berserk ended, he would fall into a Weakened state for several hours.

However, it was also precisely because of such a drawback that the system allowed the use of Twofold Berserk.

Based on Shi Feng's estimates, Gentle Snow's Starlight Saint should have a shorter duration than his Blade Liberation. If she could not finish off Lethal Gale within this period, once her Berserk Skill ended, she would lose without a doubt.

One could say that Gentle Snow was taking a gamble.

Boom!

The collision of the two weapons created a shockwave. The ground under both fighters instantly collapsed as the clear sound of metal clashing against metal echoed throughout the surrounding forest.

Peng!

Half a second later, Lethal Blade's entire person went flying out of the crater, his body breaking several large trees before slamming heavily into the ground. His HP instantly decreased by over -1,800 as well. The difference in strength between both sides was clear for all to see.

"Flew... He flew!"

"How is she so strong!?"

"Is this the Guild Leader of Ouroboros?"

This scene staggered everyone inside the main hall.

The players who had previously entertained unscrupulous thoughts about Gentle Snow now had shivers running down their backs. Lethal Gale, who had defeated the 354th ranker on the God's Domain Experts List, actually got sent flying with a single hit. If it were them in the male Berserker's place, they would've gotten killed instantly by Gentle Snow's lightning-quick attack.

...

"Gentle Snow!" Abandoned Wave's countenance turned grim when he saw Lethal Gale repulsed.

To him, Lethal Gale losing in a contest of Strength even after activating Beastification was simply inconceivable. This was equivalent to Gentle Snow sending a Great Lord of the same level flying.

...

How is her Strength so high?! After standing back up, Lethal Gale looked at the rapidly approaching War Goddess in shock.

After activating Beastification, his Strength Attribute could already rival that of a Great Lord of the same level. Coupling it with his Cross Slash, even a Great Lord would be pushed back, not to mention a player.

Despite that, Gentle Snow had managed to send him flying with a single strike—without using any Skills. His mind just could not figure out how this was possible.

However, Lethal Gale did not have the luxury of pondering this. If he did not cope with Gentle Snow's next attack properly, he might very well lose directly.

In a flash, Gentle Snow appeared before Lethal Gale once again. This time, he no longer dared to clash weapons with the female Berserker. Instead, he chose to take a large step backwards before defending himself with his greatsword.

Peng!

Lethal Gale was forced back once more. This time, however, he only received -400 damage or so. Moreover, the impact of the attack allowed him to pull away from Gentle Snow.

Suddenly, a cat-and-mouse game commenced on the battlefield. Every time the two fighters clashed, Lethal Gale would manage to buy himself some time by sacrificing a small amount of HP.

Lethal Gale was no fool. He knew that Gentle Snow's current equipment was only slightly better than his. The fact that there was still such a huge disparity between them pointed to just one thing: a difference in Skills. God's Domain was fair in all things. Such a powerful Skill definitely could not have a very long duration. Hence, all he needed to do right now was drag out the battle. If he managed to last until Gentle Snow's Skill ended, victory would be his.

He could tell that Gentle Snow had yet to reach the Refinement Realm and was only at the Half-step Refinement Realm; she did not possess perfect control over her own body. Moreover, she was clearly not used to this sudden increase in power since she would expose plenty of weaknesses when she attacked. This was the reason why he could deflect the trajectory of her attacks, dampening the collision of the attacks significantly and taking only a small amount of damage each time.

...

This Lethal Gale fellow really is something. Shi Feng was slightly surprised when he looked at Lethal Gale successfully deflecting Gentle Snow's attacks one after another.

Rather than the Refinement Realm, the combat standard the male Berserker was displaying right now already approached the Flowing Water Realm. One could say that he had reached the Half-step Flowing Water Realm.

Players at the Refinement Realm would have precise control over their own bodies. Even in high-speed combat, they would be capable of impromptu changes.

However, just having such a combat standard would not be enough for one to deflect Gentle Snow's attacks. One also needed to understand the Holy Warrior's every action and predict her attack trajectories in advance. Only with this would one be able to keep up with Gentle Snow's superior Attack Speed and turn aside her attacks.

Although it sounded straightforward, experts at the Refinement Realm would find such a feat extremely difficult to achieve.

Had Gentle Snow not activated Twofold Berserk, she really wouldn't have any chance of victory against Lethal Gale.

...

The seconds ticked by quickly. Ten seconds after the battle began, over half of the terrain of the combat room lay ravaged. At this moment, Lethal Gale was in a very miserable state and only a quarter of his HP remained. Gentle Snow would need just a few more seconds to defeat the male Berserker.

"I have to admit, you are by far the strongest opponent I have faced in battle since I entered God's Domain. However, I believe your Skill's duration should be almost up. Originally, I did not intend to use this move. However, I acknowledge that your strength indeed deserves my going all out!" Lethal Gale said excitedly.

Lethal Gale's HP began recovering rapidly. At the same time, the aura he exuded also strengthened apace.

...

Not good! That's the Tier 1 Taboo Skill Life Return! Shi Feng immediately recognized the Skill Lethal Gale used when he noticed a green mist circling the male Berserker's body along with his growing aura.

As a Tier 1 Taboo Skill, Life Return was very powerful. When activated, the Skill completely recovered its user's HP within a short period. Moreover, the more HP the user lost previously, the more bonus Strength and Agility Attributes the user would gain—up to a maximum of 600 Strength and 600 Agility.

Six hundred Strength was practically equal to the total Strength of a well-equipped Level 40 Berserker.

With such a massive increase in Strength, even if Lethal Gale's Strength Attribute was still not a match for Gentle Snow's, there would no longer be such a great disparity as before. With Lethal Gale's standards, it would be enough for him to defeat Gentle Snow. To make matters worse, Gentle Snow's Twofold Berserk was already nearing its end.

...

"Hahaha! Gentle Snow, I admit that you are amazing. Unfortunately, you chose the wrong opponent to go up against!" Abandoned Wave could not help but guffaw when he saw the gloomy expression on Gentle Snow's face.

Although Lethal Blade had used his final trump card, which would probably impact his future performance in the Dark Arena, being able to thoroughly defeat Gentle Snow now was also a good thing.

...

Immediately, Lethal Gale used Charge and took the initiative to dash towards Gentle Snow.

Chapter 976: Sudden Kill

After using the Taboo Skill, Lethal Gale's Attributes and speed both increased by a large margin.

With the inclusion of the speed boost from Charge, everyone only saw the male Berserker leaving behind an afterimage as he crossed over a dozen yards and arrived before Gentle Snow instantly.

"Die!"

Lethal Gale shouted, a bloodthirsty glint flashing across his eyes. Without even waiting for the Fainted effect of his Charge to settle in, he raised his greatsword and used Beheaded.

Although he took less than a breath's time to complete this entire process, Gentle Snow still managed to activate a Control Removal Skill and counter the male Berserker's attack with Chop.

Boom!

Dazzling sparks flew as the clangor of metal resounded throughout the entire forest.

Unlike before, however, Lethal Gale was not sent airborne this time. Instead, he had to retreat just a single step. The impact of the collision also cost him only around 100 HP. To Lethal Gale, who had recovered back to full HP, this loss was barely a scratch.

Although his attack had failed to finish off Gentle Snow, Lethal Gale did not mind one little bit. He had long since figured out how powerful Gentle Snow's current Attributes were. This first attack of his was merely to gauge how much of a difference there remained between their Strength Attributes.

In a quick follow-up to his attack, Lethal Gale's body flashed; then he appeared beside Gentle Snow and abruptly swung his greatsword upwards, the massive weapon slashing straight at her blindspot. U.p. dated by . com

As Gentle Snow was still unaccustomed to her greater Strength, the clash with Lethal Gale had thrown her stance off. Hence, her defense was full of holes right now.

Had Gentle Snow reached the Refinement Realm, even with the suddenness of the increase in Strength, she would have been able to control it skillfully. Unfortunately, that was not the case.

Lethal Gale's greatsword suddenly split into four afterimages, each one striking at one of Gentle Snow's weak points.

Caught off guard, Gentle Snow no longer had the time to adjust her stance to defend against Lethal Gale's attacks. In the end, she forcefully used Whirlwind Slash. In the next moment, a silver whirlwind suddenly formed around her. When the four afterimages of Lethal Gale's greatsword collided against the silver whirlwind, they immediately got dispelled into nothingness. Meanwhile, Lethal Gale himself had to take a step back, giving Gentle Snow a chance to catch a breather.

What a terrifying expert. After Gentle Snow retreated to a safe distance, she could not help breaking out in a cold sweat when she thought back to Lethal Gale's previous attack.

The difference between their combat standards was clear for all to see.

Despite her advantage in Strength, Lethal Gale always managed to maintain his stance after receiving her attacks. Moreover, even after his Attributes had increased significantly, he was still able to receive all her attacks without fail, as well as launch attacks from various positions. On the other hand, it was taking her all just to handle her sudden increase in Strength, which made it very difficult to maintain her stance after a direct clash.

Unlike ordinary computer games, fights in virtual reality games were no different from fights in the real world.

In many cases, an attack that one could easily block while in a proper stance would become very difficult to handle if one lost their stance. This was true even with a very normal attack.

Fights between experts were all high-speed battles. Deciding the outcome took only an instant. Losing one's stance in battle was a fatal matter.

Although Gentle Snow had repelled Lethal Gale, the latter had no intention of letting up on his attacks. He immediately charged at her once more and let loose a barrage of violent strikes.

...

In the main hall, all anyone could see between the clashes of Gentle Snow's one-handed swords and Lethal Gale's greatsword were afterimages.

“Is this a battle between true experts?”

For a time, the players in the main hall even stopped blinking, afraid that they would miss out on the moment where victory and defeat were decided.

If it were any other player going up against either of the two fighters right now, most likely, they would've already fallen numerous times to either Gentle Snow's or Lethal Gale's attacks before they could even react.

...

Inside the combat room, although Gentle Snow seemed to hold the advantage in both speed and Strength, in reality, she was actually at a disadvantage. In order to maintain her combat stance, Gentle Snow kept having to retreat. Otherwise, she would create an opening that Lethal Gale could exploit.

The seconds ticked by slowly.

When Lethal Gale noticed the three pairs of silver metallic wings behind Gentle Snow starting to fade away, one after another, a triumphant smile appeared on his face. At this moment, he could sense that her Strength and speed were both starting to wane.

Will I be able to make it?

Gentle Snow looked at the last remaining pair of wings on her back.

The outcome of this battle was already plenty obvious. With Lethal Gale's combat techniques, even if she did not enter a Weakened state after Starlight Saint ended, she would still end up losing the battle.

However, she was not willing to simply give up.

From the moment Lethal Gale activated the Tier 1 Taboo Skill Life Return, she already knew just how powerful the Berserker was.

The only reason she had fought desperately up until this point was for this final strike!

When the three pairs of metallic wings generated by Starlight Saint started disappearing, it was not a warning to the user that their bonus Attributes were about to expire. Instead, the moment all three pairs of wings disappeared, the Skill would at last display its true power, releasing its final brilliance.

However, this final power only lasted for one attack.

If Lethal Gale managed to deflect or dodge her attack, her fate would be sealed.

Hence, if Gentle Snow wanted to win, she needed to stay calm like never before. She needed far more precise control over her own body. She also had to push her mental concentration to its very limits. Thus, when her wings began fading, Gentle Snow had deliberately repressed her own Strength to the point where she could control it perfectly. Meanwhile, from Lethal Gale's perspective, it seemed as if Gentle Snow's Strength was continuously deteriorating.

Upon seeing the final pair of metallic wings disappear, Lethal Gale immediately used the Tier 1 Skill Energy Slash.

Energy Slash not only increased the power of an attack but also extended the attack range by five yards.

“Six Ultimate Flashes!”

Gentle Snow, on the other hand, had forsaken all her excess power and concentrated the remainder into one final attack.

The collision of swords and greatsword generated a blinding glare, followed by a thundering boom.

Peng... Peng... Peng...

As the glare dissipated, the shrill of metallic armor being pierced echoed throughout the entire forest—as well as the entire main hall of the Divine Colosseum.

Five penetrating cuts appeared on Lethal Gale’s armor. His HP had also instantly fallen to zero.

As for the victor of this battle, Gentle Snow, her complexion looked somewhat pale right now.

The extraordinary concentration she displayed at the final moment depleted her mental strength, so much so that she was on the brink of collapse. With the side effects of the Starlight Saint kicking in, she appeared extremely frail.

The players in the main hall of the Divine Colosseum, however, clamored at this scene.

“It’s over?”

“What happened in that instant!? I didn’t even manage to see anything!”

“Gentle Snow won, just like that?”

“This is a lie, right...?”

“All hail the Goddess!”

Everyone simply could not figure out what had happened in that final moment. Lethal Gale clearly had the upper hand just then and was about to finish her off, yet such a shocking reversal had actually taken place. The tables had turned so suddenly that even Lethal Gale himself did not know how she had defeated him...

With the end of the duel, Gentle Snow and Lethal Gale both walked out of the combat room. Due to their previous agreement, even if Lethal Gale was reluctant, he no longer had the face to look for trouble with Shi Feng at the moment. He could only watch as Gentle Snow slowly walked over to Shi Feng.

...

“Defeated?! Gale was actually defeated?! He even lost while every Guild in Star-Moon Kingdom was watching?!” When Abandoned Wave saw the outcome of the match, he threw the bottle of Witch’s Tear, which was worth 5,000 Battle Points, to the floor. “Immediately notify Gale and the others! Since they’ve embarrassed the Blackwater Corporation, they need to make up for their actions! Have them think of a way to get rid of Gentle Snow within White River City!”

Currently, Gentle Snow’s complexion was pale, and she looked extremely weak. She was clearly suffering the backlash of using that powerful Skill from before. With her in such a weak state, even with the deterrence of the city guards, killing her would be child’s play for Lethal Gale’s party of six.

As long as the Blackwater Corporation killed Gentle Snow inside White River City, they would be able to regain the reputation they lost before in one fell swoop. As for Lethal Gale’s party members getting jailed by the NPC guards, that was irrelevant to Abandoned Wave.

...

“Understood!”

Lethal Gale accepted to the instructions he received without hesitation. A cold glint flashed across his eyes as he shifted his gaze towards Shi Feng and Gentle Snow, who were chatting with each other.

Chapter 977: Shi Feng Takes Action

Following the Gentle Snow’s battle, the players throughout Star-Moon Kingdom were in an uproar.

Gentle Snow's valiant and heroic bearing captivated many male players, all of which considered applying for Ouroboros to get closer to the Snow Goddess.

"She won, just like that?" Purple Eye was stunned as she watched Gentle Snow's victory on the screen.

With only a small difference in Attributes, Gentle Snow had actually defeated a Refinement Realm expert.

"It seems the Blackwater Corporation has greatly embarrassed itself this time. If the news of Blackwater chasing Gentle Snow away in order to annex Ouroboros spreads, it will be very hard for Blackwater to mingle in Star-Moon Kingdom. Although Gentle Snow is an enemy, I have to thank her." The strength Gentle Snow had displayed had also surprised Galaxy Past. "Things will be more interesting in the kingdom for a time."

Ouroboros and the Star Alliance were old rivals. Galaxy Past had initially thought that Cao Chenghua's mutiny would have been the straw that broke the camel's back, allowing the Star Alliance to surpass Ouroboros once and for all. Yet, due to Ouroboros's alliance with Zero Wing, not only did the Star Alliance fail to surpass Ouroboros, but it had also been left in the dust.

With the Blackwater Corporation purchasing Ouroboros, he had not expected Gentle Snow to make such a daring play. It might be possible that they would see a new Ouroboros emerge sometime soon.

Star-Moon Kingdom was more lively than ever. Aside from the Blackwater Corporation, the recently-flourishing Heaven's Burial showed faint signs of stealing the position of Star-Moon City's number one Guild. If not for the Star Alliance having agreed to the Secret Pavilion's investment, surviving in Star-Moon City would have been impossible.

...

“Boss Gale, are we going to attack here?” a Level 39 Ranger beside Lethal Gale asked worriedly as he surveyed their surroundings.

Even the weakest NPC guards in the Divine Colosseum were Level 200, Tier 2 classes, not to mention the roaming Tier 3 NPCs.

If they made a move among so many NPC guards, these NPCs would kill them instantly.

Although someone had successfully killed one of King’s Return’s upper echelons in the Divine Colosseum, not just anyone could replicate that. Even now, that person was a legend among players and had the nickname Frost Eye.

Quite a few Super Guilds had attempted to contact this Frost Eye to hire him to assassinate other major powers’ upper echelons.

God’s Domain’s Super Guilds had no lack of experts. Theoretically, they should be capable of dispatching their own men for such assassinations, yet in the end, they wanted to hire Frost Eye.

Why?

It was precisely because these Super Guilds weren’t capable of doing so, which was why they were willing to pay such a high price.

Although they, Blackwater's people, were experts, they could not contend with God's Domain's apex experts. If they attempted to kill another player in the Divine Colosseum, there was over an 80% chance that the guards would kill them before they could finish off Gentle Snow.

"We can't make a move here. Fortunately, it won't be too late for us to take care of her after they leave the Divine Colosseum." Lethal Gale immediately dismissed the notion of attacking now after noticing the party of guards stationed a short distance away from Gentle Snow. "When we strike later, Stone and Tooth, you two coordinate with me to take Gentle Snow down. The rest will hold the NPCs off as long as possible. With Gentle Snow's current state, the three of us should be able to finish her off in one or two moves."

Lethal Gale's party members nodded. They then began to simulate the assassination in their minds.

Stone and Shattered Tooth were both Level 39 Assassins. The Assassin class specialized in ambush. If an Assassin successfully ambushed a Berserker, there was over a 60% chance that said Berserker would lose over half of their HP instantly. If two Assassins worked together, a Berserker of the same level would die instantly.

With this lineup and a Berserker like Lethal Gale acting as a distraction, Gentle Snow's fate was sealed.

Furthermore, both Stone and Shattered Tooth were relatively powerful Assassins, even in the Blackwater Corporation. Both had already reached the Refinement Realm. Only, they had slightly fewer achievements than Lethal Gale. They could even defeat Gentle Snow in a one-on-one fight if they had the same weakened Attributes that she did right now. Killing Gentle Snow would be child's play if these three worked together.

...

“Guild Leader Snow is as amazing as expected. I had not expected you to reveal such a trump card in the end. Lethal Gale has defeated the 354th ranking expert on God’s Domain’s Experts List. With this, your rank will rise significantly,” Shi Feng praised the woman as he watched the Snow Goddess approach. Now, he more or less understood why so many experts had suffered defeat against Gentle Snow in the past.

Others might not have seen what had happened in that last moment, but he had.

In the final moment, Gentle Snow displayed the physical control of a Refinement Realm expert. Hence, she had managed to control the six vicious sword strikes perfectly, finishing Lethal Gale off. Otherwise, with Lethal Gale’s skills, he would’ve been dodged at least half of the strikes. Had that happened, the battle’s victor would have been rewritten.

Gentle Snow had only joined God’s Domain a short time ago. Moreover, she even had to manage the massive Guild that was Ouroboros. Yet, without any guidance, Gentle Snow had reached the Refinement Realm. She was devilishly talented.

Shi Feng had only reached his current realm after experiencing ten years of fights in God’s Domain and the many miraculous encounters he had chanced upon...

Even Violet Cloud, whom he had taught carefully, had only recently reached the Refinement Realm. Meanwhile, Aqua Rose still had not done so.

“I was just lucky.” Gentle Snow shook her head. There was not a hint of joy on her face. Rather, more worry than before gripped her heart. The Blackwater Corporation had yet to join God’s Domain officially, yet it had already dispatched an expert like Lethal Gale to take her out. Now that she had confirmed that the corporation would start its conquest in Star-Moon Kingdom, it would not be as easy for her and her companions to start a new Guild as she had expected.

“I assume that Guild Leader Snow hasn’t sought me out just to trade the small stock of herbs and ores, right?” Shi Feng asked, chuckling.

“Indeed, as you say, I would like to discuss some other with you. However, this is not a place for such a conversation. Why don’t we continue our chat in the high-class restaurant below?” Gentle Snow nodded. She did not try to hide the reason for her visit. She had many more resources on hand that she could sell. Unfortunately, it was impossible to find someone who could afford so many resources in a short time. In her opinion, if Shi Feng could afford her stock of herbs and ores, he should be able to purchase her other resources as well.

“Let’s go, then.” Shi Feng agreed with Gentle Snow’s sentiment. With so many eyes on them right now, this was an inappropriate place for their chat.

Following which, as Shi Feng and Gentle Snow left the Divine Colosseum, Lethal Gale’s party followed closely behind.

Although guards patrolled White River City’s streets, the patrols were sparse. Moreover, the city guards were much lower-leveled than the Divine Colosseum’s guards. Once they found an opportune moment, Lethal Gale’s party approached Gentle Snow silently. As for Stone and Shattered Tooth, they had long since gone into Stealth.

When there were only 30 yards separating Lethal Gale and Gentle Snow, the former used Charge.

“Guild Leader Snow, I am sorry for this, but you must die today!” Lethal Gale sneered. He then executed Cross Slash against the weakened female Berserker.

Simultaneously, two black figures appeared on either side of Gentle Snow, four snow-white daggers thrusting towards the female Berserker’s blind spots.

Gentle Snow's expression darkened. She had not imagined that Lethal Gale would go to such insane lengths. The punishment for attacking another player in the city was no laughing matter.

Unfortunately, even though Gentle Snow could see Lethal Gale rapidly approach, she could do nothing about it. In her Weakened state, all her Attributes had dropped by 80%. Moreover, the debuff lasted five hours. With only 20% of her Attributes, she could not survive against Lethal Gale. Not to mention, she had just sensed two Assassin experts.

As the greatsword and the four daggers were about to plunge into Gentle Snow's body, a low voice suddenly entered everyone's ears.

"The almighty Blackwater Corporation is really a sore loser. Are you in such a hurry to restore your wounded reputation?"

As his voice faded, five streaks of blue light surrounded Gentle Snow.

Peng... Peng... Peng...

The clang of metal colliding echoed down the street five times. Lethal Gale and the two Assassins were then thrown over five yards back.

"Who are you?! You dare to stick your nose in Blackwater's business?!" Lethal Gale glared at the cloaked Swordsman. However, his eyes contained a hint of fear.

When experts fought, one clash was enough to gauge the opponent's strength.

Lethal Gale could tell that the Swordsman was stronger than him.

The fact that the Swordsman had repelled all three of their attacks told him that this man was more than an ordinary expert.

“Who am I? This is White River City. You dare to make a move in my territory and still ask who I am?” Shi Feng sneered as he glanced at Lethal Gale and the two Assassins. Chuckling, he took off his Black Cloak.

“Ye Feng!”

Gentle Snow was shocked when she saw who had hidden beneath the Black Cloak.

Although the man had felt familiar, that did not help her to identify him. After all, he could be any random person she had met before

Now that she knew her mysterious buyer’s identity, her previous questions had been answered.

Who could possibly be richer than Zero Wing in Star-Moon Kingdom?

“So you’re Zero Wing’s Ye Feng. This is between the Blackwater Corporation and Ouroboros. I advise you to stay out of it! If you don’t, you will regret it!” Lethal Gale’s face twisted into an ugly expression when he heard this man’s name.

To the Dark Arena's participants, Ye Feng was a familiar name.

Even with Stone and Shattered Tooth's help, beating Ye Feng was impossible. He had no choice but to use the Blackwater Corporation as a threat. With this, he might still have a chance to finish off Gentle Snow.

Chapter 978: Great Trees are Good for Shade

After Lethal Gale's group launched their attack, a commotion erupted among the players on the street.

"Have they lost their minds? They are attacking someone in White River City. Are they not aware of the severe punishments for assaulting people inside a city?"

"Amazing! Who are they? How long has it been since someone tried to kill another player in a Star-Moon Kingdom city?"

The players stopped to watch the show.

NPC cities were different from NPC towns. In cities, even if one only attacked another player, not killing them, the NPC guards would attack. Afterward, they would be imprisoned in the city's jail for one or two days. For successful murders, however, that punishment was more severe.

Every second in God's Domain counted for expert players and the various large Guilds. If an expert player were imprisoned for several days, they would fall behind. Because of that, very few player attacks, beyond newbies to NPC cities, occurred.

...

After issuing his threat, the Berserker's three other party members joined the ambush on Gentle Snow.

Their task was one of no return.

Moreover, the nearby NPC guards had discovered their transgress and were heading their way.

If they could not kill Gentle Snow before these NPC guards arrived, it would be much harder to kill her later.

"I've already stated that this is Zero Wing's territory. Guild Leader Snow is an ally. Do you really believe that I'll just sit by why you kill my ally?" Shi Feng rolled his eyes at Lethal Gale. "Or do you think you can use the Blackwater Corporation's name to frighten Zero Wing?"

"Do you really intend to make Blackwater an enemy?" Shi Feng's response caught Lethal Gale off guard. Shi Feng acted as if he had never heard of the Blackwater Corporation. However, time waited for no one. With no other choice, Lethal Gale ground his teeth as he growled in the party chat, "I'll deal with Ye Feng. Stone and Tooth, assist me! Everyone else, kill Gentle Snow as quickly as possible!"

"Leave it to us, Boss! We had just been a little careless," Stone and Shattered Tooth promptly used their Vanish Skills and circled to Shi Feng's sides.

The most powerful aspect about Assassins was their ability to appear and disappear like ghosts to deal lethal blows to their enemy.

Previously, they had focused on attacking Gentle Snow. Even after they had exposed themselves, they paid no attention to Shi Feng, and this, in turn, gave the Swordsman an opportunity to exploit. If they were in Stealth, however, they were confident that even apex experts wouldn't detect their presence.

"I'll create an opening for you. Don't worry about hitting me in the process." After Lethal Gale calmed himself, he lifted his greatsword and charged towards Shi Feng.

He was very familiar with Stone and Shattered Tooth's strengths. He had also watched Shi Feng's fight in the Dark Arena.

In terms of combat techniques, he was weaker than Shi Feng.

However, live combat was different from a competition. Many factors could affect a battle's outcome. The cooperation of several experts, in particular, would raise their combat power exponentially

Even he would find himself in trouble when Stone and Shattered Tooth worked together. Their psychedelic footwork allowed them to move silent, only revealing themselves, barely, as they struck.

Although Shi Feng was strong, if two Assassins that he could not perceive attacked him, his mental state would suffer an immense pressure. Even if he tried to ignore it, his subconscious would constantly search for the sudden appearance of enemies, and this would affect his focus.

He could use this opportunity to kill Shi Feng.

If he killed both Ouroboros's Guild Leader and Zero Wing's Ye Feng, even if the NPC guards imprisoned him, the fight would be worth the loss.

"Ye Feng, you need to be careful! Those two Assassins are strong!" Gentle Snow warned the Swordsman as Stone and Shattered Tooth disappeared.

Although she was in a Weakened state, her perception had not dulled. On the contrary, her duel with Lethal Gale had heightened her senses.

Even so, she had only detected the two Assassins after they had exposed themselves.

As Gentle Snow finished speaking, Lethal Gale's three other party members moved into range and began to launch their ranged attacks

Over a dozen arrows and Fireballs rushed at Gentle Snow, sealing her paths of retreat. If the Snow Goddess were at her peak, dodging and blocking these attacks wouldn't be difficult. She could even afford to be hit. However, with her Attributes reduced by 80%, one of these players' normal attacks was unbearable.

At the same time, Lethal Gale slashed at Shi Feng with precise timing.

"You dare to look down on the Blackwater Corporation?! Do you really believe that you can protect Gentle Snow?!"

If Shi Feng blocked his attack, the Swordsman would not be able to protect Gentle Snow. On the other hand, if Shi Feng defended Gentle Snow, the Swordsman would receive his merciless blow. Moreover,

he still had Stone and Shattered Tooth's assistance. If Shi Feng slipped up, they could very well take his life in one fell swoop.

Once the hindrance was gone, it would be much easier to kill Gentle Snow.

Suddenly, Shi Feng madly brandished his sword, tracing one trajectory after another in the air.

This move was none other than the combat technique he had inadvertently learned in the Titan Library—Sword's Orbit.

By tracing the thirty-two sword trajectories with his blades, Shi Feng formed an impenetrable defense around him.

Although a Swordsman did not have a long attack range, his attacks could cover a five-yard stretch in front of him, which just so happen to envelop Gentle Snow, who stood roughly three yards from him.

While Shi Feng had yet to master the sophisticated Sword's Orbit, his combat techniques were more than enough to block Lethal Gale and his people's attacks.

As the incoming arrows, Fireballs, and Lethal Gale's Beheaded Skill came within five yards of Shi Feng, he blocked them. None of the attacks struck Gentle Snow or Shi Feng.

A Skill? Lethal Gale's heart pounded as he watched Shi Feng block all of the attacks.

From his prior attack, he knew when his greatsword was within five yards of Shi Feng, and it felt as if he had struck a protective barrier. He hadn't been able to push his greatsword an inch further. On the contrary, a powerful force had repelled his blade, preventing him from launching further attacks.

As for Gentle Snow, who had stood, frozen, this entire time, she stared at Shi Feng with an odd gaze. Unlike Lethal Gale, however, she did not think Shi Feng had used a Skill. When she stood within Sword's Orbit's protective field, she could feel that Shi Feng's every swing was a normal attack.

Yet, this combination of strikes looked like an in-game Skill. The technique was divine.

How did he do it? Gentle Snow was baffled.

Despite only executing normal sword attacks, as if following some sort of rule, he managed to block the attacks that came at him from all directions.

As Shi Feng fended off a wave of attacks, Stone and Shattered Tooth took the opportunity when he withdrew his swords to use Shadow Steps. After appearing behind Shi Feng, both Assassins stabbed their daggers towards the back of the Swordsman's neck viciously.

The process was complete within an instant.

However, when the daggers were an inch away from Shi Feng's neck, all four weapons stopped abruptly. No matter how much strength the two Assassins employed, they were unable to push their daggers any further.

"Your footwork is impressive." Shi Feng glanced at the two Assassins in admiration. "Unfortunately, you tried to take me on."

Due to their footwork technique, even Shi Feng found it hard to notice them. If not for Omniscient Eyes, he might've fallen prey to their sneak attack. He would not have had the time to activate Defensive Blade to defend himself.

Knowing that Shi Feng had activated a Lifesaving Skill, Stone and Shattered Tooth began to launch rapid attacks in hopes of depleting his Defensive Blade's block counts quickly.

However, Shi Feng did not give them the chance as he used Sword's Orbit once more.

Suddenly, with Shi Feng as the center, a storm raged. Due to Defensive Blade increasing his attack range, not only did his attacks envelop both Stone and Shattered Tooth, but also Lethal Gale.

After learning Sword's Orbit, Shi Feng discovered that this combat technique was both an effective defense as well as a powerful offense.

By the time he finished the thirty-two sword trajectories, Stone and Shattered Tooth's bodies fell to the ground lifelessly. Meanwhile, Lethal Gale, who stood some distance away from Shi Feng, had less than 10% of his HP remaining. His body was marred with cuts, fresh blood flowing from his wounds freely. The gruesome scene caused many of the surrounding spectators to shudder involuntarily.

Chapter 979: Strength Gap

"What happened?"

“How did those Assassins die?”

“That Skill is so powerful!”

The spectating players on the street were dumbfounded by what had just happened.

Shi Feng’s sword drawing speed was incredibly fast. They hadn’t even seen an afterimage of Shi Feng’s swords. They had barely seen Shi Feng’s arms move, and in the blink of an eye, not only had the Assassins died, but even the distant Berserker was left in a critical condition...

“Is this the strength of Zero Wing’s Ye Feng?”

“So awesome!”

“He’s too strong!”

Experts from other Guilds, who had come to White River City to grind for Reputation, stood among the spectators. Ordinary players might not realize what Shi Feng had done and would assume that he had simply used a system-learned Skill, but as experts, they knew that Shi Feng’s attack was no such thing.

When Shi Feng first used this “Skill,” they had been uncertain. This time, however, they had watched its execution carefully.

No matter what stance a player used to execute a learned Skill, they all had the same starting motions. Moreover, the closer a player's movements were to the required actions the system had determined, the higher their Skill Completion Rate would be.

However, Shi Feng's initial motions the second time he executed the "Skill" were different from the first.

Furthermore, how could such a powerful "Skill" be used twice within one second? The skill had also been more powerful during its second use. No matter how they thought about it, this was out of line with God's Domain's rules.

The only explanation was that...

This was a combat technique!

The various Guild experts couldn't help but shudder.

Unlike system Skills, combat techniques were not limited by Cooldowns or other restrictions. Even while Silenced, they could use their combat techniques with normal attacks. The only downside was the burden on a player's Stamina and Concentration.

Those who attacked using special combat techniques knew that the more powerful a technique was, the more of a burden it had on Stamina and Concentration.

Meanwhile, of the two Assassin experts Shi Feng had defeated, both were Level 39. Both could easily rank among the top of any kingdom's Ranking List. As for the Berserker Lethal Gale, they were even

more familiar with him. After all, he was the Berserker who had dueled Gentle Snow just some moments ago. With Lethal Gale's combat standards, he could rank highly even among Super Guilds' experts.

Yet, even when all three players had worked together, they had been beaten so badly...

However, among the watching players, no one was more shocked than Gentle Snow.

Is this really the Ye Feng I know?

She had personally experienced Lethal Gale's power. If not for her Peak Legacy, there was no way in hell she would have defeated the male Berserker.

In spite of that, Shi Feng had ended the battle in three moves.

Gentle Snow was even under the false impression that Lethal Gale and his Assassins were, in fact, quite weak. She knew that wasn't true. Shi Feng was just that strong.

Despite such fierce attacks, not only had Shi Feng nullified the attacks, but he had also dealt Lethal Gale and his companions such a devastating blow.

Before this, Gentle Snow had never seen Shi Feng's true strength. Now, she finally understood that they were no longer on the same level...

“Focus your attacks on Gentle Snow!” Lethal Gale, who looked pitiful, hurriedly commanded as he retreated from Shi Feng. He then took an ancient, black Magic Scroll from his bag. “To think I would be forced to waste this...”

Although it seemed as though both sides had been fighting for a long time, their exchange had only lasted a moment. The NPC guards were still quite a distance away from them. He still had time to use his precious Tier 3 Magic Scroll, Life Seizure.

Life Seizure was a single-target attack Spell that could even severely wound a Tier 3 class. It would be a small matter to instant-kill a Tier 1 player.

As Lethal Gale unfurled the Magic Scroll and began to activate it, a violent vortex of Mana appeared above them. Even a fool could tell that this Magic Scroll was extraordinary.

Lethal Gale’s three remaining companions launched their attacks once more.

“Die!”

This time, their attacks were more vicious. All three hurled over twenty attacks at Gentle Snow.

However, their attacks focused on quantity over quality. After all, even a low damage Skill like Ice Spear could deal frightening amounts of damage to Gentle Snow. In addition, the increased number of attacks would also make it more difficult for Shi Feng to guard Gentle Snow.

“Despicable!” the bystanders cursed at Lethal Gale’s group as they watched.

If this were a fair and proper battle, Lethal Gale's group would be no match for Shi Feng. However, if Shi Feng were forced to remain by Gentle Snow's side, the incoming Tier 3 spell would no doubt kill him.

Suddenly, however, Shi Feng appeared beside Lethal Gale, arcs of blue electricity circling his body faintly. Shi Feng then sent a slash at the Berserker, who was invoking the Magic Scroll.

What's going on?! Lethal Gale had not predicted that Shi Feng would leave Gentle Snow to the wolves to come for him. However, as he glanced at Gentle Snow, he discovered Shi Feng standing beside the female Berserker...

Lethal Gale wasn't the only one seeing this. Every other player on the street stared in wonder as well.

"There are two of him?"

"How can there be two of him?!"

"Is it a Doppelganger Skill?"

As everyone tried to figure out what was going on, Lethal Gale's vision started to fade to gray. Before the shocked Berserker realized it, his HP had fallen to zero.

Such a fast attack!

When Shi Feng had appeared beside him, Lethal Gale saw a blue flash leave the Swordsman's hand just before he activated Whirlwind Slash to fend off the attack. In the next moment, his body stopped responding to his commands.

As his vision dimmed into darkness, he noticed the Shi Feng before him dissipate into nothing. It was as if the attack hadn't happened, as if this had all been a bad dream.

Meanwhile, before anyone realized it, another Shi Feng had appeared behind Gentle Snow.

Even more surprisingly, this new version of Shi Feng blocked all twenty-plus attacks aimed at the Snow Goddess. Moreover, when he executed Sword's Orbit again, it was even more powerful than before. He struck down every Spell and arrow before they had come within ten yards of Gentle Snow...

"How did he do that?!"

Everyone was shocked. Even the Guild experts from other kingdoms and empires were speechless.

Shi Feng was like a ghost, appearing wherever he wanted.

In reality, however, Shi Feng had pushed himself to his very limits to execute this phantasmal attack.

First, he had used Instant Strike to finish off Lethal Gale. He then activated Silent Steps to appear behind Gentle Snow. He had completed these two moves almost at the same time. Later, he executed Sword's Orbit.

Although Shi Feng appeared calm, he had exhausted most of his Concentration. His head was starting to ache.

“You guys have had your fun. It’s my turn now.” Looking at the three ranged members of Lethal Gale’s party, Shi Feng raised Killing Ray high before swinging it forward violently.

Lightning Edge!

Suddenly, streaks of blue lightning arced across the 50 yards ahead of him. Not only did the arcs of lightning devour the players’ attacks, but the lightning also devoured the players. All three players transformed into particles of light, leaving behind only three items. Not even their corpses remained...

Chapter 980: Ye Feng’s Deterrent Force

Every spectator was shocked as they watched Shi Feng instantly kill three Level 39 expert players.

“What a powerful AOE Attack Skill!”

“Is this Zero Wing’s strength?”

After seeing this, the Guild experts from other kingdoms and empires began to fear Zero Wing.

If Shi Feng decided to ambush their Guilds’ elite teams in the field with such a powerful Skill, the consequences would be unimaginable. He was practically a human cannon. Although he didn’t wield as many AOE Skills as Elementarists, his versatility and mobility surpassed the latter by leaps and bounds.

Currently, due to the emergence of the new class, many Guilds had dispatched their top teams to grind for Merits.

As the top combatants of large Guilds, they had their own pride. Due to that, they didn't pay any attention to White River City's ruler, Zero Wing. After all, they were not grinding around White River City. They were simply using the teleportation array within the city.

Once they reached the Twin Towers Kingdom, Zero Wing would lose its the home-ground advantage. If Zero Wing wanted any level of authority in the Twin Towers Kingdom, it would have to rely on its teams' strength.

However, the strength Shi Feng displayed a moment ago was beyond terrifying. He was fully capable of threatening their progress in the Twin Towers Kingdom. From now on, if they accidentally provoked Zero Wing, they would have to take into account the possibility of Zero Wing's teams annihilating them.

Immediately, the various large Guilds' top teams reined in their arrogance and reevaluated their opinion of Zero Wing. They had notified their teams in the Twin Towers Kingdom, warning them to avoid conflict with Zero Wing's teams as much as possible. Although they had their own experts, fighting Zero Wing would gain them nothing.

Moreover, Zero Wing had another major advantage over the other large Guilds; the teleportation house was located in White River City. Their foreign Guilds did not have a Residence here. They had to foot the additional fee of teleporting from their respective cities to White River City.

Of course, it was a different story for wealthy tyrants like Super Guilds and super-first-rate Guilds.

Super Guilds and super-first-rate Guilds had far more powerful backgrounds than first-rate Guilds. It was especially true for their connections. These Guilds could set up a Residence in any city in God's Domain. After which, they could dispatch their Guild members en masse. Unlike first-rate Guilds, these super powers didn't need to struggle to obtain Land

This was why the various large Guilds feared Super Guilds and super-first-rate Guilds.

Not only could these major powers dispatch apex experts to assassinate their Guilds' upper echelons, but they could also send swarms of elite players to obliterate the Guild members.

...

After Lethal Gale's party had been annihilated, the NPC guards, who had been rushing to the scene, stopped and resumed their patrols. It was as if the surprise attack had never happened.

As for Lethal Gale's party, who had initiated an attack within the city limits, they would not escape the system's punishment just because Shi Feng had killed them. Once they revived in half an hour, the NPCs would arrest them in the Resurrection Temple.

After taking care of Lethal Gale's party, Shi Feng collected his spoils of war.

Although the weapons and equipment Lethal Gale's party had dropped were useless to him, they could still enrich Zero Wing's Guild Warehouse.

After Shi Feng finished with the loot, he caught an advanced horse carriage with Gentle Snow and proceeded towards a high-class restaurant in the Noble's District. From beginning to end, not a single

player had dared to step forward to snatch Shi Feng's loot. Only after Shi Feng was truly out of sight did these players launch into heated discussions.

...

"What?! Zero Wing's Ye Feng wiped out Gale's party?! How is that possible!" Abandoned Wave was dumbfounded as he listened to his subordinate's report. He could not believe his ears. He then asked, "What about Gentle Snow? Did she die?"

Lethal Gale's people were one of the top ranking parties among those under his control. Usually, he tasked the party with assassinations and dealing with experts that made themselves a hindrance. Until now, they had never failed a job. They had always triumphed, even against a Void Realm expert.

Field battles were different from PvP competitions. There were many factors that could affect a player's combat power, not to mention the combat power of a group. Thus, it had been easier to send Lethal Gale to warn away Gentle Snow's mysterious buyer. If words could not sway the buyer, Lethal Gale's party would convince the buyer to submit by force.

However, after giving it some thought, this task had been quite dangerous. If he had help from the NPC guards, it wouldn't be impossible for Ye Feng to annihilate Lethal Gale and his companions.

"Gentle Snow did not die. Gale's party couldn't even lay a finger on her before Ye Feng slaughtered them..." the bald, middle-aged man said as he nervously played a recording for Abandoned Wave.

The video clip showed the entire process of Shi Feng wiping out Lethal Gale's party.

Many curious spectators had recorded the entire battle. This video was already a popular topic on Star-Moon Kingdom's official forums.

Not only had this incident boosted the fame of Zero Wing's Ye Feng, but it also made a mockery of the Blackwater Corporation.

Abandoned Wave's expression darkened as he watched the video. The dense killing intent he radiated could be felt over 30 yards away.

Sensing this killing intent, several strong and talented youths rushed over, asking, "Big Brother Wave, what happened? What has you so riled up?"

Although these youths' Levels were not high, they were greatly admired by the Divine Colosseum's regulars.

"It's nothing!" Abandoned Wave closed the video, enraged. A cold glint flashed in his eyes as he said, "I've had to make some minor adjustments to my plans. Although Young Master Jing has told me that there is no need to bother with Zero Wing, if I don't teach the Guild a lesson, be it Black Flame or Ye Feng, neither will acknowledge the Blackwater Corporation's power!"

"I've heard that the Heavenly Dragon Pavilion's Pavilion Master, Nine Dragons Emperor, has quite a grudge against Zero Wing and has been eager to teach Zero Wing a lesson. You, travel to the Black Dragon Empire and tell Qin Muyun this: If Nine Dragons Emperor wants to deal with Zero Wing, I will lend him a hand. Also, dispatch three parties to trail Gentle Snow. If there is an opportunity, kill her."

"Understood!"

After receiving his instructions, the bald man rushed out of the VIP room.

...

Inside a high-class restaurant in White River City's Noble's District...

Zero Wing's elite members filled the restaurant. Furthermore, several of Zero Wing's core members surveyed the area from the establishment's main hall. The high-class restaurant had become an impenetrable fortress.

Meanwhile, Shi Feng and Gentle Snow chatted with each other on the top floor.

"The Blackwater Corporation is quite eager to take your life," Shi Feng commented as he gazed out the french windows. From his position, he could see at least eight people stalking the restaurant. While there was a chance that he had earned his own stalkers, it was far easier to believe that these players were hunting Gentle Snow.

After all, the Blackwater Corporation had ambushed her once before. Moreover, Gentle Snow was still Weakened. He wouldn't be surprised if they tried another three or four assaults.