

The Strongest

Chapter 35 – Changing from Arrogance to Humility (3)

Seeing Gentle Snow smile with confidence, Shi Feng was already snickering in silence.

Sheep's wool comes from a sheep. If you wished to earn money, it was natural to obtain it from a wealthy person. A first-rate Guild like Ouroboros was unquestionably an appropriate target. According to Shi Feng's knowledge the Guild, Ouroboros, had already conquered over ten virtual reality games. However, the appearance of God's Domain had shaken the virtual gaming world. It was dubbed as mankind's second world. It caused the collapse of many other virtual reality games. Afterward, countless companies started madly investing in God's Domain, nurturing their Guild, growing their influence, and building their place in the virtual financial world. Naturally, Ouroboros also invested in God's Domain. They, too, wanted to share a bite of the countless assets.

Also, Ouroboros was not just wealthy; it also had a great background. The number of experts working under Ouroboros exceeded over a thousand. These thousand men were famed as the God-Slaying Army in God's Domain. The existence of these thousand experts allowed Ouroboros to establish a large virtual Empire. They unified over eighty Cities in God's Domain that each had a population of over a million players. Ouroboros was a true tyrant in God's Domain.

During Ouroboros' peak, it was the equivalent to the entire Star-Moon Kingdom. As for Shadow, it had only established ten Cities that did not have populations exceeding a million players. In such a way, Ouroboros had become a peerless tyrant in the real world. Their position was truly unimaginable. It should be known that Star-Moon Kingdom was a relatively large kingdom, even amongst the hundreds present in God's Domain. It was at the upper middle-ranks. One could clearly see Ouroboros' prowess when compared to it.

How could Shi Feng not wish to work with such a powerful Guild? It was just the risk of working with Gentle Snow was too high. Because of her particular identity, the information she could get a hold of was just too great. Shi Feng could not help but be cautious of her. It was why he intentionally revealed some hints, especially with the recipe for the Basic Strength Potion. He wanted to see Gentle Snow's reaction. If she behaved in a bad way, Shi Feng would naturally act ignorant and push all responsibility away.

However, the present situation was undoubtedly the one Shi Feng looked forward to the most.

"Since you've already explained... My asking price isn't high. Twenty Silver Coins." Shi Feng calmly stated.

To a small Guild of current times, 20 Silver Coins would already be their entire fortune. Even a hundred-man money-farming group would need two to three days to collect such an amount.

Zhao Yueru sucked in a cold breath, nearly jumping up when she heard Shi Feng casually ask for 20 Silver Coins. She stared at Shi Feng, furiously saying, "Why don't you just rob someone? That would be a faster way."

"I would do it if I could get that much money," Shi Feng said with a smile. "You should know there is a lot of skill books, weapons, and equipment for players inside the Deathly Forest. They can quickly increase the strength of players. If you could conquer the Deathly Forest a step earlier, the benefits it would bring towards future developments go without saying."

"You..... Can't you make it a little cheaper? Twenty Silvers? Even we, Ouroboros, can't simply take out that much money," Zhao Yueru thoroughly disliked Shi Feng now. However, when she thought about the importance of the Deathly Forest, she still used a softer tone to speak to Shi Feng.

"Sorry, but no negotiations. If you don't agree to it, then I can only consider working with some other Guild," Shi Feng remained firm with his decision. He had been very sincere in dealing with Gentle Snow. If it was still not possible, he could only consider the Assassin's Alliance. The Assassin's Alliance was wealthy and imposing. Before, they spent over 20 Silvers to buy Shi Feng's Level 5 Bronze Shield.

"I understand. Twenty Silvers then. However, we need some time to collect the money. After all, our Ouroboros' area of influence isn't in White River City, but at the capital, Star-Moon City. There are only a few Ouroboros members close to White River City. Give me a day's time, take these 7 Silvers as a deposit. I will compensate you with 15 Silvers a day later." Gentle Snow had never imagined Shi Feng's appetite would be so great. Twenty Silvers was still a lot to her. However, the importance of clearing the Deathly Forest was too great. They had to grasp it as soon as possible. At the same time, Gentle Snow knew that Silver Coins were precious during the early periods of the game. Hence, she had given a little more to Shi Feng as interest.

"Alright. Here is the map of the Deathly Forest, and also the things you need to pay attention to when fighting against the Boss."

Shi Feng also knew what Gentle Snow had said was true. Wanting to gather 20 Silver Coins would not be easy. Ouroboros did not have as great of influence in White River City as the Assassin's Alliance did. Shi Feng sent mail to Gentle Snow containing detailed introductions to the Deathly Forest. With Gentle Snow's abilities, they should be able to clear Normal Mode easily.

Gentle Snow looked at the strategy she received for the Deathly Forest; her heart slightly shook only after a slight glance.

She never imagined the Deathly Forest would be so horrifying. Just the number of paths available already numbered thirty-six. Thirty-three of them were dead ends. There was even a Night Ranger who moved based on opportunity. There was also a detailed description of the Boss and when it would cast its skills. She definitely got more than 20 Silver's worth of information. If she sent others to explore the paths bit by bit, the cost would exceed 20 Silvers.

Suddenly, another change occurred to Gentle Snow's perception of Shi Feng. She felt Shi Feng was not as simple as he seemed to be. He was certainly an expert. Only an expert could have such a profound understanding of the Dungeon. However, Gentle Snow had no recollection of an expert Swordsman like Shi Feng.

"In three days Ouroboros is planning to enter the first Level 5, twenty-man Dungeon, the Dark Moon Graveyard. I wonder if you will be interested in joining?" Gentle Snow's beautiful eyes looked towards Shi

Feng as she invited him to the Team Dungeon. She already acknowledged Shi Feng's strength. If Shi Feng was with them, entering the Team Dungeon, they might have an easier time in it.

From a side, Blackie looked at Shi Feng with dumbstruck eyes. His admiration for Shi Feng had already reached the level of worship. He never imagined Shi Feng would be so awesome as to conquer the Snow Goddess in a few moves. The Goddess even wished to invite him to raid a Dungeon. How great of an honor was this? There were countless men who dreamt of raiding a Dungeon with the Snow Goddess.

However, Zhao Yueru became irritated after hearing Gentle Snow invite him. Shi Feng was but a Beta Tester. At most, he had experienced God's Domain a few more days than they did and had a deeper understanding of the Deathly Forest. However, the twenty-man Team Dungeon had only opened after the game's official release. It did not exist during the Beta Test, so there was no way for Shi Feng to know anything about it. Also, Shi Feng wasn't some powerful expert; what point would there be in inviting him? He would just be wasting a slot in the Dungeon.

Shi Feng entered a thought. There were a lot of good items that dropped from a twenty-man Dungeon. It had been particularly true for the Dark Moon Graveyard which dropped a lot of worthwhile equipment for Swordsman. The Attributes of the equipment from that Dungeon were also much better than the ones obtained from Wild Bosses. However, Shi Feng was not able to organize a twenty-man party, so it wouldn't be a disadvantage to join Gentle Snow for a round.

"Alright, but leave a few spots for me. Also, all Swordsman equipment and Forging Designs must belong to me," Shi Feng answered with a nod.

"Can't you be a little more humble?" Zhao Yueru looked at Shi Feng, pouting. She felt Shi Feng was going too overboard. If Gentle Snow had asked anyone else, they would have readily agreed, even going as far as to forgo getting any equipment. Shi Feng, however, even wanted priority over equipment. He was not courteous with them at all.

Gentle Snow did not imagine Shi Feng was truly different from the other people. He did not play around with his words. However, it was interesting that he would say whatever he wanted. Following which, Gentle Snow looked towards the party members behind Shi Feng. Although they were noobs, their equipment was all of good quality. They could barely manage in the twenty-man Dungeon. Thus, Gentle Snow said, "Fine. Let's add each other as friends then. We'll be in touch when the time comes." "Alright. You can just contact me a few hours before raiding the Dungeon. I'll arrive on time." Shi Feng accepted Gentle Snow's friend request. Subsequently, Shi Feng and his party members left the small rock pit, heading towards Dark Moon Valley.

When the group passed through the Deathly Forest's Dungeon, Stabbing Heart of the Assassin's Alliance abruptly called out to Shi Feng. "Brother Ye Feng, I nearly failed to recognize you. I never imagined you actually knew a big shot like the Snow Goddess. You must not forget a brother like me in the future!" Stabbing Heart jokingly said as he walked towards Shi Feng.

"Nonsense. I just happen to meet with Miss Snow by chance," Shi Feng replied with a smile.

"Brother Ye Feng, you are too humble. Based on your strength, you are absolutely worthy of becoming friends with the Snow Goddess. After all, both of you are experts of the same level," Stabbing Heart thought Shi Feng was very humble. It was no wonder he was such a great expert. The way he conducted

himself was different than ordinary people. Stabbing Heart wanted to befriend Shi Feng even more now. "Our Assassin's Alliance is preparing to enter the Dungeon. I wonder if Brother Ye Feng would be interested in joining us? Of course, you can pick any of the equipment that you want."

"You are too courteous, Brother Stabbing Heart. However, I still have some things to attend to. I will definitely join if there is another chance in the future," Shi Feng politely rejected the offer.

Stabbing Heart spoke in a loud voice. Surrounding players clearly heard his words.

At first, everyone thought of Shi Feng as just a noob. His being called upon by the Snow Goddess was just due to luck. Even now, Stabbing Heart of the Assassin's Alliance wished to befriend Shi Feng. Just what sort of situation was this?

The Assassin's Alliance was a large Guild that was famous throughout White River City. As the Sub-Leader of the Guild's Elite group, Stabbing Heart would not need to interact with normal players at all. However, he tried to befriend Shi Feng. Shi Feng had actually rejected him. Shi Feng was just too domineering.

If someone were to call Shi Feng a noob, nobody would believe them. There was something strange about the situation.

Everyone guessed that Shi Feng must be a hidden expert that normal players did not know of. Otherwise, why would big shots try to meet Shi Feng one after the other?

"Boss Waving, that Stabbing Heart actually tried to befriend that noob. I'm not dreaming, right?" Wordless Summer Night was shocked. Was this Shi Feng really the noob they met before?

Waving Slowly But Surely was currently upset in his heart. Initially, his heart still held hope that Shi Feng was just a noob. Now, however, that hope was utterly destroyed by Stabbing Heart. Shi Feng was not a noob. He was definitely an expert, just like Lonely Snow had said. Shi Feng might even be greater than Lonely Snow had described him to be. If Lonely Snow followed Shi Feng, then his future would certainly be filled with boundless prospects. On the other hand, they had chased Shi Feng away..... They had missed a great chance for them to befriend an expert.

"Boss, why don't we go over and apologize? An expert is a magnanimous person. Who knows, he might even forgive us. At that time, we, too, could gain the favor of an expert," Battle To The End suggested.

Wordless Summer Night nodded his head in complete agreement.

Just as Shi Feng's party was about to leave the Deathly Forest, Waving Slowly But Surely and the others came running over.

"Big Brother Expert, we've had some misunderstandings before, so we're here to apologize to you. We hope you can forgive our ignorance. Here's a Silver Coin to show our sincerity. We hope Big Brother Expert can take us under your wing," Waving Slowly was all smiles as he apologized. The arrogance he had before was completely gone now.

Wordless Summer Night and Battle To The End were also sincerely apologizing without stop. They wished to grind monsters with Shi Feng.

“If you guys don’t have anything else to say, then please leave. I still have matters to attend to, so I don’t have any time to waste with you,” Shi Feng spun around to leave after replying. He did not mind one little bit in regards to Waving Slowly and the others’ previous behavior. However, wanting him to carry[1] them? Not a chance.

As for Lonely Snow, he only shook his head in regards to Waving Slowly and the others’ actions. If they had known that their actions would lead to such results today, maybe they wouldn’t have acted so in the beginning.

Watching Lonely Snow leave with Shi Feng, Wordless Summer curled his lips into a frown, saying in a sour tone, “Bah! What’s there to be amazed about?! In the future, I, too, will become an expert!”

However, only Waving Slowly knew Lonely Snow would become successful in the future. He was already in a different world than them.

Chapter 36 – Hazard Gnome

After leaving the Deathly Forest, Shi Feng’s party rushed towards Dark Moon Valley without rest.

At the current stage of the game, many players had already risen to Level 2. Aside from raiding the Dungeon at the Deathly Forest, they would stay in Brook Hills to kill Level 2 Cheetah Cubs. Only a few experts would go to the Level 4 area, Dark Moon Valley, to level up. However, along with the increase in player levels, it wouldn’t be long before Dark Moon Valley would become occupied.

After spending over half an hour returning to Dark Moon Valley, the scene they met with was the same as what Shi Feng expected.

A few Elite parties who were uninterested in the Dungeon were currently killing Level 4 Kobolds that were wandering around the outer parts of the valley. These Elite parties were quite skilled. They lured two or three monsters each time, with the Shield warrior tanking in front and preventing the Kobolds from closing in on their mage and healer. The healer was continuously healing from behind, barely maintaining the Shield Warrior’s HP.

Although it was taxing to grind in such a way, the gains from the fight were equally good. The three Kobolds had dropped 2 Coppers and some stone materials.

In God’s Domain, only monsters Level 3 and above would drop skill books and Bronze Equipment. Although the chance was only ten thousand to one, it was still enough to cause players to go on wild goose chases. Currently, Bronze Equipment was very valuable; even more so were skill books. With these enticements here, there would be many experts who would come forth, even if there was some danger involved.

After taking a few glances, Shi Feng turned and left towards the inner parts of the Dark Moon Valley.

The other party members who were new to the Dark Moon Valley were very nervous. It was especially true when they saw the Level 4 monsters scattered throughout the entire area. Their breaths became slightly hurried. However, Blackie was extremely calm when he saw these Level 4 Kobolds. After all, he had previously killed hundreds of them. He did not seem panicked, unlike the other party members. He simply followed Shi Feng, entering the deeper regions of the valley.

As for the Elite parties, they could not help but be shocked when they saw Shi Feng's party enter deep into the valley. They had never imagined the newcomer party would have such courage.

There were very few players currently present in Dark Moon Valley. It had yet to be completely developed, so there were a lot of Kobolds in the middle of the valley. The deeper one headed towards the center, the greater the number of Kobolds. There would even be groups that consisted of ten or more Kobolds. Grinding monsters there was just too dangerous. The lowest number of Kobolds they had to face was at least four or five. It was not worth risking an unwarranted death.

Unfortunately, these people did not know Shi Feng was more insane than they previously thought.

Shi Feng did not just enter the deeper regions of the valley. Instead, he went towards the core of the Dark Moon Valley. There was a good location to grind monsters there. Not only was there a large number of monsters, but their respawn rate was quick as well. Most importantly, the drop rate there for ore was high.

Regarding understanding, Shi Feng was like the local god of the area when it came to the Dark Moon Valley. Be it the location of the monsters, the number of monsters available, or their respawn time, Shi Feng had spent countless hours researching in his previous life. His goal at that time was to increase the grinding speed of his party, all to improve his position within Shadow.

Life was truly fascinating. Shi Feng's sacrifice towards Shadow in his previous life had currently turned around to help himself instead. It could increase his own party's level more quickly, while at the same time guaranteeing him a steady supply of ore.

Moving along the path of broken rocks, groups of four or five Level 4 Kobolds would occasionally appear. However, it was just a small matter with the equipment of Shi Feng's party.

Looking at the party's Guardian Knight, Cola, be it with HP or Defense, he could easily tank four Kobolds at the same time. The healer, Drowsy Sloth, could maintain Cola's HP above 80% without wasting much effort. If Cola had let a monster past, then Lonely Snow would go up and push it back. As for the others, they would fervently deal damage. A simple sword strike from Shi Feng could already deal over a hundred damage, whereas Blackie's Dark Arrows could each deal 88 damage. The fight could not get any easier than this.

Within moments, the five Kobolds were all dealt with. Compared to the Elite party outside, Shi Feng's party was stronger by several folds.

Shi Feng simply picked up the stone materials and ore that dropped, then continuing deeper into the Dark Moon Valley.

After spending over an hour moving forward, Shi Feng's party had finally arrived in front of a mountain. The massive mountain was hundreds of meters in height. Kobolds no longer filled the area surrounding the mountain; Wandering Gnomes had replaced them. These Wandering Gnomes each held a small

shovel in their hands, using it to dig into the rock wall of the mountain. There were also quite a few Gnome Overseers that inspected the surrounding areas with a whip in hand.

“Brother Feng, the monsters here are just too numerous. Are we really going to grind here?”

Blackie’s heart shook slightly when he took a look around. He discovered hundreds of Wandering Gnomes around the vast mountain. There was even a few Level 5 Gnome Overseers. Compared to the groups of over ten Kobolds outside, this place was a literal battlefield.

Cola also gulped down a mouthful of saliva, worriedly saying, “Party leader, I’m not trying to boast, but tanking six or seven of them is my limit. I really can’t manage this many monsters.”

It wasn’t just Blackie or Cola. The others, as well, were apprehensive. Wandering Gnomes occupied the entire mountain, and these Gnomes were very close to each other. As long as they made a mistake while luring, then they would have to face-off against hundreds of Level 4 monsters. Such a large number of monsters was much scarier than the Lord-rank Felt.

“I know you guys can’t fend all of them off. However, who ever said about letting any of you tank hundreds of Gnomes?” Shi Feng rolled his eyes at his party members. He was extremely clear regarding the party’s standards. Facing off against ten Gnomes at the same time was nearly their limit, so how could they deal with hundreds at the same time?

Even a Level 10 player would be finished when met with hundreds of Level 4 monsters.

However, wasn’t there a good saying that stated: “if you can’t outfight them, outrun them”?

Shi Feng’s Agility had reached 30 points. Including the Bronze Shoes he had, his Movement Speed had exceeded the Wandering Gnomes by at least 4 points. He could easily kite the Gnomes and let Blackie use the AOE skill, Hell Flame. The efficiency of grinding in such a way was several times greater than that of killing individually.

Following which, Shi Feng told everyone about his plan. He needed Blackie to get the timing right, maximizing the effect of Hell Flame. As for the others, they were responsible for taking out the Gnomes with low HP.

When Shi Feng had chosen his position, he grabbed a handful of stones and rushed towards the nearby Gnome Overseer.

Just as Shi Feng approached the 20-yard distance, the Overseer had started yelling loudly. Its screams attracted the attention of many of the surrounding Wandering Gnomes. Shi Feng waited first for a moment, avoiding the whip of the Gnome Overseer and allowing the Wandering Gnomes to continuously gather.

When about 30 Gnomes had gathered, Shi Feng turned around and ran in the opposite direction. Afterward, he threw a small stone that struck another Gnome Overseer. The Overseer who was struck loudly bellowed, bringing along over twenty of its brethren and rushing at Shi Feng.

Within moments, Shi Feng had lured over sixty monsters. However, Shi Feng was not yet satisfied. He started circling the mountain as he lured monsters, and within five minutes, there were hundreds of Wandering Gnomes and more than ten Gnome Overseers chasing behind him with all their might.

Unfortunately for them, Shi Feng's equipment was just too good. His speed was 30% greater when compared to the Gnomes. Including Shi Feng's extraordinary techniques and control over his body, he was able to toy with the Gnomes whichever way he wanted.

"Blackie, get ready to cast," Shi Feng reminded.

"Alright." Blackie was extremely excited. This was his first time using AOE magic, so he did not know what kind of effects it would have.

Subsequently, Blackie's fingers started gesturing in midair. Brilliant magical seals started appearing, forming into a dazzling magic circle that gave off a peerless aura.

As Blackie spat out the last syllable, the land shook. Jade green flames rushed to the sky, devouring the entire Gnome army. A field of damages over a hundred had appeared. Within five seconds, every Gnome chasing after Shi Feng received over two hundred damage, their remaining HP less than half.

However, the target of these Gnomes had also changed. They no longer went after Shi Feng, but Blackie instead.

Shi Feng abruptly stopped. He pulled out the Abyssal Blade and rushed forward.

Thundering Flash!

Not only did the Level 4 Thundering Flash have a low Cooldown, but its attack range also increased to 15 by 3 yards. It had nearly covered the entire Gnome army.

Three streaks of thunder flew past the Gnome army, creating three damages of over 120 points to every Gnome. The attack had completely devoured the remaining HP of the Gnomes. As for the low HP ones that remained, they were quickly held back by Cola. Lonely Snow then rushed forward and used a Whirlwind Slash, thoroughly ending the remaining Gnomes.

The hundreds of Gnomes had been wiped out, leaving behind a floor covered with items.

Meanwhile, everyone's experience madly rose. EXP of over ten points appeared one after the other, dazzling everyone's eyes.

Hua! Blackie had risen to Level 3.

"This is too awesome!" Blackie roared in exhilaration.

"This is only the beginning. They will still respawn in a moment." Shi Feng laughed, "Let's quickly pick up the drops."

Suddenly, everyone started busying themselves. Even with six people retrieving the drops, the loot of hundreds of Gnomes still required them to spend a lot of time doing so.

However, moments after they started collecting, a Gnome that piloted a gigantic robot suddenly appeared. The Gnome's face was crimson red. It immediately rushed towards Shi Feng's party with unparalleled rage.

"Not good! It's the Hazard Gnome! Everyone spread out!" Shi Feng shouted the moment he laid eyes on the gigantic robot.

