

## The Strongest

### Chapter 701 - Blood Warrior

Hua! Hua!

The skeleton in black-spiked armor suddenly brandished its two-handed saber, creating a powerful gale that engulfed Shi Feng.

Its bladework is so fast! I didn't see the weapon move at all! Shi Feng unconsciously tightened his grip on the Abyssal Blade. He felt an immense pressure as he stared at the flashing red flames in the skeleton's eye sockets.

[Blood Warrior] (Undead, Special Elite)

Level 50

HP 240,000/240,000

Although the Blood Warrior's HP was not high, its Attack Speed and Strength were on a whole different level compared to the Blood Fighters.

Suddenly, the Blood Warrior stomped its foot. Shi Feng only heard the sound of a sonic boom before the Blood Warrior appeared right in front of him, its massive saber transforming into a streak of silver light as it descended towards his head.

In terms of Strength and speed, the Blood Warrior was simply overwhelming.

Although Shi Feng had stretched his perception to its very limit, the Blood Warrior's explosive power still caught him unprepared.

Boom!

When the Blood Warrior swung its saber, the saber light extended over ten yards. If the walkway had not been indestructible, the Undead's attack would have gouged the ground.

Meanwhile, the attack had sent Shi Feng flying over 20 yards, a damage of more than -1,000 points appearing above his head.

In the blink of an eye, Shi Feng lost one-tenth of his HP.

So powerful! Shi Feng gaped at the Blood Warrior with a face. His entire arm was numb.

It was not surprising that the Special Elite was stronger and faster than he was.

What was surprising was the fact that the Blood Warrior had an expert's techniques as well. Neither its movement nor attacks contained any excess movement whatsoever. This allowed the Undead to exert astonishing speed and destructive power. Even Shi Feng had only barely blocked the attack with his sword. Suddenly, Shi Feng was no longer as complacent as he had been against the Blood Fighters.

Players had two main advantages against monsters. The first was their Skills, while the second was combat techniques.

However, inside the Blood Refining Passage, players could not use any of their Skills and could only rely on their combat techniques in a fight.

As for the Blood Warrior before Shi Feng, not only did it possess superior Attributes, but its techniques surpassed even ordinary expert players. If an ordinary expert stood in Shi Feng's place right now, they would have no strength to resist the Blood Warrior...

Just as Shi Feng pondered ways to deal with the Blood Warrior, the latter charged for Shi Feng once more, giving him no time to catch his breath. The Blood Warrior slashed its two-handed saber at Shi Feng in quick succession, every one of its attacks faster than Shi Feng's visual perception.

Shi Feng could only rely on his intuition to block or dodge the attacks.

He did not even have time to breathe.

One slash, two slashes, three slashes...

Countless saber lights intertwined, generating dazzling sparks as they collided with Shi Feng's swords.

Each time Shi Feng blocked the Blood Warrior's saber, he was sent flying. Even while Shi Feng soared through the air, the Blood Warrior showed no signs of stopping its assault. As long as Shi Feng erred in his judgment, he would be executed on the spot.

Shi Feng was thrown over a hundred yards in quick succession, his body slamming into the ground.

The difference between their strengths was obvious at first glance.

"Is this really a Level 50 Special Elite?" Shi Feng looked at his own HP.

He had less than 3,000 HP remaining. At most, he could receive three more hits before his life ended.

Before Shi Feng could even consider his options, the Blood Warrior appeared before him. Attacking with its saber, it sent Shi Feng flying once more...

Since Shi Feng had rejoined God's Domain, he had suppressed his opponents with his Strength. This was the first time an opponent had beaten him so badly regarding Strength and speed.

In the face of absolute strength, all manner of trickery was useless.

At this moment, Shi Feng was reminded of the fact that Attributes were the basics of combat in God's Domain.

Even if Shi Feng could perceive the Blood Warrior's attack trajectories, he simply could not keep up with the Special Elite's speed. If he could not even dodge the Blood Warrior's attacks, there was no point in considering a counterattack.

If Shi Feng received the Blood Warrior's saver a few more times, Shi Feng's HP would be no more.

"Huh?" Shi Feng suddenly realized that the Blood Warrior had stopped attacking him. Instead, it turned around and walked back to where it came from, no longer interested in Shi Feng. "What's going on here?"

Despite needing only two more hits to end the battle, the Blood Warrior had stopped attacking him...

"Did I move out of its field of activity?" Shi Feng accepted this conclusion after giving it some thought. Otherwise, the Blood Warrior had no reason to spare him. "It seems that I need to defeat the Blood Warrior if I wish to continue forward."

However, with his current strength, it was utterly impossible to defeat the Blood Warrior.

It would be easier without the Divine Might's suppression. Shi Feng thought as he glared at the passage walls. The Divine Might radiating from the walls had limited his strength significantly. Otherwise, he would not have been so helpless against the Blood Warrior's attacks. If I wish to pass the Blood Warrior, I only have three options. I can reduce the Divine Might's suppression, improve my combat techniques, or improve my Attributes.

Without any of my Skills, weakening the Divine Might will be impossible. As for techniques, that is not something I can improve significantly in a short time. It seems that my only choice is to raise my Attributes.

Shi Feng then looked at his current Level. At this point, he was at 61% of Level 34. He was very close to reaching Level 35.

He currently wore a Tier 1 Set Equipment. As his level increased, the set's Attributes would improve as well. Level 35 was considered a small milestone for equipment. Moreover, he also possessed Epic and Fragmented Legendary ranked items. Once he reached Level 35, those Attributes would also increase.

"Let's level up, then." Shi Feng halted his advance. Instead, he retraced his steps.

Shi Feng had mostly grasped the Blood Refining Passage's rules. He would encounter different monsters depending on where he was. Since he had entered the field belonging to the Blood Warrior, if he retreated to the previous field, he would return to the four Blood Fighters.

Fortunately, the Blood Fighters provided a lot of EXP, so Shi Feng did not level slowly. Moreover, he could also improve his techniques by facing the Elite monsters.

In such a way, Shi Feng began an endless journey of grinding, his level rising little by little.

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Star-Moon City, inside a VIP room of one of Star-Moon's High-class Restaurants:

Currently, three people, two women and one man, occupied the luxurious and spacious room. All three were at least Level 32. One woman had already reached Level 33. This woman was none other than Zero

Wing's Vice-Leader, Aqua Rose. Sitting across from Aqua Rose were the Star Alliance's Guild Leader, Galaxy Past, and the Star Alliance's number one Elementalist expert, Purple Eye.

"Vice-Leader Aqua, let's be frank. Why did Zero Wing suddenly decide to banish the Star Alliance from Stone Forest Town? I don't recall our Guild provoking your Guild in any way," Galaxy Past asked quietly, trying his best to suppress the raging fire within him.

The Star Alliance's progression into the Stoneclaw Mountains had slowed significantly. If this situation persisted, their previous advantages would vanish, and other Guilds would overtake them.

Had it not tasted the fruit known as Stone Forest Town, it would have been fine. However, after experiencing the benefits that Stone Forest Town offered, it was impossible for the Star Alliance to endure losing access to the town.

"Guild Leader Galaxy, don't tell me that you've agreed to Open Source Corporation's investment without knowing what was happening?" Aqua Rose countered calmly. "Or does Guild Leader Galaxy not know what kind of people have been harassing Zero Wing recently?"

After Aqua Rose's reminder, Galaxy Past quickly came to a realization.

He had received some information mentioning a small conflict between Zero Wing and Open Source Corporation. However, he had never imagined that this enmity was so severe.

"Guild Leader Galaxy, I believe that you should have a general understanding of the situation. Today, I've come here to pass on a message from our Guild Leader." Narrowing her eyes, Aqua Rose coldly declared, "If the Star Alliance doesn't enter an alliance with Zero Wing now, then it will be our enemy. What is your decision?"

## Chapter 702 - Swift and Ruthless

“Become your enemy?” Galaxy Past let out a laugh as he raised an eyebrow, a flame of anger igniting in his eyes. However, he quickly suppressed the emotion. Chuckling softly, he said, “Guild Leader Black Flame really hasn’t changed.”

Although he had known about Black Flame’s arrogance, he could not help his anger when it turned on him.

However, he had to admit that, up until this point, not one Guild had managed to do anything to Zero Wing.

“Aqua, you’re saying that Zero Wing intends to go to war if the Star Alliance refuses to become its ally?” Purple Eye asked, a hint of cold surfacing on her white, delicate cheeks. The killing intent she radiated even dropped the surrounding temperature by several degrees.

The Star Alliance was a first-rate Guild. Its survival until now spoke volumes to its strength; why would it possibly cower due to an upstart Guild?

Besides, the Star Alliance currently had OSC’s support.

Star-Moon City was the Star Alliance’s home ground. If an all-out war broke out between their two Guilds, Zero Wing would suffer tremendous losses.

If not for Stone Forest Town, the Star Alliance would have lashed out against Zero Wing in the Stoneclaw Mountains long ago.

“You can interpret it as such,” Aqua Rose nodded in acknowledgment.

Shi Feng’s method was indeed crazy. Dealing with Open Source Corporation was already a huge headache. Now, he planned to tear away all pretenses with the Star Alliance. This decision would only place Zero Wing in even greater danger.

Currently, Zero Wing was not in particularly advantageous position. Aside from Overwhelming Smile, Heaven’s Burial, and the other White River City Guilds eyeing Zero Wing covetously, now, they needed to deal with Open Source Corporation and the Star Alliance.

If Zero Wing declared war on the Star Alliance, it went without saying that Overwhelming Smile and Heaven’s Burial would also take action. At that time, Zero Wing would be exposed to attacks from the front and the rear.

However...

When dealing with a problem, one must be both swift and ruthless.

Since they already knew that the Star Alliance had fallen under OSC’s control, there was no doubt that the first-rate Guild would become Zero Wing’s enemy in the future. If they maintained the current peace, they would only prolong the inevitable. Zero Wing would eventually be at risk. Moreover, by declaring war on the Star Alliance, it would deter the other Guilds. They would have to think twice before plotting against Zero Wing.

Currently, as the Star Alliance had the home ground advantage, even without Stone Forest Town, the Guild could continue their development in the Stoneclaw Mountains. However, the other Guilds did not have that advantage.

“So what if we don’t become allies?” Galaxy Past sneered. In a low growl, he asked, “Do you think the Star Alliance needs a rest stop like Stone Forest Town? Once the 15-day protection period is over and Zero Wing losses their NPC guards, the Star Alliance will be able to occupy the town at any given moment. Moreover, I believe that the other large Guilds will also be very interested in the town.”

“Guild Leader Galaxy is correct. However, might I remind you that Zero Wing has not yet started a war with the Star Alliance; our Guilds have not had any conflicts with each other in the Stoneclaw Mountains. If we go to war, however, Zero Wing cannot guarantee the safety of the Star Alliance members in the Stoneclaw Mountains.

“Guild Leader Galaxy, you know that Star-Moon City doesn’t have only one first-rate Guild.”

Aqua Rose paid no attention whatsoever to Galaxy Past’s threat. Zero Wing had the support of Stone Forest Town. Even if its members died, they could simply revive in the town. Ouroboros’s members, Zero Wing’s allies, could also revive in Stone Forest Town. Hence, Ouroboros could quickly send reinforcements into the Stoneclaw Mountains.

Aside from Stone Forest Town, the nearest town players could revive in was over ten hours away.

If a fight broke out in the Stoneclaw Mountains, the Star Alliance’s members would have to waste a lot of time to return. Aqua Rose refused to think about the resources and manpower that would go to waste. If the war persisted, it would definitely wear down the Star Alliance.

Galaxy Past and Purple Eye’s expressions grew serious upon hearing Aqua Rose’s words.

Yet, if they allied with Zero Wing, Open Source Corporation would not be pleased.

How could the Guild Elders ever agree to an alliance that would anger a god of fortune like Open Source Corporation? Even his position as the Star Alliance's Guild Leader would be at risk.

However, Galaxy Past did not wish to start a full-blown war with Zero Wing right now.

Seeing Galaxy Past's troubled expression, Aqua Rose stifled a sigh heavy with emotion.

Zero Wing had only recently established, yet with no backing whatsoever, it had become an existence that could even trouble the Guild Leader of a first-rate Guild. Nothing like this had ever occurred during the virtual gaming world's long history.

"If the Star Alliance allies Zero Wing, our Guild Leader has promised to let the Star Alliance repair its equipment in Stone Forest Town at market price; its members will also be able to revive in Stone Forest Town. In addition, the Star Alliance will be allowed to construct a Guild Residence in Stone Forest Town, allowing its Guild members to transfer to the town swiftly and save on travel time," Aqua Rose said, her bright, charming lips curling into an alluring smile.

"What did you say?!" Galaxy Past's composure shattered. For a moment, he wondered if he had heard wrong.

If Aqua Rose's words were true, then the Star Alliance's development speed in the Stoneclaw Mountains would rise by multiple times.

Purple Eye was similarly shocked. She had never imagined that Zero Wing would be so generous.

“I’ve said all that needed to be said. I look forward to Guild Leader Galaxy’s decision. We will only wait one day.” After saying so, Aqua Rose turned and left the VIP room.

Zero Wing’s biggest problem right now was not the Star Alliance, but the Flower of Seven Sins.

Hence, the Guild’s upper echelons needed to improve their strength quickly and prepare.

Aqua Rose would not waste her time with the Star Alliance. Right now, she needed to challenge the Divine Colosseum’s Trial Tower.

Shi Feng was going all-out to provide the upper echelons with the Hundred Berry Wine. They would be fools not to use it. Hence, both Fire Dance and Aqua Rose fully immersed themselves in the Trial Tower. As for the Stoneclaw Mountains, they could leave that to the Guild’s core members.

After Aqua Rose left, Galaxy Past and Purple Eye remained within the luxurious room.

“Guild Leader, what should we do?” Purple Eye asked, a hesitant expression on her face. Both the OSC’s funding and Stone Forest Town’s resources were sorely tempting. However, both organizations were just as threatening. No matter which side they chose, the consequences would not be light.

“If it were up to me, I would agree to Zero Wing’s offer. However, the Guild’s main purpose when it established was to earn money for the company. The investment of a god of fortune like OSC is something all Guilds strive for,” Galaxy Past laughed bitterly. “However, now that I think about it, this was all due to Zero Wing. OSC only chose to invest in the Star Alliance to deal with Zero Wing.

“Purple, gather the Guild Elders for a meeting immediately. They must all be present; I don’t care if they’re busy.”

“I’ll contact them right away.”

Suddenly, the Star Alliance’s Elders received a message. All of the Elders, regardless of where they were, were required to attend the meeting in Star-Moon Kingdom. This situation shocked the Star Alliance’s members.

As a first-rate Guild, their development was widespread. The Star Alliance had created Branches in several other kingdoms, each one managing themselves on their own. This was the first meeting since they had joined God’s Domain that required the presence of every Elder.

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Time flowed quickly. Before he knew it, a day had passed in God’s Domain.

Inside the Blood Refining Passage, Shi Feng had killed Blood Fighters almost without rest. He only took small breaks to recover his exhausted Stamina, before returning to grinding Blood Fighters.

After Shi Feng killed another Blood Fighter, the sound of a system notification suddenly reached his ears.

System: The Blood Refining Stone has collected 1,000 points of Blood Energy. Do you wish to evolve it into a Blood Refining Crystal?

There was no guarantee that each Blood Fighter killed would generate Blood Energy. The more Blood Energy Shi Feng accumulated, the less he could collect from the slain Blood Fighters.

Who knew how many Blood Fighters he had slaughtered throughout the day to collect the 1,000 points of Blood Energy?

### Chapter 703 - Improved Attributes

“Evolve.” Shi Feng clicked “Confirm.”

Although he did not know what changes would occur after upgrading the Blood Refining Stone to a Blood Refining Crystal, seeing as he had spent so much time to collect the required Blood Energy, the crystal should not be an ordinary item. Otherwise, it would not have dropped from the Nine-headed Magic Snake.

Suddenly, the magical black cube in Shi Feng’s hands crumbled, transforming into a half-transparent, blood-red crystal ball.

There were even droplets of dark red liquid flowing within the crystal ball, each containing powerful Life Force.

“Why is there so much Life Force?!”

Shi Feng could clearly feel the life inside those droplets of blood. It was only slightly weaker than the Water of Life.

But what kind of treasure was the Water of Life? Just one drop was enough to cure a crippled NPC. After accumulating a certain amount of the treasured water, one could even use it to revive a dead NPC.

Meanwhile, the blood-red crystal in his hands contained over ten droplets of blood that could rival the Water of Life.

“Just what kind of item is this?” Unable to hold back his curiosity, Shi Feng clicked to check the Blood Refining Crystal’s statistics.

[Blood Refining Crystal] (Dark-Gold Rank Item)

Can absorb the Life Force of powerful monsters the wielder kills. After accumulating 100 points of Blood Energy, player can produce a drop of Life Essence. Can accumulate a maximum of 1,000 drops of Life Essence. Each drop can increase a player’s Stamina and Concentration recovery speed for two hours.

Current drops of Life Essences: 12/1,000

“Is this the true power of the Blood Refining Crystal?” Shi Feng was shocked when he read the statistics.

In God’s Domain, it was common knowledge that players required rest to recover their Stamina and Concentration. Hence, players could not grind for long periods. They had to take breaks.

Although there were some tools that sped recovery, such as food and Field Tents, those items could only be used outside of combat.

Shi Feng also knew of a few items that could recover Stamina and Concentration during combat. However, these items were extraordinarily difficult to obtain.

The Water of Life was one such item. However, using the Water of Life to grind for longer periods was no less than extravagant. Not a single Guild in God's Domain could afford such a waste. The other tools were similar to the Water of Life, in which they were extraordinarily valuable and exceedingly difficult to obtain. Even if a large Guild mobilized its forces, it would barely obtain enough items to supply for a handful of experts.

Shi Feng had never expected the Nine-headed Magic Snake to drop such a valuable item.

With the Blood Refining Crystal, he could recover Stamina and Concentration without having to stop his slaughter. With this, he could grind far longer than other players.

Unfortunately, accumulating Life Essence was a slow process. At most, two or three players could use the crystal continuously.

“With the Blood Refining Crystal, I can save plenty of time.”

Due to Shi Feng's reliance on techniques to kill the Blood Fighters, he consumed far more Stamina and Concentration than usual. Moreover, the Blood Fighters in the Blood Refining Passage were not easy

opponents. In an intense battle, a player's Stamina and Concentration consumption rate increased by several folds. Hence, the Blood Refining Crystal was a convenient item for Shi Feng right now.

Following which, Shi Feng poured a drop of Life Essence into his hand and drank it.

Suddenly, Shi Feng felt his body relax, the fatigue he had accumulated from constant battle vanishing instantly. His mind also cleared.

"This really is a great item."

Originally, Shi Feng had intended to take a break after fighting for a little while longer. Now, it seemed that he no longer needed rest.

After fighting the Blood Fighters for over a day, Shi Feng was very familiar with their attack patterns. His swordsmanship had also become far more precise. During battle, Shi Feng would try to discard extra attacks, pursuing efficiency. As a result, his swordplay became much faster, and he could now defeat the Blood Fighters with minimal effort.

Shi Feng had never considered these techniques before. He had only focused on ending the monsters he fought regardless of how much power he had to expend.

After reaching the Blood Refining Passage, however, he had to improve his attack efficiency if he wanted to kill his opponents quickly due to his inability to use Skills.

It was as if a new world had opened up to Shi Feng.

Initially, when facing four Blood Fighters simultaneously, Shi Feng had needed over 150 moves to finish off just one of the Undead. Among these 150 moves, more than 50 were used to defend himself against incoming attacks. He had to defend himself because he was unfamiliar with his surrounding, and as a result, this allowed the Blood Fighters to launch counterattacks. However, as the number of fights against the Elites increased, he began to require fewer movements to defend himself. Now, he could defeat a Blood Fighter with roughly 130 attacks. For a time, Shi Feng's leveling efficiency increased significantly.

As time passed, Shi Feng had become completely immersed in his swordsmanship. He no longer needed to think about how to streamline his attacks.

Once he ran out of Stamina, he just needed to drink a drop of Life Essence before returning to battle.

Only after Shi Feng reached Level 35, and a golden glow illuminated his body, did he finally regain his senses.

"After training for so long, I should be at my limit. It's time to challenge the Blood Warrior again." Shi Feng smiled faintly as he looked at his newly improved Attributes.

When he reached Level 35, the Golden Stigmata increased all of his Basic Attributes by 5 points and provided 10 Free Attribute Points. Meanwhile, as a Tier 1 player, he received 8 Free Attribute Points every time he leveled. The Abyssal Blade also provided a bonus of 2 Free Attribute Points.

After reaching Level 35, Shi Feng received 20 Free Attribute Points in total and 5 points into all of his Basic Attributes. Furthermore, his Tier 1 Set Equipment, the Seven Luminaries Ring, and the Heavenly Dragon's Breath had also received a significant boost to their Attributes.

During Shi Feng's previous fight with the Blood Warrior, it was obvious that he lacked sufficient speed. Hence, he placed all 20 Free Attribute Points into Agility.

Despite rising by only one level, Shi Feng had improved his Attributes almost as much as if he had equipped an additional piece of Level 35 Dark-Gold Equipment. His strength had also improved.

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Blood Refining Passage, Blood Warrior's combat area:

The Blood Warrior wielding a silver two-handed saber appeared once more. Since Shi Feng had already experienced the Special Elite, he would not allow the Blood Warrior to take the initiative to attack. Taking a step forward, he dashed towards the Blood Warrior.

Previously, such an action would have been suicidal. With the Blood Warrior's Attack Speed, Shi Feng had not been able to defend against its attack. It would have been utterly impossible to dodge the Special Elite's fearsome saber.

In the next moment, the Blood Warrior tightened its grip on its saber. It then slashed forward, sending a streak of silver light plunging towards Shi Feng.

Boom!

The silver two-handed saber missed Shi Feng.

Shi Feng had long since predicted the trajectory of the Blood Warrior's swing. Even before the Blood Warrior prepared to strike, Shi Feng had prepared to dodge. If he had only begun dodging after the Blood Warrior launched its attack, with his current Attributes, he would never have evaded it. Even blocking it would have been a challenge.

Shi Feng did not immediately launch a counterattack after evading the first slash. Instead, he abruptly fell backward.

Hua!

Another streak of silver light cut across the crown of Shi Feng's head.

Only after Shi Feng evaded five strikes did he send a slash of his own at the Blood Warrior's side, causing a critical damage of -2,174. Although the strike had forced the Special Elite to retreat by half a step, it had not affected its combat power in the slightest.

Even so, this result excited Shi Feng.

In his previous battle against the Blood Warrior, he had not been able to resist the Undead in the least. Now, however, he managed to damage to the Special Elite. At this point, grinding away the Blood Warrior's 240,000 HP was only a matter of time.

Chapter 704 - Final Trump Card

The Blood Warrior launched one violent attack after the other, whereas Shi Feng desperately dodged and blocked the Special Elite's attacks.

As they exchanged more attacks, Shi Feng refined his own actions, thinking of ways to deal faster damage.

-1,042.

-2,108.

-1,071.

...

One damage after another appeared above the Blood Warrior's head, its HP decreasing at a rate visible to the naked eye.

Initially, Shi Feng had to dodge five attacks before finding the opportunity to strike. However, as he refined his movements and gained a firmer grasp on his situation, he was soon able to attack after dodging every four attacks.

In less than five minutes, the Blood Warrior's HP fell to 30%. In contrast, Shi Feng had yet to receive any damage.

Just as the Blood Warrior's HP fell below the 30% threshold, the crimson flames burning inside the skeleton's eye sockets turned dark green. The two-handed saber in its hands disappeared, and in its place, two longswords appeared in each hand.

Damn it! Shi Feng scowled at the change.

There was a qualitative difference between avoiding a two-handed weapon and two one-handed weapons.

While the Blood Warrior had used a two-handed weapon, it signified that its attacks carried absolute power. A single strike was capable of sending him flying. However, as long as he managed to evade its attacks, victory would be within his grasp.

Now that the Blood Warrior used two one-handed weapons, however, the situation had changed. Although the power of attacks would lessen, it could double the number of attacks it dished out. To Shi Feng, who had relied on evasion to survive until now, this was an extremely disadvantageous situation.

The Blood Warrior's sudden transformation had caught Shi Feng off-guard.

When the Blood Warrior launched its first attack, its blade moved as fast as the two-handed sword had, as fast as lightning. If he had not predicted the attack by the movements of the Blood Warrior's joints, it would have struck him.

Against this first strike, Shi Feng abruptly turned sideways, allowing the silver longsword to brush past his chest. Just as Shi Feng thought of taking a step backward, the Blood Warrior's other sword arrived before him.

Dang!

Sparks scattered.

The Abyssal Blade in Shi Feng's hand barely blocked the Blood Warrior's fatal strike in time. As a result, however, Shi Feng was forced to retreat by four steps before he could stabilize his body. Meanwhile, a damage of over -400 points appeared above his head.

The Blood Warrior's destructive power with a one-handed sword was much weaker than with a two-handed saber. If Shi Feng had a choice, however, he would very much prefer the saber-wielding Blood Warrior.

I can only try my best.

Shi Feng quickly adjusted his footwork, using Void Steps as he saw the Blood Warrior coming in for a second wave of attacks. Suddenly, Shi Feng vanished from the Blood Warrior's sight.

Shi Feng had no intentions of giving up this fight. Currently, the Blood Warrior had less than 70,000 HP remaining. If he strived for a little longer, he could defeat the Special Elite.

Whether it was against players, monsters, or NPCs, Void Steps was a very effective technique.

Only, Void Steps was not suitable against high-tiered monsters and NPCs as these individuals possessed Domains. The owner of a Domain could grasp every movement within their Domain. They had greater perception than what their vision provided, rendering Void Steps useless.

However, the Blood Warrior was merely a Special Elite. Moreover, it was neither a high-intellect NPC nor a high-tiered monster. It could not cope with Shi Feng's Void Steps at all.

After Shi Feng used Void Steps, he frequently disappeared and reappeared. Each time he appeared, he would inflict a significant amount of damage to the Blood Warrior. And every time the Blood Warrior tried to retaliate, Shi Feng would vanish, preventing the Blood Warrior from locking on to its target.

Although this move seemed like a Bug, this was Shi Feng's final trump card, which he normally avoided using.

Void Steps combined of both footwork and breathing techniques. The burden on its user's Stamina was only secondary. Its main downfall was the massive stress it placed on its user's Concentration. Even though Shi Feng's brain activity had improved significantly, utilizing Void Steps frequently was a double-edged sword. He did not know when the technique would backfire and hurt him.

Shi Feng used Void Steps more than forty times in a row, breaking his previous record. Meanwhile, the Blood Warrior's HP fell rapidly. Now, it had less than 40,000 HP remaining. Shi Feng was also dizzy after using the advanced footwork so many times. He felt indescribable fatigue. However, if that were all, he could force himself through it.

Fortunately, before the battle began, Shi Feng had drunk a drop of Life Essence. Hence, both his Stamina and Concentration recovered rapidly right now. Otherwise, he would not have been able to stay conscious.

One hit... Two hits... Three hits...

The Blood Warrior could not resist in the least. It could only endure Shi Feng's assault silently, its HP decreasing by the thousands.

Very quickly, the Special Elite's remaining HP plunged from 40,000 to 30,000, from 30,000 to 20,000, and then finally falling to a critical state. In the end, Shi Feng suddenly appeared behind the Blood Warrior and thrust his sword through its back, destroying its final strand of HP.

I've really pushed myself to the limit this time. When Shi Feng saw the Blood Warrior fall, he breathed a sigh of relief and slumped on the ground.

If the battle had gone on any longer, Shi Feng would have exhausted himself, losing his ability to use Void Steps and his control over his body. He would become sheep at the slaughter.

Fortunately, he had succeeded.

After the Blood Warrior died, Shi Feng's experience bar increased by a sizeable chunk. The EXP he obtained from the Special Elite was more than even a Level 50 Lord offered. Immediately, he reached 9% of Level 35.

Aside from providing Shi Feng with a large sum of EXP, the Blood Warrior also dropped a Level 50 Fine-Gold cape.

[Blood Refining Cape] (Fine-Gold Rank)

Level 50

Equipment Requirement: Strength 400, Agility 800

Defense +571

Strength +68, Agility +54, Endurance +56

Movement Speed +4

Evasion +15

Additional Passive Skill-

Conceal: Increases the difficulty to perceive the wearer.

Additional Active Skill-

Lightning Flash: Appear behind a maximum of four targets. Damage increased by 20%. Duration of 5 seconds.

Cooldown: 2 minutes

“What a good item.” Shi Feng’s eyes shone as he examined the Blood Refining Cloak.

Capes were extremely rare in God’s Domain. They were even rarer than rings and ornaments. Even now, the only other cape Shi Feng had found since joining God’s Domain in this life, and still used, was the Dark Pursuer’s Cape.

Although the Dark Pursuer’s Cape provided very minor buffs to his Attributes, the Skill, Silent Steps, that the cape offered was very powerful. It could even rival an Assassin’s Shadow Steps. Only, the Skill’s Cooldown was somewhat long. However, if used appropriately, it could set one up for an instant kill. In combat, such a Skill was far more valuable than Attributes.

However, now that he had the Blood Refining Cape, as soon as he fulfilled the Equipment Requirements, he would immediately replace the Dark Pursuer’s Cape.

The requirement of Level 50 was not a problem to Shi Feng as he had the Heavenly Dragon’s Breath, which reduced items’ level requirements by 10 Levels. In other words, he could equip the Blood Refining Cape once he reached Level 40. Although the Seven Luminaries Ring also decreased the level requirement of all items by 5 Levels, in God’s Domain, this effect was not stackable. The highest effect would apply.

Aside from dropping the Blood Refining Cape, the Blood Warrior also dropped an ancient gold-rimmed book. The pressure this ancient book radiated even caused Shi Feng to shudder with fear.

Two large words graced the book’s cover.

Solomon’s Treasure!

## Chapter 705 - Whereabouts of a Legendary Item

“This is Solomon’s Treasure?” Shi Feng could not help his surprise.

Originally, he had thought Solomon’s Treasure would be a mountain of gold or an ocean of silver. It should at least be a high-ranking Treasure Chest. However, he had never expected Solomon’s Treasure to be a book.

“Could it be an Epic item?”

Thinking so, Shi Feng picked up the ancient book.

The pressure the book radiated instilled fear into anyone who neared it. This was a power that only an Epic ranked or above item possessed.

In God’s Domain, although Epic Weapons and Equipment were precious, Epic tools were far more rare.

Take the Bible of Darkness for example.

Even without occupying an equipment slot, it increased a player’s strength significantly. This was a benefit that no weapon or piece of equipment could provide.

After Shi Feng picked up the book, he was suddenly alerted of a system notification.

System: You have obtained the Ancient Document "Solomon's Treasure." Do you wish to activate the Ancient Document?

"So, it's an Ancient Document." Excitement appeared on Shi Feng's face upon hearing that the book was actually an Ancient Document. "No wonder it's called a treasure."

There were many kinds of books in God's Domain. Some were meant for reading, some could be used to learn Skills, and some offered their own abilities. The Bible of Darkness belonged to the third category. In addition to these three, there was another category that was extremely rare and special—the Ancient Document.

Ancient Documents held records of God's Domain. However, players that obtained an Ancient Document had only one chance to activate it. Upon activation, players could obtain one of God's Domain's secrets.

Although this seemed trivial, in the past, players in God's Domain had gone crazy over a single Ancient Document.

In the past, Ancient Documents sold in the Blackwing Auction House at much higher prices than even Fragmented Legendary items.

Why were they worth so much money?

They were so valued because an Ancient Document could unlock the whereabouts of a Legendary item, offering players a high chance of obtaining one for themselves.

Of course, aside from Legendary items, one could also learn the whereabouts of powerful Super Skills or tools. However, with the goal of growing stronger, a Legendary item was undeniably the best choice.

Legendary items in God's Domain were extremely limited. One had to expend unimaginable effort to claim one. One needed luck and strength.

Every Legendary item was extremely difficult to obtain. Moreover, the game would never reveal a Legendary item's exact location to players, only clues.

Unfortunately, clues were never 100% accurate, and most of the clues relating to Legendary items were likely traps.

Even after a long search, one might find nothing but a dead end, realizing that all their effort had been for naught.

In the past, to obtain a single Legendary item, many large Guilds had mobilized every available Guild force, spending a large amount of time to gain some clue. With the many clues they obtained, they would search for the location of said Legendary item. One could just imagine the manpower and resources that the search required. Hence, even after mobilizing an entire Guild, the chances of successfully claiming a Legendary item were quite low.

However, one could locate a Legendary item with an Ancient Document. There was no need to check every clue they had obtained. Hence, Ancient Documents were precious and valuable.

“It seems that my trip wasn’t a waste.” Shi Feng grinned as he looked down at the Ancient Document in his hands.

Although he had quite a few clues regarding Legendary items, he did not actually know how to obtain them as no player would ever reveal such high-level secrets. In the past, those who had obtained Legendary items kept a tight lid on any information. Shi Feng had only found a few clues after his Guild invested in quiet investigation.

Although it is impossible to obtain a Legendary item at my current level, knowing the precise whereabouts of one will allow me to prepare. Shi Feng then clicked to activate Solomon’s Treasure.

After Shi Feng confirmed his decision, Solomon’s Treasure opened and released a blinding, golden glow. In the next moment, a fivefold magic array appeared before Shi Feng. Countless runes danced inside the magic array.

Suddenly, the space surrounding Shi Feng froze. Shi Feng’s connection with the outside world severed completely.

System: Ancient Document, Solomon’s Treasure, activating...

System: Beginning connection with the Main God System...

System: Verification completed. Ancient Document confirmed as the Sixth Volume of Solomon’s Book. Allowing connection with God’s Domain’s database...

System: Connection with God's Domain's database is successful. You have one chance to access God's Domain's database. Please enter desired inquiry.

Luckily, I know the name of a Legendary item. No one else would have any idea of what to search for. Shi Feng's grin deepened. Immediately, he entered the words "Solomon's Sword."

System: Searching for information on Solomon's Sword...

System: Search completed. Confirming data on Solomon's Sword...

System: Confirmation completed. Do you wish to accept the information?

Shi Feng then clicked to accept.

Shi Feng felt a plethora of information relating to Solomon's Sword flow into his brain. The system displayed a total of 3,687 clues before him. Immediately, Shi Feng felt a headache coming on.

Verifying one clue was an extremely difficult task, not to mention 3,687. Even a large Guild would go mad if it had to verify every one of these clues.

At this point, Shi Feng came to understand one thing.

Those who had found Legendary items were either players who had received the blessing of the Main God System and possessed heaven-defying luck, or they were as frightening powerful as Super Guilds. Not only did Super Guilds have an abundance of members at their disposal, but they also possessed

monster-like experts. Only with this kind of manpower could they search for a Legendary item. It was practically impossible for a third-rate or second-rate Guild.

“I didn’t think that all of the clues I gained in the past were all fakes. Fortunately, I haven’t attempted to verify those clues. Otherwise, I would have wasted a ton of time,” Shi Feng said, relieved.

Among the 3,687 clues listed, the system only confirmed five as legitimate. In other words, only these five clues could lead him to Solomon’s Sword, one of the Ten Great Legendary Weapons.

If Shi Feng had not obtained the Ancient Document, he would never find Solomon’s Sword.

Of the 3,687 clues, every clue required a long time to verify. The easiest clue required one to spend two or three days’ time, while the more difficult clues required up to half a month to verify. Moreover, due to level restrictions, Shi Feng would not be able to visit many of these places yet. Even if he only needed to spend one day verifying each clue, it would still take ten years to plow through them all...

Without the Ancient Document, obtaining Solomon’s Sword was a dream.

After receiving the information, Shi Feng grew somewhat dizzy. Suddenly, the sound of another system notification reached his ears.

Chapter 706 - Disaster Treasure Chest

White River City, Divine Colosseum:

Ever since they had discovered that the Flower of Seven Sins targeted Zero Wing, Aqua Rose and the Guild's upper echelons had holed up inside the Divine Colosseum. They continuously expended Magic Crystals and Hundred Berry Wine in the Trial Tower and Divine Battlefield to train as much as possible.

As a result, Zero Wing's upper echelons broke their previous records in the Trial Tower again and again, shocking White River City's players. Awe towards Zero Wing swept through the city once again.

Meanwhile, inside the Divine Colosseum, a bald man in gray leather armor stared at the Trial List while sipping Vodka.

Suddenly, a thin, cloaked youth walked up and sat down beside this bald man.

"Accurate Nine, what's the situation regarding Zero Wing's upper echelons?" the thin youth sent a whisper to the bald man as he ordered an Ice-Blue Spirit.

"Their strength has been improving rapidly. Currently, three people have reached the eighth floor. Seven people have reached the seventh floor. My guess is that it won't be very long before the others reach the seventh floor as well. It would not be easy to kill all of them back to Level 0," the bald man, Accurate Nine, responded, laughing. "However, the stronger they are, the better. This way, we can charge more for the job."

Nodding, the thin youth said, "Indeed. I just wonder whether or not Open Source Corporation will be willing to pay the price."

"I think they will," Accurate Nine said as he handed the NPC bartender another Magic Crystal, purchasing another bottle of Vodka. "Magic Crystals are the lifeline of all of God's Domain's players. If OSC obtains the Stoneclaw Mountains, their future earnings will far surpass the cost of hiring us."

“Let’s hope that OSC is willing to pay this price, then. It’s been a long time since I’ve accepted a major job. Zero Wing should prove to be quite the challenge. I can also use this chance to polish my skills a little bit,” the youth said. Downing the Ice-Blue Spirit, he shifted his gaze to the three names listed on the Trial List’s eighth floor. “Huh? Where’s Black Flame’s name?”

“Black Flame has always been mysterious. Even now, I have yet to discover the exact extent of this person’s strength. However, based on the information I’ve collected thus far, he should have progressed relatively far in the Refinement Realm. He might have even reached your standard,” Accurate Nine said seriously as he sent a sideway glance at the thin youth beside him.

“My standard? The second stage of the Refinement Realm? That’s interesting. I look forward to taking him on,” the youth said, a hint of excitement shining in his eyes. He looked like a predator that had just caught the scent of new prey.

“Pleiades, don’t even think about it. Silver has already reserved Black Flame. At most, you can pick your target from the Trial Tower’s eighth floor,” Accurate Nine said, smiling as he pointed to Violet Cloud’s, Fire Dance’s, and Aqua Rose’s names.

“Silver? Why is he suddenly interested in this mission?” the youth named Pleiades said, slightly surprised. “Hasn’t he always targeted those old monsters?”

“How should I know what’s going through his mind?” Accurate Nine said, shrugging. “However, OSC has lucked out this time. Normally, an expert of Silver’s standards would not even consider this type of mission. Now, it’s just a matter of whether OSC will pay to hire Silver.”

“This fella named Black Flame really is unlucky. He has actually caught Silver’s attention. Not even heaven can save him,” Pleiades said sympathetically.

The Flower of Seven Sins' missions were divided into several levels. Experts within the organization were similarly ranked. An expert like himself only ranked at the intermediate level, whereas Silver was a peak expert in the Flower of Seven Sins. An expert like Silver dealing with Black Flame was simply a waste of time.

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As Pleiades and Accurate Nine occupied themselves with their conversation, one of Star-Moon City's first-rate Guilds,, the Star Alliance, had officially declared war against Zero Wing, announcing their intentions to seize Stone Forest Town.

This news spread quickly throughout Star-Moon Kingdom.

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The Stoneclaw Mountains' outer region:

A 500-man team ravaged a Half-orc settlement.

A settlement typically contained Lord ranked Half-orcs. A powerful settlement might even house three or four Lords. Ten or more Chieftain ranked Half-orcs usually patrolled the area as well.

In this Half-orc settlement, there were a total of three Half-orc Lords and 17 Half-orc Chieftains. However, against this team of 500 players, they could not offer any form of resistance.

Currently, almost all of the settlement's Half-orcs were already dead. Only one Level 38 Half-orc Lord continued to resist desperately. In the end, however, a silver-armored female Berserker still claimed its life.

"Snow, something has happened with the Star Alliance," Zhao Yueru, who wore a purple-red robe, suddenly reported. "A moment ago, the Star Alliance declared war against Zero Wing and sent many of their elites to deal with Zero Wing's members."

"In the end, the Star Alliance's Elders had been mesmerized by the money that OSC offered," Gentle Snow said, laughing lightly. "Although I do not know what kind of hidden cards the Star Alliance possesses, this is a good opportunity for us. Contact the our other members immediately. Tell them that Ouroboros is going to declare war against the Star Alliance as well."

Shortly after, more shocking news spread throughout Star-Moon City.

The two first-rate Guilds of Star-Moon City were finally going to take action. This war would be unlike the previous small skirmishes. This time, both Guilds would face each other head-on. In the future, whenever the members of either Guild encounter each other, only one would walk away.

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Despite a storm currently brewing in Star-Moon City, Shi Feng was oblivious.

System: Quest "Solomon's Treasure" completed.

Quest rewards: 10,000,000 EXP, 20 Free Mastery Points, and one Completely Random Treasure Chest.

After the system notification faded, Shi Feng's experience bar increased by a small chunk. A wooden treasure chest emitting a purple glow appeared inside his bag.

[Completely Random Treasure Chest]

May contain a reward or a punishment. Disappears after five uses.

"Isn't this the Disaster Treasure Chest?" Shi Feng was suddenly speechless as he stared at the dazzling Treasure Chest inside his bag.

"Completely Random Treasure Chest" was the name the system gave. The players who were familiar with the Treasure Chest, however, had another name for it: the Disaster Treasure Chest.

Nine out of ten times, opening the Completely Random Treasure Chest resulted in a punishment. Moreover, the punishments were relatively severe. The punishments ranged from losing one or more Levels to losing some Attributes permanently. Some punishments even prevented players from gaining any EXP or reduced their Attack Power for many days. Hence, it gained the name Disaster Treasure Chest.

Of course, if players obtained a reward, they deserved a celebration.

In the past, many players had bragged on the forums about the rewards they had obtained.

There were players who had actually gained an Epic item from the Random Treasure Chest, while some had obtained a complete Dark-Gold Set Equipment. Others had been rewarded a top-tier Mount. To put it simply, the rewards the Treasure Chest provided were extremely tempting.

Reward and punishment, It was up to players to decide if the risk was worth it.

To Shi Feng, however, the potential benefits were greater than the risks.

A player's Luck Attribute greatly affected the outcome of their draws. Even if Shi Feng opened a punishment, due to his Luck Attribute, it was possible that the punishment would be light.

Currently, Zero Wing faced the threat of the Flower of Seven Sins. Hence, it was of utmost importance that he grow stronger. Naturally, Shi Feng would not let go of this perfect opportunity to improve his strength. Not to mention, his chances of obtaining a reward were much higher than others.

“Hopefully, I’ll draw something good.”

Shi Feng then activated Divine Providence and stretched out his hand to open the Disaster Treasure Chest.

As Shi Feng gradually opened the Treasure Chest, a golden ray of light escaped from the wooden box.

Hua!

The golden light merged with Shi Feng's body.

Shi Feng immediately felt a renewed and improved strength, his accumulated fatigue weakening significantly.

System: Completely Random Treasure Chest has been activated. Rewarding 10 points to Hidden Attribute: Fortitude.

"A Hidden Attribute as a reward, I've lucked out this time," Shi Feng muttered as he clenched his fists. He could feel his fatigue lessening.

Fortitude was the most important Attribute among the Four Great Hidden Attributes.

Hidden Attributes would not increase a player's damage. Similarly, it would not decrease the damage a player received. However, they were far more useful than Basic Attributes. Unfortunately, Hidden Attributes would not increase with a player's level. They would only increase through special means.

Meanwhile, Fortitude was somewhat similar to a monster's Mana Body.

First, it decreased the impact external injuries had on a player's combat power.

The second effect was to decrease Stamina and Concentration consumption during battle, allowing players to fight for longer periods.

Third, it reduced the impact Stamina and Concentration depletion had on a player's combat power.

Due to these three major effects, players thirsted for the Fortitude Attribute. It was especially true for experts.

Expert players normally incorporated certain combat techniques during battle. These combat techniques placed a heavy burden on their Stamina and Concentration. Take Void Steps for example. Although the burden on Shi Feng's Stamina was minimal, it was a massive burden on his Concentration. Hence, Shi Feng had to limit how often he used the technique in his fights.

If a player's Fortitude was sufficiently high, they could use such combat techniques far more often. In turn, this would improve their chances of victory.

In addition, against high-tiered monsters such as a Grand Lord or monsters that possessed Special Skills that could reduce a person's Stamina and Concentration, Fortitude was a severe advantage.

In the past, there had been a Tier 5 player that had become famous due his monstrously high Fortitude.

Berserker Saint Broken Flow.

Due to his extraordinarily high Fortitude, he opted to fight battles of mutual destruction. With such tactics, Broken Flow had even defeated those whose strength and techniques were superior to his. As a result, Broken Flow had become one of the Twelve Sacred Berserkers.

As God's Domain was still in its initial stages, it was extremely difficult to obtain the Fortitude Attribute with players' low levels. Even Shi Feng did not know of any good methods to gain the Hidden Attribute at his level. Normally, players would only begin to encounter the Hidden Attribute after Level 50.

Moreover, of the methods and quests Shi Feng knew, the majority only rewarded one or two points of Fortitude. The fact that he had managed to obtain 10 points now had saved him plenty of time and effort. Hence, Shi Feng was quite satisfied.

With how he had profited from opening the Disaster Treasure Chest for the first time, Shi Feng quickly proceeded to open it a second time.

The second time he opened the Treasure Chest, he obtained the Tier 3 Magic Scroll, Thunder's Wrath. It was a Tier 3 large-scale destruction Spell and covered an area of 100 yards.

The third time Shi Feng opened the Treasure Chest, a black beam struck him, and his Agility Attribute permanently decreased by 25 points.

To ordinary players, a 25 Agility point loss was massive. Even after obtaining their Tier 1 classes, they would have to level up three times to make up lost points. To Shi Feng, however, the loss was acceptable.

The Abyssal Blade already provided with an additional 2 Free Attribute Points each time he leveled up. In addition to the Golden Stigmata, a loss of 25 Agility would not affect him too badly.

When players reached Tier 2, the amount of Free Attribute Points they obtained with each level up increased to 20. At that time, it would be easy to make up for this loss.

There were also plenty of tools that could permanently increase a player's Attributes. In fact, Shi Feng knew of a few that were relatively easy to obtain. Moreover, he had already obtained 10 Fortitude and a Tier 3 large-scale destruction Spell. Those two were more than enough to make up for this meager setback.

When Shi Feng opened the Completely Random Treasure Chest for the fourth time, he was struck by a purple beam.

System: You have been cursed. EXP gained from killing monsters decreased by 70% for ten days.

"Fortunately, I still have plenty of options to level up," Shi Feng frowned slightly as he saw his new punishment. Very quickly, however, he dispelled the disappointment from his mind as he muttered, "With two punishments in a row, let the last be a reward!"

Shi Feng then opened the Treasure Chest for the final time. This time, a purple-red potion appeared inside the wooden box.

[Dragon Slayer Potion] (Consumable)

Increases all Attributes by 100% and all Resistances by 100 points for 1 minute.

Cooldown: 3 hours

“This potion is insane!” Shi Feng could not help his shock.

In Shi Feng’s memories, the best potion he had ever seen only increased a player’s Main Attribute by 100% and offered a small amount of Magic Resistance. The Dragon Slayer Potion, however, actually increased all Attributes by 100%. This was, by far, the most intense Attribute increase Shi Feng had ever seen a potion offer.

Even the effects of the Heavenly Dragon’s Breath’s Activatable Skill, Heavenly Dragon’s Power, could not compare to this.

If he drank this potion, it would be the equivalent of wearing an additional Legendary item. He could challenge opponents of a higher Tier.

Unfortunately, the Treasure Chest only rewarded one Dragon Slayer Potion. If he could produce more, the Flower of Seven Sins would be no more than a flea to Zero Wing.

After using all five draws, the Completely Random Treasure Chest disappeared. Shi Feng then stored the Dragon Slayer Potion away and took out Solomon’s Treasure to begin sorting through the information he had gained regarding Solomon’s Sword.

After using an Ancient Document, the information that flowed into the user’s mind only offered a general summary, whereas the detailed information was recorded inside the Ancient Document.

After Shi Feng studied the information for several hours, he finally understood how he could obtain one of God’s Domain’s Ten Great Legendary Weapons, Solomon’s Sword.

The complete Solomon's Sword had long since disappeared. It had been shattered during the Great Destruction. Solomon's Sword broke into five fragments and had been scattered throughout God's Domain. Later, different people had found each of these fragments. These people had recast the shattered fragments to form new weapons.

Each of these new weapons contained an immense power. However, due to the passage of time, the inhabitants of God's Domain had forgotten about Solomon's Sword. Instead, these five weapons had shaken God's Domain with their might, their names passed down by the common populace.

As the fragments of Solomon's Sword had not been equal, the might of the new weapons differed from each other. Among the created weapons, the most famous was the third-ranking sword on God's Domain's Famed Swords List, Broken Steel. Broken Steel was leagues stronger than Shi Feng's Abyssal Blade.

There is no need to think about Broken Steel right now. With my current strength and level, it is impossible to obtain. I can only approach it slowly. Shi Feng was extremely familiar with Broken Steel. However, he could not go after it right now.

In the past, among the Twelve Sacred Swordsmen, the number one Sword Saint used none other than Broken Steel. Shi Feng had also witnessed the sword's might personally.

Although it was not a Legendary Weapon, its Attributes and Skills were not much weaker than a Legendary Weapon.

If he could obtain Broken Steel in this life, his strength would soar to unspeakable heights.

## Chapter 708 - Five Clues

As the most powerful sword among the weapons recreated from the fragments of Solomon's Sword, Broken Steel was, naturally, the most difficult to obtain among the five weapons.

Even if Shi Feng wanted the challenge of obtaining it right now, only death would await him.

Shi Feng carefully researched the five clues.

Among the five recreated weapons, three could not be obtained before reaching Level 100. He could only attempt to find two while he was below Level 100.

Among these two weapons, the easiest was located at the Top of the World.

"Dragon's Maw?" Shi Feng fell into deep thought when he realized where the clue led him.

The Dragon's Maw was one of the regional maps found at the Top of the World. It was a Level 60 map. However, the area was far more dangerous than any ordinary Level 60 map.

Based on what Shi Feng had heard about the Dragon's Maw, the map had even claimed the lives of many Tier 4 players. Moreover, they had died tragically. Not only had they lost some EXP and a piece of equipment, but they also permanently lost Basic Attributes upon death.

Even Shi Feng wasn't sure how much they had lost exactly.

However, the fact that a Level 60 map had even caused the deaths of Tier 4 players was more than a little intimidating.

The Dragon's Maw was only a short distance from Mount Sogar. Shi Feng only needed to travel across two leveling areas. If he left the Blood Refining Passage, he could reach the map quickly. However, with his current strength, he was more than 90% certain that he would die there. Shi Feng did not particularly mind dying. However, the risk of losing Attributes outweighed the gains.

If he wished to increase his chances of obtaining the weapon hidden in the Dragon's Maw, the best option was to go there after reaching Level 50 and completing his class change.

Fortunately, he didn't have to worry about someone else claiming the weapon before him.

If one wished to travel to the Top of the World through normal means, they would need the strength of a Tier 4 class at the very minimum. Unless, of course, they possessed a Tier 4 Position Teleportation Scroll. However, such an item was extremely rare. A second Tier 4 Magic Scroll would most likely not appear in God's Domain for a long time. Hence, the chances of players reaching the Dragon's Maw were practically non-existent.

Just as Shi Feng prepared to leave the Blood Refining Passage and grind monsters nearby, he suddenly heard the sound of a system warning.

"What? I've used up the Nutrient Solution already? Didn't I just replace it yesterday?" This sound was very familiar to Shi Feng. If the Nutrient Solution were about to run out, the system would warn him. "But it's already four in the afternoon right now. I should log out and get some rest."

Shi Feng had spent practically all of his time killing Blood Fighters in the Blood Refining Passage. He had not logged out to train or relax. Now that he had completed his quest, this was a good time for him to take a break.

Having made his decision, Shi Feng logged out of God's Domain.

Inside the luxurious bedroom, the lid of the pure-white virtual gaming cabin slowly lifted. Shi Feng emerged.

The sun illuminated his room, shining on a wide array of modern electronic smart devices displayed before Shi Feng.

As the Big Dipper Training Center's luxury villa, an ordinary apartment could never compare to the Greenwater Villa. Artificial Intelligence managed the rooms, and whatever Shi Feng wanted done, he only needed to issue the command, and the Villa's AI would complete the task. It was an extremely convenient place to live.

After exiting the virtual gaming cabin, Shi Feng felt an indescribable physical weakness.

Sure enough, I exhausted myself during my fight with the Blood Warrior. Shi Feng smiled bitterly.

Although he had always focused on improving his brain's activity, it was simply too difficult to get his hands on S-rank Nutrient Fluids. Even if he were the one providing the money, Big Dipper could only procure a limited quantity. To nurture Fire Dance and the others, he kept only five bottles for himself. Hence, he would use them conservatively.

This was the reason that he did not use Void Steps unless absolutely necessary.

However, this quest had been very important. If he had been unable to defeat the Blood Refining Warrior, he would not have obtained the Ancient Document or discovered Solomon's Sword's whereabouts.

Following which, Shi Feng drank two bottles of S-rank Nutrient Fluid before he recovered from his weakened state.

S-rank Nutrient Fluids really are impressive. It's unfortunate that even Big Dipper can't obtain more in a short time. Otherwise, if I had a large supply, I could push Fire Dance and the others into the Refinement Realm quickly. Shi Feng sighed with disappointment.

Both Fire Dance and Violet Cloud had long since set half a foot into the Refinement Realm. However, neither could break past the final hurdle, entering the new world.

Otherwise, with Fire Dance and Violet Cloud's equipment, their combat power could rank among the top five experts throughout Star-Moon Kingdom.

There were many expert players in God's Domain. Neither the Red List nor the God's Domain Experts List could take into account every expert in Star-Moon Kingdom. Among these experts, many were still unknown, hiding frightening combat power.

Take the members of Midnight Tea Party for example. In the past, during God's Domain's early stages, the majority of the independent team's members had been unknown existences. However, every one of them possessed astonishing strength. Only, their goals differed from other players, so they had never bothered to make themselves known to the public.

However, with Fire Dance and Violet Cloud's equipment advantage, there was a very high possibility that they would rank among the top five in the kingdom once they reached the Refinement Realm.

Just as Shi Feng was about to head to the gym to train, his quantum watch rang as his class's female monitor, Zhao Ruoxi, called.

Zhao Ruoxi's smiling face appeared on the screen. With a cold voice, she asked, "Shi Feng, do you remember what today is?"

Shi Feng was about to ask, but after hearing Zhao Ruoxi's tone, he immediately came to a realization.

He had previously agreed to attend Zhao Ruoxi's birthday party. However, due to God's Domain, he had completely forgotten about the event...

Although Zhao Ruoxi wore a warm and elegant smile, Shi Feng knew how angry his classmate actually was.

As if she had known that Shi Feng would forget about her birthday, Zhao Ruoxi sighed as she said, "My car is parked outside the villa. You have thirty minutes."

"I'll be right there!" Shi Feng hurriedly began to tidy himself.

Roughly ten minutes later, Shi Feng emerged from the Greenwater Villa.

Zhao Ruoxi wore a navy blue dress and a pure white ribbon atop her head. Her long, silky hair swept down to her waist, her prideful figure even rivaling Gentle Snow's in God's Domain. As she stood beside her luxury sports car, passersby could not help but turn to look at her.

"Who is that? She's so beautiful!"

"She's even more beautiful than our school's beauty! I wonder who she's waiting for?"

Some of the men training at the Big Dipper Training Center drooled as they stared at Zhao Ruoxi. However, as this was the Greenwater Villa, the person living here was definitely someone extraordinary. Hence, the most they did was look, none of them daring to approach Zhao Ruoxi.

"You're finally here! Get in!" Zhao Ruoxi, who had initially worn a displeased expression, revealed a happy smile when she saw Shi Feng. "Hurry up! We should still be able to make it in time if we leave now."

"What's the rush? Isn't the party at six?" Shi Feng asked curiously.

"You'll understand once you get there." Zhao Ruoxi revealed a proud smile. Pretending to be mysterious, she said, "However, when the time comes, you'll definitely be shocked."

"Shocked, huh?" Shi Feng simply smiled in response, no longer probing the matter as he slid into the car.

Zhao Ruoxi then stomped on the accelerator, her sports car rolling up a cloud of smoke as it left the Greenwater Villa.

## Chapter 709 - Birthday Party

High-rise buildings loomed over the bustling, downtown streets. However, there were two buildings that stood out from the rest: a pair of twin towers that were over 300-stories tall. The twin towers shone like the city's emperors, overlooking all life inside the city limits.

These towers had long since become one of the symbols of Jin Hai City.

At the same time, the twin towers were also Jin Hai City's famous 6-star hotel, the Blue Ocean Horizon.

Having a meal or staying a night in this hotel cost more than a month's salary for an ordinary office worker. Normally, only Jin Hai City's big-shots could afford to dine or rest here. Ordinary people could only watch from far away.

Zhao Ruoxi was the Zhao Group's princess.

The Zhao Group's influence in Jin Hai City was massive. Their yearly income was astounding. Furthermore, they were one of the Blue Ocean Horizon's major shareholders.

Zhao Ruoxi stopped her car in front of the Blue Ocean Horizon's entrance. Immediately, four valets came up and opened the driver's door respectfully. When Zhao Ruoxi exited her car, the four valets were momentarily mesmerized. However, they very quickly snapped out of their daze.

Not only was Zhao Ruoxi an absolute beauty, but she also arrived in an impressively luxurious car. There was no doubt that her identity was extraordinary. She also exuded a noble aura. She was definitely out of their lowly reach.

Meanwhile, Shi Feng, who emerged from the other side of the car, similarly shocked the four valets, though in an entirely different way.

As the Blue Ocean Horizon's valets, they had seen all sorts of people. Hence, they were quite confident of their judgment, particularly of a person's attire. Although Shi Feng wore a very fitting suit, based on the suit's design and fabric, they could immediately tell that it was nothing special. The suit was far below the Blue Ocean Horizon's standards.

Is he a bodyguard?

The four valets wondered. However, they were surprised when Zhao Ruoxi slid her arm into Shi Feng's as they made their way into the hotel. The valets' eyes nearly popped out of their sockets. All four were utterly dumbfounded.

After entering the Blue Ocean Horizon, Zhao Ruoxi led Shi Feng to the Hotel's top floor. There, one could view Jin Hai City in its entirety. The sight was breathtaking.

Many people already mingled inside the large, magnificent banquet hall. They were all famous figures and held influential positions within the city. Normally, it would be difficult to meet even one of them. Today, however, so many of these powerful figures had gathered here. One could just imagine how much influence the Zhao Group possessed.

“Is that the young lady of the Zhao Group?” a handsome young man in a white suit could not help but shift his gaze towards Zhao Ruoxi, who had just entered the hall. Unconsciously, he muttered, “If I can marry her, I won’t have to lift a finger for the next hundred years.”

“You?” Lan Hailong, who was dressed in a black, high-class suit, shook his head. Smirking, he said, “Duan Xianglin, you don’t recognize the man beside the young lady, do you?”

“Looking at how he’s dressed and his peasant-like temperament, do you think he could be a challenge for a prince of a major financial group like myself?” the youth named Duan Xianglin asked disdainfully.

Although the Duan Group could not compare to the Zhao Group, it was still one of the top ranking financial firms in Jin Hai City. If he wanted to, a group of beautiful women would flock to him with a wave of his hand. How could a lucky peasant possibly be a match for him?

Moreover, even if Zhao Ruoxi had taken a liking to the brat, the Zhao Group would never agree to the match.

“I guess it’s expected that you don’t know. After all, you only recently returned to the city. The man beside Miss Zhao is Shi Feng. He is the martial arts master who is currently in charge of the Big Dipper Training Center.

Duan Xianglin suddenly fell silent. Although he doubted the claim, Lan Hailong was a good friend of his. He had no reason to lie to him. Moreover, there was no point to such a lie, as the truth would come to light with a little investigation.

If Shi Feng had become an internal force expert at such a young age, it would not be surprising if he became a top-level international fighter in the future. They were currently living in the age of combat. The reputation and status an international fighter possessed were immense, and even an existence like the Zhao Group want to fawn over them, not to mention a small financial group.

Lan Hailong had a complex look in his eyes as he watched Shi Feng enter the banquet hall.

Not too long ago, Shi Feng had merely been a minor character, yet the youth had become someone who even he looked up to. However, Lan Hailong did not look up to Shi Feng due to his title as a martial arts master, but due to Zero Wing!

Among everyone present, only Lan Hailong truly knew how amazing Shi Feng was.

Currently, God's Domain's popularity grew by the day, with major corporations investing in the game with fervor. One could already imagine what kind of future the game would offer its experts.

Although the Shadow Guild under his control had developed fairly well so far, compared to Zero Wing, Shadow was a joke.

Shadow was just one of the many Guilds in White River City. However, Zero Wing had become the city's absolute overlord.

Even Stone Forest Town, which every Guild in Star-Moon Kingdom lusted after, had fallen under Zero Wing's control. The Stoneclaw Mountains were Zero Wing's backyard.

If Zero Wing continued developing at this rate, it might even be possible for the upstart Guild to become Star-Moon Kingdom's overlord. The Guild's influence at that time could easily be surmised with one word—frightening. Meanwhile, Lan Hailong had heard that Shi Feng had become one of Zero Wing's upper echelons. Hence, how could he possibly not be impressed?

It would have been awesome had I managed to form a close relationship with him. It is all that foolish Ling Feilong's fault! He made me lose such a perfect opportunity! Even now, Lan Hailong grew angry whenever he thought about Ling Feilong. However, he had long since banished Ling Feilong from Shadow Workshop, severing all ties with the foolish bastard. Otherwise, in the off chance Ling Feilong managed to provoke Shi Feng, he would cry himself to death if Shi Feng mobilized Zero Wing to deal with Shadow.

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Inside one of the luxurious rooms on the top floor banquet hall:

Two middle-aged men conversed quietly. One wore a silvery-gray suit, while the other wore a set of white robes. When Zhao Ruoxi entered the room with Shi Feng, the two men ended their conversation immediately and shifted their gazes towards Shi Feng.

"Old Zhao, this must be the little brat you've been talking about, right? Indeed, I am impressed," the white-robed man could not help but utter words of praise after giving Shi Feng a rough evaluation.

Zhao Jianhua, who wore the silver suit, said happily, "Of course! Didn't I say that Ruoxi's foresight is much better than mine?"

"Second uncle!" A faint blush appeared on Zhao Ruoxi's cheeks. Hurriedly explaining, she said, "It's not what you think!"

"I get it; I get it," Zhao Jianhua nodded, giving his niece an understanding look.

While Zhao Jianhua poked fun at Zhao Ruoxi, Shi Feng focused his attention on the middle-aged man beside Zhao Jianhua. Shi Feng could feel the aura of a martial artist coming off of this man. However, his aura was different from that of experts like Lei Bao.

Standing before this white-robed man, Shi Feng felt as if this man's aura dominated the room.

It felt as if the white-robed man were the ruler of this space.

A Domain? Shi Feng could not help his shock. However, he quickly denied this thought. No, that's not right. This isn't a Domain. Having a Domain is like forming a separate world around oneself. Owners of Domains have absolute control within their Domains. These existences can no longer be considered human. The danger they give off is also on a whole different level.

Although the white-robed man before him was not as powerful as Martial Dragon, he was not far from achieving a Domain, either.

Just who is this? Shi Feng wondered as he watched the white-robed man before him.

There were extremely few internal force experts in the world. However, looking at the man before him, Shi Feng judged that not only was he an internal force expert, but he was also a monster who was close to grasping a Domain.

Such a character had actually appeared in a small place like Jin Hai City. It was truly inconceivable.

## Chapter 710 - The Mysterious Shi Feng

Ever since Shi Feng's brain activity had improved, his senses had become extraordinarily sharp.

The white-robed man before him hid his strength very well. Currently, he felt like the quiet ocean that would accommodate everything. He felt comfortable to be around. In front of this man, Shi Feng could not find it in himself to generate any hostility at all.

However, it was precisely because of this that Shi Feng was afraid of him.

He had honed his senses through countless life and death battles in God's Domain. Particularly, after his brain activity had improved, it had become a lot harder for others to put his mind at ease.

However, the white-robed man's every action easily slipped through his warning senses.

If the man before him suddenly decided to strike, the consequences would be dire.

"Young man, you are really impressive. You have actually become one of Zero Wing's upper echelons at such a young age. Sure enough, Zero Wing has hidden itself quite deeply," the white-robed man said in a very friendly tone as he smiled at Shi Feng. "Ah, right. I haven't introduced myself. I'm Yuan Tiexin, an Elder of the Secret Pavilion."

"Shi Feng, haven't you been playing God's Domain for some time? Uncle Yuan is an expert of the virtual gaming world's older generation. Although he might not be a match for you in real life, in virtual reality games, he might be even more powerful than you! This is a good chance to ask him for some guidance," Zhao Ruoxi said, her lips unconsciously curling into a smile when she saw Shi Feng's surprised expression. Before this, Shi Feng had maintained a calm composure. He had always been the one to hold

the initiative. Now that she watched something fluster Shi Feng, she could not help but feel a little proud of herself.

Shi Feng was speechless when he saw Zhao Ruoxi's joyous look.

Yuan Tiexin was a hidden expert in the truest sense of the word. Both in fighting and gaming, the middle-aged man was far above him.

It was a fact that he had played God's Domain for more than a decade now. However, one's superiority was not determined by the amount of time one played God's Domain. Otherwise, there would not have been so many players stuck at Tier 2, unable to advance to Tier 3, even after ten years. One also had to take into account aspects such as opportunity, talent, and luck.

For example, most people would live out their lives in obscurity; some would spend only a few years to reach astounding heights that others would never touch throughout their entire lives.

God's Domain was similar in this manner.

Shi Feng was not so arrogant as to think that he was invincible in God's Domain. He had only utilized his memories to obtain certain opportunities.

"Little girl, you speak too highly of me. Young man, I was only interested in meeting you after hearing Ruoxi say that she'd bring someone promising, one of Zero Wing's upper echelons. To suggest asking me for guidance...I'm not that amazing of a person. You can just call me Uncle Yuan," Yuan Tiexin said, chuckling as he shook his head. "Let's have a seat before we continue our chat."

Although Yuan Tiexin had spoken casually, Shi Feng did not dare to be careless around the man.

The Secret Pavilion was not just any Guild. It was an existence that everyone in the virtual gaming world knew. The Secret Pavilion specialized in collecting and selling information on the major powers of various games. The Secret Pavilion ability to compile the God's Domain Experts List showed how skilled it was in gathering information.

"Uncle Yuan, you've constantly talked about Shi Feng's status in Zero Wing. Is Zero Wing an amazing Guild?" Zhao Ruoxi asked curiously.

Zhao Jianhua was also curious.

Yuan Tiexin had mentioned Zero Wing multiple times now and had even praised Shi Feng's potential. After knowing Yuan Tiexin for so long, this was the first time he had seen the man react in such a way.

Although he did not have much contact with virtual reality games, he knew that Yuan Tiexin's status in the virtual gaming world was quite high.

Particularly, after God's Domain became popular, Yuan Tiexin's status had grown with it. Many major international corporations had tried to contact Yuan Tiexin, some going as far as fawning over him. Although their Zhao Group possessed some status and wealth in Jin Hai City, they were nothing compared to those major international corporations. They were not even on the same level. Yet, such powers fawned over Yuan Tiexin.

Although this was Zhao Ruoxi's birthday party, Zhao Jianhua had been surprised that he had convinced Yuan Tiexin to attend.

Zhao Jianhua knew Yuan Tiexin's itinerary. Today, he should be meeting with the upper echelons of a major international corporation, yet he had come here instead.

The man had not attended out of respect for Zhao Jianhua, either.

He had joined them today to meet Shi Feng.

Thinking up to this point, Zhao Jianhua could not help but inwardly sigh. However, he was also pleased.

"You two might not know this since you don't play God's Domain, but Zero Wing is a very popular Guild in the virtual gaming world. It has caught the attention of various parties. Based on my understanding, even Open Source Corporation has set its eyes on Zero Wing, going so far as to offer a high price to purchase some of the Guild's shares. However, Zero Wing had rejected OSC," Yuan Tiexin exclaimed.

"Open Source Corporation? The Open Source Corporation which focuses on trading New Energy?" Zhao Jianhua did not dare believe it to be true. Hence, he wanted to confirm if the Open Source Corporation Yuan Tiexin mentioned was the major corporation that he knew.

"Yes. I was quite shocked when I received the news. I never thought that the youngsters these days would act so impulsively. There are countless Guilds hoping to gain OSC's financial support. This is my first time hearing of someone actually refusing OSC's offer." Yuan Tiexin nodded. Chuckling, he said, "I've come here for two reasons. First, I wanted to see Ruoxi. Second, I wanted to meet this upper echelon of Zero Wing that I've heard so much about in the hopes that I can arrange a meeting with the incomparably mysterious Guild Leader, Black Flame. I wonder if I can have the honor?"

Zhao Jianhua and Zhao Ruoxi were dumbfounded when they heard Yuan Tiexin's words. They shifted their gaze towards Shi Feng.

Rejecting Open Source Corporation's investment was shocking enough. They had never imagined that Yuan Tiexin had actually come here in person to obtain Shi Feng's help...

For a moment, both Zhao Jianhua and Zhao Ruoxi's minds were blank.

However, as the person of interest, Shi Feng wore a calm expression as he said, "Since Uncle Yuan wishes to meet my Guild Leader, I will try my best to get in touch with him for you. However, the Guild Leader has always been a busy man. I cannot guarantee that he will be willing to meet with you; I hope that Uncle Yuan can forgive me."

"Certainly. I also hope you will pass on a message to Guild Leader Black Flame for me. The Flower of Seven Sins has begun to act," Yuan Tiexin said very confidently. "I believe that once Guild Leader Black Flame receives this information, he will accept my request."

When Shi Feng heard the news of the Flower of Seven Sins taking action, his heart involuntarily shuddered, a serious expression appearing on his face.

The Secret Pavilion had obtained this information; there was no need to question its authenticity.

Since Yuan Tiexin had reported that the Flower of Seven Sins was on the move, it meant that Exemplary Willow was willing to pay the Flower of Seven Sins' price.

Aqua Rose had already told him that the Guild's upper echelons were rapidly growing stronger. At this moment, three of them had reached the eighth floor, and seven people had reached the seventh floor. As for everyone else, they were all at the late stage of the sixth floor. The Flower of Seven Sins' price was undoubtedly astronomical.

Has that woman lost her mind? No matter how Shi Feng thought about it, this was not a worthy tradeoff. Unless...

## Chapter 711 - Violent Dragon Set

After the birthday party ended, Shi Feng immediately returned to the Greenwater Villa and logged back into God's Domain.

Yuan Tiexin had already made himself very clear with his words. If Shi Feng wished to find out more about the Flower of Seven Sins, then it would be best if he contacted the man.

Since the Flower of Seven Sins had already started taking action, then what he needed to do right now was prepare for the upcoming battle. If he had information on the exact movements of the organization, at the very least, he would not be caught off-guard.

The Flower of Seven Sins had yet to fail at a job.

If the organization truly managed to annihilate Zero Wing's upper echelon, it would deal an irrecoverable blow to the Guild—especially now that the Star Alliance had declared all-out war on Zero Wing.

In fact, during the time Shi Feng was at the party, many battles between the two Guilds had occurred both inside and outside the Stoneclaw Mountains. Fortunately, though both sides had suffered losses,

Zero Wing had the upper hand since it also had help from Ouroboros. Even so, the situation was not looking too good, as the Star Alliance also had many Red Names and Workshops on its side.

This situation prevented the members of Zero Wing from focusing on grinding at the Stoneclaw Mountains.

On the sidelines, other Guilds were quietly eyeing Zero Wing as well.

If this situation dragged on, it would be extremely detrimental towards the level and equipment of Zero Wing's members.

On top of that, if Zero Wing's upper echelon were to suffer complete annihilation, the blow to the Guild would be fatal.

Then, the various Guilds grinding at the Stoneclaw Mountains would definitely have designs on Stone Forest Town. At that time, if these Guilds were to band together with the Star Alliance to deal with Zero Wing...

Shi Feng did not wish to see such a situation take place.

When Shi Feng logged back into God's Domain once more, he had already been teleported out of the Blood Refining Passage, appearing at the foot of Mount Sogar.

He immediately opened his Friends List and chose to add a friend.

Shi Feng had set his Friends List so that it was shielded, which prevented others from adding him as a friend. As for messages and calls, his settings automatically rejected those from strangers. Hence, other than his friends, nobody had any way of contacting him.

Yuan Tiexin had told Shi Feng that his God's Domain ID was Grilled Ironheart[1]. Currently, Shi Feng was using his identity as Black Flame to add Yuan Tiexin as a friend. As long as Yuan Tiexin agreed to the friend request, the middle-aged man would be able to contact Shi Feng right away.

Less than five minutes after Shi Feng sent out the friend request, the system notified him that Grilled Ironheart had agreed to become his friend.

"It really has been difficult for the Secret Pavilion to get in touch with you, Guild Leader Black Flame. Since Guild Leader Black Flame has taken the initiative to contact me, then you must be very interested in the information regarding the Flower of Seven Sins," Yuan Tiexin said slowly. "Guild Leader Black Flame, you should know that the Secret Pavilion thrives on trading information. If you wish to obtain information on something, then you have to pay an appropriate price for it. I believe Guild Leader Black Flame should understand this point, right?"

"I understand what you are trying to say. Without a doubt, you guys must be aiming for the Magic Crystals in the Stoneclaw Mountains. Yet, it also won't be so convenient for you to obtain them. Hence, seeing as you are trying to make contact with me at this time, you must be hoping to set up a foothold at Stone Forest Town, correct?"

Initially, Shi Feng had felt it strange that a major character like Yuan Tiexin would appear at Zhao Ruoxi's birthday party. However, when the middle-aged man had brought up his wish to make contact with Black Flame, Shi Feng immediately understood his goal.

The Magic Crystal was an essential resource required for a player to develop in God's Domain. Although the various kingdoms and empires around the continent also had their own Regional Dungeons that could produce Magic Crystals, these Regional Dungeons remained undiscovered. Moreover, even if

some countries had activated their Regional Dungeons, the drop-rate of Magic Crystals there could not compare to the Stoneclaw Mountains.

The Stoneclaw Mountains was an Asura Mode Regional Dungeon.

A Regional Dungeon of such high difficulty would naturally have much better drop-rates than other Regional Dungeons.

Although the Secret Pavilion was quite a lofty existence in God's Domain, it had yet to reach the standard of an omnipotent God. The Secret Pavilion might not have much need for Coins, weapons, and equipment, but it was a different story for Magic Crystals.

After all, if they wished to maintain their status as a lofty existence, strength was still necessary.

For example, the current Yuan Tiexin, whom Shi Feng was looking at through the video chat, carried a flame-shaped shield and wore spiked scale armor. This spiked scale armor set was the Violent Dragon Set, a Level 30 Dark-Gold Set Equipment meant for Shield Warriors. To obtain the entire set, one had to complete a series of high-level quests that was utterly impossible without a very powerful 100-man team. The difficulty of the quests was only slightly lower than the difficulty of raiding a 100-man Team Dungeon. One could just imagine how powerful the Secret Pavilion was.

It should be known that Shi Feng had relied on special means to clear a 100-man Hell Mode Team Dungeon. Otherwise, raiding the Hell Mode Frost Prison would have been utterly impossible.

"Guild Leader Black Flame is certainly amazing. That's right. The Secret Pavilion is indeed very interested in the Stoneclaw Mountains. Hence, we hope to set up a Guild Residence at Stone Forest Town," Yuan Tiexin said laudatorily.

Practically everyone within the Secret Pavilion was familiar with the name of Black Flame by now.

As for why they were very familiar with it, it was not because Black Flame was the number one expert of Star-Moon Kingdom. Rather, it was because Black Flame had managed to kill one of the Dragon-Phoenix Pavilion's strongest fighters, Martial Dragon. Although he had the aid of a Personal Guard, that, too, could be considered a part of his own strength.

"Straight to the point, I see. I wonder, what benefits can the Secret Pavilion bring to me, then?" Shi Feng asked, smiling bitterly.

In truth, letting the Secret Pavilion establish a Guild Residence in Stone Forest Town would not affect Shi Feng in any way.

The Secret Pavilion's home ground was not in Star-Moon Kingdom. It would not have any conflicts of interest with Zero Wing. After all, Zero Wing was not yet strong enough to prevent others from entering the Stoneclaw Mountains.

Moreover, if the Secret Pavilion invested in Stone Forest Town, Zero Wing could also earn some repair fees from the Guild.

However, even though there were no demerits, that did not mean he should let the Secret Pavilion enter Stone Forest Town for free.

"Guild Leader Black Flame can rest assured on this point. The Secret Pavilion can provide you with the general information regarding the Flower of Seven Sins' hit list on Zero Wing and the assigned assassins. To know one's own strength and the enemy's is the sure way to victory. I believe that, with this information, Guild Leader Black Flame will have a much easier time coping with the situation."

Although Yuan Tiexin had said these words very casually, Shi Feng's heart was already beating madly at this moment.

Shi Feng had never imagined that the Secret Pavilion was such a frightening existence!

The Flower of Seven Sins was a very mysterious organization in the virtual gaming world. Its movements were kept even more of a secret from others. Yet, the Secret Pavilion was actually able to obtain such information. It was simply inconceivable.

If I have this information, with Zero Wing's current state, we should be able to cope with the assassinations of the Flower of Seven Sins. Shi Feng had some knowledge regarding the jobs carried out by the Flower of Seven Sins. Normally, the organization would send out assassins according to the mission's difficulty. Unless it was absolutely necessary, the organization would not field an overwhelming force to complete a mission.

Shi Feng did not think that the Flower of Seven Sins would rank an upstart Guild like Zero Wing that highly on their mission board. If he responded properly, Zero Wing had a definite chance of defeating the Flower of Seven Sins.

If the Flower of Seven Sins failed a mission, they would drop it. Moreover, they would return only half of the remunerations paid. Unless, of course, someone spent more money to commission a new mission. At that time, however, the price would be more than double that of the first time.

Shi Feng did not believe that Open Source Corporation would be willing to spend that much money on commissioning another hit on Zero Wing.

"May I know Guild Leader Black Flame's thoughts on this?" Yuan Tiexin asked, smiling.

## Chapter 712 - Three Realms of Refinement

“Okay, I can agree to your conditions. However, aside from providing information on the assassins this time, you guys must also keep me updated on the latest developments of the Flower of Seven Sins.” Shi Feng put out another request after giving the situation some more thought.

Since the Secret Pavilion was able to uncover the hit list and hit men, it would be an easy task for the Guild to find out the specific time when the organization would take action.

If he knew the general timing of when the Flower of Seven Sins was going to attack, he would have a better chance of laying a trap to deal with the organization’s hit men.

Combat in God’s Domain was not just limited to simple ambushes. There were various sorts of means one could use to deal with other players. Only, the mindset of current players was still confined to previous virtual reality games. This thinking held that only players could be used to deal with other players.

In fact, one could also employ traps in PvP. As long as one knew the opponent’s movements and then proceeded with setting up a trap at a fixed location, one could kill off their targets without even lifting a finger.

Moreover, even if the trap could not finish off the target, one could still gain the initiative in the battle, placing their opponent in a disadvantageous position.

“Deal. As long as they make a move, I’ll notify you of it immediately. However, even I will only be able to tell you the general timeframe for when they take action. As for when and where exactly they are going to take action, those are far beyond the abilities of the Secret Pavilion.” Yuan Tiexin agreed immediately,

his voice filled with confidence and determination. He had long since guessed that Shi Feng would ask for something like this.

A short moment later, both parties signed a contract through the Main God System.

Shi Feng would provide a location in Stone Forest Town for the Secret Pavilion to establish its Guild Residence, while the Secret Pavilion would provide Shi Feng with reports relating to the Flower of Seven Sins' movements against Zero Wing.

After the contract was signed, Shi Feng received the report he wanted from Yuan Tiexin almost immediately.

Sure enough, he really is an old fox. After taking a look at the information, Shi Feng found that the file included even the latest movements of the Flower of Seven Sins. Yuan Tiexin had obviously prepared this report long before their conversation. The middle-aged man had only been waiting for him negotiate for it.

However, Shi Feng could not help but admit that the trade this time was very worthwhile.

Even if he spent a large sum of Credits to investigate the movements of the Flower of Seven Sins, it was unlikely he could come up with the information he wanted.

Currently, the Flower of Seven Sins had yet to establish a permanent base of operations in God's Domain. Moreover, the organization was not a Guild. All its members were independent players, and every member of the organization was extremely mysterious. Just investigating one member would be an extremely complicated task, not to mention carrying out an investigation on the movements and strengths of the majority of the organization's members.

Only a force like the Secret Pavilion could achieve such a feat.

If not for the Secret Pavilion's interest in the Stoneclaw Mountains this time, Shi Feng did not believe the Secret Pavilion would sell him this information even if he asked for it. After all, not only would the Guild provoke the Flower of Seven Sins by doing so, but it would also expose some of the Secret Pavilion's capabilities.

"Guild Leader Black Flame, in celebration of our first successful cooperation, I will provide you with additional information. The major forces eyeing Zero Wing right now aren't limited to Open Source Corporation. Some have already begun taking action. While dealing with the Flower of Seven Sins, it is best to take additional precautions," Yuan Tiexin laughed. He then disconnected the call.

"Other major forces are participating in the struggle this time?" Shi Feng's expression suddenly grew serious.

In the past, the Star Alliance had been the one that managed to obtain the Stoneclaw Mountains in the end. Back then, the average Level of players was much higher. The Stoneclaw Mountains had also been mostly developed. Quite a number of Regional Dungeons that could produce Magic Crystals had also appeared in other kingdoms and empires. Hence, the various major forces of God's Domain naturally would not bother going out of their way to lay claim to the Stoneclaw Mountains.

However, things were different in this life.

He had managed to obtain Stone Forest Town a lot earlier thanks to the special means he had employed. However, this had also resulted in a situation where obtaining Stone Forest Town was equivalent to claiming the Stoneclaw Mountains.

“It seems that I’ve gone a little overboard this time.” Shi Feng could not help laughing bitterly as he shook his head. “However, if I didn’t take the opportunity to obtain Stone Forest Town back then, doing so would have become much more difficult in the future. It also wouldn’t have become the goldmine that it is right now.

“Forget it. Since things have already gotten to this point, I can only deal with the problems as they crop up.”

Thinking up to this point, Shi Feng began analyzing the information supplied by the Secret Pavilion.

Open Source Corporation really is going big this time. They’re actually targeting the members of the main force as well. Shi Feng involuntarily sucked in a breath of cold air after reading the report.

The Flower of Seven Sins had a very high asking price.

OSC had paid for two deaths for every member of Zero Wing’s main force. Although that number was much lower than for Zero Wing’s upper echelon, for whom OSC had paid for ten deaths each, it would still weaken Zero Wing’s main force significantly.

But really though, the people from the Flower of Seven Sins are sure looking down on Zero Wing. They are actually sending less than 50 members to deal with us. Giving the list of assassins a glance, Shi Feng could immediately tell how confident the Flower of Seven Sins was.

They had not bothered relying on numbers at all.

Although Secret Pavilion's information was not complete, judging from what was in the report, every one of these people could be considered a top-tier expert in God's Domain. They all were Level 33 and above, and even their most inferior equipment was Level 30 Fine-Gold Set Equipment.

The Secret Pavilion really is powerful. They even have a general assessment of the combat standards of these people.

After carefully looking through the Secret Pavilion's report, Shi Feng gained a new understanding of the Guild.

The Secret Pavilion was simply terrifying.

Compared to the level of detail in this report, the information the Secret Pavilion published on the God's Domain Experts List was child's play.

However, the Flower of Seven Sins was indeed as frightening as the rumors made it out to be.

Of the assassins the organization sent, over 30 people had already set foot into the Refinement Realm. No matter which Guild these experts were in, they would surely rank among the top of the Guild, yet the Flower of Seven Sins had actually managed to dispatch over 30 of such people. Among these 30-plus people, seven had even managed to reach the next stage of the Refinement Realm—the Flowing Water Realm.

However, the most powerful assassin sent by the Flower of Seven Sins was not one of those seven Flowing Water Realm experts. Instead, it was an expert who had reached an even further realm.

The categorization of a player's combat power using combat standards such as the Refinement Realm was a concept that had existed even before the launch of God's Domain. Moreover, it had existed for a very long time already, so the theoretical setup behind the concept had long since been perfected. The system was not unique to God's Domain. Only, God's Domain had made the concept of the Refinement Realm known to the general public.

Back then, Shi Feng had learned of the combat realms dividing expert players only after coming in touch with God's Domain.

There were a total of three Realms of Refinement: the Refinement Realm, the Flowing Water Realm, and the Void Realm.

Of these three realms, the latter was higher than the former. Meanwhile, only those who managed to enter the Refinement Realm were considered true top-tier experts of God's Domain. Each one of these experts was capable of going up against an entire army of players by themselves.

Meanwhile, above the Realms of Refinement would be the Domain. However, the monsters that had managed to achieve a Domain were as rare as a phoenix's feather. One such existence was Martial Dragon. If Shi Feng had not relied on his Attributes to suppress Martial Dragon back then, in addition to having the assistance of his Personal Guard Kite, defeating Martial Dragon would have been utterly impossible. Had the fight dragged on, Shi Feng would have been the loser, instead.

Currently, although Shi Feng still had the advantage in equipment, this advantage was continuously shrinking.

It seems that this Void Realm expert has been prepared to deal with me? Shi Feng could not help but inwardly guess.

Even if he could successfully deal with his opponent, the other members of the Guild...

## Chapter 713 - Silver

Firewing Empire, Firewing Imperial Capital:

“Tiexin, were your negotiations successful?” a white-browed youth wearing a pair of frosty robes asked, shifting his gaze towards Yuan Tiexin, who had just entered the room.

Yuan Tiexin was one of the Elders of the Secret Pavilion, his position within the Guild very high. Moreover, he was already 50 years old this year.

Yet, despite the white-browed youth directly calling Yuan Tiexin by his personal name, the latter did not show any signs of dissatisfaction. On the contrary, Yuan Tiexin carefully handed over the contract he signed with Shi Feng to the youth in a very respectful manner and said seriously, “Just like Guild Leader has surmised, Black Flame was very incisive in making a decision. We can now begin constructing our Guild Residence at Stone Forest Town immediately.”

If Shi Feng were here right now, he would definitely be shocked.

After all, the Secret Pavilion’s Guild Leader was actually a young man.

“Ah, thanks for your hard work. Have Wen Yao bring the kids there, then. This time, we can let those kids get a chance to widen their horizons a little. Ever since God’s Domain’s launch, the virtual gaming world has not been as nice a place to mingle around in as it had been.” The white-browed youth took a

glance at the contract and accepted it with satisfaction. He then turned to look at Yuan Tiexin, smiling as he asked, "Tiexin, just ask whatever is on your mind."

"Guild Leader, the Flower of Seven Sins has already targeted Zero Wing. If we include those other people as well, there is simply no chance for Zero Wing to protect Stone Forest Town. Aren't we just making an unnecessary move with this?" Yuan Tiexin could not help but ask.

"This can't really be considered an unnecessary move. I am simply hoping to have Zero Wing test out the Flower of Seven Sins. If we can get the others to expose themselves as well, we will have profited in this exchange," the white-browed youth replied, laughing. He then took out a document and placed it before Yuan Tiexin, saying, "You'll know once you take a look at this."

Yuan Tiexin was inwardly very confused at the youth's words. He promptly began flipping through the document.

"How could this be?!" Yuan Tiexin was shocked. "That Silver has appeared? Is there some sort of mistake here? Zero Wing is merely an upstart Guild. Although that Black Flame indeed possesses some ability, it is not to the degree where it is necessary for Silver to take action, right?"

"Whether Silver will be taking action personally or not, I am not sure. However, it is certain that he will be going with the group that's going to attack Zero Wing. If he is willing to take action, this will be the perfect opportunity for us to gather some information on him," the white-browed youth said, shaking his head. Silver was part of the upper echelon of the Flower of Seven Sins. Even for the Secret Pavilion, obtaining information on Silver was extraordinarily difficult. Meanwhile, a perfect opportunity to do so had just appeared before them, and he did not wish to let the others from the Flower of Seven Sins ruin this opportunity.

If the other members of the Flower of Seven Sins defeated Zero Wing swiftly, then a superior like Silver would naturally not take action because Zero Wing simply did not possess this qualification. However, if Zero Wing could force the Flower of Seven Sins into a bitter battle, the possibility of Silver taking action would be much higher.

“Guild Leader, can I go as well?” Yuan Tiexin, who was usually calm and collected, currently had a hint of excitement in his eyes.

Silver was an existence akin to a legend in the virtual gaming world. Every time he took action, he would cause an earth-shattering sensation. However, the people who knew of him were extremely few, as the various major powers would take the initiative to keep this information hidden, giving ordinary powers no chance to learn about Silver at all.

“Go if you want to, but don’t arouse any suspicions. It will be best if you go in disguise,” the white-browed youth replied. He then took out a dark gray ring with purple elvish words engraved on it, the ring itself giving off the glow effect unique to Dark-Gold items.

“I understand.” Yuan Tiexin’s heart began beating madly when he heard the youth’s words. He then picked up the ring and hurriedly left the Guild Leader’s office.

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The Top of the World, the Dragon’s Maw:

The Dragon’s Maw was a map filled with steep and winding paths, and these paths extended down towards a bottomless crater. The crater looked just like a massive mouth that was trying to devour everything.

At this moment, Shi Feng was standing at the entrance of a small path, looking down at the sight before him.

No wonder this place is called the Dragon's Maw. It's simply impossible to see the bottom of this crater from out here. Everywhere around this place is sending my alarm bells ringing. This really isn't a place for ordinary people. As Shi Feng took a look at his surroundings, he could feel a premonition of death coming from all around the Dragon's Maw. Yet, strangely enough, he could not see any signs of danger here.

There was not a single monster present within his field of vision. Nevertheless, his intuition was warning him that he might lose his life at any given moment, should he set foot on the path before him.

This time, however, Shi Feng had no choice but to ignore his intuition and step forward.

The assassins from the Flower of Seven Sins possessed overwhelming strength.

With a force of over 30 Refinement Experts, seven Flowing Water Experts, and one Void Expert, who were all geared in Level 30 top-tier equipment, not to mention killing Zero Wing's main force, the group could even attempt to kill a Super Guild's main force.

In Zero Wing, aside from Shi Feng himself being a Flowing Water Expert, there was nobody else within the Realms of Refinement. Even with the advantage in Attributes, Shi Feng knew very clearly that Zero Wing's main force stood no chance at all against so many Refinement Experts. The outcome would be the same even if they had the Power of Darkness.

After all, if even the members of Zero Wing's main force possessed Berserk Skills, how could it be possible for these Refinement Experts not to have obtained one for themselves?

Even if not everyone from the Flower of Seven Sins had managed to get their hands on a Berserk Skill, as long as there were a few who had, these few people could easily annihilate Zero Wing's entire main force.

Whether it was Aqua Rose, Violet Cloud, or Fire Dance, all three of these girls possessed massive potential. Unfortunately, having potential did not necessarily mean they were strong right now.

If they had several years' time to grow... No, even if it were just half a year's time, if he properly guided them and helped them fully realize their potential, no doubt they would be able to cream these experts. However, there was simply not enough time right now.

From the report of the Secret Pavilion, Shi Feng knew that the Flower of Seven Sins was still in the process of making preparations, which might take anywhere from three to five days. Hence, it was highly possible for them to take action within these three to five days. However, he did not possess a method to improve everyone's strength significantly within such a short timespan.

The improvement of combat techniques required time and accumulation of experience, not to mention setting foot into the unfathomable Realm of Refinement.

Despite Fire Dance and Violet Cloud being just a thread away from entering the Refinement Realm, no matter what they did, they were unable to achieve a breakthrough. Even Shi Feng had no methods to assist them in breaking through.

Otherwise, the Refinement Realm would not have become the great divide that differentiated ordinary experts from top-tier experts in God's Domain.

Even Super Guilds would find it very difficult to nurture a Refinement Expert.

Although there was the option of bringing Fire Dance and the others to level up, the possible improvements through this method were limited. Within four or five days, the most he could do was help everyone in the main force gain two more levels.

The first reason for this was because everyone was already high-leveled now. The amount of EXP they required to level up was a lot.

The other reason was that, while he was capable of killing monsters that were many levels higher than himself, the others could not. At most, they could only serve as support. If the EXP of the monsters he killed were to be split among 100 players, the overall leveling speed of Zero Wing's main force would only be slightly faster than an ordinary expert's.

Rather than doing such a futile action, Shi Feng decided to go all-out.

Although Solomon's Sword had been broken into five parts, even the weakest fragment could improve a person's strength to a very frightening degree.

As long as he could obtain the weapon hidden inside the Dragon's Maw, it might be possible for him to pull off an upset in the upcoming battle with the Flower of Seven Sins.

As Shi Feng walked deeper into the crater along the small path, he used the Magic Amplification Scroll once more to summon a Level 52 Tier 3 Demon, to deal with unexpected situations.

However, even after walking for more than three hours, Shi Feng did not encounter a single monster. His surroundings were deathly silent. Occasionally, he could also hear agonizing screams as if an invisible ghost were standing right beside him.

Not wishing to waste too much time, Shi Feng activated Wind Rider and quickly descended the path. Finally, after traveling for another two hours or so, he arrived at the bottom of the crater.

“Statues?”

At the dark bottom, Shi Feng discovered many lifelike stone statues carved in the form of various creatures: humans, Elves, Half-orcs, and many more. Every single one of these statues had an expression of horror on their faces. It was as if they had seen something extremely terrifying.

Before Shi Feng could further analyze these statues, the sounds of stone shattering entered his ears. He quickly shifted his eyes towards the source of the sounds, discovering more than a dozen black shadows moving about. These black shadows were tiny, roughly the size of an ordinary person’s fist. However, their speed was horrifying; it was practically impossible for the naked eye to keep up with them. Most importantly, every single one of these shadows gave Shi Feng a heavy sense of dread.

Meanwhile, these black shadows were currently approaching Shi Feng at lightning speed.

Chapter 714 - Engineering Tool

The floor of the crater was very dark. As a result, Shi Feng was caught completely by surprise when the dozen or so shadows suddenly appeared. He did not have time to direct the Tier 3 Demon to protect him.

Seeing three fist-sized shadows fly straight at him, Shi Feng immediately switched the Seven Luminaries Ring's Aura of Wind to the Aura of Earth and activated Absolute Defense.

Suddenly, a pale yellow glow surrounded Shi Feng's body. The black shadows created massive tremors when they crashed into the golden barrier.

The powerful impact Shi Feng sent flying more than ten yards away.

After receiving the bombardment, Shi Feng managed to uncover the black shadows' true identity.

[Quartz Worm] (Special Elite)

Level 60

HP 420,000/420,000

These Quartz Worms were made of black quartz crystals. In addition to their small bodies and astounding speed, they were extremely difficult to detect in this darkness. Although these Special Elites had low HP, their Attack Power was frighteningly high.

So many Quartz Worms would even kill a Tier 2 player instantly.

Fortunately, Shi Feng had Absolute Defense. Even though these Quartz Worms were Level 60 Special Elites, they could not break through the Aura of Earth's Activatable Skill.

However, as the seconds ticked by, more Quartz Worms started to appear.

In the blink of an eye, nearly 60 Quartz Worms had surrounded Shi Feng. He could not help but shiver as he felt the numerous beady, bright red eyes on him.

These Quartz Worms gave Shi Feng no opportunities to escape as they surrounded him and barraged him with a stream of attacks.

As each second passed, Shi Feng could hear several dozen crashes. It felt as if someone were firing an automatic rifle at him. Shi Feng had no resistance to offer whatsoever.

When Absolute Defense's duration came to an end, Shi Feng would die.

The Quartz Worms here could drown a player to death. Shi Feng was relieved that he possessed a Skill such as Absolute Defense. Otherwise, even if he came here after reaching Level 50 and obtaining his Tier 2 class, death would be the only outcome awaiting him.

With only two seconds remaining before Absolute Defense vanished, the Tier 3 Demon standing a distance away began to chant an incantation, casting the Tier 3 Spell, Oblivion Storm, over the area where Shi Feng stood.

Oblivion Storm was a Tier 3, large-scale destruction Spell that had an effective area of 50 yards. It could easily envelop Shi Feng and the Quartz Worms.

Suddenly, a massive blue magic array appeared in the air. A massive tornado then descended from the magic array.

They were all, Shi Feng and the Quartz Worms, sucked into the tornado and assaulted by countless wind blades from every direction.

Immediately, the Quartz Worms' HP decreased at a rate visible to the naked eye. Meanwhile, the tornado sent Shi Feng flying into the sky.

The moment Absolute Defense's duration was about to end, Shi Feng immediately stopped the Tier 3 Demon from channeling its Spell.

Suddenly, the tornado vanished.

Glancing at the Quartz Worms that were over a hundred meters in the air, Shi Feng realized that the Special Elites only had a small amount of HP remaining. The lower HP ones had around 10,000 to 20,000, while the higher HP worms had around 30,000 to 50,000. If Shi Feng had not stopped the Demon's Spell, these Quartz Worms would have died.

However, if Shi Feng had not stopped the Spell, he, too, would have died.

Hovering in midair, both player and monsters, neither of which could fly, began to descend.

Shi Feng quickly activated Gravity Liberation, slowing his descent to less than one-tenth of his initial speed. At the same time, he directed the Tier 3 Demon below to cast the Tier 3 Spell, Scorching Gale, over his and the Quartz Worms landing area.

Scorching Gale was not a large-scale destruction Spell. Rather, it was a cone AOE Spell with a range of 20 yards.

Not only had Oblivion Storm sent its targets into the air, but it also gathered them into a single area. Hence, Scorching Gale could easily envelop the landing zone. However, due to the difference in their speed of descent, the Quartz Worms had landed while Shi Feng still floated down.

Suddenly, the Tier 3 Demon fired countless flame blades from its hands, the burning attack devouring the Quartz Worms.

-104,189.

-110,467.

...

Damages over -100,000 appeared above the Quartz Worms. The low HP Special Elites could not endure the flaming assault.

Only after Scorching Gale finished did Shi Feng land. Loot and Quartz Worm corpses littered the ground. Meanwhile, Shi Feng's experience bar rose rapidly.

The Quartz Worms were Level 60 Special Elites. Although the EXP they rewarded was less than what ordinary Level 60 Special Elites offered, it was still a lot more than Level 60 Elites.

Moreover, Shi Feng was only Level 35 right now. The bonus EXP he obtained from fighting monsters that were 25 Levels higher than him was impressive. However, the bonus EXP one could obtain through killing monsters of a higher level was not without limit, capping at 20 Levels. Hence, players' EXP would, at most, increase by 20 times.

Even so, an increase of 20 times would still provide Shi Feng with an exaggerated amount of EXP.

After this brief battle, Shi Feng had gone from 9% of Level 35 to 98% of Level 35. He was only 2% away from reaching Level 36. At this level, he could rank at the top of Star-Moon Kingdom's Ranking List.

Currently, the number one player on Star-Moon Kingdom's Ranking List only approached Level 35. They still needed to grind for half a day before crossing the threshold to Level 35.

"This method of leveling isn't bad at all." Shi Feng could not help his grin as he looked at the EXP he had obtained.

Unfortunately, Special Elites were not easily discovered. Even in the Stoneclaw Mountains, an Asura Mode Regional Dungeon, so many Special Elites would not appear at a single time. In a group of one hundred Elite monsters or so, roughly eight or nine Special Elites might tag along. Hence, it was nearly impossible to find large groups of Special Elites such as the Quartz Worms to grind on.

Moreover, the Tier 3 Demon's Tier 3 Spell, Oblivion Storm, had a relatively long Cooldown of 70 minutes. Unfortunately, the Demon did not have any other combination attack that could kill a group of Level 60 Special Elites instantly.

Most importantly, it would be very difficult for Shi Feng to locate so many Quartz Worms again.

After Shi Feng had wiped out the wave of Quartz Worms, silence returned to the area. The only Quartz Worms in the area were the corpses on the ground.

Although the Quartz Worms had not provided much EXP, the loot they dropped was relatively good. Moreover, Shi Feng had the Luck-increasing Icarus's Heart. The 60-plus Quartz Worms had dropped quite a bit of Level 50 or above Bronze and Mysterious-Iron Equipment. The Special Elites had even dropped an engineering design.

"Glare Bomb?" Shi Feng was delighted.

One could produce many interesting items with engineering. However, very few engineering items could be used in combat.

Take the Frost Grenade for example. Not only could it cause damage, but it also possessed a control effect. Sadly, only Master Engineers could produce such items. Moreover, the designs were extremely difficult to obtain. Yet, if one tried to purchase these items, their prices were extraordinarily high. Ordinary players could not afford to use them.

The Glare Bomb was not as advanced as the Frost Grenade. It could not inflict any damage. However, it was very easy to produce. The materials required were not particularly rare. Hence, it was one of the most common tools in field battles.

The Glare Bomb could temporarily blind all creatures within its range, though its effect on players was reduced.

After Shi Feng finished arranging the loot and was about to leave the area...

For some reason, the external layer of stone on the statues began to fade, revealing these statues' original appearance.

Every one of these restored individuals radiated a frightening aura. Shi Feng felt an immense pressure from these creatures and was overcome by a desire to flee.

However, these unpetrified individuals had noticed Shi Feng.

## Chapter 715 - Thunder Emperor

With the eyes of these revived individuals on him, Shi Feng did not dare to make any sudden movements.

Every one of these NPCs, be it human, Elf, or Half-orc, had an astounding and intimidating level.

Level 150!

Even a Common monster at this level could kill Shi Feng effortlessly, not to mention the humans and Elves, both of which were Tier 3 classes.

“Young man, was it you who saved us?” a middle-aged human male asked as he turned to Shi Feng, his previous aura vanishing suddenly.

This middle-aged man was a Tier 3 Great Mage. Even in White River City, he would be considered an incredibly powerful individual. Players would find it difficult to gain an audience with such a character.

“I’m not really sure. I merely cleared out the Quartz Worms residing here,” Shi Feng said truthfully, calming after seeing no evil intent among these NPCs.

Hearing Shi Feng mention the Quartz Worms, these Level 150 NPCs examined their surroundings, bewilderment appearing on their faces. It was obvious that they, too, were unsure of the situation.

After these NPCs had a quiet chat among themselves, the Tier 3 Great Mage named Carrion Walker walked up to Shi Feng.

“Although we are not sure of what happened exactly, we’re certain that your actions saved us. As a show of our gratitude, we’ve unanimously decided to gift you this item,” Carrion Walker said. He then took out a purple-gold, lightning-shaped emblem and carefully handed it over to Shi Feng. “This emblem is our Imperial Army’s Honorary Emblem. We hope that you will accept it.”

Shi Feng accepted the emblem. When he inspected the information, he was shocked.

[Thunder Emperor’s Emblem]

This is the Honorary Emblem of the Thunder Beast Empire. This grants the wielder Honorary Citizenship within the Thunder Beast Empire.

Wasn't the Thunder Beast Empire destroyed long ago?

Shi Feng knew quite a bit about God's Domain's history. The Thunder Beast Empire had been one of the extremely powerful empires in God's Domain. During its peak, its territory encompassed over a dozen kingdoms. On the continent of God's Domain, not a single kingdom or empire dared to act against it.

The ruler of the Thunder Beast Empire had been the Thunder Emperor Kaiser.

However, according to God's Domain's historical records, to pursue eternal life and become a God, Kaiser had broken many taboos. As a result, his actions had earned the anger of the Gods as the imperial capital had suddenly disappeared. Following the capital's disappearance, the Thunder Beast Empire had split into multiple kingdoms.

At this point, the Thunder Beast Empire had long since faded from existence.

Naturally, this Thunder Emperor's Emblem also held no meaning whatsoever.

"Young adventurer, although we have been freed, we have many companions still living under the curse. We hope that you can save them. If you succeed, we will present to you the empire's greatest treasure," Carrian Walker said as he looked at Shi Feng, his clear expectation reflecting in his eyes.

"Are you not coming with me?" Shi Feng could not help but ask.

Carrian Walker shook his head and said, "Our time in this world has long since run out. Although the curse has been lifted, our strength wanes. Moreover, as we approach that place, we lose strength faster. At this point, only you can save our companions."

"Alright, then. I promise you. Where do I have to go to save your companions?" When Shi Feng heard about the empire's treasure, he thought that it might be related to the weapon he hunted.

The clue he had obtained had indicated that the weapon hid within the Dragon's Maw.

As it had been an extremely powerful empire in the past, the Thunder Beast Empire must have amassed countless treasures. The weapon he looked for might very well occupy the empire's treasury.

Rather than searching for the weapon blindly, he might as well accept this quest.

"We are merely people who had escaped the imperial capital. Our companions are still trapped in the capital. This is a map of the imperial capital. Hopefully, it will be of some help to you," Carrian Walker said. He then took out a map of the imperial capital and passed it to Shi Feng.

System: Epic Quest "Empire's Past" accepted.

Quest content: Save the people inside the imperial capital within ten days. If the quest is not completed within the allotted time, you will be inflicted with the Petrification Curse. Rewards unknown.

An Epic Quest with a time limit of ten days? Shi Feng was immediately stunned upon hearing the system notification. He had never imagined that the quest would be so difficult.

However, after giving it some thought, he found it reasonable.

The weapon he sought was no trivial item. How could the game offer it up so easily?

After Shi Feng accepted the map, he summoned another Tier 3 Demon. With two Tier 3 Demons leading the way, it would be much easier to deal with the Quartz Worms.

Now that Shi Feng had a map, his progression into the Dragon's Maw's maze of the underground tunnels became a lot easier.

After Shi Feng reached the Dragon's Maw's second underground layer, many Demonic Beasts appeared in the dark tunnels. With a single glance, Shi Feng counted over 500. The monsters squeezed tightly together as they blocked Shi Feng's path.

[Giant Petrified Rat] (Demonic Beast, Elite Rank)

Level 60

HP 300,000/300,000

Without hesitation, Shi Feng directed the two Tier 3 Demons to clear out these Rats.

When the Giant Rats saw the two Tier 3 Demons, they released ear-piercing screeches one pounced on the Tier 3 Demons. They showed no fear of the two Tier 3 Demons.

Normally, even monsters would fear a powerful enemy, yet these Giant Rats were unafraid.

Shi Feng used one Tier 3 Demon to attract these Giant Petrified Rats' attention while the other Demon cast a Tier 3 Spell.

The Petrified Rats had very high Attack Power. Even against a Tier 3 Demon, their bites dealt over -1,000 damage. If these Elites faced an MT player of the same Tier, they could easily devour half of said player's HP.

Meanwhile, these Giant Petrified Rats attacked in groups of a dozen or so. They would instantly devour players of the same level. Only a Tier 3 Demon with 9,000,000 HP could withstand their assault for long.

"This is..."

Shi Feng suddenly noticed that the Tier 3 Demon that held off the Rats began to show signs of petrification. A portion of its body had already begun to turn a dull gray.

Could this be why even Tier 4 players have fallen here? Shi Feng did not believe that these Giant Rats were capable of defeating a Tier 4 player with only their powerful bites. However, it was a different story if they could petrify their targets.

Looking at the Tier 3 Demon's statistics, although it had lost less than 1% of its HP, an additional Petrification Value had appeared. Currently, the Demon displayed a Petrification Value of 0.84%, and with each bite from the Giant Rats, that value increased slightly.

Needless to say, once this Petrification Value reached 100%, even if the Tier 3 Demon still had 100% of its HP remaining, it would turn into stone.

So this is how they work. Shi Feng could not help but breathe a sigh of relief.

Fortunately, he had only used his summoned Demons to attack. If he had faced these monsters himself, the consequences would have been dire.

The Tier 3 Demons he summoned could last five hours. With the increment rate of the Petrification Value, although they would not last a full five hours against these monsters, they should have no problems fighting for three or four hours. Fortunately, he could summon a new Demon once every three hours. In other words, he could rely on his summoned Demons to fight for him, having no need to worry about being petrified or any hindrance to his progress.

## Chapter 716 - Ruins of the Imperial Capital

Under Shi Feng's control, the two Level 52 Tier 3 Demons quickly swept through all of the Giant Petrified Rats in the stone hall.

Following the clear sound of a system notification, a golden glow encompassed Shi Feng. He had finally reached Level 36. Without hesitation, Shi Feng placed the 10 Free Attribute Points he had just obtained into Agility, partially making up for the loss of 25 Agility he had previously suffered.

The Giant Petrified Rats were Level 60 Elites, and they dropped valuable loot. Aside from some materials, they dropped plenty of Level 50 and above Common and Bronze Equipment. In the outside world, Shi Feng would have to grind far longer to obtain so many items.

“Huh? A Tier 2 Skill Book!” Shi Feng was slightly surprised as he picked up a book decorated with silver silk from the pile.

In God’s Domain, the majority of a class’s Basic Skills were learned from NPC instructors, while some of the slightly more powerful Skills were obtained from quests. As for high-tiered Skills, however, one could gain them by trading the Legacy Skill Point that the system provided.

Tier 0 Skills could generally be found in the fields or Dungeons. However, Tier 1 Skills practically never dropped, increasing the difficulty of obtaining them exponentially.

In truth, the majority of the Tier 1 Skills that monsters dropped could be gained by trading in Legacy Skill Points. If one obtained such a Skill from monsters, they would not have to waste their Legacy Points to unlock said Skill and could spend the points on learning other Skills.

Ordinary Tier 1 Skills generally cost two Legacy Skill Points to learn. Meanwhile, players only obtained one point for every three Levels. Hence, a player would have to level up six times to learn an ordinary Tier 1 Skill.

If Tier 1 Skills were already so expensive, there was no need to mention Tier 2 Skills.

Even the most common Tier 2 Skill cost four Legacy Skill Points. One had to level up 12 times to learn one. Hence, in God’s Domain, Skill Books were extremely valuable.

Currently, the going rate for an ordinary Tier 1 Skill Book could even rival a piece of Level 30 Fine-Gold Equipment. If it were a powerful Tier 1 Skill such as a Lifesaving-, AOE Attack-, Control-, Control Removal-, or Burst-type Skill Book, no one would sell it even for the price of a Level 30 Dark-Gold Weapon, much less anything Fine-Gold ranked.

Weapons and equipment would be discarded as players increased in level. However, Skills would not.

Nobody would complain about too many Skills.

The drop-rate of Tier 1 Skill Books in a large-scale Hell Mode Team Dungeon was roughly 2%.

However, in large-scale Hell Mode Team Dungeons that were Level 50 and above, the drop-rate of Tier 2 Skill Books was less than 0.3%. Obtaining one was mostly due to luck.

Hence, Shi Feng was astonished when he realized that the Giant Petrified Rats had dropped a Tier 2 Skill Book.

Shi Feng checked the Skill Book, discovering that it was the Tier 2 General Melee Skill, Dark Ghost.

[Dark Ghost] (Tier 2 Skill)

Split yourself into four and attack simultaneously. Every doppelganger deals 100% of the main body's damage. Duration of 4 seconds.

Cooldown: 2 minutes

Tier Requirement: Tier 2 class or above.

I recall someone exchanging this Dark Ghost Skill for an Epic item with relatively good Attributes in the past. I never thought I would find it here. Shi Feng was speechless.

General Skill Books were much more valuable than Class Skill Books as they could be used in a variety of battles.

It was especially true for this Dark Ghost Skill. If he suddenly split himself into four identical copies, who would dare to approach him casually?

Hence, among Tier 2 General Skills, Dark Ghost ranked relatively near the top. Many melee players had sought after this Skill. If used during a crucial moment, the Skill could turn the tide of battle.

It's a pity that I can't learn it yet. I'll have to wait until I reach Tier 2. Shi Feng tucked the Dark Ghost Skill Book away in satisfaction. He then directed the Tier 3 Demons to advance.

The second underground floor was like a massive maze. Even with the map in hand, Shi Feng had a very difficult time progressing through it.

Throughout his journey, he would occasionally encounter Giant Petrified Rats' nests.

When he met such encounters, he had no choice but to stop and clear out the nest. Otherwise, he could not venture further.

Moreover, due to the petrification issue, it became far more difficult to control the Tier 3 Demon that held off the Giant Rats. In the end, Shi Feng gave up on the Tier 3 Demon altogether and let the Giant Rats attack it. With the Tier 3 Demon's HP and Shi Feng's Life Bloom, the Giant Petrified Rats would never kill it.

Although killing the Rats was time-consuming, the fact that these Elites could drop Tier 2 Skill Books motivated Shi Feng. Moreover, he could also obtain a large sum of EXP.

While Shi Feng explored the Dragon's Maw's second underground floor, he instructed the Dark Gods Legion, which had been training all this time, take action, delving deeper into the Stoneclaw Mountains.

As an Asura Mode Regional Dungeon, the Stoneclaw Mountains was somewhat special.

Not only were the monsters inside the Dungeon more powerful, but the loot was also better than elsewhere. The monsters also dropped Magic Crystals. More importantly, the monsters dropped Barrier Crystal Balls.

If one collected a sufficient number of Barrier Crystal Balls, they could use them to form a barrier. The barrier would suppress the strength of contained enemies. It was just like the Demon Suppressing Barrier that Blue Frost's team had used when they faced the Level 40 Great Lord Noya. The barrier had greatly reduced Noya's combat power, making it a lot easier to raid the Great Lord. The Barrier Crystal Balls were similar in this aspect.

Only, the Barrier Crystal Balls were somewhat different from Magic Scrolls. Generally, Magic Scrolls were one-use items. Barrier Crystal Balls, however, could be used multiple times. Only, each use would expend a lot of Magic Crystals.

During God's Domain's initial stages, players were both low-leveled and low-tiered. Hence, most felt helpless against even High Lord ranked monsters, not to mention Great Lords. Raiding these monsters simply required too much from players at this stage of the game. Perhaps the Main God System had taken this into consideration; since a player's strength was limited, the only other way to defeat these Grand Lord ranked Bosses was to suppress their strength.

However, aside from quests, there were practically no methods or tools that could suppress Boss-level monsters.

Bosses of large-scale Team Dungeons had been a roadblock for many large Guilds. However, after the Stoneclaw Mountains had appeared, the various Guilds had discovered the Barrier Crystal Ball in the Dungeon's inner region. This had allowed the Guilds to reduce the difficulty of large-scale Team Dungeons, significantly increasing their raiding speed.

A Guild only had a limited number of experts. Normally, only these experts were barely able to clear large-scale Team Dungeons. Large-scale Team Dungeons also had Cooldown times. Hence, this had resulted in the rarity of top-tier equipment.

However, if a Guild could lower the difficulty of a large-scale Team Dungeon and allow players that were not quite experts to clear it, the acquisition of top-tier equipment would naturally skyrocket.

Shi Feng was not confident in dealing with the Flower of Seven Sins adequately. Against the Star Alliance, however, he had plenty of confidence. The best method to crush the Star Alliance swiftly was to increase Zero Wing's overall strength. After all, a battle between Guilds could not be settled by an individual.

Currently, the various large Guilds were grinding in the Stoneclaw Mountains outer area. They avoided the inner region as they had deemed the danger to be higher than the potential rewards.

The Flower of Seven Sins was already preparing to deal with Zero Wing. However, it would not be wise for Shi Feng to send the main force into the Stoneclaw Mountains. But it was a different story for the Dark Gods Legion.

Originally, the Dark Gods Legion's members were already powerful as individuals. After taking into account the Power of Darkness, they could easily venture into the Stoneclaw Mountains' inner region to obtain the Barrier Crystal Balls.

Under Shi Feng's command, the Dark Gods Legion had no trouble obtaining several dozen Barrier Crystal Balls. This was enough to outfit several 100-man teams to raid the Hard Mode Frost Prison.

Time passed quickly. After a day of travel through the second floor, Shi Feng finally arrived at the staircase leading to the floor below. Meanwhile, Shi Feng was already Level 37. He had fully recovered the 25 Agility he had lost.

The instant Shi Feng's foot landed on the staircase, the view before him changed. He was transported to a fog-covered city. The sound of a system notification suddenly reached his ears.

System: You have discovered the Ruins of the Imperial Capital.

Grinding Mastery Points

Chapter 717 - Taboo City

The Mana density here is intense.

Standing in the mist, Shi Feng suddenly felt his mind become clear and ethereal. He could see the mist's true colors.

In God's Domain, when players found themselves in places with high Mana density, their minds would clear, and they would feel more energetic. This greatly aided in the improvement of their Skill Completion Rates and combat techniques.

With such a high Mana density, the boost one could get in this area is no less than the Hundred Berry Wine. If players fight and level up here, they could see improvements at least five or six times faster. It's a pity that this area isn't easy to access.

When Shi Feng opened his system interface, he discovered that he could not contact with the outside world at all. H, he had also discovered Undead roaming down the lifeless city streets. Fortunately, they were not very high-levelled.

[Suffering Soul] (Undead, Elite Rank)

Level 60

HP 450,000/450,000

[Ghoul] (Undead, Special Elite)

Level 60

HP 700,000/700,000

These half-transparent Suffering Souls and Ghouls wandering about the city were not particularly numerous. A Level 60 party should be able to handle these monsters very easily.

Whether it was leveling up or improving one's Skill Completion Rate, grinding monsters here would be beneficial.

After examining his surroundings briefly, Shi Feng took out an Isolation Scroll and used it. He then descended from the rooftop carefully and headed towards the Palace indicated on the map.

The city had long since died. Shi Feng could see various statues haunting the city streets. These statues had all been citizens who had received the curse. However, it was unlikely that killing those Undead would lift the curse. Shi Feng would have to deal with the problem at its source.

Based on Shi Feng's understanding of the Thunder Beast Empire, only one person was capable of cursing an entire city.

Thunder Emperor Kaiser!

Emperor Kaiser had been a Tier 5 Sword Saint. He had only been a step away from becoming a Tier 6 God. Unfortunately, it had been so close, yet so far.

To players, the promotion from a Tier 5 class to Tier 6 required great opportunities, luck, and strength. It was even more so for an NPC. For example, in the past, even the Dark-Gold Guard Kite, with his vast potential, could only be promoted to Tier 5. It was practically impossible for him to reach the realm of Tier 6.

According to the legend, in order to pursue eternal life, Emperor Kaiser had mobilized his empire to carry out a taboo.

Looking at it now, it was highly possible that said taboo was related to the curse currently plaguing the imperial capital.

Damn it! The city is already in ruins, so why are there still guards?!

Shi Feng stood on the roof of a building one street away from the Palace, his eyes locked onto the mechanical guards stationed on either side of the Palace gate.

[Thunder Beast Guard] (Grand Lord)

Level 200

HP ??????/? ??????

The Thunder Beast Guards' levels were just too high, so Shi Feng could not see how much HP they had. However, he could confirm one thing; their HP was mind-bogglingly high.

Normally, Grand Lords had six HP bars displayed. The Thunder Beasts had ten.

Furthermore, there were a total of eight Thunder Beast Guards...

The Thunder Beast Empire's strength left Shi Feng in awe.

Shi Feng had visited plenty of empires before. However, this was his first time seeing such powerful mechanical guards.

The Palace was also protected by a magic array. In order to enter the Palace, Shi Feng would either have to destroy the magic array or enter through the front gate.

The first option of destroying the magic array was obviously unrealistic.

Even a Tier 6 God would find it difficult to destroy a magic array that carried such dense Mana, not to mention a Tier 1 Swordsman like Shi Feng.

Yet, entering through the main gate was also unrealistic.

Even a Level 200 Tier 4 class would not dare to provoke eight Level 200 Grand Lords simultaneously. Shi Feng was only a Level 37 Tier 1 Swordsman. The Thunder Beast Guards would send him to oblivion long before he ever reached the Palace gates.

Shi Feng had thought of using a Tier 3 Demon as bait.

However, due to the gap in levels, rather than luring the Guards away, he might draw the Guards' aggro himself.

Do I have to give up just like this? Shi Feng was frustrated. He observed his surroundings in hopes of finding a solution.

After watching from the rooftop for some time, Shi Feng suddenly discovered something interesting.

There were plenty of Undead roaming the streets in front of the Palace. However, not a single Suffering Soul came within 200 yards of the palace gates. Only a few Ghouls would wander near.

Meanwhile, when a few occasional Ghouls and Suffering Soul tried to wander towards the gates, the Thunder Beast Guards vanquished them immediately. Only those few Ghouls remained unharmed.

The Thunder Beast Guards should be absolutely neutral. They should regard both players and monsters as enemies. So why are those few Ghouls safe?

Shi Feng was very curious. He even summoned a Tier 3 Demon, directing it to capture a few Ghouls from elsewhere and throwing the monsters towards the main gate.

Without exception, the Thunder Beast Guards annihilated every Ghoul.

This is interesting. Shi Feng could not help his smile as he watched the few Ghouls wander about before the gates.

He then directed the Tier 3 Demon to hide and waited for those few Ghouls to wander out of the restricted area.

Minutes and seconds passed quickly. However, Shi Feng did not rush.

To Shi Feng, who had taken on many adventures and quests in God's Domain, patience was the foundation of success.

After more than an hour, a Ghoul finally exited the 200-yard restricted area. Like an eagle hunting its prey, Shi Feng directed the Tier 3 Demon to nab the Ghoul. No matter how hard the Ghoul attacked and struggled, it could not break free from the Demon's grasp. With a flap of its black wings, the Demon put more distance between itself and the restricted area.

The Tier 3 Demon then brought the Ghoul before Shi Feng, its hand gripped the Ghoul tightly, preventing the Special Elite from moving. Meanwhile, Shi Feng activated Omniscient Eyes to inspect just what differentiated this Ghoul from the others.

The Ghoul was actually able to deter even the Thunder Beast Guards from attacking it.

The Ghoul had mutated from a human's corpse. It still wore the noble's clothes it had worn in life.

There had been nobles among the Ghouls the Guards had killed. Could it be that this Ghoul had possessed a higher rank while it was alive? After observing the Ghoul for some time, Shi Feng failed to

discover any clues. However, he did not believe that the Main God System would have him complete this high-level quest for no good reason.

For a quest in a Level 60 map, even a Legendary Quest, Level 60 players should be able to complete it.

However, even Level 200 players would not be able to get past the Thunder Beast Guards before him, much less Level 60 players. At the very minimum, it would take a team of ten Level 200 Tier 4 players to defeat them.

Forget it. Let's kill it as an experiment. In any case, there are a few more Ghouls I can experiment with. In the end, failing to discover any peculiarities, Shi Feng had the Tier 3 Demon finish off this Ghoul.

When the Ghoul died, it transformed into a bundle of meat and green liquid. It also dropped a few Silver Coins and some other items. Its loot was no different from the Ghouls Shi Feng had killed before.

"Huh? This is..."

## Chapter 718 - Grinding Mastery Points

Among the Ghoul's loot, Shi Feng found an item that he was relatively familiar with.

Mastery Book!

This item was extremely rare and would provide players with Free Mastery Points.

Normally, it could only be obtained from Treasure Chests or quests. This was the first time Shi Feng had seen this item drop from a Special Elite.

Shi Feng's One-handed Sword Mastery had already become a Basic Sword Master, the Mastery increasing his damage with the one-handed sword by 30%.

At this stage of the game, even for powerful experts, being an Advanced Swordsman was impressive, receiving a 20% damage increase. The majority of the expert players in God's Domain were currently stuck as Intermediate Swordsman.

"A Bronze Mastery Book, huh?" Shi Feng was somewhat disappointed after he checked the Mastery Book's information.

If it were a Mysterious-Iron Mastery Book, he might be able to become an Intermediate Sword Master this instant.

When used, a Bronze Mastery Book could provide players with anywhere from 5 to 25 Free Mastery Points, significantly fewer than a Mysterious-Iron Mastery Book's 10 to 50 points.

Basic Sword Master required 150 Mastery Points.

Intermediate Sword Master required 200 Mastery Points.

If he were lucky with a Mysterious-Iron Mastery Book, after including his previously accumulated Free Mastery Points, he might have achieved the promotion to the Intermediate Sword Master right away.

At Intermediate Sword Master, the Mastery would increase Shi Feng's damage with the one-handed sword by 40%. This was a significant increase to any player, not to mention Shi Feng.

Shi Feng then used the Bronze Mastery Book, obtaining 9 Free Mastery Points. Adding this to what he had already accumulated, he had 177 Mastery Points. He was only 23 points away from the 200 point threshold.

"I wonder if all the remaining Ghouls will drop Mastery Books as well?" Shi Feng could not help but get his hopes up. He then directed a Tier 3 Demon to wait outside the restricted area while controlling the other Tier 3 Demon to kill nearby Ghouls.

There were currently three more Ghouls within 200 yards of the Palace.

However, Shi Feng did not dare to lure them away casually. He was too low-leveled. A single mistake might attract the Thunder Beast Guards' attention. At that time, he would certainly die. Hence, he could not take this risk.

As Shi Feng bided his time quietly, steadily decreasing the Ghoul population.

He had obtained one Bronze Mastery Book for roughly every 50 Ghouls he killed. This gave Shi Feng a good idea to strengthen himself and his Guild.

At the moment, God's Domain's players did not focus overmuch on improving their Weapon Masteries. However, once players reached an adequately high level, they would discover the massive strength boost that Mastery provided.

As an Intermediate Sword Master, Shi Feng's damage with the one-handed sword would increase by 40%. As an Advanced Sword Master, that bonus damage would increase to 50%.

If Shi Feng could go one step further and upgrade his Mastery to Basic Sword King, his bonus damage with the one-handed sword would rise to 80%. Two or three additional pieces of equipment could not bridge a 30% damage gap.

Hence, among the many PvP battles that occurred in God's Domain, despite both sides being nearly equal in terms of techniques, the player with superior Attributes would occasionally taste defeat. This was a result of the difference in Mastery levels.

If he could improve the Mastery levels of the Guild's upper echelons, they would have an easier time coping with the assassins of the Flower of Seven Sins.

However, it would be very difficult to increase one's Mastery to the Sword King standard.

In order to reach the Advanced Sword Master standard, one required a total of 300 Mastery Points. Meanwhile, Basic Sword King required 450 Mastery Points, which was three times that of a Basic Sword Master.

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As Shi Feng grinded Ghouls while waiting for the Ghouls inside the restricted area to venture out, a huge commotion occurred in Star-Moon City.

The Secret Pavilion's Guild Residence had appeared in Stone Forest Town. This was the second foreign Guild to establish a Guild Residence in the town after Ouroboros.

It was common knowledge that Ouroboros had only received such treatment due to its alliance with Zero Wing. However, what about the Secret Pavilion?

Were they allies, too?

When the various large Guilds considered the possible alliance between Zero Wing and the Secret Pavilion, they began to reconsider how they treated Zero Wing.

The Secret Pavilion was a massive existence in the virtual gaming world. Although it did not participate in the struggles between Guilds, no one dared to underestimate the Pavilion. Even Super Guilds tread lightly when around the Pavilion. Now that the Secret Pavilion occupied Stone Forest Town, the Guilds, who initially aspired to obtain the town, would have to reconsider their options.

Previously, since a first-rate Guild like the Star Alliance had taken the lead, the various Guilds in Star-Moon Kingdom had gained some confidence in facing-off with Zero Wing.

However, there was a massive difference between the Star Alliance and the Secret Pavilion. Contesting over Stone Forest Town with the Secret Pavilion would be suicide.

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Inside the Star Alliance's Guild Residence:

"Purple, have you investigated the matter regarding the Secret Pavilion? Just what kind of relationship does Zero Wing have with the Pavilion?" Galaxy Past, who occupied the Guild Leader's throne, asked as he turned to Purple Eye.

Originally, Galaxy Past had been in a merry mood as he had recently accepted a high-level Rare Quest. Just as he prepared to complete it, however, he had received this very distressing news. Hence, to get to the bottom of this situation, he had called for an emergency Guild meeting.

Aside from being one of the Star Alliance's top fighters, Purple Eye was also one of the Guild's information managers. Purple Eye also possessed some special connections of her own, which allowed her to obtain information that even the Star Alliance could not get its hands on.

Hence, Galaxy Past asked Purple Eye directly.

"According to the investigation, the Secret Pavilion is not in an alliance with Zero Wing," Purple Eye said softly. "However, the Pavilion seems to have conducted an internal trade with Zero Wing. As to what the two Guilds have exchanged, even my sources could not uncover that."

"A trade?" Galaxy Past frowned. "Black Flame really knows how to surprise people. The Secret Pavilion does not trade with others easily. Just in case, slow down our actions against Zero Wing. From now on, we should be more careful when dealing with Zero Wing. Let Open Source Corporation deal with them."

Although the Star Alliance had the OSC's financing, that did not mean the Guild would sacrifice itself for the corporation.

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In the Stoneclaw Mountains' outer region:

"Snow, now that the Secret Pavilion has established a Guild Residence in Stone Forest Town, Galaxy Past must be pretty annoyed," Zhao Yueru could not help but smile when she read the report she had just received. "It really makes you wonder just how Big Brother Black Flame managed it. He actually roped in the Secret Pavilion. As long as the Pavilion intervenes, the Star Alliance will be powerless in the Stoneclaw Mountains."

"It is still too early to determine anything. No one knows exactly what the Secret Pavilion exchanged with Zero Wing. If the Secret Pavilion is really willing to help Zero Wing, it would have already declared Zero Wing to be its ally rather than let the situation remain uncertain. However, my guess is that the Star Alliance will not act drastically any time soon due to its fear of the Pavilion. We can use this opportunity to snatch some of the high-resource areas the Alliance currently occupies," Gentle Snow expressed her intentions after examining the report.

Due to the Open Source Corporation's financing, the Star Alliance had grown significantly stronger over these past few days. They had both gained new members and improved the quality of their members' equipment. It was especially true for the Consumables the Guild supplied to its members. Ouroboros stood no chance against the Star Alliance. This situation allowed the Star Alliance to occupy many of the high-resource areas in the Stoneclaw Mountains' outer region.

This was the perfect opportunity for them to steal those high-resource areas.

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A group of black-cloaked players had gathered inside a bar in Stone Forest Town. These players were all very high-leveled, with the lowest among them being Level 34. On Star-Moon Kingdom's Ranking List, they could all rank among the top ten. With their presence alone, these people had caused a chill to sweep through the bar, causing the other players around them to shiver in fear.

These players shared a commonality; they all were independent players. None of them belonged to any Guild.

Suddenly, a young man in silver robes entered the bar, instantly breaking the silence. The group of cloaked players stood at attention at this man's arrival, watching him seriously. None of them dared to show any disrespect.

"Everyone, get ready. Open Source Corporation is already getting antsy."

## Chapter 719 - Mastery Skyrockets

### Ruins of the Imperial Capital:

On the streets filled with wandering undead, Shi Feng controlled the Tier 3 Demon to slaughter Ghouls.

However, the presence of Ghouls was quite rare, and after clearing several streets surrounding the Palace, Shi Feng had only obtained four Bronze Mastery Books. His EXP bar, on the other hand, had risen significantly. Currently, he was at 53% of Level 37. At most, he would need to grind for another day or so to reach Level 38.

Just after Shi Feng killed the last Ghoul within the 200-yard restricted area...

Golden light escaped from this Ghoul's body and flew towards the sky. After the golden light dissipated, a golden beam shot into Shi Feng's body.

The sound of a system notification suddenly rang by Shi Feng's ears.

System: You have liberated a bound soul and have received the blessing of the dead. For each Ghoul you kill, you will increase your Thunder Beast Empire Reputation by 1 point.

Killing Ghouls increases my Reputation with the empire? Shi Feng suddenly understood how he could enter the Palace.

One could not casually approach a kingdom's or empire's Palace. One first needed a certain amount of Reputation.

Unfortunately, neither a kingdom's nor an empire's Reputation was easy to obtain. Generally, one had to complete special quests or obtain the First Clear of Team Dungeons to gain Reputation for a kingdom or empire.

These Thunder Beast Guards were mechanical puppets. They would only carry out the commands they had been given. Hence, if Shi Feng had sufficient Reputation with the empire, he could walk into the Palace unhindered.

Meanwhile, if one wanted to enter a kingdom's Palace, they needed to become a Count first. As for an empire's Palace, one had to become a Marquis.

Becoming a Marquis required 5,000 Reputation Points.

Normally, it would be exceedingly difficult to accumulate so much Reputation. Now, however, Shi Feng only needed to kill Ghouls. With this, it would be much easier to rise to the rank of Marquis.

No wonder this quest has a time limit of ten days. It turns out that I need to kill 5,000 Ghouls. Shi Feng began to understand the quest's time limit.

Ghouls were Level 60 Special Elites. Moreover, there were also many Suffering Souls getting in the way. Shi Feng would have no choice but to kill the Elite monsters while hunting for Ghouls. Even a Level 60 ordinary expert would have to spend quite a long time killing a Level 60 Special Elite Ghoul. Each one could take anywhere from seven to over a dozen minutes depending on the expert's strength. At that pace, even with ten days, they would not be able to kill 5,000 Ghouls.

To Shi Feng, though, this was not a problem.

One Level 52 Tier 3 Demon took less time to kill a Ghoul than a 20-man team. Fortunately, Shi Feng could control two Tier 3 Demons simultaneously.

Following which, Shi Feng began sweeping through the city for Ghouls.

Previously, as he had to wait for the Ghouls in the restricted area to wander out, Shi Feng's range of activity had been limited. Hence, his grinding efficiency had been very low. Now that this restriction was gone, he could move from one end of a street to the other, slaughtering everything without pause.

As one Ghoul after another fell, Shi Feng's Reputation rose.

System: You have killed a Ghoul. Reputation in Thunder Beast Empire +1.

System: You have killed a Ghoul. Reputation in Thunder Beast Empire +1.

System: You have killed a Ghoul. Reputation in Thunder Beast Empire +1.

...

After three hours, Shi Feng's Reputation had increased to 207 points. He gained Reputation far slower than he had expected.

Although he killed the Special Elites very quickly, there were only so many Ghouls that appeared on a single street. He had to waste a lot of time moving from one Ghoul to another, which significantly reduced his efficiency.

At this rate, I will only complete this part of the quest if I grind nonstop for two days. The remaining time should be enough to lift the curse on the city and complete the quest. Just as Shi Feng was lost in thought, he heard a warning from the system.

This warning was a notification telling him that someone was calling from the real world. Normally, the game would only warn players when communication with the outside world had been severed, and players were unable to accept real world calls from inside God's Domain.

"Did something happen?" Shi Feng didn't think too much about it as he immediately swiped his fingers, calling up the system interface and clicking the "Logout" button.

Previously, he had told Fire Dance and the others that he was working on a quest in a special area and that contact with the outside world was unavailable. Hence, they would not call him unless it was urgent.

It was 3 am in the real world. Normal people would not call at this time of night.

For Blackie and the others to contact him in the dead of night, the only possibility was that something had happened to Zero Wing.

Darkness surrounded Shi Feng as he stepped out of his virtual gaming cabin.

The ringing from the quantum watch Shi Feng wore on his wrist echoed throughout the silent bedroom. Taking a look at the watch's display, Shi Feng discovered that it was Blackie.

"Blackie, what's so urgent? Has something happened in God's Domain?" Shi Feng asked after answering the call.

“Brother Feng, the Stoneclaw Mountains... something has happened! Blackie said in a panic after the call connected. “Of the 300 members in the Dark Gods Legion, nearly all of them have been wiped out. Only a dozen or so managed to return to Stone Forest Town.”

“Impossible!” Shi Feng was dumbfounded. “Could it be the Star Alliance? That shouldn’t be possible!”

Although the Dark Gods Legion only had 300 members, their equipment was first-class. Their combat techniques were also top-notch. Furthermore, the Dark Gods Legion had a Berserk Skill like the Power of Darkness. Even if the Star Alliance sent out its best fighters, they could never annihilate the Legion.

“Initially, I wondered the same thing. However, based on what the survivors told us, the people who attacked them did not seem like members of the Star Alliance. They weren’t Red Names either. They were a group of independent players. The instant they appeared, they killed off a few dozen members of the Legion. Even after everyone activated the Power of Darkness, they couldn’t hold their ground against those independent players.

“Some of the more powerful players even killed Legion members in just a few moves. Before they could even react, they were dead...”

The news had also shocked Blackie. Hence, he had contacted Shi Feng immediately.

Aside from Zero Wing’s main force, the Dark Gods Legion was the most powerful team in Zero Wing. Even throughout Star-Moon Kingdom, the Legion ranked at the very top in terms of combat power. The Legion also had the Power of Darkness.

Yet, they had been massacred...

News of this incident had already spread throughout Star-Moon Kingdom. If they did not deal with this matter properly, Zero Wing's reputation would plunge to the darkest pits of the abyss.

"A group of independent experts with top-tier equipment and skills? Could it be the Flower of Seven Sins?" Of all of Shi Feng's possible enemies, only the Flower of Seven Sins was capable of such a feat. "However, wasn't the organization's target Zero Wing's main force and upper echelon?"

Hearing Shi Feng suggest that it was the Flower of Seven Sins' doing, Blackie was momentarily stunned.

Blackie agreed with Shi Feng's deduction. Only, he never imagined that the Flower of Seven Sins would be so powerful.

Initially, he had doubted that any power could easily defeat Zero Wing's Dark Gods Legion. Even if the Flower of Seven Sins took action, the organization would have to expend a lot of effort to take the Legion down. In the end, however, he had been sorely mistaken.

If the Dark Gods Legion had already suffered such a fate, Zero Wing's main force was in trouble.

"Brother Feng, what should we do?" Blackie asked, panicking.

Chapter 720 - Marquis

Shi Feng fell silent at Blackie's question.

He had never expected the Flower of Seven Sins to take action so quickly. Not only had the organization made its move several days earlier than estimated, but their targets had also not been Zero Wing's main force or upper echelons.

The loss of EXP from the Dark Gods Legion's annihilation was a small matter. However, it would not be easy to recover the lost equipment.

"Blackie, tell Aqua and the others that they are already being targeted immediately and try to stay within city limits as much as possible. Have them focus on improving their techniques in the Divine Colosseum. We'll deal with the Flower of Seven Sins once I return," Shi Feng said after giving it some thought. The best decision right now would be to have Aqua Rose and the others avoid the executioner's blade. With so many Refinement Experts, Aqua Rose and the others would have no chance of victory in their current state. "Right, also have Melancholic gather some materials for me. I'll need them once I return."

In God's Domain, with players' current strength, it was impossible to commit murder in the cities or Stone Forest Town and get away with it. Although the Flower of Seven Sins was powerful, they would throw away their lives and suffer in jail for a time if they killed another player within a city.

The Flower of Seven Sins would most likely avoid such a raw deal.

If they wanted to deal with the Flower of Seven Sins, their best option was to wait for his return and set up a trap for the organization's assassins. Only then would they have a chance of victory. Anything else would just add bodies to the growing mound of corpses.

"I understand." Blackie nodded solemnly. Although he was frustrated, this was all he could do right now.

After the call ended, Shi Feng busied himself, refilling the gaming cabin's Nutrient Solution. He needed to give it his all and complete this Epic Quest of his as soon as possible.

Now that he was halfway through the quest, he could not turn back to seek for help. The penalty for failing an Epic Quest was no laughing matter.

I'm taking too much time to kill the Ghouls. I need to work faster. After Shi Feng logged into the game, he opened the imperial capital's map and searched for the location with the highest density of monsters. Although the area around the Palace is crowded, it's not the most populated area. Generally, the Trade Area has the most NPCs.

After deciding on a destination, Shi Feng activated Wind Rider, leading his two Tier 3 Demons as he charged towards the Thunder Beast Empire's Commercial District.

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At the same time, something was happening in Star-Moon Kingdom.

The news about the near annihilation of Zero Wing's Dark Gods Legion had already appeared on Star-Moon Kingdom's forums, and many players chatted about this latest drama.

"Aren't there a ton of experts in Zero Wing's Dark Gods Legion? How did they get wiped out?"

"I heard they were done in by a group of independent players."

“I used to think that Zero Wing was very powerful. It seems that they only amount to this much.”

“Indeed. Others keep saying how powerful Zero Wing is and how the Guild has so many experts. In the end, a group of independent players slaughtered them. As expected, everything was just a bunch of rumors.”

...

As news about Zero Wing’s defeat spread, the Guild’s reputation began to sink. As a result, many players who had intended to join Zero Wing began to hesitate. Meanwhile, in Stone Forest Town, many Guilds had begun to move covertly when they heard this news. They were all preparing to deal with Zero Wing.

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“Hahaha! Open Source Corporation is truly formidable! They managed to annihilate Zero Wing’s Dark Gods Legion so quickly. This should be a major blow to the Guild.” Galaxy Past could not help but laugh when he received the news. “Purple, do you know who did it?”

“The Flower of Seven Sins!” Purple Eye said with a serious expression.

As an expert who had been nurtured by a Super Guild, Purple Eye knew quite a bit about the terror of the Flower of Seven Sins.

Although she was quite happy that the Flower of Seven Sins targeted Zero Wing, she could not help her fear upon seeing the organization's frightening power. On the off chance that a major power hired the organization to target the Star Alliance, they would not laugh.

"It's no wonder they wiped out the Dark Gods Legion. It seems that OSC really went all-out this time." Galaxy Past similarly shivered when he heard the name of the Flower of Seven Sins, his joy vanishing. "Since the Flower of Seven Sins has begun to strike, we won't have anything to worry about. Notify Red Feather and the others. Both inside and outside of the Stoneclaw Mountains, tell them to kill every Zero Wing member they meet!"

Previously, the Star Alliance had been afraid of an ambush by Zero Wing's top fighters. Hence, the Guild had dispatched mostly elite members to the Stoneclaw Mountains, with only a few experts to tag along.

Now that they had the support of the Flower of Seven Sins, however, things had changed. In terms of top combatants, the Flower of Seven Sins possessed an overwhelming advantage. Now, rather than fear Zero Wing's experts, their experts could strike. That way, the Flower of Seven Sins could obliterate all of them in one-go, burning Zero Wing's prestige to the ground.

"I'll get it done." Purple Eye left to put the plan into action.

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As the Star Alliance's experts began to move, Zero Wing, which had dominated the Stoneclaw Mountains, was suddenly at a disadvantage in the Regional Dungeon, its members having to take precautions.

“Vice-Leader Aqua, many Guild members have begun complaining about our inaction. If you keep having us train in the Divine Colosseum and ignore the situation in the Stoneclaw Mountains, I’m afraid that morale will start to fall.”

“Vice-Leader, why don’t you let us deal with those bastards from the Star Alliance? The Dark Gods Legion will put fear into their hearts, and the Alliance won’t dare set foot in the Stoneclaw Mountains ever again.”

Many of Zero Wing’s core members were annoyed with the Star Alliance’s actions, eager to participate in the battles in the Stoneclaw Mountains.

“Rejected. I understand your sentiments, and I feel the same, but we will only fall into the Star Alliance’s trap by doing so. Guild Leader has already ordered us to put everything aside until his return,” Aqua Rose said, shaking her head. “As for the Stoneclaw Mountains, everyone should just go elsewhere to level up for now.”

Previously, roughly a dozen of the Guild members had attacked without authorization in the hopes of teaching the Star Alliance a lesson. In the end, they died before they had even arrived at the transfer gate to the Stoneclaw Mountains.

The dozen or so main force members had been defenseless. Moreover, the enemy even had fighters at the time.

Launching a counterattack right now would be the equivalent of gifting their equipment to their enemies. For now, they could only give up on the resources in the Stoneclaw Mountains.

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Meanwhile, inside the Ruins of the Imperial Capital...

After luring and killing monsters in the Trade Area for more than a day, Shi Feng finally managed to kill 5,000 Ghouls, reaching Level 38 and becoming a Marquis of the Thunder Beast Empire.

However, Shi Feng was more excited about the Mastery Books he had obtained. Although the drop-rate in the Trade Area was much lower, the 5,000 Ghouls Shi Feng killed had yielded him a total of 31 Bronze Mastery Books.

After killing 5,000 Ghouls, Shi Feng had killed practically every Ghoul in the Trade Area.

The Ghouls in the imperial capital were different from the monsters in the outside world. They did not respawn after they died, so there would be one Ghoul less with each kill. Hence, no one else would ever grind here for Mastery Books again.

With so many Mastery Books, I wonder just how many Mastery Points I'll obtain? Hopefully, my luck won't be too bad. Shi Feng then took out a Mastery Book from his bag and clicked to use it.