

Elite Mages' Academy

Chapter 1: Admission Letter

Translator: EndlessFantasy Translation **Editor:** EndlessFantasy Translation

It was quiet at 11 p.m. From a small rented room, a boy's unresigned growl was heard.

Xiao Lin slammed the mouse under his hand on the table, and his frustration was reflected on the monitor. This was his fifth loss of the game tonight.

Xiao Lin realized that he had been down on his luck recently; he was working for a property developer as a fresh graduate, but he was fired under two months. What followed was a long period of job-seeking. He had his eighth interview since his termination today. Judging from how uninterested the interviewer looked, Xiao Lin was not counting on getting the job offer.

He was planning to play a few rounds of his game tonight, but he ended up being stuck with horrible teammates and a losing streak. As he grew exhausted, he turned off his computer altogether and laid down on his bed to sleep.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

A string of knocks came on his door all of a sudden. A husky male voice boomed, "Delivery!"

Xiao Lin opened his eyes, grabbed his phone, and looked at the time before rolling his eyes. He believed that no courier service would deliver anything past 11. Hence, he did not plan on entertaining whoever was outside his door.

However, the knocks continued persistently. They sounded louder than ever amidst the silent night. The mysterious male voice continued slowly, but firmly, "Xiao Lin! Get your delivery!"

Xiao Lin finally got up. The man outside his door actually knew his name! Could someone he knew be pulling a prank on him?

After hesitating for a moment, he headed toward the door before the knocking stopped. He looked through the peephole; there had to be someone outside since there was light in the corridor, but there was no one outside at the moment.

Nothing happened even after a few minutes. The night was silent again. Xiao Lin opened a slit in the door quietly and looked around.

There was still no one outside, but something fell through the crack in the door, landing on the ground with a sound. Xiao Lin picked it up; it was an envelope from SF Express. He mumbled in frustration under his breath, closed his door, and returned to his room.

Interestingly, there were only his name and address on the recipient's column of the envelope, while the sender's column was empty. After tearing the envelope open, a thin, yellow postcard fell out.

Words in a blood-red color on the card read: ‘Admission Letter to the Dawn Academy’.

Meanwhile, there were words in black on the back of the card that read: ‘Xiao Lin, congratulations. You have been accepted as a freshman at the Dawn Academy. This card will be the proof for your registration. Please store it safely.’

Xiao Lin laughed; it seemed like someone’s prank. He had never heard of the Dawn Academy in his life. Moreover, he just graduated from university. How was it possible that he was accepted into school again?

“Ouch!” Just as Xiao Lin was about to throw the card away, he yelped in pain. His fingers that were holding the card were caught by something sharp, and blood flowed down the card. However, it did not drip onto the ground; it peculiarly disappeared into the card itself.

At this moment, the card became extremely hot in Xiao Lin’s hand as a robotic voice was heard in his head: “Freshman’s identity verification complete. Initiating delivery...” After that, Xiao Lin passed out.

...

Xiao Lin gradually woke up dizzy after what felt like forever, and his blurry gaze became clearer by the second. He was lying on a cold, metallic floor in a huge, closed hall. There were metallic walls and a group of oddly-dressed but confused people around him.

Xiao Lin tried his best to gather his memory and began making assumptions in shock. Was he being kidnapped? But that could not be right; he was too poor to be worth kidnapping!

The room was noisy. Everyone there seemed either agitated or in extreme fear. Xiao Lin planned to ask around about what was going on, but judging from everyone’s faces, no one seemed to know what happened.

Creak!

The only metallic door in the hall was pushed open, and the noisy crowd went quiet. Dozens of eyes turned in the direction of the sound.

A tall and skinny man in his thirties, dressed in a white t-shirt with a crew cut, walked into the metallic hall. He glared at the few people he pushed into the hall with disdain and scoffed, “Did you all think this was a place where you could come and go as you wished? How naive!”

The quip ignited everyone’s rage instantaneously. Countless angry voices raised questions, one after another.

“Who are you?”

“Where is this?”

“Let us out!”

“This is kidnapping!”

...

The tall, skinny man sneered at the face of the crowd approaching him. All of a sudden, he pulled out a machete over a meter long and yelled, “Stop your noise! Shut the hell up right now!”

The man spit on the floor and said with a disapproving look, “Why are there idiots like this in every batch of freshmen? The bastards in the Admissions Department obviously slack off more often than doing work!”

The man looked around before setting his gaze on Xiao Lin. He asked with a frown, “Are you awake?”

Xiao Lin shivered. He realized that the man’s gaze was not friendly at all. However, he was also confused; he did not offend the man. He had no choice but to nod in response.

The man did not push him further, but mumbled in anger, “How annoying! The last student took over three hours to wake up. How horrible is his basic physique! What kind of people are the bastards in the Admissions Department recruiting for the Academy!”

The man cursed the so-called Admissions Department again while everyone else remained silent, not daring to ask further questions. However, Xiao Lin was clear that the man was talking about him.

Xiao Lin did not find any other person as dazed as he was upon waking up, so it was obvious that the person with the ‘horrible basic physique’ the man was talking about referred to himself. This annoyed him; his physique was indeed not that great since he barely exercised.

“Since somebody was late to wake up, too much of our class’ time has been wasted. I’ll keep this short! This is Dawn Academy’s Freshmen Class Seven, and I’m your instructor, Qin Chuan. I know you have a lot of questions. Tear open your admission letter; you’ll get your answers. I’ll give you five minutes to process it.”

Like everyone else, Xiao Lin went through his pockets and found the damned admission letter. He tore it open in disdain, and the letter immediately lit up before burning into ashes in the air. Soon after that, a newsfeed with a message appeared in Xiao Lin’s mind.

This was the Dawn Academy, and they were all selected to be freshmen here. They would have to go through a vast amount of training to increase and hone their capabilities before being eligible to enter the New World.

They would be able to attain unimaginable strength, money, and power here!

The message was short. It only told everyone why they were here and what they had to do, but people still had questions. However, they were too afraid to ask.

“We’ll move onto the health screening.” Qin Chuan clapped, and the metallic floor of the hall’s front portion cracked open. Two black frames, similar to security gates, rose from the ground.

“Stand between the frames and wait for the system’s scan. You can only walk out after the red light dims. Queue up. Don’t cause chaos!”

Qin Chuan’s machete was terrifying. No one dared cut the queue, and everyone took their turn to stand in between the frames. A ray of red light swept across their bodies before dimming itself after a few seconds.

Meanwhile, a virtual display popped up in front of Qin Chuan. Xiao Lin squinted; he could vaguely see rows of data appearing on the display.

As more and more people completed their health screening, Xiao Lin realized the look of disappointment on Qin Chuan’s face becoming gradually prominent. It was Xiao Lin’s turn before he knew it. As the last person to be awake in the hall, Qin Chuan glared at Xiao Lin in a rare moment. His gaze was filled with disdain.

Xiao Lin stood between the frames silently. The ray of red light appeared from the edges; Xiao Lin did not feel anything as it scanned his body. However, soon after that, he realized that something was wrong. Qin Chuan, who was nearby, mumbled a “hmm” under his breath at this moment. His lazy eyes widened as he glared at Xiao Lin.

Other people who were done with the health screening gathered in scattered groups and whispered to each other. Only a handful of people realized something was going on with Xiao Lin. All of them could not help but look over in surprise.

Qin Chuan’s burning gaze scared Xiao Lin. His forehead was sweating a little as he prayed for the red light screening to end soon.

Other people only spent about six or seven seconds for the health screening, but it was nearly 20 seconds for Xiao Lin; the red light did not seem like it was dimming anytime soon. As Qin Chuan had said that no one was allowed to walk out of the frames before the red light dimmed, Xiao Lin did not move an inch.

The light finally dimmed after over 30 seconds.

Chapter 2 - Of Health Screenings And Talents

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Xiao Lin was about to walk out of the frames in relief before Qin Chuan said out of nowhere, “Wait, let me see your basic physique report!”

Xiao Lin stood silently and waited for another few minutes. This time, everyone realized something odd had happened during Xiao Lin’s health screening, but no one dared ask about it in front of instructor Qin Chuan.

The virtual display in front of Qin Chuan flashed. He widened his eyes in surprise before cursing and looking over at Xiao Lin with a pitiful gaze. “Your total basic attribute points aren’t even past 10 points. You’re the worst I’ve seen since I came to Dawn Academy! I thought I finally found a talented recruit after such a lengthy scan; what a waste of my emotions!”

“What are talented recruits?” Xiao Lin could not help but ask.

“Move it! Stop blocking the next one!” Qin Chuan did not want to explain anything and waved his hand in frustration.

Xiao Lin was frustrated as well. He did not come to this weird academy of his own will; if they really did think that his physique was bad, they could just send him home!

There were over a hundred people in the hall. After all of them completed their health screening, Qin Chuan’s face was filled with disappointment. “There’s not a single talented recruit. The quality of freshmen is going downhill! Forget it, your health screening reports will be given to you with your identity feed. Take a ten-minute break, we’ll move onto the admission test.”

“Brother Instructor, what is the admission test? Can you help me?” A girl with heavy makeup asked in a sweet voice. Although Qin Chuan did not allow anyone to speak, she felt that her looks were enough for her to sidestep the order.

Qin Chuan was undeterred. He glared at her and said, “This is a place you have to work hard. It’s not a place for you to obtain credits and redemption points with looks.”

“The message from the admission letter mentioned that we will obtain unimaginable wealth and strength from this academy. May I ask if we can only get the wealth and strength from those credits and redemption points that you mentioned?” A decent girl among the crowd, wearing glasses with black frames, asked suddenly.

Qin Chuan looked over at her in surprise and explained in a rare display of patience, “That’s right, the credits and redemption points are basically this academy’s universal currencies. With these, you could redeem anything you want, including real life currencies.”

“Interesting.” The glasses-clad girl nodded calmly.

“What’s your name?” Qin Chuan asked.

Qin Chuan lifted his brow. “So, you’re the one who has the highest basic attribute points among these people. You may not be talented, but that’s good enough for now. Work hard, and, although it’s just the admission test, a good start will help you a lot in your freshman year.”

Xiao Lin checked Gu Xiaoyue out in surprise; she seemed like a decent girl, but she had the highest attribute points among the batch. Moreover, Qin Chuan spoke to her with unusual friendliness. It was obvious he had high hopes for her. If his basic attribute points were under 10 points, what were the individual points for each of his basic attributes?

Moments later, the identity feed Qin Chuan was talking about appeared in everyone’s minds. According to Qin Chuan, this feedback in everyone’s consciousness was automatically created by the academy’s Central Smart Computer System.

[Name: Xiao Lin]

[ID: 201235]

[Credits: 0]

[Redemption Points: 0]

[Basic Attribute Points: 2 Strength points, 2 Agility points, 2 Intelligence points, 3 Physique points]

[Natural Life Expectancy: 83 years; 23 years old currently, 60 years to go. Warning: Every death will deduct 10 years off your life expectancy automatically; when your life expectancy becomes zero, you will die!]

[Physical Attack Power Evaluation: F-]

[System Evaluation: This evaluation was given because the database has yet to include a level lower than F-. According to the Central Computer's calculation, an adult pig's physical attack power is stronger than yours.]

[Magic Attack Power Evaluation: F-]

[System Evaluation: Same as above. This evaluation was given because there is no lower grade than F-.]

Xiao Lin could not help but laugh at himself; his total attribute points were under 10 after all. On top of that, what were 'physical attack power' and 'magic attack power' about? He was worse than a pig? Also, what was up with the intelligence points? Xiao Lin did not think that his intelligence was that low. Truth be told, he was the team leader for fighting Instances or Bosses for many years of his gaming career.

But Xiao Lin came to the sad realization that this evaluation was rather factual. The otaku life had made his physique worse; there was fat on his waist and even running a few hundred meters would make him put him way out of breath.

However, Xiao Lin was more concerned about his life points than his attribute points!

The hall erupted like a boiling pot; the Life System was undoubtedly unacceptable to nearly everyone.

"What joke is this! I only have 13 years to live. Wouldn't that mean that if I died once in this hellhole, I'd actually die?"

"It's probably fake! How could it detect our life expectancy? This must be a con!"

Xiao Lin was shocked as well. If the system was accurate, he had 60 years left to live. This was not a bad thing. However, he thought of something all of a sudden and was going to ask about it before someone else cut him off.

“Is deducting ten years of life for each death only applicable in the Dawn Academy, or does it apply to the whole world?” A bird-like voice was heard speaking again. It was the girl called Gu Xiaoyue; her question was exactly what Xiao Lin was going to ask.

Qin Chuan had expected everyone’s reaction. He observed them for a moment. He heard her question just as he was about to speak. He held his anger in and nodded, “When you’re a recruit at this academy, this rule automatically applies to each and every one of you. This rule applies wherever you are as long as you’re still on Earth!”

Those who were still confused understood it all at this moment; their angry voices now lowered. This meant that even if they were killed in society, they would only lose ten years of their life; they would not actually die!

Qin Chuan continued explaining, “I’ve said that this academy is capable of giving you things you could never imagine, such as your life expectancy. If you’re good enough, it’s not hard to become immortal!”

Xiao Lin’s final question was answered. Although it was clear to him that it would take unimaginable sacrifice to become immortal, he could not help but be tempted by it.

This academy was too much of a temptation to everyone; even if there was a possibility of death, it was enough for everyone to work their hardest.

Competition was always mankind’s most primitive instinct. Everyone began talking to each other about their respective attribute points.

Those with higher basic attribute points expectedly exhibited hints of arrogance. Everyone also realized that the man who called himself the instructor spoke to those with higher basic attribute points in a friendly manner despite looking threatening; Gu Xiaoyue was one of them.

“Hahaha! I have 10 Strength points. The system said that those with 10 points for a single attribute are considered the better ones in the academy!” A muscular man said loudly with excitement.

I may not have high points for a single attribute, my total attribute points for four attributes are over 30!”

“I wonder how many basic attribute points Gu Xiaoyue has. Didn’t Qin Chuan say that hers were the highest among us?”

“If my total attribute points of 31 aren’t the highest, I can’t imagine how high hers are!”

“Although we don’t know what the highest is, isn’t there someone with the lowest of under 10 total attribute points among us?”

“I was chatting around, those with lower total attribute points have at least 14 or 15 points.”

“Under 10 total attribute points? I think his years of life will be deducted soon!”

...

Xiao Lin listened to the chatting around him silently. No one asked him for his total attribute points as Qin Chuan had already told everyone that he had under 10 total attribute points.

Beep! The Smart Computer System's unique sound pinged in Xiao Lin's mind. "Recruit Xiao Lin, the detection has ended."

What?

Did the screening not end earlier?

Xiao Lin was confused. He looked around him carefully; it seemed like he was the only one who heard it.

[The Talent Detection has ended.]

[Talent Name: ??? (No matching answer found in the database)]

[Talent Level: ??? (No matching answer found in the database)]

[Talent Analysis: The recruit's learning ability has been greatly improved.]

[Results: As a LV1 talent, his learning efficiency of various abilities is increased by 100% while in a passive state. Once the talent is unlocked, the recruit will obtain a chance to replicate any F-grade ability (talent abilities cannot be replicated), and this will last for three minutes. This replicate skill can only be unlocked once every seven days. When the talent levels up, all numbers related to the results will be improved as well. Since there are no prior cases of this talent, according to the rules, the first person to possess a new talent will get to name it. Recruit, please name the talent.]

Xiao Lin felt a little dizzy and was in disbelief as well. Qin Chuan did mention the term 'talent', but whatever it was, it seemed like it was rare and not something an ordinary person would possess. But why could the health screening not detect his talent?

[Recruit, please name the talent.]

The Central Smart Computer urged. Xiao Lin thought about it for a moment and said, "Academic Genius! Let's call it Academic Genius!"

[Talent Name: Academic Genius]

[Level: LV1]

[Talent Level Evaluation: SS

Once a talent above the S grade is detected, the recruit's files will be automatically sealed. Recruit Xiao Lin, please note that the right to read this file is limited to the dean. Do adhere to the confidentiality clause.]

Soon after that, contents of the so-called confidentiality clause from the Smart Computer automatically flashed through Xiao Lin's mind. In summation, the SS level talent was not to be known by a third person other than Xiao Lin himself and the dean.

Xiao Lin was terrified again. Although he did not know what an SS talent meant, it felt like it was something powerful. It was no wonder Qin Chuan did not know that he had that talent. Clearly, an instructor did not have the right to know about this.

Qin Chuan did not give everyone much time to chat. He said with his loud voice, "Our class is already behind. The admission test begins now! Everyone, stand where you are!"

Qin Chuan's threatening aura was already well-known. Everyone stopped what they were doing and stood in place; although everyone was confused about the admission test, Qin Chuan did not plan on explaining anything. Soon after that, a ray of white light shot down from the ceiling. Everyone was bathed in it before disappearing in the blink of an eye. Qin Chuan was the only one left in the metallic hall.

Phew!

Qin Chuan pursed his lips and seemed like he exhaled in relief. He mumbled, "How unfortunate. There's not a single talented recruit in this batch of students. Looks like I can't get a good score on the instructor's evaluation this time around. I shouldn't have signed up for this if I knew how this was going to turn out!"

"Hahaha! Old Qin, I have some good news for you!" The hall's door was pushed open, and a man walked in quickly with a big smile on his face. He passed Qin Chuan a cigarette and helped him light it up.

Qin Chuan was not friendly to many, but he would not say no to a cigarette. He drew a long one and scoffed, "You're good at enjoying things, aren't you? How dare you use your redemption points on something this fancy!"

"Pfft! That's nothing! Listen, Class Three has two talented recruits!" The man did not attempt to hide his excitement at all. "No matter what, I'm definitely getting a good score on the instructor's evaluation. Haha, with the awarded credits, I might be able to get second-year students next year!"

This brat was obviously here to show off. A hint of jealousy flashed through Qin Chuan's face before he replied nonchalantly, "Two talented recruits? Haha, what level are they? Talented recruits with low levels are just a little better than normal recruits. Our class has a strong candidate with over 40 total basic attribute points!"

"Over 40 basic attribute points!" The man exclaimed before continuing with a smile. "No matter how high the attribute points are, she's still not a talented recruit. My talented recruits are of B and A-level talents. I've notified the Student Union about this. I think a few of the seniors will meet with them soon."

Qin Chuan could not hide the jealousy on his face anymore. For one, he was jealous of the talent recruits; being talented meant that they were ahead of ordinary people. Although the instructors looked like they were powerful, it would take talented recruits one or two years to be above the instructors.

Secondly, Qin Chuan was jealous of the man in front of him. If an instructor's class performed well, the instructor would be rewarded for it. Otherwise, no one would be willing to waste his time with a bunch of idiots.

Qin Chuan no longer wanted to chat after remembering that his Class Seven did not have a single talented recruit and that he would miss out on the awards.

However, the man who came over continued speaking, "Did you hear that there was a freshman with an SS-level talent in the US last year? Tsk tsk, SS, I've never even come across an S level in my life!"

"SS? It's probably fake. I've heard that the dean in the US has denied this, and the Central Computer does not have a matching database for it. This means that there cannot be someone with an SS-level talent. Isn't there only a handful around the world with an S-level talent?"

"Haha! You don't know much about this! A few days ago, I heard a few fourth-year seniors chatting that the US and Europe held a combined test, and this person who was said to have an SS-level talent showed unimaginable abilities. Although he's only in second year, his abilities are as good as some graduates! Only someone with an SS-level talent could have such terrifying abilities."

"It's probably just rumors! I don't believe there's someone with an SS-level talent in this world!" Qin Chuan refused to believe what he just heard.

"Pfft! Forget it, we'll never meet that guy in our lives anyway. I heard that the Europeans have nicknamed him Demon King."

"Demon King? Pfft, you might as well call him Satan."

...

The admission test was fully administered by the Central Smart Computer; this was something the instructors could not see. The duo continued chatting to fill their time.

Elite Mages' Academy

Chapter 3: Admission Test

Translator: EndlessFantasy Translation **Editor:** EndlessFantasy Translation

When Xiao Lin opened his eyes again, he found himself in a classroom. The size of the classroom was about the same as his high school; there were over a hundred people in here, and it was crammed.

The Central Smart Computer's unique sound rang in everyone's minds.

[The admission test begins!]

[Compulsory Mission: Escape the school within an hour! This school is being attacked by a horde of zombies. Escape the school safely, arrive at the safe area, and the mission will be completed.]

[Optional Missions: 1) Kill at least 5 zombies, or 2) Kill the Zombie King.]

[Mission Rewards: Completing the Compulsory Mission will bring 10 credits and 100 redemption points; completing Optional Mission 1 will bring extra 10 credits and 200 redemption points; completing Optional Mission 2 will bring extra 20 credits and 500 redemption points.]

[Hint: Every freshman will receive an admission gift bag and a free novice weapon.]

[Given that this is the admission test, this event will not come with punishments for failure to complete the mission.]

Xiao Lin was crammed in the corner of the classroom. He looked around him; the classroom was rundown and the grey walls were smeared with darkened bloodstains. The tables and chairs were strewn all over the floor, and there were clouds and a bright blue sky outside the broken windows. A mild breeze made everything seem real; everyone marvelled at the technology the Dawn Academy possessed.

The field outside was filled with zombies the Smart Computer mentioned. Their skin was completely decomposed, and it was impossible to tell what shape they were. They wandered around aimlessly.

The novice weapon the Smart Computer talked about appeared in everyone's hands with a ray of light. Xiao Lin held a grey wooden wand, and he received a message about the wand in his mind at the same time.

[Novice Wand]

[Magic Attack Power Evaluation: F]

[A skill 'energy ball' is attached. Each use will lead to consumption of mental power.]

[Automatic acquisition of the Basic Wand Mastery skill LV1: 0/100]

Basic wand mastery?

Xiao Lin seemed like he understood something. He pointed the wand at the sky outside the window and felt a gush of unexplained energy flowing from his body. The wand's handle heated up slightly, and a white, fist-sized energy bomb emitted from the top of the wand with a whistling sound. It exploded like fireworks mid-air after flying for less than 50 meters.

[Basic Wand Mastery: 2/100]

The movie-like magic had many people rapt in wonder. Their glowing eyes were fixed on the wand in Xiao Lin's hands; they were reluctant to look away from it.

Although the novice weapons were randomly assigned — swords, bows, knives, daggers, wands, and so on — only a handful of people received a wand from the get-go.

The magic wand was obviously more attractive to everyone compared to the swords that seemed so commonplace.

Some more intelligent people began trading weapons with others. Some of them were unsatisfied with the weapon randomly assigned to them; they either despised the daggers for being too short, the swords being too bulky, or not knowing how to use bows and arrows. After trading for weapons they were satisfied with, they left the classroom one after another.

The classroom grew more spacious. Some of the people stayed back to try out their weapons; although swords and knives were considered normal, not many had used them in real life.

“The skill I got was Basic Bow Mastery.”

“Mine is Basic Dagger Mastery.”

“Looks like you’ll automatically get whatever skill is relevant to the weapon you’re assigned.”

“Hey, did you guys realize? Every time you wave your weapon, the Basic Mastery skill will increase in experience points!”

“That’s right! I waved it just now, and there was an increase in experience points.”

Everyone eventually learnt about this, but waving weapons did not guarantee an increase in experience points. For example, those with daggers did not get an increase in experience points if they merely waved it; they had to wave it with all their might to obtain experience points.

Xiao Lin leaned against the wall in the corner. He felt a little dizzy, but this did not stop him from listening in the chatter. He felt a little confused; everyone had a 1XP increase in their basic skills every time they waved their weapons, regardless of distance from their target. However, he was the only one who gained 2XP in Basic Wand Mastery after firing the energy bomb.

Xiao Lin’s eyes lit up; he finally understood how his SS Academic Genius talent worked. His learning efficiency for all abilities increased by 100%, even when he was in a passive state. This meant that the speed of his skill upgrade was twice as fast as everyone else’s!

“Energy bomb!”

Xiao Lin released a white energy ball toward the sky, and his Basic Wand Mastery skill increased to 4/100. His hunch was right; this was the SS-level talent after all. Although it was not really powerful at the moment, it was a masterstroke in the long run.

Nevertheless, what came after the excitement was more intense dizziness. Xiao Lin’s vision turned dark before he stumbled. He supported himself against the wall to stop himself from falling. He recovered after a few moments, but he felt hints of fatigue in his mind. It was as if he had overworked his brain.

“Could it be? No way... It’s impossible that it’s a bug after all. How could it be so easy to increase XP?” Xiao Lin looked at the magic wand in his hand. He guessed the answer to his question soon after that, and he could not help but laugh about it.

There were barely any people left in the classroom. Just as Xiao Lin had guessed; if they could increase their XP from waving their weapons around, they could just up their skill levels here before going out to complete the mission.

Truth be told, given the average person’s strength and stamina, they would only be able to wave their weapons for about 20 or 30 times with all their might before their arms grew tired. It seemed like there was a rule to an XP increase; when one lacked strength, there would be no increase in XP, no matter how vigorously they waved the weapon.

The mission was limited to an hour; it was probably so to not allow people too much time increasing their skill XP. More people chose to leave the classroom beforehand to avoid exhausting themselves.

Xiao Lin took a break. After a slight recovery, he headed toward the door to observe his surroundings before realizing that Gu Xiaoyue was following him.

Gu Xiaoyue was wearing a cream-colored jacket with a white dress. She had shoulder-length hair and donned a pair of black-framed spectacles. This girl did not stand out in terms of looks, but her decency and elegance was enough to draw eyes.

Xiao Lin did not know Gu Xiaoyue, but his male instincts made him want to talk to this elegant girl. He stood up straight, turned around, and initiated conversation. “You’re Gu Xiaoyue, aren’t you? Is there anything I can help you with?”

Gu Xiaoyue pushed the black-framed spectacles up her nose with grace and said honestly, with her bird-like voice, “Do you want to trade weapons?”

“Trade weapons?” Xiao Lin was stunned.

Gu Xiaoyue waved the dagger in her hand with difficulty. Since she was a girl, she was not very strong. She said with a serious face, “I’m not used to this.”

“Why me?” Xiao Lin was still a little confused. “I mean, there were so many people in the classroom. I don’t think many of them could say no to a beautiful girl.”

Gu Xiaoyue scrunched her pretty nose and said, “I only have eyes for the magic wand. The others aren’t for me.”

Xiao Lin nodded and replied, “Only a handful of people were assigned magic wands.”

“To be exact, only 15 people were assigned magic wands,” Gu Xiaoyue uttered the exact number before adding, “I’ve observed that you’re the only one who’s not suitable for this weapon among those who were assigned them, so let’s trade.”

Xiao Lin was a little surprised. “You realized it too?”

Gu Xiaoyue pushed her glasses again and said, “It isn’t hard to analyze. Although I don’t play games, I know that things like magic would lead to some kind of energy consumption, either mentally or in magic points. This is probably related to our Intelligence points discerned from our health screenings.”

Xiao Lin only had 2 Intelligence points, so after releasing two energy bombs, his brain felt unusually fatigued. He did think about this possibility, but he did not expect this girl to be so observant.

Xiao Lin agreed to the deal right away; to him, a dagger was undoubtedly better than a magic wand.

[Novice Dagger]

[Physical Attack Power Evaluation: F-]

[Automatic acquisition of Basic Dagger Mastery LV1: 0/100]

As expected, this physical weapon did not come with the problem of energy consumption, and its attack power was at a lower grade. The magic wand’s Magic Attack Power was graded F, while the dagger’s attack power was graded F-.

Gu Xiaoyue did not plan on continuing the conversation after obtaining the magic wand. Satisfied, she turned around and left.

Xiao Lin felt a little regret and shook his head. When he arrived at the entrance of the academic building, there were already brave people charging towards the field with weapons in hand. The field was about the size of 1.5 football fields, and there was a ray of pale yellow light at the end of the field. That was the safe area mentioned in the mission. So long as one arrived at the light, the mission would be completed.

The zombies wandered around aimlessly on the field; they did not seem like they were heading toward the academic building. This was expected, as the newbies would not be able to complete the mission otherwise. However, the moment someone rushed out, the zombies locked their eyes on their targets before quickly shuffling toward them.

The zombies were slow; even after gaining momentum, they moved at the speed of an adult walking at a brisk pace. Nevertheless, there were about three or four hundred zombies; the first batch of people who charged out was quickly trapped. The person ahead of everyone else had his head snapped by a zombie; his body transformed into dust before disappearing into thin air.

Instructions about the admission test were clear about this; there would be no punishments for failing to complete the mission; there would be no 10-year deduction of their lifespan, and no one would really die from this. However, if one was injured by zombies, the pain would feel realistic. The screams and cries on the field were enough to terrify the group of people who were used to living in peace.

Some of the people charged forward after seeing that the zombies were focused on the first group. However, the system was not going to let that happen so easily; as they charged out, half of the

zombies trapping the first group came toward them instead. Meanwhile, this put the first group under less stress, and they got closer to the safe area.

Xiao Lin's eyes twitched as he watched it unfold on the field. He gulped with all his might; he was just an otaku before this. He admitted that he was a little afraid; this mission was obviously not as easy as everyone thought it would be.

Although it sounded nice to have no punishments and to be able to come back to life, neither Qin Chuan nor the Smart Computer warned them about this situation.

The zombies' attack power was not high; unless one was unlucky enough to be grabbed by the neck and be snapped in half, other injuries the zombies caused were barely lethal. At most, they would tear a piece of meat off one's body before chewing on it.

The visual was terrifying; some of the more timid fell to the ground in fear and could not get up.

Those whose legs were injured had it worse; they could not count on anyone to save them after losing their mobility. They would be swiftly trapped by zombies, and although they knew that they were not really dying, the pain from having their bodies torn apart was excruciatingly unforgettable. Their bodies only transformed into dust and disappeared into the air after they took their last breath.

The field grew more and more chaotic, and everyone was dumbfounded by the cruel display before their eyes. Although they were wielding weapons, they lost the will to fight in the face of rotting meat, horrible smells, the pungent scent of blood, and screams for help around them. They kept their head down and ran with all their might in an attempt to arrive at the safe area before the zombies trapped them.

Xiao Lin took a deep breath and tried his best to move his gaze away from the scene on the field. He gleaned enough information from what he observed; if he continued watching, he would have lost the courage to charge forward.

There was only an hour for the mission. Xiao Lin did a silent count; he still had enough time to train himself. He had the Academic Genius talent, so it would be great if he could get his Basic Dagger Mastery skill up to LV2.

Xiao Lin understood that he was behind everyone else; his total basic attribute points were under 10. He was the worst among these people in terms of strength, intelligence, and physique. If he wanted to increase the chances of him completing the mission, training his skills was the best option.

He turned around to leave in search of an empty classroom to practice his Basic Dagger Mastery skill. Soon after that, his eyes lit up at the sight of what he was looking for. He pushed a door open and walked into a classroom.

Gu Xiaoyue turned around and stared at him silently before looking out the window toward the field. She waved the magic wand and released a white energy ball, but did not hit anything. It was impossible to hit anything anyway; Xiao Lin calculated from his first try that the energy bomb could only travel for about 50 meters.

The nearest zombie to the academic building was over 100 meters away. It made sense anyway; It was impossible for the Smart Computer to allow such a loophole and let them attack the zombies from the safety of the building.

Practicing Basic Wand Mastery was not as obvious as practicing any physical weapon. Magic points and mental power were very valuable to those with low basic attribute points. The more they wasted, the harder it would be for them to complete the mission.

However, Xiao Lin did not think that the calm girl would make any mistakes. Seeing that she did not want to converse, he ignored her and continued with his practice.

He only had two Strength points. Thankfully, the dagger he got from Gu Xiaoyue was light; if it was a heavy weapon, like a long sword, Xiao Lin might not be able to use it.

Xiao Lin tried waving the dagger lightly; his Basic Dagger Mastery XP did not change.

He then tried to wave the dagger with all his might, but it only moved a little in front of him. The XP remained the same.

Xiao Lin finally lifted the dagger over his head before slamming it forward. The blade's edge whizzed in the wind before the tip hit the ground, freeing a speck of rubble from the floor. The dagger's sharpness was unexpected.

[Basic Dagger Mastery LV1: 2/100]

"There are indeed no loopholes." Xiao Lin pursed his lips in regret before trying out straight and slanted slashing poses. He gained XP from both of them. It meant that there was no compulsory pose to wave the dagger in order to gain XP, but it had to fulfill a certain requirement and one had to go all out on strength to wave the dagger. Otherwise, the move would be deemed a failure and reap no XP.

Xiao Lin tried to standardize his moves, but since he had never learnt proper dagger-wielding, his moves were only imitated from whatever he had seen from TV and movies. That was why he failed sometimes to accurately waving the dagger; not only did he not gain XP, he also wasted his energy.

Xiao Lin began feeling soreness in his arms after a few minutes; his horrible physique was finally showing itself. He could not consistently exert strength, and the effects of his labor were greatly affected. The number of times he failed to increase his XP also grew.

After about 15 minutes, his Basic Dagger Mastery LV1 was at 90/100.

This was unsatisfactory to Xiao Lin; he only succeeded 45 times. He began regretting his otaku lifestyle and ignoring exercise. His physique was only worth 3 points at the moment; he was probably trailing behind many girls.

Xiao Lin was drenched in sweat. He could barely complete his moves; he had no choice but to take a break.

"There's no point in doing what you're doing." Gu Xiaoyue finally moved her eyes away from the windows. She pushed her black-framed glasses and analyzed him with a serious face. "I tried it out

before you came. Calculating the ratio of shooting energy bombs and my recovery time, it would take about an hour to get to LV2. I think other people have the same ratio as well. That is why we were only given an hour for the mission; the academy would not give any of us a chance to take the shortcut!”

Xiao Lin exhaled; he was mildly surprised at the girl’s calculative ability. Yes, based on his efficiency earlier, he would have needed about 20 to 30 minutes to get to LV2. If he did not have the Academic Genius talent, which afforded him twice the efficiency rate, he would probably need about an hour to do so as well.

Xiao Lin could not tell the girl about his Academic Genius talent. He did not want to continue on this topic, so he diverted the conversation. “Did you come to any conclusions from observing the zombies’ abilities?”

Gu Xiaoyue tilted her head, hints of surprise appearing on her face. “You knew what I was doing?”

Xiao Lin giggled in his mind. When he entered the classroom to find Gu Xiaoyue looking out the window rather than practicing her skills, he knew what she was up to.

“Gamers know that it’s important to come up with strategies before playing Instances. Since there are no strategies in this world, it’s up to us to find our own.”

“Games? Sorry, I don’t play childish games.” The girl was serious.

Xiao Lin coughed before changing the topic. “The zombies aren’t that strong in terms of attack power. Based on the evaluation standard here, I think they’re only at an F- grade. An average person could probably take about four of five strikes from a zombie, so long they don’t get attacked in their vitals or legs. There was a big man who was attacked at least ten times before falling.”

Seeing how intently the girl was listening, Xiao Lin continued his analysis, “The zombies are low in defense as well, so that’s probably ranked F- as well. I’ve seen a F- grade dagger pierce through a zombie’s body. Based on these points, the mission isn’t really so hard, it’s just that everyone is terrified.”

Xiao Lin sighed with a forced smile; he was terrified as well. However, after calming down, he realized that the zombies are not unbeatable; they were just terrifying. Everyone was capable of facing zombies with the novice weapons they had; but if they lost the will to fight, they would not win at all.

Maybe the admission test was meant to help everyone get used to this environment?

Elite Mages' Academy

Chapter 4: Teaming Up

Translator: EndlessFantasy Translation **Editor:** EndlessFantasy Translation

There was a brief silence.

Gu Xiaoyue picked up on his statement and said with a crisp voice, "That's why there are hardly any long-distance novice weapons. Truth be told, apart from magic wands, bows and arrows were rarely assigned as well. This is actually how the academy is taking care of us, freshmen."

Xiao Lin agreed. Bows and magic wands had a grade F attack power evaluation, while short-distance weapons had F- attack power evaluation. This point was validated by everyone else.

However, in the first group of people who charged forward, those who wielded long-distance weapons were the first to die. Although novice weapons like bows came with 10 free arrows, those who knew how to use them would have horrible aim under extreme fear and stress; let alone those who knew nothing about bows and arrows.

Xiao Lin even saw someone with a bow hastily shooting away; one of the arrows eventually hit another player in the butt. The victim fell and died after being cornered by zombies.

Wand-like weapons were even more useless than bows. Although many were jealous of the 'energy bomb' skill, it was a different ballgame in combat.

The energy bomb's flight trajectory was not a straight line; it was trickier than arrows. At least people knew some basic principles of aiming when it came to bows and arrows, but when it came to the energy bomb, its trajectory was simply erratic. Based on Xiao Lin's brief observation, the energy bomb had a higher hit rate at a closer range of ten meters; any further than that, its hit chance was up to luck.

This was not a game where you could just click on the monster with your mouse and hit a shortcut key to use a skill. This was the real world.

"We should go out," Gu Xiaoyue said all of a sudden. "Most from the first group are dead. Those who stayed back are probably thinking of the same strategies."

"How many completed the mission?" Xiao Lin knew that Gu Xiaoyue must have been watching everything closely for the past ten minutes or so; she was an observant girl.

Gu Xiaoyue shook her head. "It's hard to estimate for the first optional mission, but amidst such a chaotic scene and extreme stress, I don't think many of them killed five zombies. However, there are about 11 or 12 who got through the field and arrived at the safe area with injuries to complete the compulsory mission. Unfortunately, they killed too few zombies."

"There are actually over 10 lucky ones!" Xiao Lin thought that the figure was decent; maybe these people had better physique and managed to escape lethal injuries with pure luck. That was probably how they made it through the zombies.

However, when Xiao Lin and Gu Xiaoyue arrived at the entrance of the Academic Building again, Xiao Lin could not help but laugh after silently counting the number of people who stayed back.

Over 20 people who stayed. This meant that at least 70 people charged forward bravely within the last 20 minutes, but only a seventh of them completed the compulsory mission. This was not a good chance.

A muscular man, in a black tank top, widened his eyes upon seeing Gu Xiaoyue. He walked out of the crowd and extended his hand to the girl. He said with a friendly tone, “Gu Xiaoyue, you’re here. I was just looking for you!”

Gu Xiaoyue ignored the hand and took two steps back. She lifted her brows. “Who are you?”

The man smiled and left his hand hanging in the air. “I forgot to introduce myself, I’m Wang Dalin. I have 32 basic attribute points; my Strength, Physique, and Agility points are above 10!”

Wang Dalin went on to glare at Xiao Lin; a hint of irony flashed in his eyes. It was obvious what he meant; three of his attributes were above 10 points, while Xiao Lin’s total attribute points were under 10.

Thanks to Qin Chuan’s ‘marketing’ during the health screening, everyone knew Xiao Lin as the loser with a horrible physique. That was why Xiao Lin was not surprised that Wang Dalin recognized him right away.

Gu Xiaoyue lifted her hand slowly, but only to push up her spectacles. She moved away and looked around her before saying, “Are there over 20 people left? There’s quite a lot of them, but that doesn’t matter. Let’s form teams.”

Xiao Lin tried his best to hold in laughter as he watched Wang Dalin withdraw his hand in embarrassment. Although he knew that Gu Xiaoyue was not intentionally defending him — the girl was naturally cold and distant to others — Xiao Lin was still satisfied. He could not help but smugly glance at Wang Dalin; it was obvious that he meant: Did you think you could get a girl so out of your league? Dream on!

A hint of anger appeared on Wang Dalin’s face. He turned around to avoid Xiao Lin’s gaze and followed Gu Xiaoyue, saying, “You’re wrong, not everyone here wants to team up to complete the mission.”

Teaming up was the obvious answer.

Since the zombies’ combat power was far below average, they could possibly arrive at the safe area without being harmed as long as they got over their fear and teamed up.

Xiao Lin frowned; the 20 people obviously split themselves up into two sides. He could roughly guess everyone’s answer.

True enough, one of the girls, who was dressed more fashionably, cautiously raised her hand and forced a laugh. “I won’t be teaming up with you guys, I’ve thought about it. I’ll just wait it out here.”

Quite a few people immediately agreed with what the girl said. One of them even waved his arm vigorously to conceal his fear before saying, “Since there isn’t a punishment for failing the mission, there’s no point risking it!”

Xiao Lin did a count; there were 26 of them, including Gu Xiaoyue and himself. 14 of them were too afraid to go out, and most of them were girls. As such, Xiao Lin subconsciously stared at Gu Xiaoyue for a few seconds; she seemed calmer than ever.

“That’s more than enough!” Wang Dalin patted the sword he was holding and said loudly, “Since my basic attribute points are above 30, Gu Xiaoyue and I are strong enough to face the zombies! What’s there to be afraid of!”

Even the girls who stayed back could not help but roll their eyes. It was the umpteenth time Wang Dalin showed off his attribute points. Although it was true — their total attribute points were between 10 and 20 at most — that was the normal standard for ordinary people. Only two people had above 30 points; Wang Dalin and Gu Xiaoyue.

Even though Wang Dalin was showing off again by dragging Gu Xiaoyue into his antics, she did not care much for it. She pushed her glasses up her nose out of habit and said, “Arriving at the safe area and killing five zombies are easy, but the harder mission is killing the zombie king. I don’t think that can be easily achieved with just the both of us or even a dozen of us.”

Wang Dalin’s expression froze. He rebutted, “The zombie king is just an optional mission. Moreover, has anyone seen where the zombie king is? I’ve been observing and I haven’t seen anything that looked like a zombie king on the field...”

Xiao Lin cut him short and said, “Obviously, the zombie king only appears if some mechanism is triggered. Judging from the current situation, there are only a few possible triggers; time, the death toll of zombies, and the number of survivors!”

Gu Xiaoyue looked at Xiao Lin and said, “Time is impossible; it’s been nearly half an hour. Judging from the zombie king’s potential difficulty, it’s impossible to give us such little time to fight it. The number of survivors would be impossible as well; there’s only a fifth of us here. The only possibility is the death toll of zombies.”

“The people who rushed out first did not kill too many zombies, so that’s possible. It’s just that we don’t know the exact number.” Some people were a little convinced by now, but there was still doubt.

Xiao Lin added, “Isn’t the first optional mission to kill at least five zombies per person? Since there’s half an hour to go and we’re not rushing to the safe area, why don’t we kill a few more zombies? It’ll be great if the zombie king comes out, but if he doesn’t, we can still reach the safe area in the last few minutes. It’ll still work!”

A great number of people agreed to this. Those who stayed back wanted credits and redemption points as well. The mission’s instructions were clear; there were no punishments for failing the admission test. This also meant that there would never be such a good deal again. No one wanted to miss such a great opportunity to be rewarded for winning, nor face any consequences for losing.

The zombie king’s strength was still an unknown factor, but it did not matter. Even if the zombie king did appear, everyone was ready to fight it if they could and run if they could not.

Everyone finally reached an agreement. Wang Dalin was not resigned to being rejected; he blurted, “There are 12 of us, eight of us can do close-range combat, and four of us can do long-range combat. Among the long-range ones, there are two with bows and two with magic wands. Why don’t we move in a circle formation? The long-ranged combatants can stay in the inner circle to better carry out long-range attacks.”

Xiao Lin could not bother listening to this guy further. He had a good rest while the discussion went on; he got up immediately and began waving his dagger. He was 10XP away from leveling up; he wanted to achieve it before they went out.

Wang Dalin seemed displeased with Xiao Lin. He sneered, “What’s the use of doing that last minute? Before I came to Dawn Academy, I worked out consistently, every day. Without that, how could I have my 32 attribute points?”

Everyone had grown immune to his arrogance. Just as they ignored Wang Dalin, a clear voice said, “The zombies’ attack and defense abilities are weak, so higher or lower basic attribute points won’t make much of a difference here. Moreover, 32 attribute points mean that you’re just a little better than the average person.”

Wang Dalin was annoyed when the girl put him in his place. He could not help but ask, “What’s the total of your basic attribute points?”

“46.”

There was silence.

Everyone’s eyes widened as if they had seen a monster, while Wang Dalin’s mouth hung open in surprise. Xiao Lin’s dagger was also suspended in the air as he stared at the nonchalant girl in disbelief.

Although everyone knew that Gu Xiaoyue’s attribute points were the highest among them, the instructor did not mention her actual figure. As most of them had between 10 and 20 points, while Wang Dalin had 32 points, they assumed that Gu Xiaoyue’s points would be within that range, however high hers were.

Elite Mages' Academy

Chapter 5: Kill Stealing

Translator: EndlessFantasy Translation **Editor:** EndlessFantasy Translation

“Any more questions?” Gu Xiaoyue asked calmly.

“Oh, no, none. No more questions.” Wang Dalin sounded weaker instantly. Although his attribute points were second highest, he was still miles away from Gu Xiaoyue.

Xiao Lin snapped out of it and waved his dagger around for the last few times. Soon after that, a series of voices from the Central Smart Computer echoed in his mind.

[Basic Dagger Mastery skill upgraded to LV2. You now have a basic understanding of swordsmanship, and your sword-wielding attack power has increased slightly.]

[After vigorous training, your Strength has improved; basic Strength points +1]

[Basic Dagger Mastery LV2: 0/500]

[The database shows that you are the first freshman in this batch to raise your skill level. According to the latest Freshman Incentive Measures issued by the academy, you'll be awarded a skill that matches your current abilities for free. The database is searching for matches...]

Xiao Lin was excited; he did not expect that practicing a skill could increase his basic attribute points. This was good news to someone with low attribute points like him; the free skill was a pleasant surprise as well.

After waiting for at least 30 seconds, Xiao Lin was beginning to feel anxious when he heard the Smart Computer's voice again.

[Slashing LV1]

[Learning Requirements: 1 Strength point and above]

[Weapon Requirement: Any close-range physical weapon]

[Skill Introduction: A stronger blow can be delivered after gathering the user's strength for a few moments. The attack's damage depends on the user's current Strength points.]

[Hint: It is recommended that there is a minimum of a one-minute break between each time the skill is used. Continuous use of this skill will accelerate the user's energy consumption. Please choose carefully.]

While Xiao Lin was happy, he could not help but laugh at himself. The skill's requirement was so low; it only required 1 Strength point to learn it. Although the Smart Computer said that the reward matched his current abilities, it also meant that his attributes were so weak that only the lowest level skill matched his abilities...

Nonetheless, Xiao Lin was very satisfied with this gain. Moreover, he realized that his physical attack power evaluation rose from F- to F upon receiving the Slashing skill. As for its effect, he would only find that out in actual combat.

"Hey! How long do you plan on holding everyone up!" Wang Dalin urged impatiently.

"Yes, I'm done!"

The others formed the team; it was a circular formation, as discussed, and the four long-ranged fighters were on the inside of the circle. Although Xiao Lin acquired a new skill, he had yet to know its power; he decided to stay low-key and stood at the back of the formation.

Wang Dalin stood at the front of the team fearlessly, being so arrogant about having high attribute points. He drew his sword, brandished it forward, took a deep breath, and yelled like a drill sergeant. "Charge!"

With that, he rushed out of the Academic Building; other people were forced to pick up their speed as well in order to maintain the circular formation. As expected, the Academic Building was a safe area designated by the system so zombies would not attack them. However, once they left the

Academic Building, zombies on the field looked like sharks smelling blood. Their hollow eye sockets glowed immediately as they closed in on the team.

Xiao Lin was stunned for a few seconds before cursing and chasing after the crowd. He yelled angrily, “Wang Dalin! Are you dumb? Are you trying to kill everyone? Everyone, stop! Stop running! F*ck, I’m talking to you, why are you running? Were you kicked in the head by a donkey? Are you trying to reincarnate?”

Wang Dalin was arrogant. He had set the scene to make everyone, especially the elegant girl, know how great he was. He wanted to prove that he was fundamentally better than some loser with under ten attribute points.

Xiao Lin’s words drove Wang Dalin’s frustration to the brink of explosion. He ignored the fact that they were nearing the zombies; he pushed through the crowd and glared at Xiao Lin angrily. “What did you say! Huh? Do you want me to kick your *ss! Haha, with our Strength points, it’ll take me two hits to finish you!”

“He’s right! Are you trying to kill everyone!” A beautiful figure blocked Wang Dalin’s gaze. Gu Xiaoyue raised her magic wand and pointed it mercilessly toward him.

Everyone else felt awkward watching the fight unfold. They thought about stopping it, but given that one of them had 32 attribute points and the other had 46, they might end up injured.

Everyone decided to stay silent. Some of them even wanted to retreat to the Academic Building.

Xiao Lin pushed through the crowd, walked toward Wang Dalin, and glared at him. “Did you not observe anything? These zombies are slow, but if we choose to run, the zombies will pick up their speed as well. I think that limitation was set for us. Otherwise, if the zombies stayed slow while everyone else gets to run, how would this mission be challenging?”

Gu Xiaoyue pushed her spectacles with one hand and said, “Zombies have weak attack and defense abilities, but they have strength in numbers. As long as we choose to move slowly in order to stop the zombies from gathering too quickly, we could kill them one by one. Is it so hard to understand such a simple principle?”

After Xiao Lin and Gu Xiaoyue’s reminders, everyone realized that the zombies around them did slow down after all. The zombies were slow; at this speed, it was possible to kill them all one by one.

“Wang Dalin, they’re right, just let it go. Let’s continue the mission together and get the credits and redemption points,” said a guy, trying to be a peacemaker.

“Wang Dalin, if you’re dissatisfied, you can complete the mission yourself. Stop bothering us. Don’t you have 32 attribute points? Haha, it should be easy for you to go through the field yourself,” said someone who was annoyed at Wang Dalin.

Wang Dalin’s face was flushed. His expression changed before lowering his sword. He said, straight-faced, “Don’t take it personally. We’re teammates after all. Let’s do as you say. Let’s continue with the mission!”

Everyone remained in formation; they were no longer running. They moved slowly toward the area with fewer zombies. Although they initially overcame their fear by walking out of the Academic Building, Xiao Lin realized that his arms trembled a little as they approached the zombies' hideous faces. He glanced at the person next to him from the corner of his eye; he realized that the person's reaction was similar to his own. They were nervous with anticipation.

The team was less than 20 meters away from one of the zombies. The guys on the outer circle pulled out their swords and knives before anxiously stopping in their tracks. They got ready and waited for the zombie to come near them.

Whoosh!

A white energy bomb with a shallow trail drew a beautiful arc in the air before hitting the right side of the zombie's decomposed body.

Bang!

With a mild explosion, half of the zombie's body flew onto the pasture a few meters away from the team. The zombie wobbled before falling to the ground.

Silence! Everyone turned around and stared at a calm Gu Xiaoyue in shock. They could not find the words; the energy bomb was so powerful that it was a little terrifying. It was an instant kill!

Gu Xiaoyue's brow flinched for a moment. She mumbled, "It was tough to aim at the target. I wanted to hit it in the head. Looks like I need to keep correcting the deviation of the flight trajectory."

Xiao Lin was shocked as well, but not because of the energy bomb's power. Although Gu Xiaoyue's total attribute points were 46, she seemed frail; her physique was very different from Wang Dalin's, who had consistent physical training. Her Strength and Agility could not be high, so most of this girl's attribute points must come from her Intelligence. It was not surprising that she was so lethal.

What shocked Xiao Lin was the girl's hit rate. Based on his previous observation, it was extremely hard to control the energy bomb's flight trajectory; it was harder than using a bow. He was unsure if Gu Xiaoyue was lucky, or she had already mastered her control over the energy bomb's hit rate.

Nevertheless, following Gu Xiaoyue's successful attack, everyone felt a little better about facing the zombies. Her hit eased the others' nervousity, so the combat that followed was easier than everyone imagined.

Since they slowed down, the group only faced eight or nine zombies at one time. Although most of them were unfamiliar with their weapons — their moves with the weapons were unpleasant to look at — the zombies were of the lowest level. The group could cause considerable damage to the zombies with sheer brute force.

Although their attributes were digitized, actual life and combat could not be digitized; it was difficult to do so. However, it did not matter. According to Xiao Lin's observations, zombies would basically die after three to four physical attacks. If they were attacked in vital parts such as the head, it would only take two to three hits to knock them down.

There was another guy with a magic wand apart from Gu Xiaoyue, but his ability to use the energy bomb was less satisfactory. He could only guarantee a 60% hit rate within a 10-meter range. Fortunately, magical attacks were stronger than physical attacks. Even if the zombie was not hit in the head, it would only take two energy bombs to kill it.

The admission test's difficulty was not high after all. After killing the first zombie, everyone became more confident; their movements were no longer flustered, and they could chat with each other occasionally.

"How many zombies have you killed?"

"Probably about seven."

"F*ck, why are you stealing my kills! Stop that, I just need one more to complete the mission."

...

Everyone kept checking each other's body count. Truly, everyone felt like the first optional mission was not hard at all in the moment. It was easy for the whole team to complete the mission. However, the kill would only go to the person with the final blow, which was why killsteals were happening.

Gu Xiaoyue was the first to complete the mission; she killed five zombies within two minutes with her insane lethality. Xiao Lin also understood that the girl's hit rate was from pure luck.

After that, Gu Xiaoyue went silent and watched the others; she did not intend on attacking anymore. Everyone praised her for not stealing kills. If Gu Xiaoyue did want to attack again, it would definitely be an instant kill. There would not be an opportunity to kill for anyone else.

Xiao Lin's lips twitched. As he watched the girl, who was calmer than ever, he felt that the reason Gu Xiaoyue did not make a move was purely to take time and recover before facing the zombie king that could appear at any moment.

Xiao Lin completed the mission quickly as well. His normal attack was not strong, and he only had three basic Strength points. Even after upgrading to Basic Dagger Mastery LV2, he needed five or six strikes to kill a zombie with normal attacks. It was obvious that no one around him would give him that amount of time to do so.

That was why Xiao Lin did not strike first; he silently followed everyone else and invoked his Slashing skill on zombies after two or three strikes from other people. He took the final blows and stole the kills successfully.

Most of those with physical weapons had F- grade attack power, while Xiao Lin's attack power was F grade whenever he used the Slashing skill.

Based on Xiao Lin's observation, this was how he understood the attack power: one's true attack power consisted of their attack power evaluation and Strength points. That was why, although his Strength points were not high, the power of his Slashing skill was on par with everyone else's attacks. It was the perfect way to steal kills.

The Slashing skill was easy to use since its learning requirement was pathetically low. When Xiao Lin raised his dagger, he could feel his energy gathering at the edge of the dagger for one or two seconds before executing a powerful strike.

Apart from Gu Xiaoyue's distracted and confused gaze on him, no one realized what Xiao Lin was doing. Those who had their kills stolen were annoyed, but they did not do much other than glare at him.

It was like how two Level 100 players in online games fought each other. Your strike brought your opponent to 1HP left, but a Level 1 newbie came over, attacked your opponent, and caused a 1HP decrease — stealing your kill. You could not accuse the newbie of doing it on purpose; you could only lament your luck.

Everyone knew that Xiao Lin's basic attribute points were under 10. On average, he would only have about two or three Strength points. They felt that their attack powers were vastly different from Xiao Lin's; therefore, although their kills were stolen, they could only blame it on their luck.