

God level 36

Chapter 36: This Time Featuring Jaws

Da Fei took a deep breath and quickly adjusted his state from the earlier fright.

Leadership Skill is a compulsory skill for heroes, and it's bound to be learned sooner or later. If I made a mistake, then so be it; I still have plenty of Skill Points. Luck Skill, of course, is something to continue learning; I must rectify the Curse of Misfortune. There can't be any mistakes with the remaining sharks.

Da Fei took out the Skill Book for Luck Skill, and there was a flash of golden light.

—System Prompt: You have spent one Skill Point to learn Basic Luck Skill.

—Basic Luck Skill: Increases the hero and hero's troops' Luck Value by 1. 1 point of Luck Value has a 2% chance to hit a maximum damage double Lucky Strike.

Now Da Fei could finally slay the sharks without worry.

The crossbow cannon roared, and each thundering sound took a shark's life like the Death God itself. The sea turned crimson, and dozens of dead sharks thrashed belly-up in the bloody waves. Those sharks that couldn't reach the golden spearfish began feasting on the corpses of their dead companions. For a shark, as long as there is blood and flesh, it doesn't care if it's its own kind. And once a shark smells blood, its damage and attack speed increase significantly, which is the shark's powerful special skill, Bloody Frenzy. If not for the negative effect of friendly fire, this skill could be called a God-level Special Skill.

Finally, another ray of golden light descended from the sky.

—System Prompt: Congratulations! You have leveled up to level 18! You have gained 1 free attribute point, 1 Skill Point, +2 Life Value, +1 Command Power.

Da Fei exhaled a long breath; it was great to have wisely preserved the crossbow cannon from the start. They all say that leveling after level 10 is tough—is it? I don't think so, ha! I'm a master! Hell for the weak is heaven for the strong!

There are still a dozen left; let me send you all on your way. It's a pity that after hunting so many sharks, they didn't even leave me a fin.

The crossbow cannon fired with a thud, taking yet another shark's life. And at that moment, the school of sharks scattered instantly, fleeing as if startled.

Da Fei couldn't help but be taken aback; why did they suddenly flee? There were tens of thousands of experience points to gain. While he was in shock,

—System Prompt: Reconnaissance Skill Warning! A strong enemy is approaching you, please stay alert.

The mini-map began flashing red! Damn it, a boss! No wonder they fled so fast; turns out there's an enemy even sharks fear! I thought sharks were fearless after going into Bloody Frenzy.

Da Fei immediately took out a telescope and looked in the direction of the warning on the mini-map. Sure enough, he saw a massive fish's dorsal fin cutting through the waves in the distance like a speedboat—a great white shark! The overlord of the ocean, the king among overlords! Legend says that in the ocean, a great white shark's speed could reach that of a car; judging by its astounding speed, it's indeed true!

Da Fei was instantly dumbfounded! Is it here to eat the prey or to ram the ship? As long as it doesn't ram the ship, anything is negotiable—I absolutely won't fight you! No, no, no, there's definitely no one here, feel free to eat!

Fearing being seen by it, Da Fei immediately ran to another closed gun port in the gun cabin and peeked outside through a crack. After all, legends say that the great white shark is the only shark that can lift its head above water, and its vision can't be compared to that of ordinary sharks. Who knows what might happen if it spots him.

The great white shark arrived in an instant, and its size was beyond Da Fei's imagination! It was almost as long as half the ship! This was a prehistoric giant shark!

Among this sea of floating corpses, its first chosen prey was the battered and delicious golden spearfish, then it opened its massive maw—like a garage door—wide open, and chomped down!

—Bang! The ship suddenly shook violently! Da Fei's heart jolted!

Am I fishing for a prehistoric giant shark? Am I courting death? No, no, don't turn Hemingway's "Old Man and the Sea" into Spielberg's "Jaws" on me, what's next? "Pacific Rim"? Should I be summoning a Gundam?

Gigantic waves rolled on the sea as the ship began shaking violently, the power of the giant shark was truly capable of shaking the heavens and seas!

Da Fei's heart tightened; if this goes on, it would turn into "Titanic"! He couldn't continue recklessly; he needed to loosen the cable quickly.

Just as Da Fei ran toward the deck, he felt the ship beginning to move, and not slowly! The giant shark was dragging the ship along!

Da Fei was suddenly startled! Why isn't the shark attacking my ship?

Is it still replaying "Old Man and the Sea"? In the story, wasn't that golden spearfish dragging the old man's small boat for days and nights until it exhausted itself and died of blood loss? Does that mean this giant shark's intelligence is at the same level? Doesn't it realize the rope is tied to the ship?

If that's the case, should I bet or not?

As a lottery enthusiast, as an opportunist, this kind of problem was never a problem! However, Da Fei suddenly realized that he had begun to become overly cautious since acquiring the ship. Like that low-level mistake just now, he definitely wouldn't have made it before.

Indeed, when I was a specialist back then, the so-called experts had no arguments against me—not necessarily because my skills were absolutely better than theirs, Da Fei was self-aware of that. Ultimately, it was because I didn't take games seriously, and could mess around without reservation, which led to remarkable achievements.

All in all, I need to surpass myself!

I'm taking the bet! I've already got a treasure map and information on the Super Crossbow Cannon, and I've gained plenty from the Epic Captain; it's just a ship in a game, I can handle it.

Now, "Old Man and the Sea" was playing again, with Da Fei in the lead role, the great white shark as the supporting cast, and the small boat replaced by a big ship. Under the astonishing strength of the great white shark, the Flying plowed through the waves in the sea.

Where is my destination? It doesn't matter anymore; I'll accompany you to the end!

But although he spoke boldly, Da Fei's mood was far from calm. He huddled on the ship, not daring to move, fearing the slightest sound would alert the shark and make it wake up.

Suddenly, Da Fei felt a strong sense of incongruity. Why doesn't the shark attack my ship? If it did, I'd be a goner; this felt just like when helping the captain with the trial mission, where the monsters only attacked the captain and ignored me. That implies this is the system intentionally lowering the difficulty?

Thinking about it carefully, as soon as I repaired the ship, the storm came—yes, advancing the plot mission, definitely intentional.

Then having no food, fishing—yes, that's expected.

And then the golden spearfish, the shark swarm, the great white shark—all those big names at sea that were so rare even among many mariners during public tests, all appeared in this area one after another. Isn't that too deliberate? Under normal conditions, every boss-level big name has its domain, and encounters are rare. It's obviously a system-produced monster, just like how the system keeps spawning monsters to attack the island in the Undead Realm.

Could it be that my novice trial isn't actually over? But on the island, it clearly prompted completion for "Assist the Captain in Battle," gave me a sword as a reward, offered a ship, and the Epic Hero isn't far off. This should be more than enough rewards for a novice, so why isn't it over?

Wait a minute! Could it be that such a high-level combat mission like assisting the captain wasn't really meant for a non-combat hero player like me in the first place? Isn't that just forcing a square peg into a round hole? While the system may be cruel, it's unlikely they would send an admiral into the mountains; similarly, sending me, a player starting with Sailing Skill, straight into battle doesn't seem very likely either.

Did I, by excluding Blood Sea Wave, inadvertently take over his trial mission, completing it while my mission has just begun?

In that instant, Da Fei was suddenly enlightened!

Possible! Anything is possible! His expertise, though strong, was only suitable for duels with people and beasts, while my expertise was in contention with the sky and the sea—a completely different realm! Only the heavens and oceans were qualified to test me!

That's right, my trial has just begun! Hahaha—whoa! Just as he realized, Da Fei finally released his laughter, quickly covering his mouth—don't let the shark hear me, if the ship goes down, the trial will end before it begins.

As they say, once you understand one thing, many things become clearer. Suddenly, issues that Da Fei never understood began to make sense. If the ship, sword, and Epic Hero were actually all prepared for this God-level Hero Admiral, then what kind of reward would a trial just beginning bring me? What reward could possibly match the level of someone who contends with the sky and sea?

A Divine Artifact? A lightning strike from the heavens on my ship, a Titan Sword emerging from the thunderfire?

Makar? That's already an NPC for an Epic Quest.

A God-level Skill? Without any information or leads, the system wouldn't possibly award one. In this money-grabbing game, it's more believable that you could pay to buy it from the system.

A Hidden Profession?

Da Fei's eyebrow twitched, does this world have a starter village where you can't change professions? No! At level 18, still unable to change profession, isn't that odd? Very odd!

Then...

In an instant, the word "Sailor" leaped into Da Fei's mind!

In the captain's diary, it repeatedly mentions how Sailors are, then again how Sailors are, and even that odd Skill Book begins with Sailors. It's as if warning me he was a Sailor, so what exactly is a Sailor?

Of course, Sailor is a profession! But professions like miner, doctor, cook, fisherman, dancer, even Long Spear Soldier like mine, are numerous in the game. So the crucial question is, is a Sailor a hero profession? At least it isn't stated on the official site.

According to the official site, Human Race hero professions are knights and priests, Elf Clan are rangers and druids, Undead Race are death knights and undead wizards, Beastmen are shamans and barbarians. In short, they're categorized into warriors and magic types, all capable of leading troops to enhance overall team abilities, distinctly different from professions like miner and cook!

If Sailor is a hidden hero profession, then my trial reward might very well be it!

And a Sailor who leads the whole crew performing the world's most dangerous job couldn't possibly be anything but a hero profession. I was even a henchman under one, they say! Then what are the conditions to become a Sailor?

—“An excellent Sailor does not merely grasp all combat exploration skills. The ocean is humanity's unknown domain. We are so insignificant before the ocean, our knowledge and skills are never sufficient.”

Da Fei once again opened Renior's special edition Skill Book to the first page, and suddenly realized!

Chapter 37: China Region's First Epic Deputy Hero

Deputy Hero Da Fei had an epiphany! As a navigator, he must be an all-around jack-of-all-trades, so of course, he had to learn all the common combat and adventure skill books he found in the room! Otherwise, why would he wholesale so many skills?

Da Fei, at level 18, gained 17 skill points upon leveling up. And for Advanced Reconnaissance Skill with sub-skill Intelligence Collection and Stealth, a total of 5 points were spent; 6 points for Master War Machine Science with sub-skill Crossbow Master; 1 point mistakenly allocated to Leadership Skill and 1 point to Luck Skill. That left 4 skill points.

And Da Fei happens to have exactly 4 unlearned skill books left, tailor-made for him!

Isn't this a clear sign for me to change profession! Anyway, I'm already a BOSS-killing assassin with Crossbow Master now, so even if I have to do quests in the future, I won't have to worry about combat. Might as well learn all the remaining skills! Although this is a big no-no for newbies, being a jack-of-all-trades means master of none, just a waste of skill points, especially when leveling up becomes increasingly difficult later on. But for hidden professions, none of this is a problem!

Da Fei was no longer confused. He took out the skill books, and the golden lights flashed continuously!

—System Prompt: You have spent 1 skill point to learn Basic Attack Skill!

—Basic Attack Skill: Increases the melee damage of the hero and hero's troops by 10%.

—System Prompt: You have spent 1 skill point to learn Basic Defense Skill!

—Basic Defense Skill: Reduces the damage received by the hero and hero's troops by 10%.

—System Prompt: You have spent 1 skill point to learn Basic Arrow Skill!

—Basic Arrow Skill: Increases the damage of the hero and hero's ranged troops by 10%.

—System Prompt: You have spent 1 skill point to learn Basic Logistics Skill!

—Basic Logistics Skill: Increases the marching speed of the hero's troops on land by 20%.

All the accumulated skill points were spent, and learning was completed. But then — the imagined golden light did not fall from the sky, nor was there any system prompt. And then, there was no 'then'.

Was it not the system acting out a scene?

The ship was sailing smoothly, the waves rhythmically lapping against the hull, the fresh sea breeze blowing into the cabin, rustling Da Fei's messy hair, his heart feeling an ethereal emptiness...

After an indeterminate amount of time,

—China Region System Announcement: Warm congratulations! China Region player Lady Fleeting Blossom has become the first player in the world to successfully hire an Epic Hero!

In that very moment, the World Channel burst into an uproar!

— World Channel [Eternal Star]: Star Guild warmly congratulates Lady Fleeting Blossom for achieving the world's first! Star Guild welcomes you!

— World Channel [Dragon Scale]: Dragon Slayer Guild warmly congratulates Lady Fleeting Blossom for bringing glory to the China Region! Dragon Slayer Guild welcomes you to join us!

— World Channel [Divine Emperor]: Ninth Heaven is willing to hire Lady Fleeting Blossom with an annual salary of one million dollars to join our guild!

— World Channel [Dragon Scale]: Our guild offers an annual salary of 2 million.

— World Channel [Divine Emperor]: I'm talking in US Dollars!

— World Channel [Dragon Scale]: I'm talking in British Pounds!

— World Channel [Hero News Reporter 043]: Ms. Lady Fleeting Blossom, hello, I'm a reporter from the Hero News program, hoping you can temporarily add me as a friend and accept my online interview...

— World Channel [Divine Emperor]: Also, Ms. Lady Fleeting Blossom, please add me as a temporary friend, I am the president of Ninth Heaven, China's largest professional gaming club, Divine Emperor.

— World Channel [Dragon Scale]: Little Huang, just forget it, you guys are ranked ninth!

.....

Only then did Da Fei snap back to reality. Speaking on the World Channel costs 100 bucks a pop! Are they treating it like a chat room? The server has only been up for a few days and someone has already hired an Epic Hero! That's too awesome, right? Wait a second, the name Lady Fleeting Blossom sounds familiar. Isn't she the farm girl from yesterday who was amazing at mental calculations? Holy shit, that's right, I'm not envious of anyone else, but I have to admit envy for this kind of person with real talent. It's not impossible to land an Epic Hero in just a day or two. After all, as badass as I am, I've only reserved an Epic Hero.

Wait, this Dragon Scale, this Dragon Slayer Guild also sounds familiar. Could it be?

Suddenly, Da Fei was flooded with old memories. Back then, it was also during the New Year, Da Fei was heartbroken and made a major mistake at work, which led to him being fired without even receiving his year-end bonus. Then, not wanting to see anyone, he just holed up at home playing games, venting his frustrations in the game, and on the first day of the server, he encountered this Dragon Scale, who made him get killed by a BOSS, and then stole his pet tiger.

And then the story gets long. The Dragon Slayer Guild started to send people after Da Fei every day. One day, while their guild was besieging a BOSS and both sides were at their wit's end, Da Fei suddenly burst in, stole the kill and the BOSS, and looted a guild token.

There's nothing much to say. You, Dragon Slayer Guild, are so righteous and badass, right? I'll take over as guild leader! Da Fei registered the name Dragon Slayer Guild for himself and then declared to the entire server: "Recruiting a 'Black Wood Ear' as the guild leader's wife, the blacker, the better. Whatever you want, I'll give you." Soon, all sorts of small-time crooks gathered...

And then the situation escalated further. The Dragon Slayer Guild contacted Da Fei: "We offer 100,000 to buy back the guild."

100,000? Kidding me? At that time, Da Fei's impression was that gaming was all about hacking accounts, scamming money, scamming equipment, right? Ignoring them, the chaos continued.

Then they offered 200,000! Wahaha! Raising the price was easier than eating, truly scammers! You are all seriously sick, good for you to get treated. And just like that, the entire Dragon Slayer Guild was cured out of the game; the game was also shut down, saving countless internet-addicted youth. Those were truly passion-filled days.

Years later, when Da Fei finally learned about the real-life background of the Dragon Slayer Guild, he was full of regrets. This was truly damaging to both others and oneself! Had he known, he would have asked for 1 million! If he had 1 million, wouldn't his dreams of owning a house and a car be within reach? But on second thought, had he really taken their money back then, it would've burned his hands – sums above 100,000 could be prosecuted for blackmail, and cyber police could be dispatched.

Nevertheless, it was precisely because of that crazy time in the game that Da Fei's family grew increasingly dissatisfied with him, especially his high school-age younger sister. The little brat, not even fully grown, had the audacity to scold and instruct her elder brother! How infuriating!

In short, after Da Fei quit gaming, he started taking temporary jobs everywhere and never played games again. Even so, Da Fei still yearned for that extraordinary gaming life; whenever he had time, he would still follow various new game releases online.

Now looking at people like Dragon Scale arguing over a hundred bucks per post in the World Channel, Da Fei let out a soft sigh, “Why give up on treatment?”

Anyway, with such a big incident in the China Region, online news interviews should be all over it. Since he’s idle anyway, why not find out what this Epic Hero is all about.

Da Fei logged into the game’s built-in forum. Then, a prominent hot post pinned to the top caught his eye! “Trash Player of China Region, Da Fei!” posted and pinned by Blood Sea Wave!

—Ahem! Da Fei sprayed out a snot bubble! Do you freaking know how much it costs to pin a post for an hour?

...

At this time, reporters from the Hero News column were broadcasting a live interview recording with Lady Fleeting Blossom.

Reporter: “Sorry to disturb you, thank you Lady Fleeting Blossom for accepting our column’s interview.”

A very strange electronic voice replied: “No problem, I hope my success can also be an inspiration to other players.”

The reporter surprisedly asked: “This voice is?”

“It’s Luo Tianyi, my favorite virtual idol.”

Reporter in surprise: “The domestic Miku.”

“Please don’t include Miku, I am Luo Tianyi, thank you!”

The reporter laughingly said: "Ah, sorry, what the vast number of players are most concerned about now is your Epic Hero. May I ask if you could reveal some of their attributes? Of course, feel free to skip the question."

"No problem, I'll send you a video clip to see."

Host: "Hello viewers, let's now watch the video footage sent by our front-line reporter. Let's await the world's First Epic Hero."

The screen changed to show pastoral scenery, windmills turning, hundreds of Human Race level 0 reserve Soldier Farmers busily working in the fields, a golden-haired Female Knight dressed in silver armor, waving to the farmers on a steel-armored horse, as the farmers cheered and saluted in response.

Then, a Vice Hero attribute box appeared on the screen, revealing the full details of the world's First Epic Hero to hero players all over the world.

—Knight Lord: Elanee, Level 30, Attack 20, Defense 20, Magic Power 5, Knowledge 5, Command Power 1000.

Hero Special Ability: Beloved by Farmers.

Elanee, a lordly landowner who is noble, righteous, charitable, and deeply loved by her farmers. The farmers under her command voluntarily pay an extra Gold Coin in taxes each month.

—Soldier Farmer: Holy Hall level 0 reserve soldier, Attack 0, Defense 0, Damage 0-1, Life 3, Attack Speed 8, Move Speed 8, Command Value 0. Special Skill: Production, Taxpayer, Unable to go to war.

—Taxpayer: Pays 1 Gold Coin in taxes each month.

...

At this moment, the reporter exclaimed in surprise: "This is quite an unexpected Epic Hero, so how did Miss Fleeting Blossom manage to acquire her?"

"Luo Tianyi" laughed and said: "At the start, I was assigned to work here by the examiner and then I met Elanee. She had always been concerned about the losses of the farm, so I managed to turn the farm profitable within 15 days of game-time, and that's why she gifted the farm to me. After that, she joined me as my Vice Hero."

The reporter surprisedly asked: "Just like that? She actually gave you the farm?"

"Yes, the reason for her losses was because she had been giving money to help the poor too much, a true Angel. She gave the farm away because she said she doesn't understand how to run it, and by giving it to me, she believed more people could be helped. There's nothing more than that."

The reporter asked again: "Now all the large guilds want to invite you to join them, do you have any intentions of doing so?"

"I appreciate everyone's recognition, but my Vice Hero is still subject to the laws of the Kingdom and cannot be deployed for combat, and all I want is to farm leisurely in the game, I have no intention of joining any guild. Is it okay if we end the interview now?"

"Thank you, Miss Fleeting Blossom, for the interview, it was a pleasure working with you, goodbye!"

For a moment, players from all over the world watching the live broadcast were sighing in amazement. An obviously non-combat hero and not a very high-level Epic Hero, her value couldn't be judged at first glance. But at least one thing's for sure, the emergence of the Epic Deputy Hero hastened the pace of professional gaming teams in various countries.

Chapter 38: This Time It's Pirates

Da Fei, with an impassive look, finished scanning the posts about the bounty on his head, unfazed. After all, back in the day, Da Fei was the man who pacified the entire server.

Is getting PKed to level zero such a big deal? Thinking they can curse me to death? And a server-wide manhunt? What a joke! That just goes to show how small the world of the national service is. But on second thought, times have changed, and now I have to earn money as a professional player, having a long list of enemies does become a bit problematic. Even though I only have one enemy for now, my infamous red name sticks out like a sore thumb. I don't kill people, but people want to kill me, and that's quite a hassle. Damn Blood Sea Wave, using others to do your dirty work, you're truly something!

Right now, the top priority is to figure out a way to get rid of this red name. I've collected quite a bit of rare BOSS information this time, selling it should greatly increase my reputation. In short, it's not going to be easy to finish me off with what I've left from the old days.

Then Da Fei started watching an interview program about Epic Heroes, when suddenly—

—System Prompt: Reconnaissance Skill warning! Three unidentified ships are approaching you, please be alert!

Unidentified ships? Da Fei was jolted into action, rushing to the deck to peer through a telescope, and indeed, three ships were speeding towards him from the front, left-front, and right-front directions!

They were paddle sailboats! Definitely pirates!

Some of the wealthier large pirate ships and ordinary kingdom warships don't have much difference; if they don't fly a flag, they're hard to recognize. But paddle sailboats are definitely pirates. These so-called paddle sailboats have sails on the deck and oars on the bottom cabin. The rows of long oars protruding from the bottom of the ship look like a giant centipede. The advantage of such ships goes without saying: with both wind and manpower, they speed along like dragon boats, especially when pursuing against the wind, the advantage is even more pronounced. In short, once they've got their sights set on you, there's no running away, only fighting.

As for the downside, it's also quite clear; after all, people have to row in the bottom cabin, so the draft of the ship is shallow, and it performs poorly in waves, unsuitable for sailing out in the vast ocean. Thus, merchant ships have an easy way to avoid them: simply keep away from the nearshore. Another drawback is due to the shallow draft, the ship's body is not high, and it's hard to forcibly board higher vessels, so it requires higher combat skills from the pirates.

Now, Da Fei was targeted! There's definitely no escaping. And with an attack from three sides, fighting is not an option! What to do!

For a moment, Da Fei was rooted to the spot. Just as the great white shark shows up, pirates come too! System, how can you make me believe you're not putting on a show?

—Bang! Bang! Bang! Three black signal flares with long black smoke trails shot up from the pirate ships. Although the meaning was unclear, it was definitely nothing good.

They're getting closer, and through the telescope, Da Fei could already see the decks of the pirate ships and their masts crowded with dense numbers of pirates. Indeed, because the paddle sailboats have low hulls which make it hard to board larger ships, the pirates all stand on the masts, and once they engage in combat, they will, like acrobats, throw grappling hooks to catch onto the masts or bulwarks of their targets, either sliding down or swinging like Tarzan—the essence of risky and technical moves.

After being stunned for a moment, Da Fei finally came to his senses.

So many pirates and they didn't even notice such a big obstacle ahead? Even if you won't give me face, at least show the great white shark some respect.

There's only one tactic left—using their own strength against them. Put more colloquially, it means luring monsters to attack them. I'm quite the master at this. Whether it succeeds or fails, this is the last and only strategy.

Da Fei walked over to where the cable was tied to the mast, the cable already taut and the mast creaking ominously.

Da Fei tried to pull the vibrating cable, but it wouldn't budge. Then he went ahead and did a bit of tight rope walking on the taut rope. Since the shark's belly had swallowed such a big mass, surely stirring things up here would anger it somewhat? It's bound to show some reaction if provoked?

Da Fei tried jumping on the rope, and bang! Water splashed wildly up front, the whole ship suddenly shook—there was a reaction!

I keep jumping!

—Bang! Waves surged skyward!

Da Fei recoiled in fright! Don't really go overboard; it would be awful if I end up hurting myself in trying to harm others.

The pirates, clamoring all the while, drew closer, but upon the sight of the great white shark stirring the seas, they suddenly fell silent! The speed of their ships also abruptly slowed!

It's time to draw blood! Da Fei immediately rushed to the gun cabin below decks, aiming at the dense crowd on one of the pirate ships to his right and fired two shots straight at them! Screams rose!

—System Prompt: You've killed a pirate, gained +40 Experience!

—System Prompt: You have acquired partial information about a pirate.

—System Prompt: You've attacked the pirate ship, dealing -78 damage!

This cannon fire was indeed the fuse of a bomb; the already raging great white shark instantly turned into a torpedo, rushing toward the pirate ship on the right side at an unbelievable speed. Amidst the horrified screams of the pirates on board, the shark struck in the middle, BOOM!!!

The pirate ship shook violently with the impact, the pirates who were standing on the mast fell like dumplings, clattering to the floor. Those holding onto the ship's rail to steady themselves were equally fierce, pulling out throwing axes to attack.

The great white shark, struck by the flying axes, became even more furious and rammed hard into the bottom of the ship, almost flipping the entire ship over!

Success! Da Fei felt an exhilarating mix of surprise and joy!

— Bang! Bang! Two more smoke signal flares went up; the pirate ship in front moved to support the one on the right side, while the pirate ship on the left continued to approach the Flying amidst shouts, damn it!

How are we supposed to fight this! This is definitely not a trial, I've definitely run into real pirates, right? It's over! The ship's done for!

Da Fei steeled his heart, considering he had made enough for this trip anyway, he was ready to go all out against them. Da Fei immediately rushed to the deck, preparing to chop off the rope binding the great white shark and let the shark wreak havoc!

But at this moment, the pirate ship on the left side had already closed in—a double-masted paddle sailboat, half the length of the Flying. Da Fei could already see the pirates on the opposite mast, their heads wrapped in cloths, knives in their mouths, and hooks in their hands.

“Muahaha!” Seeing Da Fei appear, the pirates immediately sneered and threw their rope hooks, with a clattering sound, the hook caught on the Flying’s rail!

Damn it! No time to cut the rope!

“Damn it!” Da Fei immediately rushed forward and shot at an acrobat sliding down the rope, -13!

— System Prompt: The enemy is affected by Paralysis Poison, their actions are interrupted...

Ah! The pirate’s hand loosened on the rope, and with a scream, he fell into the sea with a splash. Da Fei’s eyebrows twitched! This action interruption effect was almost like an instant kill!

Clatter! Clatter! Two more grappling hooks landed on the Flying’s rail. For these desperate pirates, losing a few mates didn’t stop their assault.

Damn it! If one comes, kill one; if two come, kill a pair! Da Fei immediately rushed to another grappling hook, took another shot in mid-air—splash! Another one hit by Paralysis Poison fell into the sea.

And at that moment, a wave surged between the two ships—BOOM!!! The pirate ship shook violently!

The great white shark had made its move! Wherever there was someone falling into the water, it would be the first to show up! In the water, it could reach a top speed of 70 kilometers per hour! (Has your car reached that speed yet? Have you lost all your points?)

Da Fei finally couldn't help but burst into uproarious laughter! Relative to the tall sailboat, the great white shark in its frenzy would instinctively attack the smaller paddle sailboat. Facing this bloodthirsty, frenzied king of predators, that moved like the wind, what chance did these three little pirate ships have? Especially since the shark's size was comparable to the pirate ships. Da Fei was even more grateful that he hadn't made his move on the great white shark. Otherwise, how many hits could his battered ship withstand?

The pirates quickly realized the situation and started to turn around to retreat. Unfortunately, the pirate ship on the left side had just suffered violent shaking, causing a lot of water to flood into the rowing cabins; the ship began to tilt and couldn't get away. The pirates immediately ran to the other side of the ship to counterbalance it, trying to keep it upright.

Of course, Da Fei wouldn't just stand by and watch. He immediately ran to the Gun Cabin, pushed the Crossbow Cannon to the gun port on the left side, and then, well, aimed it at the crowd trying to balance the ship—no no no, should aim at the side with the leak! Ah, who to shoot at? This question actually made me hesitate, hahaha! Anyway, I survived again, I am really a pro; it's just so awesome!

Finally, with both Da Fei and the shark's relentless attacks, the pirate ship capsized and sank. Hundreds of pirates in the water waved their swords in a last desperate resistance, but in the end, they became ghosts beneath the teeth of the great white shark, a sight too gruesome and inhumane to witness...

— System Prompt: You have sunk a medium-sized pirate ship and obliterated a unit of pirate troops, gaining +80,000 Experience! You have obtained the achievement "Victory in the 1st Battle," Command Power +10.

— Newbie Tip: When you completely annihilate the enemy's entire force, you will receive additional Command Power achievement rewards. Additional rewards are related to the strength of the enemy troops and your combat losses, up to 10 points.

Da Fei's eyebrows twitched, to think I, a lone fighter, actually won a battle! Such terrifying experience!

The sun was setting in the west, and the sea also turned a deep red. The great white shark, covered in wounds after the battle, floated on the surface of the water, bleeding profusely, both physically and mentally exhausted, finally at its limit.

Ah, what can I say? This is the highest level of watching the fire from across the shore. Da Fei, feeling an emotional complexity akin to mourning the death of a fellow predator, sighed, "Brother, I'll see you off on your final journey!"

Chapter 39: Hidden Hero Part-Time Job: Navigator

The setting sun was blood-red, and as night fell, with the final two cannon shots, the great white shark struggling on the sea surface finally belly-up, died.

— System Prompt: You have killed the great white shark, obtained Experience +50,000! Acquired B-grade strategic treasure: White Shark Ship's Figurehead.

— White Shark Ship's Figurehead: Ship equipment. Installing it at the bow can increase the ship's speed by 10%, ship's troop attack +2, attack speed +1.

Then a golden light descended from the sky!

— System Prompt: Congratulations! You have leveled up to level 19! Acquired 1 free attribute point, 1 Skill Point, Life Value +2, Command Power +1.

Gaining experience and treasures! Hahaha! Da Fei burst into a triumphant laughter, but there's more info!

— System Prompt: Congratulations! You possess the basic qualifications to become a Navigator and have successfully passed the basic maritime tests of storms, survival, sea monsters, and pirates. You have completed the additional rookie trial mission and earned the reward: hidden hero secondary profession "Navigator"!

—— System Prompt: You have successfully changed to the hidden hero secondary profession, Junior Navigator!

—— Junior Navigator: The hero's ship's speed is additionally increased by 10% on the sea, stacking with the Sailing Skill. Every 5 levels, the hero acquires one extra free attribute point for the secondary profession. The hero, and the hero's vice heroes, gain an additional 100 experience points per day at sea.

—— System Prompt: You are currently level 19, and you have received 3 free attribute points from the Navigator secondary profession bonus. As you advance the Navigator Skill level, you will receive more attribute point bonuses. The timing of skill upgrades does not affect the acquisition of attribute points, and missed points will be compensated for after upgrading.

—— System Prompt: You have obtained the professional information of "Navigator."

—— Newbie Prompt: On Hero Continent, due to military and commercial secrecy, the emerging secondary hero profession of Navigator hasn't formed a complete system. There are no Dedicated Skill Books for raising professional skill levels or directly learning professional special skills. Players must interact with, learn from other Navigators, raise skill levels, or develop skills themselves.

—— Newbie Prompt: The hero's secondary profession does not conflict with the primary profession. You can still profess as the primary hero professions Knight or Priest at the Skill Tutor.

.....

Seeing this series of system messages that followed, Da Fei's laughter abruptly stopped! What is meant by additional rookie trial mission? Isn't this supposed to be my task?

After being dumbfounded and silent for a while, Da Fei burst into laughter again! It turns out these guys really were sent by the system to test me through this act! The thing is, isn't this act a bit too much? Surely, I didn't pass following the normal script? Never mind, whether it's normal or not, as long as I pass, it's fine!

Indeed, it's the reward for a hidden profession, and it's also a part-time that doesn't conflict with my main profession! Dual hero professions, what does this mean? It means I get more strategic attribute points than others upon leveling up! Think about it, I go back and take up a profession as a Knight, getting two attribute points per level. Then, as a Navigator, leveling up also gives attribute points!

But attribute points are secondary; the key is having more professional specialties than others due to having an additional profession! I'm awesome!

What does Professional Specialties mean?

Each hero starts with an inherent specialty when they create an account. My Storm Navigation is an inherent specialty. Then at level 10, when a newbie changes their profession to a hero profession, they can obtain a professional skill. Sub-skills under the professional skill are professional specialties.

For example, Priest's Blessing Ceremony, Undead Wizard's Banshee's Howl, Dwarf's Rune Control, Demon's Hell Gate, etc. In short, professional specialties are unique skills that other professions do not have.

Since this hidden profession Navigator is also a part-time job, undoubtedly, it must also have corresponding professional specialties.

I knew it, gathering good karma plus my natural gaming talent, once they burst forth together, my success is destined!

I've made my fortune! What am I afraid of now? I fear no one, my dual professions are outrageously powerful, even if that Blood Sea Child gathers all the server's players to hunt me down, forcing me to struggle to survive, I could simply log off and sell my account on the spot, starting the bid at 1 million pounds! I've achieved success and fame, I'll buy an apartment in Coastal Garden, and then marry Little Fang to be my wife, hahaha!

When life is triumphant, revel to the fullest, amidst the laughter Da Fei danced around releasing all the tension of the past days!

Finally, like that void after something intense, Da Fei grew tired, took a long breath, and his mind began to cool down and plan the future development strategy.

Currently, it's too early to discuss dual professions. After all, the bonus from the Junior Navigator profession is too weak, increasing only 1 strategic attribute point every 5 levels. Currently, at level 19, I have gained 3 points, which means reaching level 20 would add another 1 point. Overall, it's pretty weak, especially when newbies gain 1 attribute point per level. It can't compare to the main profession which gains 2 attribute points per level.

From the perspective of future prospects, rising to an Intermediate Navigator should reward 1 point every 4 levels, Advanced should be every 3 levels, Expert should be every 2 levels, and Master Level will reward 1 point for every level, reaching the growth rate of a newbie. This means if I were to rise to the Master Level now, I'd be rewarded 19 points all at once, effectively compensating me with 16 points.

The system prompt also mentions that promoting a hidden profession is no simple task: no Skill Books, no sub-skills, and the value of upgrading is also a problem, especially since acquiring Skill Points after level 20 is difficult and leveling up professional skills must be done cautiously.

In a nutshell, I shouldn't be too proud too soon.

After realizing this, Da Fei felt a wave of fatigue wash over him. It's midnight again, after all, maintaining one's health is the real capital for making a fortune. I should ensure my well-being; having fought continuously for nearly two days, it's time to rest well.

This time, without any hesitation, Da Fei immediately purchased the "Divine Sanctuary" offline item for 20 yuan from the store. After all, the gaming company also carries the important mission of revitalizing the world economy, I can still afford the cost of two plates of fried rice.

Before logging off, Da Fei took a satisfied look at his current attributes:

Level: 19

Professional Specialties: Storm Navigation.

Profession: Long Spear Soldier, Level 10 Legion Commander, Level 8 Explorer, Junior Navigator, Training Newbies

Reputation: -3120 (Infamous, your current reputation will affect your ability to receive tasks from NPCs, and may also cause hostility from some NPCs.)

Attack: 20 (18 attribute points from level 19 all in attack, +2 from Captain's Sword at sea, +2 from White Shark Figurehead not equipped yet. Also, I haven't allocated 3 free attribute points obtained from the part-time job.)

Defense: 5 (3 points of personal defense from tattered leather armor, +2 strategic defense from Captain's Sword at sea)

Magic Power: 0

Knowledge: 0

Basic Killing: 9-11 (Born with 1-3, +1 from Anemone Enchantment, +1 from Lonely Hero Achievement, +1 from Lonely Hero 10 Consecutive Victories, +3 from system reward every 5 levels at level 15, +2 from Captain's Sword at sea. The +2 from the Captain's Sword applies to the whole army.)

Life Value: 71 (Born with 10, +2 each level, +10 from Lonely Hero Achievement, +15 from Lonely Hero 10 Consecutive Victories)

Attack Speed: Normal 12 (Captain's Sword +2)

Move Speed: 10

Morale: 2 (+1 from innate hero trait, +1 from Basic Leadership Skill)

Luck: 1 (Basic Luck Skill +1)

Command Power: 30 (+18 from leveling up, +10 from first campaign achievement, total 28, Basic Leadership Skill adds 10%, making it 30)

Stamina: 100

Learned Skills: Master Level War Machine Science (sub-skill Crossbow Master); Advanced Reconnaissance Skill (sub-skills Situation Collection, Stealth), Basic Luck Skill, Basic Leadership Skill, Basic Attack Skill, Basic Defense Skill, Basic Arrow Skill, Basic Logistics Skill.

Still have 1 Skill Point unallocated.

This night, Da Fei woke up laughing several times in his dreams.

Chapter 40: Da Fei and 'Brother-in-Law'

Da Fei woke up laughing the next morning at 9 a.m., suddenly remembering it was the day his little sister, Little Li, was coming home for the holiday. There wasn't much time left, he hurried to the station to see her off, her train seemed to be around noon.

Da Fei didn't even have time for breakfast and went straight to the station by subway. Although the Spring Festival travel rush hadn't started yet, the station was still as crowded as ever. After asking around, he quickly found out which train it was and searched for her in the sea of people in the waiting hall.

Then, something caught his eye—a pair of curvy, sensuous, warmly clad black silk stocking-clad legs, a pair of high-heeled white leather boots, and a black wool mini skirt. Nice legs, nice skirt! Glancing up, a white down jacket with a pink scarf bundled around it, topped with a ponytail of pure modesty—one look and there she was! No doubt about it, my sis can turn street knockoffs into supermodel looks! Whether it's her studies or her appearance, she loses to no one. The saying goes, freshman year humble, sophomore year pretty, junior year proud, by senior year rich bosses are vying to get them!

At that moment, she was laughing and chatting with a tall boy beside her, who was wearing only a shirt and a wool sweater.

Da Fei's face darkened, sure enough it was that poor pretty-boy! Skilled in sweet talk and flattery, if you have the skills and means, go seduce a rich lady or a beauty, don't hold back my Little Li's future! Brother rarely intervenes, but today I have to make things clear.

Da Fei, with a stern face, squeezed through the crowd and called out, "Little Li!"

The girl turned around in surprise: "Bro! Didn't I tell you not to come?"

The tall, handsome boy quickly bowed and greeted, "Hello, big brother!"

Da Fei scowled, "Who's your big brother!" Anyone else calling Da Fei 'big brother' would make him ridiculously happy, except for this guy!

Little Li glared: "What are you saying, bro? Da Wei is just a friend! He specifically came to help me with my luggage today. By the way, why are your eyes so dark? Did you stay up late?"

Humph! Just you wait, I'll deal with you later!

Da Fei offered a faint smile, "Been working night shifts for two days, not feeling the best, intended to have you bring some stuff back home, but it's inconvenient for you as a girl to carry stuff, so never mind." Actually, he had rushed over and forgotten. As for mentioning being a professional gamer, Da Fei dared not mention it; the disapproval he faced from his family back when he was crazy about gaming was unbearable.

Little Li sighed, "Bro, take care, don't work yourself too hard."

Damn! When is she ever this gentle to me? Clearly, she's trying to show this Da Wei she's a good wife and mother! The relationship has progressed this far! I won't let you two get together over my dead body!

Da Fei shook his head, meaningfully saying, "To be a man, you have to struggle hard and earn a lot, otherwise not only will women look down on you, even dogs won't spare you a glance." After saying

this, Da Fei glanced sideways, sure enough, the pretty boy looked disheartened. Damn it, even you know you're broke? As a tall but poor pretty boy, do you need me to teach you what to do?

Of course, Little Li caught the drift in Da Fei's words and immediately retorted, "Money is endless, not all women just look at money! Big brother, you need to change your mindset and win people over with sincerity. What mom and dad worry about most is your marriage."

Crap! The cheek of this little girl to lecture me in front of others! Damn, women don't look at money? There are such good women only in our house with Little Li! I definitely won't let such a poor guy benefit!

Da Fei chuckled, "Don't worry, bro's luck is turning around, it won't be long before I strike it rich."

Little Li questioned, "Really? Just don't tell me you're going into pyramid schemes!"

Da Fei quickly shook his head, "Absolutely not! Totally lawful! I've joined a big boss now, my salary could increase to at least twenty thousand a month!" Humph, the big boss is actually the Chinese representative of Heroic Creation Era. Bro fears if I said 200,000 a month, you'd pee your pants thinking I've joined some shady business.

Little Li laughed, "That's great then, big bro, you must work hard."

Damn it! What I hate most is hearing a woman say you must work hard! Like men don't want to?

So, Da Fei and Little Li chitchatted about various relatives like the auntie-in-law, the second uncle, the third aunt, and the fourth great-uncle—family members they seldom discussed before, all the while deliberately leaving Da Wei out.

Finally, the station's loudspeaker rang, it was time to board.

Da Wei finally found his chance and hastily moved to lift the luggage.

Pssh, who do you think you are to me? Da Fei immediately stepped forward and grabbed the luggage, “No need for you, I got this!”

Da Wei protested, “No, no, let me do it!”

Da Fei forcibly snatched it back: “I said I’ll handle it!” Goddamn! It’s quite heavy and hard, is it books? Bringing books for the holidays, that’s just torturing me who hasn’t had breakfast...

As the train departed, Da Fei and Da Wei waved goodbye to Little Li from the platform. Although they couldn’t hear what she was saying from behind the window, her mouth shape didn’t seem to say “goodbye.” Maybe it was “don’t fight”? Damn, I skipped breakfast, was tired from carrying the backpack in line earlier, my waist and legs sore, let’s give him a pass this time.

Da Fei pulled out a cigarette and offered one, Da Wei hurriedly gestured, “Big brother, I don’t smoke.”

Pssh! How does a man survive in this world without smoking? No ambition!

Da Fei tilted his head, lit the cigarette with an air of indifference, took a deep drag, then moved his hand holding the cigarette aside, striking a classic Zhou Runfa pose and exhaled a sharp puff of smoke like a sword—it was a move Da Fei had perfected! Kid, ever seen this? This is how you pose, a man must show off or else he gets bullied outside!

Just then, a station worker with a red armband rushed over furiously pointing at the non-smoking sign on the wall: “No smoking here! Can’t you read the sign? There’s a fine of 20 yuan!”

Damn it, ruining my buzz! You don’t smoke, huh? Then have a drink!

Sending away the incessant old lady, Da Fei shook his head: “Let’s go, time for lunch.”

Da Wei hurriedly said: “Oh, yes, sure.”

Psh, no class at all, the type who'd definitely get played by others if he went out. Sure, many students are like this, timid and reserved at school, but stepping into society is like a rookie entering a battlefield; one wrong step and you're done before you even know what's happening. You get trampled underfoot for ten, twenty years maybe, unable to turn things around! How could Little Li ever be with someone like you.

...

At the little tavern near the bus station. Da Fei ordered three small dishes and two small bottles of liquor.

Da Wei quickly waved his hands: "Big brother, I-I don't drink! Our track and field team isn't allowed to drink."

Psh, track and field? You think you can run like Liu Xiang? You don't drink either, what use are you! You really think this is some high society cocktail party? That's not what rookies like you should worry about! Barely understanding the culture of Chinese drinking gatherings and thinking of climbing up from the bottom? Brother Tian has marked you for death; a brother is as a father, and I will never let you be with Little Li.

Da Fei took a sip of whiskey, sighing deeply: "Actually, I think you are not bad, your character is decent, but what's the premise of your relationship with Little Li? Just for fun, and at graduation you go your separate ways? Or marriage?"

Da Wei hurriedly responded: "Of course, marriage! I am a local, I won't leave!"

Crap! Marriage! How dare you even say that? Do you know how much it costs to get married? But with Little Li's character, maybe she'd agree to a simple non-materialistic marriage? DAMN! That absolutely cannot happen!

Da Fei's eyelids twitched, his gaze sharp: "Our family is very poor, my parents' health isn't good either, and the financial burden is heavy. I'm not very capable as the eldest brother, have you considered these issues?"

Da Wei eagerly replied: "I know, Big Brother, you have it tough, and Little Li told me about it. No matter the hardship, I will definitely stand with Little Li—"

Dammit, Brother Tian hates those sappy romance dramas that poison the youth; watching more historic palace dramas would be better for your growth!

Da Fei, running out of patience, waved his hand cutting him off: "You'll graduate in a year, right? Tell me, what are your plans after graduation?"

Da Wei replied: "I am considering civil service."

Da Fei shook his head coldly: "Forget the civil service. An average clerk in our city might earn just barely over ten thousand a month, it's hardly better than me laboring in construction and water delivery. How will you buy a house with that kind of income? How will you support a family? You have parents too, right? How will you support them? Don't even mention promotions, newcomers can't hope for one for a decade! You're not expecting Little Li to wait for you for ten years, are you?"

Da Wei was taken aback: "I—I..."

Da Fei continued to interrupt: "I have many classmates and friends who are going through divorces, and the reason is simple: they don't get along! Bullshit 'don't get along'; they just despise their husbands for having no money and being incapable. They knew what they were getting into, so why bother in the first place?"

Da Wei quickly argued: "Little Li is not that kind of woman!"

Nonsense! My Little Li certainly isn't that type of woman! Brother is worried you'll embarrass yourself outside and come home to vent your frustrations on your wife! How could such a rare and good woman marry a useless man and suffer?

Da Fei stated sternly: "I'll just say it straight—You have one year, which is until you graduate, to make 300,000 yuan, just enough for a down payment on a house here, that's the bare minimum requirement. I'm not being difficult, remember other women would straight up demand a car, a house, and a bank

savings; I'm only asking for a down payment! If you can't handle this, I don't want to see you. And don't even think about borrowing from relatives; I won't let Little Li marry some incapable debt-ridden fool."

Da Wei exclaimed: "Earn 300,000 in one year! But... I still have classes in my senior year..."

Da Fei disdainfully said: "What's the use of those Classes? The economy is down, you undergrads are less in demand than vocational school grads with a trade. Anyway, Brother's said his piece, it's up to you now!"

Have the guts to shout not to underestimate the poor? If Brother had your physique, even just moving bricks for a year would earn 100,000. If Brother had your looks, being a gigolo for a year would bring in a million! You think you can just win the beauty with just a mouthful of sweet nothings without facing real life challenges? Dream on!

For a while, Da Wei couldn't swallow his food, and Da Fei was drowning his sorrows with drink after drink, and thus the meal ended gloomily without joy.

On the way home, Da Fei also felt extremely uncomfortable. Little Li would definitely be furious when she learns of this, wouldn't she? Wouldn't this unloved elder brother become even more disliked?

Psh! Whether it's being a villain, or a gold-digger, Brother will accept it! Brother is just this realistic, just this opportunistic! Hasn't Brother seen enough, suffered enough, witnessed enough?

...

Da Wei absentmindedly returned to his dorm, and as he passed the school store, suddenly remembered something, turned back to buy a pack of cigarettes, and then sat in the dorm hacking and tearing up while smoking one cigarette after another. This was the first time he had smoked, chain-smoking one after another.

After a long while, the dorm room door opened. His roommate Da Bing burst in cheerfully carrying a big box, smelled the full room of smoke, and was shocked: "Wow, Brother Wei is smoking? Heartbroken?"

Da Wei irritably responded: "Beat it! What's that you've got?"

Da Bing laughed: "You wouldn't understand if I told you, it's the hottest thing globally! It can make you rich overnight! I'm not going back this winter break!"

Da Wei was taken aback: "Get rich overnight?"