

## God level 401

Chapter 401: Passing on the Hidden Profession: Minstrel

Although Da Fei originally planned to go to the Black Forest to clear the area after killing the giant crocodile, the mercury steam explosion in the Black Forest is now happening, so the current priority is still to clear the battlefield and collect the spoils of victory.

The body of the giant crocodile, especially the crocodile skin, definitely has a huge recycling value. We cannot let those scavengers grab it, so the elder prioritized arranging personnel to guard the giant crocodile. Then he sent Bilbo with people to take over the giant lizard's lair.

Bilbo reluctantly let go of the Crossbow Cannon: "Lord City Lord, you must give me this cannon!"

Da Fei laughed heartily: "You go ahead, I'll dismantle the Crossbow Cannon and pack it up to send to you later. I can also give you a Skill Book to study at your leisure!"

"Thank you so much, my Lord!" Bilbo cheered and left.

Compared to Hobbits, whose Attack is weak and cannot break through the thick-skinned Water Monsters, they indeed need a War Machine to enhance their firepower. I don't know when I'll be able to come back here next time, so whether it's giving away snake eggs or a Crossbow Cannon, it's a necessary strategic investment to help them open up a development scenario.

At this time, the elder spoke with anticipation: "Lord City Lord, rest assured, once we take over these two lairs, we will build fences and earth walls around them, and also build relay bases and a warehouse dock on this island occupied by the giant crocodile, and then build even bigger rafts..."

Listening to this, Da Fei's brow kept twitching, 'Oh my god, that's all my Mercury Wood! Easy on the usage!' But rafts, really? Can't you aim higher, like shipbuilding?

Da Fei had to laugh and say: "If I come next time, I'll try to bring some Shipbuilding Masters for you!"

The elder was overjoyed: "That would be great, if we have boats, our transportation efficiency can increase by more than two or three times!"

Hmm, now that our relationship is so solid, it's time for a bit of give and take! I don't believe it, this final race and final profession wouldn't teach the player some Hidden Profession!

Da Fei said with a smile: "Elder, I'm very interested in your profession. Could you teach me?"

The elder smiled and nodded: "Not bad, my Lord. You have good ideas, learn cooking from me!"

Da Fei quickly shook his head: "I meant the Minstrel profession!"

The elder was taken aback for a moment, then shook his head: "That kind of profession that mixes in taverns and performs tricks isn't very prestigious. Moreover, there are many more specialized singers than me. Why would Lord City Lord want to learn from me?"

So he can teach me after all! But plenty are nothing! You're talking about 1000 years ago, nowadays this profession is already extinct on the surface world! But, of course, I won't tell you that this profession has been extinct!

Da Fei solemnly said: "During this battle, I deeply felt that the elder's flute contains that sort of, robust and powerful, um, practical, overall indescribable shock, just like the Beastman war cries and war drums full of battle force and utility. At this moment, I realized how powerless and superficial the notes of those worldly singers are. In short, I very much want to learn, can the elder teach me some secrets?"

The elder's brow twitched, "Is that how Lord City Lord evaluates my flute sound?"

Da Fei held up a thumb: "Absolutely refreshing, the key is its practicality in battle! I have an Elf Baron under my command who played the piano on the sea for a few days, other than throwing a dance party he was useless, not as effective as someone with a loud trumpet!" Vice President, sorry about this!

The elder's brow trembled, and he said excitedly: "Finally, someone who understands me. At that time, I always felt that the Minstrel's battle scores were too flashy. In the scores, only a few notes really had killing power, the rest were just worthless notes for catching breath, but I was ostracized by my peers. After coming here, living conditions became harsh and undesirable for Hobbits. Battle scores are like playing music to cows for these swamp monsters, so I diligently modified the scores, specifically

extracting those deadly notes into a seemingly simple but actually very difficult coherent battle score. Although monotonous and harsh, it indeed helped Hobbits gain a foothold in the swamp!"

I knew it, you old noise maker! Da Fei quickly applauded: "Elder, you're too modest! In the ears of us warriors, your flute sound is indeed the most inspiring and heart-stirring. Please don't hesitate to teach me, I will prove those who laughed at the elder before were all wrong!"

The elder laughed heartily: "Since Lord City Lord says so, I no longer need to hide my skills!" Then frowned and said: "However, the profession of Minstrel still depends on the racial and personal talents. There are several low-frequency tunes that our Hobbits and Elves can play, but most humans can't play and perceive them. Even if Lord, being a human, learns it, you might just remain a Basic-level forever and cannot advance further!"

As long as I can learn! How many cross-racial professions have I learned? One more profession, a few more attribute points, why not! Da Fei hurriedly said: "No problem, I also have a Deputy Officer, who sings holy songs very well, widely recognized as talented, she can also learn, let her success prove the elder's theory is correct!"

The elder laughed heartily: "If that's the case, I have nothing more to say. Next time Lord can bring her to see me, I will personally teach her!"

—System Prompt: You have obtained the "Minstrel Poem Score," which costs 1 Skill Point to use this item, and you will obtain the Hidden Joint Profession "Basic-level Minstrel," with the Professional Skill "Concerto."

—Basic-level Minstrel: Increases the troop's Stamina recovery speed by +10%, Morale by +1, and adds a free attribute point for every 5 Hero Level increases.

—Concerto: Minstrel can enhance the skill effects of singing and playing troop types by 20%. The effect of Concerto increases with the Minstrel's level.

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Haha! The effect of this profession is really like a cultural troupe, huh? Plus, the attribute point bonus adding 1 point every 5 levels is really weak! But this Concerto skill is indeed pretty quirky, meaning the Minstrel can only lead musical troops, like these Hobbits who can all play the flute?

How many troop types in this game are musical troops? In an instant, Da Fei thought of Mermaids! Sea Demons!

"Damn, my Divine Artifact, the Sea Soul Staff, can summon Sea Demons, and I also have special soldier training. Can I train musical Sea Demons?"

While Da Fei was letting his thoughts wander, the elder spoke again: "However, Lord City Lord, the score recorded in this book is quite special, there are no basic-level scores suitable for you, all the scores are at least Master Level to perform, so if you want to use basic-level scores, you may ask other minstrels."

Da Fei was stunned: "Why are there no basic-level scores?"

The elder chuckled and said: "Not applicable, I forgot about them, it's been 1000 years!"

Da Fei was dumbfounded! Where would I find other minstrels? Is the system purposely teasing me? Right, does Little Coltner count? Anyway, when I go back, he's the only one I can look for.

The elder continued: "Lord City Lord, please also note a few points, for a minstrel, the instrument is the weapon, the score equates to magic. Although the basic-level scores are extremely weak against strong opponents, the higher your Magic Power and the better your instrument, the stronger the power of the scores. Music is different from magic; it cannot be reduced by Magic Resistance, which is the strength of a minstrel. But your strength alone is not enough, you need to form your own band troop type, unlike other troop types, you need to spend time training them to learn your scores, which will greatly increase your fighting power! Also, there's a 'Song Chanting Technique' skill, which is akin to combat skills like Weapon Master that enhances singing and various instrument effects."

Da Fei kept nodding, it seems, the minstrel profession really suits Mages. It really needs to cultivate musical troops, but if such elaborate troops die, wouldn't that make one spit blood?

But luckily, this 'Song Chanting Technique', I just got it from Coltner and taught it to Selvia. They are all sorts of irritating singing mastery, piano mastery, recorder mastery sub-skills—wait, Weapon Master? I've never heard of this skill before?

Da Fei confusedly asked: "Weapon Master? What kind of skill is that?"

The elder was also astonished: "Of course, it's a skill that enhances the effects of various weapons for troops. For example, if you, Lord City Lord, are a gunner and learned Long Weapon Mastery from Weapon Master, your gunners would be more formidable. It's such a famous skill!"

Could it be a hidden skill? Da Fei blankly said: "I've never heard of it!"

The elder was equally shocked: "No way? Has the lineage of Weapon Master been interrupted? Could it be due to the Eclipse Battle?"

Da Fei asked: "Was it very famous during your era?" Let me put it frankly, your minstrels are almost extinct too! But since an NPC mentioned it, it means this hidden skill must exist somewhere in the world, waiting for players to discover.

The elder shook his head and sighed: "Truly, the nail that sticks out gets hammered down. The great warriors that mastered this skill were so feared by demons; they probably got targeted first and were annihilated by them, sigh..."

—System Prompt: You have gained information about the hidden skill 'Weapon Master'!

Look at that! A system prompt appeared, what a relief! I should focus on making my Stealth Master skill official instead, not sticking my head out.

During the casual chat, Da Fei finished disassembling his Crossbow Cannon, and handed the packed Crossbow Cannon, ammunition, and War Machine Study Skill Book to the elder: "A gift for Little Bilbo, wishing him to become a great warrior who can revive the Habbit Tribe!"

The elder hurriedly thanked him: "Thank you, Lord City Lord! Now that another day has passed and things here are arranged, shall we go take a look at Black Forest?"

Da Fei cheerfully said: "The elder is really eager for battle! Good! I'll go clear the area!"

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Da Fei and the elder took a raft back to the spatial passage, where Tai Da was urging the logging team to get ready to move out.

Seeing Da Fei appear, Tai Da hurried forward and said: "Lord, just waiting for you to clear the area!"

Haha! Subordinates with such enthusiasm, truly a blessing for this City Lord! Da Fei laughed heartily as he passed through the space passage to the Black Forest, only to find the entire forest eerily quiet!

Da Fei was startled and checked the radar, no red dots at all! Eh? Where are the crows? Da Fei then instructed Little Fei to circle the area and not a single crow was found! Damn, isn't this too strange?

Da Fei had to ask, "Elder, what do you think?"

The elder stroked his beard and pondered for a while: "Perhaps, the loss of the clone yesterday made the Crow Demigod more cautious, so as soon as the mercury steam passed, it was possible to retrieve all its clones, not giving us a chance to strike. However, when the mercury steam comes again, it should continue to multiply its clones. Although constantly multiplying is troublesome, it's better than being hunted. This indicates that the Crow Demigod is still in the stage of gathering strength and probably won't waste it lightly. We won't be threatened by it for now!"

It seems that's the only explanation. Mercury Lake, indeed, isn't something that can be developed shortly, so let's develop what's before us.

Da Fei then said: "That's just fine, let's hurry up with logging and managing. Now that things here have somewhat concluded, I need to set off immediately to scout the next space by myself, Mr. Tai Da, I'm leaving all the troops to you, make sure to wait for my return!"

Tai Da: "Rest assured, my Lord, you must take care!"

The elder also said: "Then please come to the village, sir, we will prepare the best meal to send you off!"

#### Chapter 402: Smuggling Through the Eight-Headed Snake Channel

At the Habbit Village Chief's home, the Elder prepared another table set with "Swamp Mushroom Fish Soup" banquet. Although Da Fei found the many formalities of playing a game rather bothersome, he grudgingly accepted for the sake of their cooking which significantly boosted status. Speaking of which, their cooking skills were key for future development. Once the path was cleared, he would definitely hire some chefs from their village to open a tavern in the Kingdom Capital.

After the pleasantries, the Elder spoke gravely, "Lord City Lord is planning to sneak in under the nose of the Eight-Headed Snake Hydra?"

Da Fei nodded, "Exactly, I am the Child of Destiny. Elder, there's no need to worry about my safety. However, I still hope to successfully pass through to see if there is a path in another space, as well as to scout out the Eight-Headed Snake's capabilities."

The Elder pondered for a moment before standing up and saying, "Lord City Lord, please wait a moment, I have something to give you for your journey!" With that, he left the room.

Da Fei's eyebrows twitched. Was there really some substance behind this banquet? Seeing how seriously he acted, whatever he was giving must be extraordinary, right? Haha! Great, the more extraordinary, the better I like it.

By the time Da Fei had finished the meal, the Elder came back holding a basin with a glittering golden tree branch in it! And when this branch appeared, Da Fei felt as if the air in the entire room was fluctuating, no, it was his vision that was distorting and wavering!

Da Fei was shocked, "This branch is just like the one in the giant lizard's nest! A branch of the World Tree?"

The Elder said with utmost solemnity, "This is the branch of the Earth Tree Alena. Alena is one of the numerous descendants of the World Tree. On the day the city of Alena fell, we were transported here by holding onto this branch. Now, I present this branch to the Lord City Lord!"

—System Prompt: You have received the Pangbo Oak Shield, a limited Divine Artifact "Alena Tree Branch" gifted by the Elder Habbit.

—Alena Tree Branch: a limited-type Space Divine Artifact, special skill: Space Barrier, Space Teleportation.

Space Barrier: Upon use, it provides the user with a layer of space barrier protection, avoiding attacks and surveillance from the current Plane. Once used, it will consume a significant amount of the Alena Tree Branch's Divine Power Value.

Space Teleportation: Upon use, it can transport a large number of troops to Habbit Village in Swamp Space, but the branch will wither and become ineffective after use.

Da Fei was astounded on the spot! A Divine Artifact gift! A one-time Divine Artifact that could directly transport troops to their village! Holy shit, so the old man really had a trump card up his sleeve!

The Elder emphasized, "Lord City Lord, the Eight-Headed Snake lurks in the space passage, absorbing the spatial energy of the World Tree, and having reached Demigod strength, it's quite extraordinary. Even while slumbering, its eight heads take turns being on guard, and it surveils not just the current Plane. Therefore, in a critical moment, you must use the Space Barrier skill of this branch for spatial transfer to avoid its surveillance. Of course, it would be best not to use it if not necessary. There's not much Divine Power left in this branch. Using it once will affect the effect of Space Teleportation. The main purpose of giving this to you is to hope that if you can't find a way out, you could still teleport a large number of troops here to support us!"

So that's it! I knew the game wouldn't be so bothersome as to send players to a place with no way out and expect them to walk! In the end, there had to be teleportation! And for a pro like me, even being able to teleport just once could change the situation.

Now Da Fei was brimming with confidence, "Thanks for the generous gift, Elder. Rest assured, I will use it prudently—oh, can this branch teleport a big ship over?"

The Elder laughed heartily, "Unless, Lord, you also install a Space Teleportation Array on the ship! And use this branch as the power core!"

Da Fei laughed out loud, "My ship just happens to have a Space Teleportation Array on it!" Well, everything else is fine, it's just the Durability that hasn't been restored and is weak as can be.

"As expected of the City Lord, then let's set off!"

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Now, the elder led a dozen rafts of his people, blowing flutes to drive away the swamp water monsters, arriving at the very edge of the swamp, at a space gate on the lake surface resembling a maritime whirlpool passage.

The elder spoke solemnly: "Lord City Lord, we can only escort you this far. The Eight-Headed Snake is inside the whirlpool passage, you must be careful!"

Da Fei nodded: "When I come next time, I will certainly come with a splendid army to resolve the elder's crises!"

The elder also smiled: "By the time the Lord comes next time, we will also surely work hard to redevelop and rebuild our swamp!"

After the final pleasantries, Da Fei activated Stealth and jumped into the water, then was swept into the whirlpool. As the world spun around him, the scene changed, and Da Fei appeared in a gently flowing river, with the sky a pale green and serene blue, countless green specks like fireflies fluttered spectacularly far and wide. On the left side of the river was a patch of swampy bushes, surely the mirrored projection of the swamp on this side of the passage, and on the right side was a vast rainforest, which meant—it was the next space, right? If there's a rainforest, does it mean it's close to the space developed by the Kingdom?

Rumbling sounds came from ahead of the river, needless to say, it must be the thunderous snoring of the Eight-Headed Snake.

Da Fei drifted quietly with the flow of the water, not daring to make a sound. Soon, the massive body of the Eight-Headed Snake, blocking half of the river channel, emerged from the front of the river course! Even in slumber, it exuded an intimidating presence no less threatening than the Sea Demon Skira!

The countless specks of light in the sky continuously gathered towards it, meaning—were those specks the energy of the World Tree it had stolen?

At that moment, it was holding up one giant snake head, constantly spewing clouds of poison and surveying its surroundings, while its other heads hung on its back, fast asleep. It seems the only way to sneak past was to stealthily move along the very edge of the river.

So, when to cross over? Da Fei frowned, completely unsure.

However, since the elder gave him this branch that could teleport once, Da Fei felt more confident and less pressured. This stealth operation became less critical. After all, even if he made it across, what significant achievements could he accomplish alone? When the future army arrives, it would be much simpler and more direct to fight and explore simultaneously. Perhaps, the greatest significance of this operation was to test whether he could officially become a Stealth Master?

No no no, that would be too meaningless! Stealth is not the goal; the ultimate aim is to defeat it head-on! And to defeat it, maybe the only way is to bring in the Flying and cannonade it head-on. Wait, isn't this river made for sailing large ships?

Anyway, since there's no pressure now, let's start a video recording of the surrounding environment to prepare for the future battle.

As for the Space Divine Artifact's Space Barrier and such, that's a joke—such precious Divine Power, I'd die before using it. It's just right to die and return clean; I've not been home for a few days, and I'm eager to see how Radiant City's construction is going. I'm also desperate to return and focus on developing troops to build a great army.

Then Da Fei calmed down, first dove into the riverbed to test the depth, then swam from one shore to the other to test the width—ensuring that the Flying could turn and maneuver without any trouble. This place also seemed to have no wind, but no matter; the Flying had a Magic Sail, the mayor had said it was

possible to purchase it from the Magic Guild, and money was no problem. The biggest issue was the durability of the Flying! This problem is quite troublesome!

Could it be the only solution was to teleport Radiant Wings down here? However, Radiant Wings lacked a teleportation array and hadn't been retrofitted with a Magic Sail. Without triggering a quest, it was absolutely impossible to expect NPCs to help retrofit these high-end strategic facilities, even with money! So did this strengthened version of my Epic Quest count as triggering a quest? Even if so, would NPCs set up teleportation arrays for two ships belonging to the same player? It's doubtful!

By the way, is sailing the only option? In the current and foreseeable future, players are unlikely to possess large ships, so how should players normally confront this Demigod? Send a mass of infantry to pile on? Only a large guild would do such a thing, right?

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As Da Fei pondered his tactical strategy, there was movement at the Eight-Headed Snake's position—the poison-spewing head that was on duty fell asleep, while another one that spat frost raised its head.

A shift change, the Ice Head? Suddenly, Da Fei's brows twitched. Isn't this the head that the Ancient Witch Spirit said it had severely injured? Does it mean that this head is slightly impaired and has weaker sensory abilities than the others? The success rate for sneaking past under its watch must be much higher, right?

Alright, since the video recording is pretty much done, if not now, then when? Here I come!

Chapter 403: Flower Demon Village in the Ruined Jungle

The smuggling began!

Da Fei drifted to the outer edge of the river, daring not to make any swimming motions. Closer, ever closer! He could now feel the immense pressure from the Hydra's massive form! Just then, Da Fei started losing Life Value!

—System Prompt: You have entered the Corrosive Poison Domain of the Eight-headed Snake Hydra, and your Life Value is starting to decrease at a fixed percentage rate!

Damn! What the hell is a domain? Watching his Life Value drop rapidly, Da Fei was astonished, feeling defeated!

I only have 200 points of life left, Sea Monster Hunter +20%, Disease Resistance +15%, eating at the elder's home adds 10%, barely making it to 300. If I lose 2, 3, or 4 points of Life Value per second, I might manage to endure for a minute or two and get across. But now losing Life Value by percentage, not even a god could withstand this!

In just a few seconds, Da Fei hadn't even drifted before the Eight-headed Snake when his Life Value was already half gone! Da Fei realized the power of this Eight-headed Snake. This wasn't something that could be overcome by sheer numbers; no matter how many came, they'd all die! A percentage-based Life Value loss, even if 7th or 8th-level soldiers, BOSS troops, elite troops came, it'd be the same!

What to do, no need to be discovered yet, just drifting in front of it has already reduced half the Life Value, will I survive by drifting across later? Should I increase speed to swim past? The problem is, using Stealth in water might not be as effective as on land, and any splash could expose me!

Damn it! Why panic? I was already prepared to die early and reincarnate! If I die, I die, as long as I'm not exposed and drift past under its nose, maybe I'll temporarily promote the sentinel.

With that thought, Da Fei immediately calmed down and continued drifting like a dead fish. In any case, I absolutely won't use a Divine Artifact.

A few moments later, Da Fei noticed his Life Value decline speed had slowed noticeably, huh? What's this?

Understood, since the so-called percentage Life Value loss is based on the current percentage, so it's alarming when full at first, but as Life Value dwindles, the loss slows too.

Wait a minute, Da Fei's brow furrowed! If this domain's effect was just percentage-based Life Value reduction instead of direct damage, it likely couldn't kill anyone! This domain's mechanism might be to bring enemies' Life Value down to zero by percentage, then with a slight touch, they die! Yes! It must be this, otherwise, this domain would be too godlike! Even for a Demi-God, it's excessive, isn't it?

Thinking this, Da Fei drifted even more calmly like a dead fish.

Now, Da Fei's Life Value had dropped to less than a third, and finally drifted into the narrow waterway between the massive form and the riverbank! A red light flashed before his eyes!

—System Prompt: Reconnaissance Skill alert! You have entered the Eight-headed Snake Hydra's alert range and are about to enter battle!

Da Fei's heart tightened, the critical moment had arrived! However, the vigilance range of this Eight-headed Snake was so low that it only triggered when he drifted in front of it, greatly exceeding Da Fei's expectations! The vigilance range of a giant crocodile at quasi-demi-god level was so vast, but what's with this huge discrepancy? Is it because it's asleep or is it this ice head's stupidity? Perhaps both?

In short, success or failure depends on this move!

Drift! Drift! Lose Life Value! Lose Life Value! Drift! Drift! Lose Life Value! Lose Life Value...

Time seemed to freeze in the river, Da Fei's Life Value had hit rock bottom. Whatever happened, if Da Fei had one word, it was "die!"

Yet time still flowed, Life Value depleted but not dead, Da Fei continued to drift, past the narrow waterway, slowly, drifting past the massive form of the Eight-headed Snake!

—System Prompt: You successfully evaded the Eight-headed Snake Hydra's surveillance, you have acquired "Stealth Master" skill information!

—System Prompt: You have acquired "Basic Reconnaissance Sentinel" profession information!

Evaded? Did I just evade it like this? Not a single twist or thrill for me? Da Fei couldn't believe his eyes!

Is it that my God-level Reconnaissance Technique was stealthy enough, or is this ice head on duty truly stupid? The issue is, with such an impressive feat, I just get a profession information instead of a rank-up? Damn it! You are a semigod! How can you be on the same level with those little rascals? Even the Elder Habbit brought out his bottom-box Divine Artifact, he thinks highly of you, yet you don't give me an upgrade?

At this moment, Da Fei's mood was both joyous and frustrating, an indescribable tangle.

In summary, there were gains, confirming that this ice head was truly a fool, far from reaching the level a semigod should have, and killing it in the future, this head would be the biggest breakthrough! It seems the system indeed wouldn't designate a fully healthy semigod as a quest creature!

Now, ahead appeared a large Vortex Space Gate; the exit was in sight. Alright, also saved a life, I must cherish this usable form to see what kind of space this is.

With a change of scene, Da Fei appeared in a large greenish-black river, with both banks covered densely with trees of yellowing and blackened leaves. Aside from having a river and leaves, how did this differ from the Black Forest? Overall, it must be another invaded space.

Just as Da Fei was observing, a large cluster of dense red dots appeared on the radar, moving towards him from ahead in the river!

Damn, what is this? I have God-level Stealth! These must have sniffed me out, right? My Life Value is drained, a single touch and I'm dead, how can I let them catch me! Da Fei, alarmed, hurriedly swam towards the shore!

Closer! Ever closer! That cluster of red dots turned out to be countless tiny sharp-toothed fish, those must be Amazon Piranhas! The terrifying creatures that could strip a live human to the bones in minutes if they fell into the water! Damn, run!

Fortunately, Da Fei's early alarm allowed him to scramble ashore as these palm-sized little fish crowded the water's edge, baring their fangs! The shocking number left Da Fei gasping for air.

Escaped danger in the water, equally unsafe on land. Da Fei looked around, seeing countless red dots amidst the dense woods, bugs! Familiar-looking beetles! They seem to be the ones encountered on the Pool of Radiance task, those that suck the sap of the World Tree?

Damn, looks like I can only stay by the shore and hope there aren't any crocodiles around. However, with such a terrifying presence of piranhas in the water, it's unlikely for any large Water Monsters to be around. Now, the first thing to do is eat by the shore to recover Life Value, then send Little Fei out for reconnaissance.

Da Fei took out his camping gear, lit a fire to cook, and then took out the Spiritual Eagle Flute. At this time, Little Fei had full Stamina; after killing the giant crocodile on that side and leveling up, Little Fei had been idle, so Da Fei summoned it back. Its World Tree Fruit effect, which restored 3% Life and Mana per second, still had half a day left. This time shouldn't be wasted, Da Fei intended to clear the field with the Petrification Aura on and eradicate pests! With the recovery effects of the World Tree Fruit, Little Fei could maintain the Petrification Aura without exhausting mana.

The Blood Eagle soared again, sweeping like a whirlwind over the jungle near Da Fei, countless beetles buzzed up, flying towards the sky, only to be turned into stone statues by the gray Petrification Aura surrounding Little Fei and then fell like hailstones, reverberating through the forest with a plunking sound!

Da Fei widened his eyes in surprise! Although I knew this aura was effective against small insects and birds, I hadn't expected it to be this powerful! Amidst the swarm of beetles flying in the sky, none were able to breach the Petrification Aura to attack Little Fei?

Haha! Wahaha! Awesome! How wise I was to decide to learn this skill over there, mere little bugs and small birds aren't worthy of Little Fei's personal attention anymore, this is definitely a No-fly Aura! Without having cleared the crows earlier, I felt quite dissatisfied, but now there can be no regrets; I must within this half day clear all the beetles I can clear!

Move out, Little Fei!

Now, Little Fei began carpet-luring in the jungle from above, wherever it went, a rain of stones would pour. It felt like a pesticide-spraying airplane where pests vanished in its path. Why was it so enjoyable? Playing a game could feel this good because I rock, and only awesomeness could bring such enjoyment, wahahaha!

Just then, several yellow dots suddenly appeared on the edge of Little Fei's vision!

Yellow dots? Neutral creatures? Da Fei hurriedly switched to Little Fei's view for clarity and saw they were Flower Demons! No, not ordinary Flower Demons, they wore vine armor with green light and flowers blooming, perhaps forest goddess-level creatures? Clearly not! They should be above the forest goddess level, have you ever seen a forest goddess with such flashy vine flower armor?

Instantly, Da Fei was thrilled! What did this mean? It meant there was likely a Flower Demon Village nearby, and I could capture another village! They appeared neutral, which is way more convenient than the Hobbits that appear as hostile! Importantly, this Flower Demon Village ! Beauty Village! My enthusiasm for capturing it is vastly greater than for a Habbit Village!

Wahahaha, Little Fei, go find their village!

Consequently, Little Fei immediately headed in the direction these Flower Demons had appeared, causing them to retreat warily!

Wahaha! Little babies, don't run, you're mine, all mine!

Soon, a dozen more yellow dots appeared. Again, more Flower Demons! This indicated their village must be nearby. Though they displayed a cautious, defensive formation, as long as their attitude remained neutral, there was no fear of an attack.

Little Fei continued bravely forward!

Finally, Da Fei saw it! In the jungle, there appeared a clear, dazzling little lake, with a lush, sturdy tree growing in its midst. Tiny, elegant tree houses hung from branches of the big tree!

Da Fei laughed heartily, finally finding the beauty village. Wait for me, I will personally come to claim you all, but for now, it's time to keep performing—Little Fei, eliminate! Continue to eliminate, wipe out all the beetles in front of the Flower Demon sisters!

## Chapter 404: Even the Elite Can't Stop Me from Clearing the Field

Now that Da Fei is at full health, he starts venturing deeper into the jungle towards the Flower Demon Village. As for Little Fei, of course, he continues to glide in a low-altitude sweep. With the Petrification Aura that these beetles could never break through, Little Fei doesn't need to engage in aerial combat anymore. The consumption of stamina is virtually negligible, so Da Fei is confident in eradicating even more beetles.

At this moment, a small squad of Flower Demons follows behind Little Fei, with the leader being a hero standing on a green halo!

Da Fei's heart skips a beat! A hero of the Flower Demon Clan! Another rare racial hero, and a flying one at that! This must definitely be a Hidden Profession, right?

However, since this village is also led by a hero, there's no talking about recruitment; let's just keep it at maintaining a close and cooperative alliance. Actually, the advantage of hero-led forces is their strength in battle. Just like the Habbit Tribe earlier, who would have thought that such raggedly dressed weaklings could trap a Demigod? If it were a commonplace hero from a regular force, perhaps defeating a Demigod might be possible, but to kill one? How difficult would that be?

Ten minutes have passed, and Da Fei is still struggling through the jungle. It must be said that the jungle terrain significantly hampers the movement of a Human Race hero like Da Fei, and even the Master-level Logistics Skill hasn't improved the situation by much. Fortunately, Little Fei has cleared an area, and there are no red dots left as far as the eye can see on the entire map.

However, the special effect duration of the World Tree Fruit is so precious, the bug-slaying can't stop! Da Fei spots even more red dots in the jungle across the river, so he hurries on!

As Little Fei flies towards the other side of the river, Da Fei seems to hear the Flower Demon Hero who has been following them from afar shout, "That side is dangerous!"

Huh! Is this a warning? Does this mean they see me as one of their own? Wahaha, this is exactly the effect I wanted! But, so what if it's dangerous? I'm having such a blast killing, I just can't stop!

Alright, I'll just stay in the back myself to see how dangerous the other side of the river really is. First, I'll let Little Fei play at high altitude, I don't believe these bugs have anti-air missiles to shoot Little Fei down!

As Little Fei climbs higher and flies across the riverbank, that small squad of Flower Demons indeed stops at the riverbank and doesn't continue to follow. It seems there's a mystery in this space; the two sides of the river are not part of the same map.

Indeed, they are not the same map! I didn't see clearly upon arrival, but now taking a closer look, there's quite a difference between the two banks. The jungle on Da Fei's side is just yellowed and wilted, while the jungle on this riverbank has turned scorched black, and it truly resembles the Black Forest if the leaves were to fall off completely.

According to gaming logic, such a severe infestation must be due to a BOSS stirring trouble. Alright, let's meet this BOSS and see whether it's a super beetle or a Demigod beetle having numerous avatars?

Little Fei begins to lower his flying altitude to lure the enemies. Countless beetles fly up to attack, could they be Elite? Da Fei is even more vigilant, widening his eyes and closely monitoring. If anything goes wrong, he'll fly high immediately! I don't believe it, can these mere beetles really out-climb a Flying Eagle?

As the swarm of insects approaches and comes into contact with the Petrification Aura in an instant, countless beetles still turn into stone statues and fall to the ground, but this time it's different. Several larger beetles successfully break through the influence of the aura and fly towards them!

Sure thing, these Elites were anticipated!

Little Fei flapped his wings fiercely and suddenly soared higher! Although these Elite Beetles were unaffected by petrification, they were still slowed down by the aura's secondary effect. Obviously, they couldn't catch up, merely fluttering their wings a few times before they could no longer ascend!

So, this is their maximum altitude? Da Fei couldn't help but laugh in amazement. Bugs will be bugs, indeed incomparable to Flying Eagles. What does this imply? It implies that my Little Fei can ride high above your heads anytime, and I can play with your lives however I want!

But considering they were slowed down by the aura, I actually didn't need to fly high, right? Even the King Giant Lizard knew how to open the aura and tease the Demigod Giant Crocodile. Why wouldn't it be the same for me to open the aura and tease the Elite Beetles?

Right, the effectiveness of this Petrification Aura strengthens with the user's power. Its basic range of effect is 10 meters. Now that my Little Fei has grown twice after learning the aura, how much is the effect now? Da Fei hurriedly checked Little Fei's Halo Skill:

—Petrification Aura: Activating this spell will form a radial force field of 12 meters, reducing enemies' Move Speed and Attack Speed by 12% within it, and there's a chance to petrify enemies in the field. Activating this spell consumes 2 Mana Value per second. The skill's effect enhances with the user's level increase.

Ha! Grown twice, the aura expanded to 12 meters and reduces speed by 12% now! Wahahaha! It truly is a heaven-defying skill! Alright, even Elites can't stop me from clearing the field. I'm going to toy with you all!

Da Fei's confidence soared without any more concerns. He controlled Little Fei to lower his altitude and circled the field at full speed to attract monsters. In an instant, the beetles of the entire Black Forest took to the air amid the buzzing roar, then fluttered down with a crackling sound! And the Elites chasing Little Fei had already grown to the hundreds!

The scene was so chaotic, so dazzling, that it was impossible for Da Fei, given his skill level, to remain completely unscathed. However, with the World Tree Fruit's special effect of recovering 3% of Stamina every second, all these hits were bearable— but mentally, Da Fei couldn't bear it! At this moment, Da Fei felt like he was on an accelerating roller coaster, pumped to the extreme, his heart about to stop, his breath about to freeze, his nerves about to collapse!

No choice, this is the operational and mental limit of the world's number one amateur player! Da Fei soberly realized it was time to pull back and flee upwards! If not, I'm going to mess up just like that King Giant Lizard!

But, these are hundreds of Elite Beetles! Why won't they be petrified? I can't bear to just let them go! Killing a few hundred Elites, can't Little Fei grow one more time? If it grows once more, could they then be petrified? The problem is, can Little Fei, with the attributes of a level 6 soldier at most, really defeat hundreds of Elites?

However, what if I drag them all to my side, can Little Fei gain a boost from my attributes? Now I've got a freaking strong Divine Artifact Necklace! Plus, those Flower Demons are obviously the enemies of the beetles, will Flower Demons help?

Let's bet! I bet those Flower Demons will definitely help!

At this moment, Da Fei was in an extremely excited state, it's hard to say if he was clear-headed enough, but anyway, if there's going to be a battle, make it a fierce one! The Flower Demon beauties are watching by the side, Little Fei's performance in this one fight will determine the recovery of Beauty Village!

#### Chapter 405: Killing the Swarm Leader

Now, Little Fei dragged a few hundred elite beetles across the riverbank and converged on Da Fei's location. The sight immediately startled the flower demons watching by the riverbank, causing them to retreat in unison and vanish without a trace.

Hey, hey, hey, why are you all running away? I was counting on you to lend a hand! Well, no choice then, I'll just take them on myself and show you how it's done. Get ready to shower me with admiration!

As they got closer, Da Fei and Little Fei were about to meet. Da Fei quickly checked Little Fei's current status,

—Growing reconnaissance spirit eagle (Little Fei): Small-sized spiritual leader creature, attack 50, defense 17, damage 20–21, life 166/199, mana 135, attack speed: 20, magic resistance 50%, command value: 0, stamina: 97/163.

Great, the life and stamina are enough for a big fight! As the battle was about to begin, Da Fei crouched under a tree, continuing to hide stealthily. Finally, Little Fei entered the range of Da Fei's hero attribute bonus, and at that moment, Little Fei's attributes soared dramatically!

—Attack 149 (+99. Including Ranger +39, Temporary Sentry +39)

—Defense 95 (+78)

—Damage 22–23 (Captain's Sword's land damage +1, God Slayer Demigod achievement +1)

—Life 210/243 (Lonely Brave Warrior's hundred victories all-army life +2, Spider Demon two-piece set all-army life +4, Master-level Defense Skill's Unlimited Vitality all-army life +2, "God Slayer" achievement +1, "Dancing with Gods" achievement +1, total 13 points, plus three plague antibody achievements total life +15%)

—Attack speed 24 (Captain's Sword land +1, Speed Cloak +10%, Corpse Poison Antibody achievement +5%)

—Stamina 121/187 (three plague achievements increase stamina by 15%)

With a high attack of 149 breaking the bounds, even if these beetles have an impressive defense of 50, Little Fei still has an extra 100 attack points, which means damage increases by 500%, equivalent to 120 damage! Do these beetles even have 120 blood? Catch one and it's down in a second! Plus, with the special effect of the Divine Artifact Necklace, damage is not a problem; it's solidly at BOSS level.

The key is the defense; can it withstand the onslaught of these hundreds of elite beetles? Although Little Fei shared his God-level Reconnaissance Technique, lacking Intelligence Collection Skill, it couldn't gather information on these beetles even after taking some hits. So an estimate had to be made.

Ordinary beetle's attack might be just 1 point, but how much does the elite's attack have? Suppose the elite here is impressive, with an attack over 30 points, reaching the basic level of an angel, and even now Little Fei has a 60-point attack-to-defense difference, which means damage is reduced by 75%. Then with Master-level Defense Skill further reducing damage by 50%, the total damage reduction is 87.5%!

But these beetles surely don't reach an angel's attack level. However, considering the attack-defense difference being between 60 and 90 is only about a 5% gap, let's consider the total damage reduction at 90%!

So, how much damage do these beetles deal? Little Fei just took some hits, so there's some understanding; let's say these beetles break the sky with 10 damage, under a 90% damage reduction,

their physical attack would at most only take 1 point of life from Little Fei! Meanwhile, Little Fei's World Tree Fruit's special effect can restore 2-3 life every second!

As for the beetle's toxic skill? It posed no threat to the spiritual Little Fei, not to mention that Little Fei now also benefited from the three major plague antibody bonuses, plus the 10% physical dodge from the Evasion Talisman, 1 point toxin absorption from Nash's Tooth, along with the high-speed dodge inherent in Flying Creature, and the effect of God-level Luck's 15% biological special skill chance suppression. Little Fei was ready to fight!

Even if victory isn't certain, it doesn't matter; Little Fei has the high-fly special skill, can attack or retreat, unbeaten and without fear! In conclusion, everything was within Da Fei's calculated control; it wasn't mere impulsiveness. Even if it was before, it isn't now!

Let the battle begin!

Little Fei circled in the air, suddenly accelerated to catch up with the tailing beetle, grabbing one with a claw! First, let's kill one to gather some enemy intelligence!

—Boom! "-100!!" The beetle exploded, white fluid splattered! It was indeed a one-hit kill! Yet, atop Little Fei's head emerged two damage figures, "-4", "-3"!

—System Prompt: Your Intelligence Collection Skill has acquired incomplete information about the "Giant Evil Branch Beetle"!

Da Fei was startled; Little Fei actually took a total of 7 points of damage? This exceeded Da Fei's calculations immensely! Da Fei hurriedly opened the information panel to inspect the beetle's data.

—Giant Evil Branch Beetle: Small-sized leader-level insect, attack? Defense 35, damage? life 100, special skill: Flying Creature, Spiky Body Armor, Death Self-Destruction, ???

Da Fei's eyelid twitched; Spiky Body Armor and Death Self-Destruction? So, these two damages were caused by those two skills? Killing even a defenseless one costs 7 points of life, so there's no way to battle these hundreds, right? Wait! This thing is leader-level? Seriously, a few hundred BOSS beetles all at once, is this wholesale?

Alright, I've encountered over a hundred crocodile BOSSs before, so meeting hundreds of insect BOSSs isn't a big deal! Plus, their blood defense is honestly not three to four streets lower than Little Fei's. If Little Fei faced off one-on-one against three or four of these, it might not even be a sure win, worthy of the BOSS title, fine! If it's a BOSS, then I cannot let it go; I'll fight as many as I can, and if not, I'll just fly away!

Continue!

At this moment, the swarm immediately turned back to besiege Little Fei, and right at this time, a swarm of insects suddenly emerged from the recently burst beetle's body, joining the siege!

Da Fei was dumbfounded! Damn, even after death, it still had offspring inside!

While still stunned, these newly emerged little flying insects immediately turned into stone after encountering Little Fei's Petrification Aura, falling one after another.

Fortunately! Luckily, Little Fei had such godlike skills, otherwise how would ordinary folks deal with these beetles? Da Fei finally understood why those flower demons scattered upon sight of these beetles.

And in the brief moment Da Fei was stunned, Little Fei's giant wings were already flapping open and close, freely engaging the swarm. In an instant, the sky was filled with a dazzling array of crushing strikes, tear strikes, along with damage numbers like -26, -56, -32! These numbers were the result of the swarm sharing the damage from the eagle strike. Little Fei's head also displayed "-1", "-1", "-2", "poison resistance", "toxin absorption", "dodge" in a mix of red and green text jumping quickly.

Meaning, if Little Fei executed a group attack, it could reduce the spiky counter damage? However, the more beetles attacked, the more reflecting spikes counter damage would be received; the total amount of suffered damage hardly changed! These beetles truly weren't suited for close combat; so how should they be fought?

Tear strike? Yes! We can only rely on Tear Strike now. Once Little Fei delivers a Tear Strike, it should immediately fly away and ignore them, just waiting for the enemy to hemorrhage to death! Tear Strike,

under my Luck Body bonus, has a 16% occurrence rate. With Little Fei's attack speed, two wing flaps in the swarm are sure to trigger a few Tear Strikes, perhaps with a luck strike on top!

Now, Da Fei quickly devised a guerrilla battle strategy, and after Little Fei executed a few tear strikes in the swarm, it immediately broke through to pounce on the swarm from another side. After seven or eight rounds of maneuvers, Little Fei's life was running low too, but no worries, now Little Fei relied on the speed advantage from the aura's reduced speed to lead the swarm in circles, while Little Fei had the World Tree Fruit continuously regenerating, and the swarm struck by Tear Strikes began to bleed non-stop!

As for taking high fly, that's definitely not feasible; if pursued unsuccessfully, the other side might just escape.

Finally, when Little Fei's life recovered over half, the reaping season arrived!

—Boom! Among the tailing swarm, a beetle finally ran out of juice, exploded violently, and fell, while the small flying insects that inherited its will soon turned to stone points and joined him!

Then, Boom! Boom! One after another, the beetles fell!

Da Fei laughed heartily! The tactic was successful! This was the victory of the Petrification Aura, the victory of the World Tree Fruit! But ultimately, it was my foresight and supreme intelligence that won the day; my success was well-deserved!

And at this moment, from the direction of the flower demon village, hundreds of flower demons were flying in, with the flower demon hero among them. Turns out they went back to get reinforcements just now! Haha, I knew you wouldn't stand by idly, but these beetles are so dangerous, don't rashly engage them, in short, don't steal my experience! Especially Little Fei's precious growth experience!

Now, those flower demons observed from afar outside the swarm, while Little Fei, whose life had restored to full, dove back into the swarm, making a clean sweep, and as his life was running low again, Da Fei was preparing to continue guerrilla healing when the flower demon hero called out: "Faraway hero, let me lend you a hand!"

As she spoke, the cluster of flower demons simultaneously acted, beams of green light descended from the sky onto Little Fei, instantly refilling his life and rapidly recovering his stamina.

—System Prompt: The Lumang Tribe's army has joined the battle!

At that moment, Da Fei was dumbfounded!

Originally, reinforcements stepping in should have made Da Fei happy, but suddenly Da Fei wasn't cheerful at all; he felt like a clown! What's the big deal with the Petrification Aura, what's the big deal with the World Tree Fruit, what's the big deal with the tactics, ultimately it just boiled down to using a few Skill Points to learn Light Magic, increase some mana knowledge, maximize Healing Skill, and pump Little Fei full of healing, avoiding all this trouble, right?

Ah no no no! Da Fei immediately shook his head to dispel such clownish thoughts. The Petrification Aura is a No-fly Aura. Without the Petrification Aura, could Little Fei have flown across the river so boldly to lure the monsters? It's like forgetting the first six cakes after being full with the seventh!

And with the flower demons joining to heal, the beetles who couldn't harm Little Fei for a long time immediately shifted direction and swooped toward those flower demons who were standing ready!

Damn! Little Fei's growth experience! Da Fei was anxious: "Little Fei, chase them down! Snatch as many kills as possible, one shot one kill!"

#### Chapter 406: Forest Vine Demon VS Evil Branch Tree Spirit

The fact proved that Da Fei's worry about snatching monsters was completely unnecessary. When the swarm attacked the Flower Demons, the vines on these Flower Demons suddenly extended, instantly weaving into a vine cage to enclose themselves and resist the beetle's attack. Then, these Flower Demons healed each other!

Da Fei watched in amazement! Truly worthy of being an unknown space, an unknown community, and some incredible skills! Good! The higher the level, the better! They have taken the initiative to help, conquering them will be just around the corner! Little Fei, hurry up and clear the area with your speedy kills!

With the help of over a hundred mysterious Flower Demons providing healing and stamina and sharing the damage, Little Fei had no inhibitions, activating the Rapid Bite special skill that increased attack speed by 50%. Wings flapped furiously as the leader beetles burst into pieces, white sap bursting in the sky like hail falling down! At this moment, Little Fei was a frenzied airborne meat grinder!

The swarm gradually thinned. And at this moment, golden light flashed again in the sky! Oh yes! Finally upgraded! This was almost an entire map full of beetles along with hundreds of bosses!

—System Prompt: Your Reconnaissance Eagle Xiao Fei has gone through fierce battles, activated the potential within, and grown, increasing Attack +8, Defense +2, Damage +1, HP +20, Stamina +10, and gained All Magic Resistance +3%. Special Skill "Fierce Bird Pressure" effect enhanced!

—Fierce Bird Pressure: Increases damage to non-elite bird creatures by 60% and decreases their attack speed by 15%. There is a 10% chance to directly inflict the "Broken Wings" effect on all small flying creatures.

Huh? Broken Wings? Isn't this the signature anti-air effect of Master-level Light Magic coming this way? Damn! This is impressive, this 10% chance becomes 25% with my Luck Body, a frighteningly high chance! Little Fei's enemies now have another way to die!

Sure enough, as Little Fei flapped its wings again, a beetle just happened to have "Broken Wings" appear above its head and plummet straight to the ground—"54"! Boom, smashed into pulp, and died directly!

Da Fei burst out laughing! Yes, this is exactly the effect I wanted, I don't mind the many ways you die, wahahaha!

Finally, when the last beetle turned into sap and stone residue, the battle ended perfectly!

Now, it was finally time for me to make an appearance! However, the opponent is the Beauty Village Chief, I must leave a good impression, of course, the battle impression just now was good enough, but I want perfection, hurry up and change clothes, my Captain's uniform has been eager for ages!

Just as Da Fei was changing clothes, the Flower Demon Hero began calling in the air, "Hero from afar, where are you? Can we meet?"

Heh heh heh, let you see my Little Fei first, then show you my God-level Stealth plus Stealth Mastery, what reason do you have not to bow down to my majestic presence?

A fully uniformed Da Fei slowly emerged from the shadows, stature tall and dignified, with deep eyes seemingly penetrating the dense jungle to look at the horizon—in conversations with beauties, I will pretend to admire the scenery first!

Wow!!! For a moment, the whole sky of Flower Demons screamed!

—System Prompt: Your reputation in the Lumang Tribe has become "Friendly"!

Hey hey hey! I haven't even said anything yet and I'm already friendly? Of course, this battle outcome ensured it! With friendliness achieved, how far can admiration be? Wahahaha!

The group of Flower Demons, shining with pollen brilliance, immediately landed lightly around Da Fei, making the entire jungle become radiant and dazzling. And Da Fei couldn't help but become fascinated amidst the wavy figures! This effect is exactly what I pursue, haha!

The leading Flower Demon Hero, shining with golden light, saluted Da Fei and said excitedly, "Hero, I am Tachiusu, known as the Morning Dew Light, leader of the Lumang Tribe. From the first moment I saw you, I felt a special closeness, you must be a friend of the Flower Demon race, right?"

Da Fei paused, then realized, and hurriedly said, "Yes, yes! I have helped many Flower Demons, and my reputation among them is respectful!"

Right! It must be so, the friendly Hobbits were also distrustful of my red name status upon first meeting, the Flower Demon race being otherworldly and unapproachable, there was no reason for them to be neutral to me from the beginning, indeed it's because my good deeds in the past have paid off now?

Tachiusu exclaimed excitedly, "Indeed! Hero, your war eagle's combat strength exceeded our expectations, and it must have also exceeded the Evil Branch Tribe's expectations. In just a short half day, their Evil Beetle Army is almost annihilated, and it will take until tomorrow for them to produce a new beetle army, this is our opportunity to completely eliminate the Evil Branch Tribe. We've gathered

all our tribe's power here, and we're about to launch an attack. Friend, you may not be clear about many things, but the opportunity is fleeting, and we don't have time to explain. Will you be willing to help us attack the Evil Branch Tribe first?"

—System Prompt: The Lumang Tribe invites you to attack the Evil Branch Tribe, do you agree?

—Task Hint: The Lumang Tribe and the Evil Branch Tribe have been arch-enemies for a thousand years. Players can choose to join one faction in this rival duel to receive special troop rewards.

Sure enough, it rewards special troops! What a redundant task hint, beauty is justice after all, there's no way I could choose the opposite beetle tribe, not to mention my innate goodwill with the Flower Demon race—Agree!

The Flower Demons cheered in unison!

Tachiusu said with a smile, "Hero, thank you! With your help, we can surely escape the fate of enslavement, let's set out and fight!"

—System Prompt: You temporarily joined Tachiusu's unit!

Da Fei couldn't help but be startled? Enslaved? What does it mean? If I chose the opposing faction, I could enslave them? Then I could have both the opposing special troops and theirs, hitting two birds with one stone? Damn! Am I losing out on this deal?

At this moment, a dozen Flower Demons extended vines and wove them into a large net instantly.

Tachiusu smiled, "Hero, please! We'll take you flying over!"

Da Fei immediately regained his senses and nodded repeatedly, "Good good good! Let's set off!"

Da Fei climbed onto the vine net, and the team took to the sky, Da Fei even more shocked!

Damn, these Flower Demons actually have the ability to carry people in the air? Although ordinary Flower Demons' production skills can also transport goods through group cooperation in the air, that's limited to items and can't carry living people, and ordinary Flower Demons can't go on expeditions! In other words, they're essentially transport planes? What else can they transport? I don't have high demands, can they airlift a Crossbow Cannon?

Da Fei immediately began to check the formation and attributes of the team; this was Da Fei's second time joining an NPC unit since Newbie Island and Renior, and now Da Fei finally knew their attributes and names!

—Forest Vine Demon: Small Spiritual Elite Unit, Attack 27, Defense 17, Damage 18-27, Life 80, Mana 100, Attack Speed 13, Command Value 6, Magic Resistance 75%, Stamina 150, Special Skills: Flying Creature, Ranged Attack, Production and Transport, Vine Armor, Vine Control, Master-level Healing Skill, Master-level Fatigue Recovery.

Vine Demon! Elite unit! A total of 120, is this the entire power of this Lumang Tribe? In terms of attributes, indeed they are not as good as those giant beetles, but their skills are quite outstanding! Although apparently not as good as those beetles.

Ordinary Flower Demons specialize in controlling bees, the Forest Goddess is in illusion techniques, and they excel in vine manipulation. More importantly, they indeed have production and transport skills! It's a skill as good as those Kingdom Elite Tree Elves left in the swamp! They can fight in wars, produce when idle, troops like these won't let players spend resources in vain, and they can also construct buildings in the wild! Players love troops like these! Furthermore, their production skills give them enslaving value, right?

—Production and Transport: Elite Forest Vine Demons possess daily production skills, able to transport 10 units of goods.

Oh, just 10 units! 1 unit = 100 portions they say, this amount truly doesn't compare to the Tree Elf's 5 units of massive volume. But for a flying troop, it's already quite impressive. Plus, their Master-level Fatigue Recovery Magic goes hand in hand with the production skill, restoring stamina after casting spells when tired, damn! Arranging these Vine Demons in an overloaded Tree Elf transport team is a golden partnership!

Good! Really good troops, meaning, as long as I wipe out the opponents, I will get them!

And the entire unit's offense and defense strategic attributes were all enhanced by me, meaning this Tachiusu was just a pure Mage focused on magic power and knowledge? Fine! With my exaggerated offensive and defensive enhancements, a Little Fei at the level of 1st rank soldiers can slaughter enemies, take on hundreds solo, slay bosses, and infiltrate enemy lairs as if entering an uninhabited sanctuary, now that I have enhanced over a hundred 6th level elite troops to annihilate, won't their lair be torn apart? Wahahaha, isn't this too much bullying!

Now, the unit flew over the river and continued to penetrate the black forest. At this moment, Da Fei suddenly found the trees below were moving slowly! Yes, indeed moving, so they were Tree Spirits?

Tachiusu shouted, "Hero, the opponent lost their beetle army and had to deploy Evil Tree Spirits for defense. Even if there are some beetles left, they won't be a match for your Flying Eagle. Our target is to directly behead the head of the Evil Branch Tribe, the Evil Branch Ancient Tree, which is also the largest beetle nest. In short, we must destroy it before a new batch of beetle troops is produced tomorrow!"

Da Fei asked in surprise, "So the Evil Branch Tribe is all Tree Spirits and beetles?"

Tachiusu solemnly said, "They're Cannibal Tree Spirits!"

So that's it, Cannibal Tree Spirits must die.

Soon, a towering black ancient tree, as large as the Vine Demon Village, appeared in the forest ahead, with vines dancing around and numerous black Tree Spirits fortifying its surroundings.

Tachiusu shouted, "Everyone land and fight! Kill the Evil Tree Spirits first!"

#### Chapter 407: Siege Catapult Makes an Appearance

As Tachiusu landed for battle with a loud battle cry, the Vine Demon Army immediately descended into the densely populated Dark Forest filled with Tree Spirits.

Da Fei was suddenly startled. So many Tree Spirits below, and they just land like this? Not finding an open space? But there indeed was no open space here, it seems they had to airdrop forcibly. However,

with my attribute bonus, the Flower Demons' Blood Defense both broke through 100, and with their Healing Skills, they should be able to hold on!

And it was at that very moment the Vine Demon Army landed, that the Flower Demon leader Tachiusu flashed with green light all over her body, and centered on her, a huge green Magic Array covered a large part of the forest!

— System Prompt: Legion Commander Tachiusu has released a large mysterious magic "Giant Thorn Forest"! Enemy forces within a 50-meter radius will be subjected to the bind, damage, silence, life stealing, and mana stealing effects of the Thorn Forest, lasting for 30 seconds!

Boom! The ground erupted in dust as numerous thick thorns burst from the earth, instantly binding and wrapping around all the Evil Tree Spirits around the landing point!

Da Fei's eyelids twitched in shock! Such a stunning spell, this is absolute control over the battlefield! This Vine Demon hero really has the goods! But what does this mysterious magic mean? A hidden magic not among the known categories of Light, Dark, Destruction, and Summoning?

"Fire!" Following Tachiusu's immediate cry, the Vine Demons began firing Magic Bullets at the bound Tree Spirits around them, the entire forest lighting up with a barrage of bullets, countless "Tear Strike," "Shattering Strike," "Dragon Slayer Strike" and damage figures of "-4," "-6," "-5" filling Da Fei's screen!

Da Fei was shocked again! The scene was splendid, but the damage numbers were atrociously low!

— System Prompt: Your Intelligence Collection Skill has received incomplete information about the Evil Tree Spirits!

Information has come out! Da Fei quickly checked it!

— Evil Tree Spirit: Large-sized Elite Spiritual Creature, Attack?, Defense 65, Damage?... Special Skill: Advanced Defense Skill, ???

Impossible! Just 65 Defense and one Advanced Defense Skill, how could it reduce so much damage from my troops? After my enhancement, they have an Attack of 130, and I am now temporarily an Expert-level with Attack Skill countering their Defense Skill, with nearly a 60-point difference in Attack and Defense, 1 point provides a 5% increase, which should boost the Vine Demons' average of 20 damage by 300% to 80 points! How could it be just 5 or 6 points?

And then, that fortress-like black Ancient Tree in front of him spoke, "Little one, do you think you can win?"

Tachiusu shouted, "Evil Branch, your Doomsday has come!"

The Ancient Tree said annoyedly, "I have a name. I am the great Tree Elf Hero Regulas. If you think you can win, then allow me to kindly remind you—did you bring enough ammo?"

Tachiusu angrily said, "I have a name too. I am the great Vine Demon Hero Tachiusu. We have brought all our reserved ammo, prepare to meet your doom!"

The Ancient Tree snorted coldly, "Then I shall see what your fate will be after your tribe's entire ammo supply is spent!"

Tachiusu shouted angrily, "Your fate will be your death!"

Da Fei then realized, this Ancient Tree was also a hero! No way! I'd rather believe its massive size denotes a Demigod type of solo fighter than accept it as a hero! No wonder my troops' damage is so low! It means this tree is a hero with super high Defense, given that it has reduced the Vine Demons' damage by nearly 75%, my troops have at least a 60-point difference in Attack and Defense with it! Meaning its strategic defense must be at 200! That's like a low-level city wall! Then how high is its personal defense?

No wonder it fearlessly asked if they had enough ammo; it is extremely confident about its own Life Value! Even if a Vine Demon could carry 10 pieces of ammo, after all these minor Tree Spirits are dealt with, how much time and energy will there be left to deal with this final BOSS?

Right, if I had chosen to join the Evil Branch Tribe in this battle, what would have been the result? Would I easily crush the Vine Demon Tribe? I'm afraid it wouldn't be that easy; the Vine Demon Tribe must have their own strengths. At the very least, this type of mobile Flying Army would completely embarrass any players.

In any case, a player's participation in this battle shouldn't just be about adding some simple buffs to Attack and Defense; there must be a decisive factor that only players can resolve. I'll calmly observe for now!

One by one, the Elite Evil Tree Spirits fell amid the concentrated firepower. Even if the Vine Demons' damage was reduced by 75%, under the frequent special skill strikes of Da Fei's Divine Artifact Necklace, as well as Da Fei's 13-point Luck Value nearly 26% critical hit rate, the 30 seconds of the Thorn Forest was enough for hundreds of Vine Demons to clear the field.

Now, the Vine Demons began attacking the roots of the Evil Branch Ancient Tree soaking in Black Water Lake, with numerous "-1" "-1" damage figures popping up, and all the splendid attack effects from Da Fei's Divine Artifact Necklace were nowhere to be seen!

Da Fei's brow twitched, a -1 damage means the damage was reduced by 95%, which implies a 500-point difference in Attack and Defense between my army and the Ancient Tree Hero, and no more hitting effects appearing suggests this Ancient Tree has building attributes, immune to all kinds of assorted special attack effects, this Ancient Tree is truly a city wall in its own right!

Holy moly! It's a creature, a building, and a hero all in one! How should I face an ancient tree like this?

Wait a minute! It's a building, right? Too much of a good thing is bad. If it merely had a Defense of over 500, it would've had me, but if it's like a wall, then there's the perfect nemesis—the Catapult that ignores the Defense of buildings! Of course, it can't be blamed, if it weren't a building, it probably wouldn't have over 500 Defense, right?

Da Fei took out the Space Bag of War Machines that Makar gave him along with the Phantom Crossbow Cannon, which also contained an ordinary Siege Catapult and a healing tent. Fortunately, the Catapult, which had never seen action before, can now take the stage. Assemble it.

As mentioned before, War Machine Science is a discipline that involves three types of war machines, so it has the most sub-skills of all, including a variety of plague tents, firestone catapults, and so on. Until the mid-game, players are mostly grinding monsters and running instances, so the idea of besieging is quite abstract, hence no one learns the Catapult-related sub-skills early on. Initially, the Crossbow Cannon is enough to deal with everything.

But the Crossbow Cannon also has a clear disadvantage. For instance, my Master-level Crossbow Cannon now does over 1000 damage, but its Attack doesn't benefit from hero bonuses. Even at Master level, it only has 35 Attack. In the face of Defense over 500, the damage gets reduced by 95%, leaving only 50 damage! And the building's Defense varies with the material, which further reduces damage from light weapons like the Crossbow Cannon. Right, a Crossbow Cannon is essentially just a larger crossbow, classified as Light Weapons. And for a wall with 500 Defense, its Durability would be at least over 100,000. Using the Crossbow Cannon, it'd take till the Monkey Year to bring it down, right?

But the Catapult is different. It's a common machine, and during late-stage National Wars, basically every player has one. It doesn't require high skills from players and is also unrelated to the player's attributes because the Catapult doesn't have a complex damage formula; it deals fixed damage that ignores building Defense.

—Catapult: Attack 0, Defense 10, Life Value 1000, Damage 100-150, Attack Speed 5, Move Speed 1. Special skill: Ignores building Defense, uses local materials for ammunition, deviates in trajectory.

These are the Basic Attributes of a Catapult without skill bonuses. Each additional level in War Machine Science adds 50-100 damage, 10 Defense, 100 Life Value, and improves accuracy. My Da Fei Master-level Catapult's damage is 400-750, real solid damage, enjoying bonus from Luck Value critical hits, not reduced by building Defense, one shot could worth dozens from the Crossbow Cannon!

However, this doesn't mean besieging is easy because the Catapult has one frustrating special skill that makes countless players want to smash their eggs—"trajectory deviation"! It doesn't mean a miss, it literally means it doesn't hit where it aims!

Walls are built in segments of 10 meters, so if you focus your Catapult on one segment, you will eventually blow a hole through it, but the problem is the Catapult often hits here and there, just not obedient!

After all, this special skill is a balancing design by the game, to prevent sieging from being too easy.

And it's this annoying flaw of the Catapult that makes it rarely appear on ships. Of course, there have been instances, like when Da Fei encountered the Ghost Fleet; getting hit then would really hurt.

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The battle continues, and the reinforcing Tree Spirits, with their slow steps, are being surrounded and conquered from all directions. Under Tachiusu's powerful Vine Magic and the focused attacks of the Vine Demons, they are falling one after another. Obviously, this seemed to be the enemy's strategy to deplete our ammunition, but, that strategy is about to end now!

—System Prompt: You have completed the assembly of the Siege Catapult. You can use local materials for ammunition or use the special ammunition you brought, which has an additional damage bonus.

Oh yeah! Taste my "local material collection" technique!

—Boom! A loud explosion, the Catapult launches a clump of black mud hurtling towards the ancient tree—Slap! "-663!!!"

Oh yeah! Slapped its face with mud!

The mighty attack from Da Fei immediately caused the Vine Demons to scream, and a golden Flying Eagle icon rose above their heads! They're pumped up with Morale!

Wahahaha! That's exactly the effect I wanted!

"Not bad! You've brought quite useful assistance!" the Ancient Tree spoke, "But, do you think I would just sit and wait for death?"

After saying that, the ground began to rumble, and beneath the Ancient Tree, several thick roots burst forth from the earth, surrounded by a huge black Hero Aura!

Da Fei's eyes narrowed in shock! What the heck is this?

— Boom! The ground shook thunderously, and those gigantic roots took a massive step forward, like spider legs, as if a colossal mountain was rolling their way!

Da Fei was scared witless! Damn, so it can move? That one step equals dozens of human steps, right? There's no room for my Catapult to run. How the heck do I continue to fight?

#### Chapter 408: Infiltrating the Heart of the Tree Spirit, Slaying!

When the Ancient Tree Hero, whose enormous body was like a mobile fortress, took a step that spanned half the battlefield, Da Fei was shocked, his eyes wide open and mouth agape! Da Fei's first reaction was to wonder if the Vine Demon could urgently airlift the Catapult away? However, based on game logic, such good fortunes usually cannot be enacted once battle has commenced, right?

And it was at this moment that Tachiusu exploded in a burst of green light and shouted, "Evil Branch, you've finally shown your true colors!"

A blood-red giant Array once again covered the battlefield; the bodies of hundreds of dead Evil Tree Spirits exploded violently, each corpse releasing a sturdy, blood-red vine, which lassoed around the Ancient Tree's moving massive roots like ropes!

— System Prompt: Legion Commander Tachiusu has released the large Mysterious Magic "Parasitic Sapping Demon Vine"! The Demon Vine must be summoned using flesh and blood corpses. Once parasitic, it will bind the enemy and continuously absorb their life, Mana, and Stamina. This Spell requires the casting hero to maintain channeling continuously; when the hero's Mana and Stamina are insufficient to sustain the Demon Vine, or if the casting hero is attacked, the Spell effect disappears!

In an instant, the Ancient Tree's advance was suddenly halted by the entanglement of hundreds of vines around its roots! Da Fei was so amazed that he was lost for words; this Vine Demon Hero's Spell was unbelievably dramatic!

The Ancient Tree said in a deep voice, "Little thing, how long do you think your Spell can hold me?"

At this time, Tachiusu, still shimmering with green light, maintained her casting stance and said through gritted teeth, "Hero, I must focus all my energy on binding the enemy and cannot move now. My troops are now under your command; do not let me be attacked! Victory or defeat depends on you now!"

— System Prompt: You have gained command of the Vine Demon Army!

Pfft! Da Fei couldn't help but snort! So it turns out, the player's role is to clean up this mess? That's not how you fight a battle, is it?

If I had been in command from the start, I would have definitely taken advantage of the Flying Army's mobility to clear the area of regular Tree Spirits from the river bank, gathering Experience as we weeded them out before taking on this big boss. As for tomorrow's task of dealing with the insect nest, that's something trivial that my Xiao Fei wouldn't even need to worry about, right? A perfectly good mobile warfare tactic was turned into a tiresome siege by her; how could I not be frustrated?

Anyway, since I've taken over, there's nothing more to say. Continue bombarding it with the Catapult!

Seconds ticked by, and Tree Spirits kept joining the battlefield, further scattering the troops' firepower. The hundreds of blood vines entwining the Ancient Tree kept showing "-1" "-1" Damage, while blue flashes indicated the continuous absorption of Mana to make up for Tachiusu's Mana consumption. Yet, Tachiusu's Mana Value continued to decrease, meaning the Mana absorbed by the blood vines was nowhere near compensating for the consumption of casting the Spell. At this rate, the Spell might not even last a minute.

Would the Catapult be able to topple this Ancient Tree within a minute? If the enemy had 20,000 health, that would be impossible! Not to mention that such a large body doesn't look anything like a low-level wall with only 20,000 health.

Da Fei felt like he had missed something again.

Under normal circumstances, how should a player appear here? Either by leading a large army to defeat the Eight-Headed Snake blocking the gate and marching to this point, or by entering from another unknown entrance. In any case, it certainly shouldn't be like my current situation as a Commander without any troops, right?

However, as such a Commander, I have Xiao Fei's incredible Divine Skill to instantly clear the field, completing a progress that even a player's large army could not achieve, which led the system NPC to a tactical misjudgment, thinking that victory was within reach, hence starting the beheading battle?

Impossible! The system is very smart, and system NPCs, even if they are blind, can distinguish the difference between a Commander without troops and a large army. Try taking troops or not taking them into enemy Alliance territory and see?

That is to say, there must be a trick to this battle, and it probably is not greatly related to having a portable Catapult! It has nothing much to do with the player's own military strength either!

The trick should be the weakness of the Tree Spirits. They cannot be as strong as they seem; without the beetles, what they can do is nothing but boldly confronting and using their lives to deplete the Vine Demon Ammo. How pathetically heroic?

Wait? Beetles? Tachiusu had said that the Ancient Tree is the largest Beetle Nest, and must be eliminated, which means—

A thought struck Da Fei, and he immediately assigned a Vine Demon to help him operate the cannon. Both the Catapult and Crossbow Cannon can be manned by medium or small-sized human-shaped troops to assist with operation, and the Attack attribute is calculated based on the hero's.

Then Da Fei, fully focused, switched his perspective to Xiao Fei's view—right, since this Tree Spirit is a Beetle Nest, then the little bugs should be flying out from the Tree Spirit's body, right? And since these Vine Demons are Flying Soldiers, won't they just rush into the Tree Spirit and destroy its nest from within? This means, the battle could be solely completed by the Vine Demon Army!

So the first step now is to locate the entrance to the Beetle Nest. Obviously, the dozens of thick vines continually swaying above the Tree Spirit's head deeply betray the location of the nest entrance! It must be the gateway specifically designed to prevent Vine Demons from sneaking in through aerial assault!

That means players need to have excellent control to break through the barriers of the vines with their Flying Soldiers! Otherwise, the losses will be heavy! The key to completing this task is how many Vine Demons the player can successfully infiltrate!

I see! But for me, operations and such are unnecessary luxuries; my level is to simply crush through with high-tech!

— System Prompt: Your Reconnaissance Eagle Xiao Fei cannot enter Plane Surveillance state during combat!

Huh? Psh! Doesn't matter! I'll just disengage from combat then.

Da Fei immediately maneuvered Xiao Fei to fly away from the battlefield, then, Stealth! Wahahaha! Brother's back again, don't tell brother that a big tree like you that doesn't even know magic can spot brother's Stealth-ed Spiritual Eagle! No no no, this isn't just Stealth, Stealth is just a visual misdirection with light, the body is still on this Plane. Only an indiscriminate Attack could blast the true body out. But Plane Surveillance means that the body has already entered another Plane. Unless the opponent has spatial skills, they can't detect or interfere! This is the high tech that only ghosts possess!

Now, Xiao Fei, in Plane Surveillance mode, approached above the ancient tree where vines danced and saw—a huge rot hole between the thick branches and lush leaves!

Go through it!

The vines passed through Xiao Fei like illusions, without any interference at all!

Da Fei let out a long, triumphant laugh!

Xiao Fei entered the tree hollow, where a dim light flickered and a thunderous heartbeat-like rhythm echoed. Following the direction of the light and rhythm, a shimmering Space Gate appeared—Haha! Just as expected, jackpot!

The scene changed, and a circular hall appeared with rows of hexagon windows densely packed like a Hive. Countless insect eggs and larvae filled the hall, and in the center of the hall was a huge heart-like flesh ball pulsing!

Wahahaha, so it's you! Brother's best at kicking Demon Kindergartens, Xiao Fei, show yourself!

With a spatial fluctuation, blood-red Xiao Fei emerged with a whoosh and headed straight for the heart—"44!"

And just then, the entire Insect Nest Hall screeched, and countless larvae swarmed from all directions, but under Xiao Fei's Petrification Aura, they were instantly turned to stone statues!

Nothing can stop Xiao Fei now! Brother's high tech is so strong, even brother is scared of it! Haha, Wahahaha! Brother says, with such badass and formidable skills, how could there be a mission brother can't handle! These Vine Demon beauties were indeed right in rushing to decapitate their target, it's reasonable. Otherwise, if there were a bunch of Leader-level guards, Xiao Fei would have had real trouble taking this down!

Now, it's good, Vine Demon beauties, adore brother! From today on, only think of me in your hearts, dream of me in your sleep, and chant my name with your lips, I am your God!!!

As Xiao Fei rampaged through the Insect Nest space, the ancient tree outside erupted with agonizing roars: "How is this possible! Why is this happening!"

Tachiusu cheered: "Regulas, today is your end!"

The ancient tree growled resentfully: "You finally call my name, and I finally remember yours, Tachiusu, but I am a great hero, I will not die, don't be pleased for long, I've will come back—Ah—"

Boom!!! With the heart of the Insect Nest Space exploding, Regulas' fortress-like gigantic body thunderously fell, raising a cloud of dust!

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—System Prompt: Congratulations! You have defeated the Evil Tree Spirit Hero Regulas, You've won the battle, you've gained Experience +730,000, and you've obtained the spoils of war: the troop building "Evil Tree Spirit Fortress."

- Evil Tree Spirit Fortress: Can recruit Evil Tree Spirits, Evil Beetles.
- System Prompt: Congratulations! You've achieved "Victory in the 14th Battle," and received a reward of Command Power +10.
- System Prompt: Congratulations! You've achieved "Victory in the 8th Glorious Battle," and received a reward of Command Power +20, Personal Life +20.
- System Prompt: Congratulations! You've completed the mission "Assault on the Evil Branch Tribe" perfectly with zero casualties, gaining Experience 1,000,000, your reputation among the Lumang Tribe has now become "Revered!" You have obtained the recruitment rights of Lumang Fortress, able to recruit the Special Forces "Forest Vine Demons".
- System Prompt: Congratulations! You've leveled up to Level 40! You've gained free attribute points +1, Skill Points +1, Life +2, Command Power +1, Personal Damage Value +1, tactical position +1, Ranger profession extra provides Attack +1, Master-level Navigator extra provides free attribute points +1, Intermediate Treasure Appraiser extra provides free attribute points +1, temporary Reconnaissance Sentinel extra provides temporary Attack +1.

"Victory!!!" The Vine Demons cheered jubilantly, encircling Da Fei among waves of cheer and excitement!

Wahahaha! That's the reaction I wanted. Brother didn't care for you all for nothing! Brother thought this was a losing deal, but who knew I could recruit the opponent's troops after taking them down! Now I can recruit Special Soldiers from both sides!

Very good, now the battle is over, little darling Tachiusu, isn't it time you tell brother about this map's secrets?

#### Chapter 409: Transplanting the Ancient Tree Heart

The dust settled on the battlefield, Tachiusu approached Da Fei and bowed deeply: "Hero, we truly cannot thank you enough. Our millennia-long war with the Evil Branch Tribe has finally come to an end because of the hero's arrival. However, we must not let our guard down, as the Evil Branch Tribe has joined forces with the Dark Force. They will surely return. By the way, we still don't know the origins of our hero. Is there anything we can do to repay you?"

Ha ha! Repayment, that's exactly what I've been waiting for you to say. The best reward would be to devote yourself to me!

Da Fei smiled lightly: "I am a hero of the Elf Kingdom, and I am the City Lord of Radiant City. I am tasked with resisting the Demon invasion into the World Tree Space. I came here while I was lost, and I need the power to fend off the Demons."

Tachiusu responded with solemn respect: "Indeed, a warrior of the Kingdom. It must have been divine guidance that led the hero here to save us! A thousand years ago, a massive Demon invasion occurred in the surface world, which affected our space with its power, causing space distortion and displacement. We have been out of contact with the Elf Kingdom for a thousand years. Over these past years, dark forces have infiltrated our space, causing many ancient trees to undergo dark mutations, giving birth to the Evil Branch Tribe. If it weren't for this river, we would have been destroyed long ago. Even so, the Evil Branch Tribe relied on the dark power to produce masses of Evil Beetles, which feed on the life energy of the forest, causing the forest to wither and the rivers to be polluted. All we could do was to keep eliminating these endless beetles and use the Lumang Ancient Tree's Life Pool to restore vitality to the forest. Now, the Lumang Ancient Tree's Life Energy is nearly depleted. Thankfully, we have finally triumphed! Since the hero needs power to resist the Demon's invasion, the Lumang Tribe will definitely assist you with all our might!"

—System Prompt: The Lumang Tribe has formed a military alliance with you to counter the Demons!

—System Prompt: Congratulations! You have successfully established a strategic alliance with the Lumang Tribe to combat the Demons, completing the side quest "The First Ally" of the Epic Quest "Gradually Collapsing World Tree Space." You have received the following rewards: Skill Points +1, Life +20, Command Power +50.

Da Fei was overjoyed!

Damn! A reward for this stage! A military alliance before I even asked! What is a military alliance? It means when I need to stomp someone, they have no choice but to join in! Of course, it's only against Demons, but it's still better than those single Hobbits with families to care for! I've gotten so close to the Hobbits and not even the old man dared to propose an alliance! They must have been soldiers in the past, right? Ha ha, being single is great, I like it! With them taking the lead, the powerful Hobbits will surely join me sooner or later!

Da Fei said cheerfully: "Having your help is wonderful. I am looking for a way to the Elf Kingdom, do you have any information?"

Tachiusu frowned: "There is a space vortex at the end of the river, which once led to the Emerald Lake controlled by the Elf Kingdom. However, the war a thousand years ago distorted and shattered that space, so I don't know what it has become now. Moreover, there is a space rift in the territory of the Evil Branch Tribe, which should lead to the whereabouts of the Dark Force, certainly not a place for ordinary people to come and go."

Why does the road home have to be so long? If I get impatient I might as well just die and go back.

Da Fei's brows furrowed: "No worries, I'll continue to explore ahead. By the way, what are your plans now?"

Tachiusu proclaimed with enthusiasm: "The defeat of the Evil Branch Tribe is not something that can be recovered from quickly. We need to take this time to restore the vitality of the forest and prepare to face the challenge of the Dark Force's invasion, until we completely heal the ravages caused by the Dark Rift."

Da Fei nodded: "Excellent. You must develop well, accumulate strength, and when I return, I will surely lead an army to pave the way. At that time, we shall join forces to eliminate all invading Demons!"

Tachiusu performed a military salute of the Elf Kingdom: "I shall heed the hero's teachings!"

Indeed, she's a trained soldier! Being admired does feel good!

Now, Da Fei turned his attention to the Evil Tree Spirit Fortress before him, which had become spoils of war. It turned out, this Tree Elf Hero wasn't actually that tall, and the fortress was not actually the hero's body. Otherwise, if the hero were defeated, the fortress would be gone as well. To combine a building with a hero into one, how formidable and enigmatic! In that moment, Da Fei thought of Renior! Didn't Renior merge with Radiant Wings as well? When it returns to its hero form, won't it be like this hero? Damn! A Hero ship, the mere thought is awe-inspiring!

Da Fei opened the fortress's attributes.

—Evil Tree Spirit Fortress: Soldier building, Defense 644, Durability 64369, Special Skills: Evil Tree Spirit Production (unavailable), Evil Beetle Production (unavailable), Elite Training, Leader Training, Base Movement (unavailable).

—Evil Tree Spirit: Large Spiritual Creature, Attack 24, Defense 22, Damage 16-23, Life 171, Magic Resistance 60%, Attack Speed 8, Move Speed 7, Special Skills: Tree Spirit Frenzy, Tree Elf Devouring, Advanced Defense Skill, Root Entwining.

—Evil Beetle: Tiny insect, Attack 0, Defense 2, Damage 0-1, Life 4, Attack Speed 6, Special Skills: Absorb Juice, Spiky Defense, Death Self-Destruction.

Da Fei frowned: "Why is this fortress unproductive?"

Tachiusu spoke gravely: "Because this fortress has died, it has lost the Ancient Tree Heart, now just an empty shell left behind, unable to produce or move."

Da Fei was suddenly astonished! Damn, isn't this system just messing with me, giving me something useless as spoils of war? Got me all excited for nothing. I really thought I could recruit special soldiers from both sides.

But then again, an emptied ship is considered scrap metal, but an emptied aircraft carrier is still an aircraft carrier. Even as an empty shell, who knows how many countries would scramble for it! After all, the system's reward does make sense! Just from the formidable presence shown by the opposition, the system wouldn't easily let players acquire such a massive weapon.

As soon as Da Fei heard mention of the Ancient Tree Heart, he immediately thought of the charred Ancient Tree Heart he'd picked up in the Nasir Space.

Da Fei swiftly pulled out the Nasir Ancient Tree Heart and asked, "I happen to have an Ancient Tree Heart right here, and it's been demonized too, can it be used on this fortress?"

Tachiusu's face changed, "This is an Ancient Tree Heart much older than Biligulas. How could a hero like you possess it?"

Da Fei sighed, "Our fight against the Demons is still ongoing. The Nasir Ancient Tree fell a few months ago and was demonized, and this was found in its remnants."

Tachiusu spoke gravely, "It seems the situation in the outside world is very severe. This Ancient Tree Heart is still alive, it's just—"

Da Fei eagerly asked, "Just what?"

Tachiusu said solemnly, "Just that this Ancient Tree Heart can still be saved through purification. If transplanted onto the Evil Tree Spirit Fortress as it is, it would fall completely into darkness beyond redemption."

Da Fei rejoiced, "You're saying, it can be transplanted?"

Tachiusu silently nodded.

Hahaha, combining two wastes turns out to be a treasure! As long as it can be transplanted, that's all that matters. Dark is dark, what's the big deal! Players from the Bright Alliance always go to the Dark Alliance to buy vampires, right? As long as the troop type is overpowered, that's all that counts!

Da Fei spoke seriously, "Demons are very strong. We need power, more power to combat the Dark Force. To me, dark power is often the bane of dark forces. Dark Creatures can roam freely in the Netherworld, the Demon Realm, and other areas that Bright Creatures find hard to reach, and they can strike at the Dark Force effectively without being easily discovered. Therefore, we should also cultivate a lot of dark power, and then counterattack into the Dark Force next door!"

Tachiusu frowned, "While I may not fully agree with some of the hero's views, you have created a miracle, saving our tribe in one battle. Perhaps you're right. To repay you, I will do my best to transplant this Ancient Tree Heart!"

Da Fei was overjoyed, "Great! I appreciate your efforts!"

Tachiusu chuckled, "It's not a bother. In the initial stages of transplantation, the Evil Ancient Tree Heart will absorb a large amount of Dark Energy from our space, which is very beneficial for our environmental purification and revival of vitality. So it also has a positive meaning for us. However, once it reaches the intermediate stage of growth, I suggest it be moved, for then it will start polluting the environment."

Hahahaha, turns out it's a dark energy vacuum cleaner! Da Fei laughed, "No problem, by that time, I'll find a good spot for it!" By then, of course, it would be time for the great battle with the Eight-Headed Snake, right? With its hefty size, it's perfect for leading the charge! Hahahaha!

"Now, watch me do my work!"

After receiving the Ancient Tree Heart, Tachiusu immediately led the other Vine Demons into the fortress crevice to cast spells and set it in place.

Another big accomplishment! What a fruitful haul! I'm seriously not ready to just die and go back. What kind of opportunities might await me in the next space?

Da Fei couldn't help but stretch out a big lazy yawn, relaxing in the boundless satisfaction. Just then, the phone rang.

Eh? It's gotten dark already! Is my takeout here? Da Fei immediately took off his helmet to check—it was Little Fang! Is she inviting me to dinner? Seriously, I don't have time today, men should prioritize their careers!

Da Fei cleared his throat and answered, "Hello, Little Fang?"

Little Fang laughed, "Big brother, have you eaten yet?"

Da Fei chuckled, "Yes, I have. It's my turn to be on duty tonight."

Little Fang laughed, "I see, big brother's really busy. Just wanted to tell you—the Heroic Creation Era client we talked about at noon has arrived. If you're free after work, come and give it a try. In fact, this is

also a test of the new version of Shenning Group's client. It's quite simple. By that time, I can teach you, okay?"

Da Fei was suddenly taken aback, a test for the new client? They had this job? Holy shit! Was that Lin Tianhao hitting on female students doing this work? I must take charge of the situation!

Da Fei nodded repeatedly, "Alright! Tomorrow after I'm off work, I'll give it a try!"

#### Chapter 410: The New Execution Officer of the Pool of Radiance

Not long after hanging up Little Fang's call, Da Fei's takeout also arrived. Speaking of which, didn't I become a millionaire with 20 million this noon? And yet, I'm still eating this 20-yuan takeout? Wahahaha! Having tens of millions in savings yet eating plain buns and porridge every meal, that's real class.

While eating takeout and gazing at the night view outside the window, Da Fei's thoughts surged once again. What are Little Li and Little Fang eating tonight? I wonder how the construction at the Pool of Radiance is going?

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At this moment, on the 16th floor of a building in Wenhua District, Little Fang and Little Li were feasting on a full set of Texas Chicken takeout while watching the news on TV.

News anchor: "Good evening, dear viewers. It's time for Hero News evening broadcast. First, we'll share guild information. Since the game servers launched, major guilds worldwide have been fiercely competing in guild building contests. After more than a month of competition, at 4 A.M. Beijing Time today, the United States Supernova Guild was officially established, becoming the first official player guild in Heroic Creation Era! Of course, since the Chinese player Da Fei acquired a guild half a month earlier through questing, the title held by Supernova Guild is quite controversial. And Supernova Guild did not participate in any celebrations, taking a very nonchalant approach to their establishment."

"Following that, the second guild to be established was China Region's Bloodrose Guild, founded at 4:04 A.M., narrowly defeated by Supernova Team. But they're still the first official player guild in China Region, and we'd like to congratulate them. The third place goes to the God's Hand Guild from France in the European Union Zone, as an old French guild..."

Hmph! Little Fang snorted coldly: "Even America's 'world first' is controversial, what are they bragging about with China's number one?"

Little Li spoke solemnly: "The leader from Ninth Heaven mentioned that Bloodrose Guild possesses a formidable Angel Army, number one in combat strength in China!"

Little Fang scoffed: "Having seen Da Fei's Elite Banshee Army in the competition, even they can't claim to be China's number one!"

Little Li laughed: "You can always disgust them with this Da Fei card!"

Little Fang scoffed again: "It's not about using Da Fei to disgust them; it's their stuck-up attitude, thinking they're all that and looking down on everyone, that deserves disgust!"

The news anchor continued: "Today is March 2nd, a peak period for college students returning to school after the winter break, and the sales of new Hero client machines have seen the second wave of frenzy since the launch at various retail spots. Here's our correspondent's reports from the storefronts.

—Hello, viewers! This is the Heroic Creation Era client machine sales center in Hanwu City. Starting from 8:30 A.M., there has been a long queue outside the store, and around noon, the line of people peaked again. Now it's 6 P.M., and the queue is still as long as before, with Hanwu City dispatching 200 police officers to maintain order around the clock. Additionally, to meet the customers' demands, the sales center has decided to stay open until midnight. Now let me interview a few customers waiting here—Hello! I'm a front-line reporter for Hero News; may I ask if you are students?"

A group of youths immediately waved peace signs excitedly towards the camera: "Hi!!! We're students from Wuda! We've been eagerly awaiting the start of the term, we're going to start the Wuda Team!"

Reporter: "What is the price range of the client machines you are purchasing?"

"Obviously, it's the experiential student edition released after the New Year, we only need to pay a 5,000-yuan deposit per person, followed by a monthly payment of 300 yuan!"

Reporter: "5,000 yuan is no small amount for students; is it affordable for you? Do your families know? Will this affect your studies?"

The students laughed: "5,000 yuan is just the price of a few tens of thousands of Gold Coins in the game; with our skills, it won't take long to earn it back!"

"Miss Reporter, have you heard? Someone sold a Divine Artifact today for 20 million! Even if we could never craft a Divine Artifact ourselves, with the strength of our team, selling some A or B tier treasures could fetch a price of tens of thousands."

"We are playing games for the rise of China; our families won't object. Even the CEO of Shenning Group has launched a satellite gaming RV, calling for using games to suppress housing prices. We have every reason to support it!"

"Yeah, an RV costs only 500,000 yuan, you can game and travel anywhere you want, no idea how much more economical it is than a house; our goal is for everyone to own a gaming RV before graduation!"

"Yeah, this is a process of redistributing social wealth, a repositioning of consumer fashion, a chance to narrow the wealth gap, a vital premise for social stability..."

"Hahaha! Right, let's take this opportunity on TV to shout out the slogan of our Wuda Team!"

"Cool! Let's do it together—Wuda Team! An elite strong team! Break out of the national service! Step onto the world stage! Yeah!"

The reporter wiped sweat: "Thank you, students, for the interview. This is Little Honey Bee reporting from Hanwu City."

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—Achoo! Little Fang couldn't help but spray her Coke in front of the TV!

Little Fang laughed loudly: "That's hilarious, 'playing games for the rise of China', 'using games to combat housing prices', one is funnier than the last!"

Little Li giggled: "They all dream of selling Divine Artifacts, that's the truth."

Little Fang laughed: "Exactly! Shenning's CEO should really thank Da Fei, and thank that Tycoon who bought the Divine Artifact. This blockbuster news on the day of sale has skyrocketed sales everywhere, who knows how many drop-out youths will be born because of this!"

Little Li said annoyedly: "Are we considered drop-out youths?"

Little Fang said seriously, "No, once we've made money, we can hire professional players at a high price to pass the tests for us!"

Little Li laughed, "Hire me, 100,000 per subject, I guarantee you'll pass!"

Little Fang pouted, "Wifey~~~ No way!!!!"

Little Li cleared her throat, "Alright, alright. By the way, what did my brother say just now?"

Little Fang was surprised, "What else could he say? Anyway, your brother is always temping around and can get re-employed at any time. We should take the opportunity to make a quick buck early in the game, just like Da Fei." Little Fang's tone became serious, "Right, Da Fei made a killing today, making his enemies jealous. Blood Sea Wave is about to blow his top, so we should keep a low profile and not get involved. Da Fei's guild barely has anyone as they're usually out at sea, so it's not easy to take revenge on him, but it's much simpler to cause trouble for us. We have to be careful."

Little Li nodded, "Got it, I'll try to keep quiet in the guild. But I have a feeling that One Sword Eastward in our guild is particularly arrogant; he should attract a lot of hate, right?"

Little Fang shook her head, "I think the real arrogant one is that new tycoon. Anyway, let them attract the hate; once we've secured our position, we won't have to worry about others causing trouble..."

Pool of Radiance.

Since last night, the newly appointed Zone Leader of the Thunder Fire Dragon Team had been working nonstop without a wink of sleep. In reality, one day may not mean much, but to professional gamers, one day is like ten gaming days, with a lot of things that can be done.

Indeed, Thunder Fire Dragon Team had done a lot: clearing construction debris, repairing roads, clearing out troublesome Resentful Spirits and Earth Elements, and most importantly, purchasing and transporting building materials out of their own pocket. The Demon Camp was gradually restoring its vitality to a third of its former glory.

Thunder Fire Dragon's efforts had finally moved the Demon King, who, to show his regard, sent an Execution Officer to make a big impression.

Now, Thunder Fire Dragon led two subordinate workshops with a hundred professional and temporary worker players gathered in the camp square to welcome the new Execution Officer.

From within a cloud of blood mist, a giant spider, as large as a bulldozer, appeared quietly! All the players in attendance were in an uproar!

Thunder Fire Dragon's heart skipped a beat—this was a Hidden Race's hidden hero! To professional players, it was clear how many opportunities could be uncovered here!

The giant spider spoke in a deep voice, "I am Nakasha, the Execution Officer newly appointed by His Majesty the Demon King. I have volunteerly come to these ruins to seek vengeance for my tribe. Before seeing you insignificant insects, I've already destroyed a space of the World Tree and caused spatial turbulence to the World Tree. I am extremely tired and have no desire for pointless talk, nor do I wish to listen to drivel. Insects, present any combat plans you think are valuable. If your ideas are too foolish, I'll throw you into the pool for a Radiance Sauna!"

Thunder Fire Dragon was overjoyed! Players are being invited to make their own proposals? This was so much better than blindly following NPC missions!

Thunder Fire Dragon hurried forward, "Sir, our attack on the Pool of Radiance shouldn't involve troops but should focus on pollution as it's cost-effective and quick. And for defense, we shouldn't build Magic Watchtowers by the coast as before, but rather build a large ring of city walls along the entire lakeshore. This way, the Pool of Radiance will become a huge moat protecting us, and we can freely pollute it. Once we capture the Pool of Radiance, the walls will serve as an outer perimeter for a massive Demon city, and our early construction efforts would be like laying the groundwork for a city—an outpost for the invasion of the surface world—"

Nakasha roared, "Fool! Do you have any idea how much money it would take to build a great circle of walls!"

A mass of spider silk suddenly entangled Thunder Fire Dragon!

Thunder Fire Dragon exclaimed urgently, "We are willing to privately fund half the cost!"

Nakasha roared, "Get out!"

The spider silk lifted Thunder Fire Dragon into the air, and he was about to be dropped into the Pool of Radiance!

Thunder Fire Dragon cried out, "We fund 75%, no, 80%!!! We'll make a contract to prove it—"

The spider silk snapped back!

Nakasha spoke in a deep voice, "I need to rest for 10 days. In 10 days, I want to see your so-called private funding. If you fail, I won't ask the Kingdom for a penny of military expenses!"

Thunder Fire Dragon quickly replied, "Sir, rest well; we'll take care of everything here. In 10 days, this will be a massive construction site!"

"Hmph!" With a cold snort, Nakasha disappeared into a cloud of blood mist, and his muffled roar came from within it, "Remember what you said! Otherwise—"

Thunder Fire Dragon let out a long sigh of relief! City construction, player funding—this was like manna from heaven! This opportunity could not be missed!

Thunder Fire Dragon immediately dialed his boss's phone...