

## God level 41

Chapter 41: Not Being a Pirate Anymore

Da Fei logged back in, and the divine glow of the “Divine Protection” offline shop item vanished, the wreckage of the sunken pirate ship and the corpse of the great white shark still in good condition. Truly worthy of being an artifact that can stop time.

—System Prompt: A new day at sea has begun for you, gaining +100 sea training Experience.

This must be the daily Experience point that the Navigator profession gives. Speaking of which, “Navigator” is just one character different from “Sailing Skill”, that’s the distinction between profession and skill, there’s a real difference in class. So would Attack Skill possibly have a hidden profession called “Attacker”, and might Defense Skill also have a profession counterpart called “Defender”? Heh.

In any case, the Flying once again began drifting on the high seas.

Now there’s no one to row the boat, how long will it drift? Has my trial mission been completed? There’s no more assessment after this, whatever happens, happens, and it’s down to a real fight. If it comes to a real fight, as a Commander with nothing up his sleeve, I can only leave the fate of this ship to luck.

—A day in the game passed. Da Fei didn’t sleep well last night, and having drunk some sullen drinks at noon today, a wave of drowsiness hit him. He turned the system alarm to maximum and wrapped himself in his helmet to nap.

Who knows how long later, the alarm woke up a napping Da Fei!

—System Prompt: Reconnaissance Skill alarm! Three unidentified ships are approaching you! Please be on alert!

Da Fei was startled and quickly took out his telescope for a look. Pirates! Pirates again! It’s over, the ship is finally done for!

Da Fei shook his head with a wry smile. After all, the trial ship giveaway was just a gimmick. How could the system be so generous as to really gift a newbie player such a big ship? There would always be an excuse to take it back, it was just a false hope.

Fight on? What's the point! Of course, it's time to hurriedly pack up the Crossbow Cannon and prepare to bail, save what I can save.

—Da Fei hastened to the Gun Cabin to dismantle the Crossbow Cannon. The pirate ships were also getting closer. Finally, with a clang, the ships collided, and boarding began! The pirates shouted and swarmed aboard.

Footsteps clattered from above, Da Fei felt relieved as he packed the last component.

Thud! Thud! The pirates jumped into the cabin one by one. Da Fei heaved a deep sigh, and with a resigned gesture said, "Kill me if you will! I am the Captain!"

Several pirates rushed forward, their knives to Da Fei's neck, and shoved him onto the upper deck. Huh? Why didn't they just kill me directly? Aren't their statuses clearly hostile red names? Could it be that I've triggered some plotline?

—On the deck, a burly big-bearded man puffing on a pipe glanced at Da Fei and said coldly, "What crew are you with?"

Da Fei's eyebrows twitched! What crew? Is this some kind of gangster code? Do I look like a pirate? This couldn't be another trial, could it? No way, is this trial ever going to end? The system ain't no charity.

Da Fei had no choice but to respond, "I'm a newbie, not with any crew." Telling the truth and leaving it to fate.

The big bearded man's eyes flashed coldly, "Is this your ship?"

Ask about a watermelon and soon it'll be your ship! Da Fei had to respond, "I am the Captain."

The big bearded man asked again, "Did you kill the shark?"

Da Fei replied woodenly, "I killed it."

The big bearded man laughed heartily, "Drag it away!"

And so, the three pirate ships began to tow Da Fei's ship with chains on the return journey. The pirates also took over the Flying and started handling the sails. For a moment, the fleet made headway through the waves on the high sea.

There's a difference when the sailors are many. But Da Fei was even more puzzled—it didn't seem like they were enemies. Could it really be that he had triggered a storyline? Maybe it's best to ask something, although those who talk too much usually end up getting whacked.

Da Fei then asked, "Where are you taking me?"

The big bearded man laughed heartily, "You'll know when we get there." Then with a wave of his hand, a pirate put a black hood over Da Fei's head, making everything pitch black for him. Alright, I get it, you're taking me to your lair. It seems like there's no trouble, otherwise why all the talk instead of just killing and robbing?

Since it's dark anyway, might as well go to the official website to look up information on pirates.

Hero Continent is full of islands, an excellent habitat for pirates, so piracy thrives. Players focused on maritime development won't have trouble finding good places to level up. And there are several major pirate forces, namely the Innocent Pirates, Blood Raider Pirates, Blood Sail Pirates, Desolate Barbarian Sea Pirates, and Pirate King Red Beard's New Caribbean Pirates, who've established power in the New World. These major pirate forces have extremely hidden hideouts, with even the large national navies not daring to pursue them lightly.

Pirates are enemies to all ships at sea, and the forces fight amongst themselves. The fact that someone like me survived encountering pirates likely indeed triggered a plotline. Nothing to do now but take it one step at a time.

Who knows how long passed, raucous shouts and laughter came from over the sea. Da Fei's vision brightened, the hood was lifted. An island port appeared before him, with a dense group of pirate ships, and on the shore a dense array of wooden houses. Da Fei looked around and saw small islands spotted all over the place. Is this the pirate's lair?

Big Beard burst into laughter: "Newcomer, welcome to Desolate Island. I'll take you to meet our boss, Captain Rock. When the boss asks you something, you just answer honestly, unless you want to suffer, haha!"

Captain Rock! Desolate Barbarian Pirates! A major force indeed! Damn it, what kind of act is this now?

The fleet lowered the sails to dock, and a large group of pirates excitedly crowded around, chattering: "Haha, we actually captured a large ship!"

"This time Barak has struck it rich, huh!"

"Eh, such a big shark?"

Big Beard waved to the crowd: "Lads! Drag the shark up. We must skin it cleanly!"

The crowd responded with a thunderous cheer: "This shark skin is definitely top-notch! It can be made into excellent leather armor!"

Big Beard and his men took Da Fei ashore, walking through the streets. Da Fei looked around this fascinating island town, noting shipyards, blacksmith shops, equipment stores, taverns—everything. The taverns all over the streets, especially, were filled with the raucous laughter and wild music of the pianos.

Truly a tiny place with all its essentials.

Soon, Da Fei was pushed into a large house by Big Beard, who didn't bother knocking and just flung Da Fei inside, shouting, "Boss, brought you something fun."

Upon entering, Da Fei saw a man of colossal stature with a bare muscular upper body and face full of knife scars lounging on the big sofa in the hall. A few scantily-clad beauties were serving him wine, while several others knelt on the plush carpet in front of the sofa, giving him a pedicure and massage. Compared to his bear-sized body, these petite women seemed... This kind of size difference, is it even usable...

This scar-faced man was, of course, the leader of the Desolate Barbarian Pirates mentioned in the official information—Rock. No doubt about it, a typical Epic Hero.

Rock laughed heartily: “Barak, I heard you seized a big ship on this trip?”

Big Beard shook his head: “Not yet, only came across an interesting fellow, this guy here.”

Rock gazed at Da Fei and laughed aloud: “Kid, you’ve got potential. So young and you’ve already caused quite a stir, and have a big ship too. It’d be a real pity if you didn’t become a pirate. What say you, join us. I’ll groom you into the finest pirate, living the most carefree and comfortable life!”

—System Prompt: Pirate Leader Rock will offer to change your profession to the hidden main hero profession “Pirate”. Do you accept?

—Basic Pirate: The uncrowned king of the oceans, increasing your navy’s damage by 10% per level and the ship’s speed by 5%. This effect stacks directly with Attack Skill and Sailing Skill. Each level grants one free attribute point and one automatically assigned attack attribute point.

Professional Specialties: Can train the naval combat unit pirate warrior. Learning this specialty consumes one Skill Point.

—Pirate warrior: Attack 10, Defense 2, Damage 6-10, Health 35, Attack Speed 14, Move Speed 12, Special Skills: Sailing Skill, Throwing Axe, Agile Evasion, War Plunder.

—Beginner’s Tip: Once you change your profession to a pirate, you will become an enemy to all kingdoms. Please choose carefully.

Only then did Da Fei come to a sudden realization! The reason they didn't kill me is that I'm a newcomer who hasn't chosen a formal profession yet, and I'm also infamous with a red name, meeting the criteria for becoming a pirate! Who would have thought players could join this hero profession; I thought it was unique to NPCs. During the open beta, although there were players who made a living by robbing at sea and claiming to be pirates, that wasn't really being a pirate, just common red names.

Now that's a problem. This is a main hero profession, not some part-time sailor. I could wash off a red name, but once a pirate, always a pirate!

I don't want to be a pirate. That would mean being at war with all the players and NPCs in the world! Although I loved doing such things in the past, I am now a professional gamer looking to make money selling Gold Coins. Not to mention, how could I, a big red-named pirate, trade Gold Coins with the intermediary customer service of the website? Ask the level 1 customer service newbie to meet up by the beach after a series of turns? Not even worth considering.

Moreover, with all the fighting and repairing, will the robbed money even cover the expenses? Do you think pirates lead a carefree life? If that were true, they wouldn't be holed up on this island. Lions in Africa, although they are the kings of the savannah, still often go hungry. Prey isn't that easy to catch. Lions who die under the horns of African buffalo are far more numerous than the buffalo lions eat. An injured lion is as good as dead. Similarly, for pirates, a profession that relies on ships, once the ship is damaged or destroyed, that's it, game over.

Not to mention, I've taken on an Epic Quest. As a pirate, I can't even enter a city, let alone meet with Duke Makar. The Epic Quest would be ruined.

In short, I won't become a pirate. There's no future in it. I am a law-abiding citizen, positively charged through and through.

Da Fei immediately chose to refuse: "I will not become a pirate." Worse comes to worst, kill me—I doubt NPCs can completely wipe a player out to level 0.

Big Beard was furious: "Kid, do you have any idea how you kept your ship?! Don't get too cocky!"

Rock waved his hand and laughed: "No worries, let him wander around first. He'll come to me once he comes to his senses."

Big Beard snorted coldly: "As the boss says, take your time playing." Then, he picked up Da Fei, carried him out of the room, and threw him away like trash, and left strutting away.

Chapter 42: The Beautiful Pirate Hero Da Fei climbed up from the ground with a dust-covered face.

Fuck! What kind of play is this now? Anyway, I'm safe for the moment, and the boat is temporarily secure. Seems like the game is still a game after all; it won't easily meddle with the player's virtual properties. Better head to the shipyard to take a look. Seems like they towed my boat there; if I can get it fixed, I'll find a way to slip away. Of course, that certainly won't be easy.

Da Fei looked around as he headed toward the shipyard. The residents of this small town appeared as hostile red names to Da Fei, scanning him with malicious eyes like cats eyeing a mouse, causing Da Fei's heart to feel hairy.

When Da Fei reached the shipyard, a dozen shipbuilders with tattoos and scars were idly drinking and playing cards.

So Da Fei approached one that seemed to be the leader and asked, "How much to fix my boat?"

The crowd burst into laughter: "Your boat? Who do you think you are? Go cool off somewhere else and play!"

Fuck! Da Fei had a bad feeling.

Da Fei tried talking to the NPCs in the shops on the island. Everyone was extremely unfriendly to Da Fei! They wouldn't sell anything, didn't offer quests, and their glances were malicious.

The worst-case scenario had arrived. Could it be that I must change my profession and become a pirate before they'll treat me as one of their own? If I don't join them, will I be unable to take a single step, trapped on this island for life? So that's why Rock is so confident that I'll go back to him?

Impossible! This would mean the system is forcing players to change their profession. There must be a way to get through this. I refuse to submit. I'll find a way out.

Just then, Da Fei's stamina began to plummet into the red, hunger status. Crap! Eating is a big problem too! Never mind if the tavern owner is willing to sell me food, even if he is, I'm completely broke!

An uninhabited desert island can be considered a desperate situation. A populated and thriving small island is also a desperate situation? I don't believe it. As a master player who has weathered great storms, am I going to die in a toilet?

First thing's first, hit the tavern where there's a variety of people.

For pirates, the tavern is very important, even the only place for entertainment, so there are many taverns in the small town. Da Fei first entered the one by the roadside.

The noise hit him as he walked in: dancers, gamblers, drunkards, diners, a typical tavern. Da Fei's entry did not attract any special attention. But the diners who sat alone at their tables, silently drinking, caught Da Fei's eye because they had neutral yellow names, indicating they were ordinary heroes waiting for players to hire. Heroes are easy to recognize; they have a faint halo beneath them. Human Race heroes of the Holy Hall have a golden halo, Undead heroes have a green smoky halo, Elf heroes are surrounded by a halo of sparkling gold butterflies, and pirates have a bloody red halo, and so on.

There's a truth in the Hero Continent: Where there is a tavern, there are heroes waiting to be hired. Pirate Island is no exception. Even if a player ends up in enemy territory, where the whole world consists of red-name enemies, the heroes in the taverns remain neutral yellow names.

These heroes are refreshed by the system at intervals, so if a player encounters a hero with superior skills or exceptional talents, they must rush to hire them in a race against time. Of course, it's even more difficult to hire heroes who are neither of the same race nor the same faction as the player.

Da Fei approached the first table, which had a Pirate Hero who was boastfully bare-chested, standing on a blood-red halo. Of course, the whole place was filled with Pirate Heroes.

Da Fei greeted, "Hello!"

The hero glanced at Da Fei and snorted coldly, “I’m not interested in playing with kindergarteners. Go away.”

He thinks I’m a greenhorn because I haven’t changed my profession. Let’s try another one.

— “Where did you pop up from? Go away.”

He thinks I’m not famous enough. Next.

— “I’m not here to give money to beggars.”

He can see I’m broke and can’t even afford food. Next.

— “The rule here is to buy a drink first, right?”

How can I invite you for a drink when I don’t have a penny? Fuck! What exactly am I doing? Am I here to hire heroes? I’m the one who’s reserved for an Epic Hero; I wouldn’t even bother with these worthless heroes wasting my Experience. The current priority is to solve the food and shelter problem.

Da Fei then approached the bar: “Boss, need someone to work?”

The bartender glanced coldly: “I don’t hire people with unclear backgrounds.”

Crap! Want to force a good man to become a thief, dream on! I will not surrender. I’ll just change to another tavern. Da Fei rushed through all the taverns on the street in succession, suddenly feeling an inexplicable sadness in his heart, reminiscent of the days when he was fresh out of graduation, seeking a job.

Is it really going to push me to the point where I have to catch and eat raw shrimp from the sea? Looking at the last two coconut juices on him, Da Fei sighed deeply. Keep going! Never give up until the last moment.

This time, Da Fei approached another tavern, a tavern that was far less noisy than the others, and to his surprise, it even emanated the melodious sound of a violin. What the heck, artistic pirates?

The moment Da Fei entered, he stood frozen as if struck by lightning!

Beauty! Sitting atop the bar counter was a red-haired beauty clad in a black leather bra, black leather mini skirt, and black leather thigh-high boots! Not a barmaid! The radiant glow beneath her voluptuous yet athletic bronze thighs hinted that she was a hero—a sexy and beautiful female pirate hero!

Holy crap! A beautiful female hero, and female heroes were already rare, let alone a beautiful one. Such a sexy and wild female hero was precisely the kind that could drive male players mad to the point of exhaustion! When encountering a beautiful female hero, things like potential, special skills, level, race, and profession all became insignificant—love has no standards!

As a captain without a ship, Da Fei was in urgent need of a deputy captain, namely a first officer. Recruiting an outstanding first officer was imperative.

As for whether it could be successful? This... this was a big question. Recruiting female heroes was much more difficult than recruiting males. Due to women's inherent need for security and belonging, they tended to be very picky about their employers. And the harder to get, the more beautiful the prize, so during the public beta, players were far more enthusiastic about female heroes than the so-called divine artifacts; just one appearing in a tavern would draw a crowd.

Current circumstances were not favorable for Brother Chu. Even ordinary heroes looked down on him, so how could he make her interested in Brother Chu? In that instant, Da Fei suddenly thought of Liu Dawei—how did he manage to hook up with my sister? It must be because my sister is too kind-hearted to reject a poor bloke like him!

No way! Brother Chu needs to have confidence—I'm a man with a big ship! And judging from the tavern's music, she's an artistic female pirate. So, Brother Chu should also play the artistic card.

Da Fei immediately stripped off his tattered sailor's leather armor at the door and changed into a dignified and solemn black captain's dress uniform, transforming into the image of a mature, mighty,

and extraordinary young captain! Truly deserving of a garment with 90 Formality and 60 Disguise Level—this man's spirit and demeanor were different indeed.

And then, of course, you can't look famished. A man who can't even feed himself thinks he can woo a woman? Da Fei removed his captain's hat, crushed a treasured coconut fruit with his head, and downed it in one go. Oh yeah! Stamina +100, I'm full!

Next was, of course, to take out the Captain's Sword from the pack and equip it. Da Fei had stowed the Captain's Sword in his pack when pirates boarded earlier, fearing trouble.

With all preparations complete, Da Fei confidently walked in.

Wearing the dress uniform really made a big difference. All the other patrons in the tavern, including the beauty at the bar, couldn't help but turn their gaze to the entrance. Unlike the times he entered other taverns, where he was treated like a dog and ignored, this was a day-and-night contrast.

Hahaha! See that? Only captains of big ships who move up in class have these clothes; other small-time captains are nothing but fishermen! This is a symbol of status! Who would've thought that clothes with no combat attributes could serve such a wonderful purpose?

Now, Da Fei and the female pirate locked eyes! Those sexy blue eyeshadows, those hot red lips, those shoulder-length flowing locks partially veiling her face, that bubbly melon-seed shaped beauty, those smooth shoulders! Beauty! What a beauty! Soon enough, Da Fei's gaze involuntarily moved downward to the surging waves that her leather bra barely contained! A true female pirate, often sunbathing, I presume, with that healthy bronze skin, that sexy belly button, those abs peeking out, that low slung mini leather skirt, and the partial visibility of the blood rose tattoo above the groin of her skirt...

In that instant, Da Fei made up his mind, if he couldn't take this female pirate with him, he wasn't leaving!

While the female pirate looked at him in astonishment, Da Fei gracefully moved to the bar next to her and smiled, "May I sit here?"

The female pirate turned her head lazily and said, “Perhaps, you should offer me something to drink first?”

—Boom!!! A heavy hammer struck in Da Fei’s heart! Brother Chu can’t even afford a drink! This is what they call ‘a penny to bury a hero’!

Da Fei took out his last coconut fruit and managed a forced smile, “Drinking alcohol is bad for your beautiful skin and health, coconut juice is purely natural.”

The female pirate gave a sideways glance and reached out a hand, “Give it here!”

That worked? Da Fei was overjoyed and quickly handed over the coconut fruit, “Let me open it for you.”

“No need!” The female pirate took it with both hands and, getting up from her seat—then, to Da Fei’s astonishment, she made a goalkeeper’s kick motion and with a thud, the coconut fruit whizzed out the window, disappearing into the sky...

“Exercise is good for health!” The female pirate clapped her hands and nonchalantly returned to her drink at the bar. Da Fei stood there petrified. That was Brother Chu’s last bit of food! How could you do that?

It’s over, I knew it wouldn’t be easy. Can’t get past the first hurdle, no chance. But Brother Chu won’t give up easily unless you tell me to get lost to my face!

Second move—play the artistic card! Da Fei then dug out a book of poetry from the belongings of Sailing Captain Juan, sorry uncle, my apologies.

Da Fei placed the book of poetry in front of her and smiled, “This book of poems is for you, as stunning as poetry itself!” Hmph, this is Brother Chu’s artistic seduction method.

The female pirate flicked the book of poetry back with a finger and said coldly, “I can’t read!”

—Pfft! Da Fei spat out a snot rocket! Can't read and still posing as an artsy pirate, listening to what violin!

What to do? Is it finally time to pull out the ultimate move and offer a treasure?

#### Chapter 43: Catherine, Legendary Hero?

Da Fei steeled himself, deciding to give the gift! If he can't even win over an NPC woman in the game, what's he even doing?

Da Fei pulled out the extra telescope: "For you!"

Though it's only a C-grade, it's still a strategic treasure, worth a good thousand or so Gold Coins when sold, haha! Giving treasures has been discovered by players during the open beta as an ultimate move, like when encountering heroes of enemy camps in the tavern, unable to persuade them by any means, a treasure becomes the key to the door. Of course, it's just that, a key to the door.

Sure enough, the beauty's eyelids fluttered. Is she tempted?

She took the telescope and played with it back and forth, looking as if she was seeing such a thing for the first time, or like a child engrossed in fiddling with a new toy. Da Fei's heart was also in knots, I can only give you this, please don't kick it away like a coconut, haha.

Finally, she revealed a satisfied smile on her lips: "Quite well made."

Da Fei took a long breath of relief. Isn't that a no-brainer? It's an extra one from the Captain's quarters, how could the Captain's belongings be of the same class as the stuff used by you broke-ass pirates?

Da Fei said with satisfaction: "Only such high-quality goods are worthy of a beauty like you."

The female pirate's gaze turned icy: "Kid, do you know the situation you're in?"

Da Fei's brow twitched, oh! Finally getting to the main point. Great, with the whole island full of red names, no one is willing to deal with Brother Bird. If he finds an opening, he can stick it out.

Da Fei sighed: "I feel, very lonely."

The female pirate snorted: "Of course, this place doesn't trust outsiders, you should know what to do."

Da Fei's heart went cold, does that mean I must become a pirate to hire her? Damn it, wouldn't that be throwing away the telescope for nothing? What a loss! No choice now, I can only give up.

Of course, when I say give up, I mean give up on her! I'll never let a female NPC affect my career. A man can find a new woman if he loses one, but if he loses his career, that's real ruin. I'm just that pragmatic.

Da Fei sighed deeply: "I will not become a pirate; it's too small-minded, no future."

The female pirate smiled coldly: "Then just stay here for the rest of your life. If you're not a pirate, you can't board a ship, can't leave the island; you'll be stuck." After saying that, she ignored Da Fei and continued to pour her own drink.

For a moment, Da Fei was speechless. Stranded in this plight, even if he dies, he'd resurrect on the island, truly stuck here unable to leave? Should he curse Blood Sea Wave? But thinking back, if it wasn't for him turning me into a red name, wouldn't I have just been robbed by pirates when encountering them? At least I still have my ship, there's still a glimmer of hope.

But where's the hope?

The melodious sound of a violin echoed through the tavern, and a few mercenary heroes also sat quietly at their seats napping. Da Fei suddenly realized that this tavern was extremely deserted, with no gamblers or drunks, apart from those heroes waiting to be hired, there was virtually no business at all.

This wasn't an ordinary tavern. Was this female hero not ordinary either? If he really couldn't even pass the hurdle of inviting her for a drink, she wouldn't have spoken so much to him. Normally, she would

just say “Go away” like other heroes do. Also, her position was different; she was sitting at the bar, not at the tables like other heroes. Realizing this, Da Fei’s eyebrows leaped.

Substance! This artsy female pirate must have substance; the door to Brother Bird’s future is not yet closed.

Da Fei tried to continue the conversation: “Beautiful miss, it’s not good for me to be idle on this island, I’m looking for some temporary work. Can you put in a good word for me...” After all, I did give you a C-grade treasure, it should raise the friendliness a little bit.

Sure enough, the female pirate chuckled: “Alright, then wash dishes and wait tables here. Two Gold Coins per day.”

— System Prompt: You have become a waiter at Blood Moon Bar, with a daily salary of 2 Gold Coins.

Da Fei was shocked! Could this female pirate be the boss? Damn it! Is this hitting rock bottom only to be saved at the last moment by big legs! Desperate to be kept by a wealthy lady!!!

Da Fei bowed hurriedly: “Thank you very much.”

The female pirate shook her head with a sneer: “Dishwashing Captain... heh...” With that, she flicked her long hair, stood up, and left the tavern without a trace.

Da Fei was startled again! The hero left the tavern? If she’s a regular hero, this would mean her time limit has been reached, and the system is about to refresh her away. But could she as a boss-hero be a regular hero? Of course not, she must be an Epic Hero!

For a moment, Da Fei was stunned speechless! If she’s an Epic Hero— Damn it! Don’t worry about whether I’m good or not! I am invincible and will not succumb, I won’t become a pirate!

With the female pirate’s departure, the sound of the violin in the tavern abruptly stopped, and the musician put down the violin, picking up the accordion which was most popular among pirates. Then,

several scantily clad dancers entered through the back door, starting to warm up on the dance floor of the tavern.

No way, right? This rhythm is surely turning into an ordinary tavern, isn't it? Was the previous artsy vibe just for her alone?

Da Fei came back to his senses and asked the barkeeper in astonishment: "Boss, what was the name of that miss just now?"

The fat barkeeper with a face full of horizontal flesh glared with his eyes: "You're not worthy of knowing! Don't think that because Catherine took it easy on you, you're one of us. We're about to open soon, get to work properly, and if you dare to slack off, I'll throw you on Crocodile Island!"

Catherine! This name... Damn, it seems like there really was a red-haired Pirate Queen Catherine from Spain in history? Could it be her? If the background set for her character in the game is indeed that of a queen, she might well be at a Legendary Level!

If it's a Legendary Hero, then players should not even dream about it. Well, that's good, it quenched my evil thoughts. I'm firmly not going to be a pirate.

Isn't a dragon supposed to soar, not to be confined to a pond? Once the storm comes, while all of you are cowering, I'll Stealth my way onto the ship, and according to the game's Resurrection rules, as long as I leave the Wilderness Desolate Sea's waters, even if my ship sinks in the storm, I'll be resurrected in the Bright Alliance, I don't believe I can't escape!

At that moment, several pirates laughed heartily as they entered the pub: "Boss, give us five bottles of Rum! A big portion of grilled fish steak!"

The barkeeper at the counter immediately said to Da Fei: "Serve the drinks."

Da Fei quickly replied: "Understood."

Then the pirates poured in one after another, filling the air with noisy laughter, turning the artistic tavern completely into a common bar. The tavern missed out on half a day's good business for her taste, her status must indeed be not low. Even if it's impossible to spirit her away, maintaining a good relationship is necessary, at the very least when I run into Desolate Barbarian Pirates while trading in the future, they might let me go for her sake.

In any case, I now have a wage, and I must make up for that drink I owe. Before fleeing, I'll try to max out the friendliness.

Speaking of which, the game time salary of 2 Gold Coins a day is actually not low in the world of ordinary NPCs, 1 Gold Coin = 10 silver coins = 100 copper coins, buying some bread, frying up some small dishes, and having a little drink is totally enough to subsist on. But if you think about buying swords or something like that, it's a bit tight. As for hiring troops and horses, don't even think about it.

In the game, even the cannon fodder Skeleton Soldiers, known as level 1 troops, have a recruitment price of 16 Gold Coins, and the gunners, known as the elite among level 1 troops, have a recruitment cost of 50 Gold Coins. These beings with either 5 hit points or 10 hit points would be wiped out in swathes by a single Fireball on the battlefield or fall in clusters under a barrage of arrows, it's truly not a game that a working-class player can afford. As for ship repairs, that's definitely out of the question as well.

Now the tavern was full of customers, and most of the orders were in, Da Fei finally had a bit of a breather.

As an expert, of course, Da Fei wouldn't idly waste this time. It's hard enough to get close to these pirates, so an opportunity to gather information must not be missed.

Da Fei seized the chance while serving drinks to a table of pirates to probe: "Who among you knows about the Pirate King's secret technique, Mysterious Stealth Navigation?"

For a moment, the whole tavern went quiet, and then everyone's eyes turned to stare at Da Fei.

Da Fei's butt clenched – had he asked something he shouldn't have?

The silence was suddenly broken by loud laughter from all the pirates, as if they had heard the funniest joke in the world.

—"Even you, a little kid who's not weaned yet, knows about the Pirate King's Mysterious Stealth Navigation, feared across the Seven Seas. How could we possibly not know?"

Oh! So it's that famous, eh? Da Fei couldn't help but feel delighted: "So how exactly can one learn this skill?"

The pirates, seemingly too lazy to bother any further, started drinking and eating meat again.

Really? That was it? Well, how could the Pirate King's secret technique be known to any Tom, Dick, or Harry? Moreover, with my current status, even if they knew, they definitely wouldn't tell. What to do? Here I am serving dishes, only able to interact with these nobodies. Do I wait for Catherine to come and ask her? That's a must. But of course, the more information I collect, the better. I still have one more trick.

Da Fei chuckled: "However, as far as I know, the Pirate King's secret technique isn't all that. It was easily cracked by the Sailing Captain Renior."

Instantly, the eyes of every pirate in the tavern turned his way again. Hmph! Provocation works, let's see who objects, I'll argue with you! The truth becomes clearer with argument, they say.

Sure enough, a pirate sitting at the table next to Da Fei spoke in a gloomy tone: "Where did you hear that?"

Haha! Lost your cool, huh? But it's true, after all, Renior died on the way back, and that matter is only recorded in the Sailing Captain's diary. Probably only Makar is left who knows about this. Ordinary people aren't likely to know much. What should I answer?

Just then, the fat barkeeper shouted loudly: "This is a tavern! Eat! Drink!" After which he pointed at Da Fei: "You! Go help out in the kitchen!"

Once again, the tavern erupted into eating, drinking, and fist-bumping, as if nothing had happened.

Seeing the evasive looks on everyone's faces, Da Fei grew even more puzzled. Could it be that for this Pirate King's secret technique, people only need to know of its power, but are not allowed to inquire how to learn it, let alone how to counter it?

In any case, the first day as a server in the game went by in such an awkward manner.

#### Chapter 44: The Scroll of Changing a Hero's Fate

The next morning, Da Fei's task was to repeatedly clean the room's alcohol smell with a bucket of perfume. Da Fei knew this was the illiterate female pirate's take on art.

In short, as the various heroes and violinists took their places and the music began to play, the wild and sensual Catherine arrived fashionably late.

Today, Da Fei had money and smiled, saying, "To thank you for your hospitality, may I offer you a drink?"

Catherine took the wine offered by Da Fei, gently swirled the bottom of the glass, and with her beautiful eyes fixed on the swirling wine, solemnly said, "I heard you know about Mysterious Stealth Navigation?"

Da Fei couldn't help but be delighted! He initially wanted to ask her, but she beat him to it, making things easier. Whether it was to build a good relationship or to gain more information about the Divine Skill, he had plenty of reasons to share what he knew.

Da Fei hurriedly said, "I know a little."

Catherine, surprised, said, "We pirates have a decent intelligence network on land, but I've never heard of anyone deciphering the Pirate King's Mysterious Stealth Navigation."

Da Fei instantly understood; it seemed the pirates were also interested in the Pirate King's secret technique. Maybe if the Pirate King's secret technique were deciphered, his throne would be in jeopardy? Haha, if that's the case, it's not about me pursuing you, but...

Da Fei chuckled pretentiously, saying, "Some things can't be uncovered."

Catherine asked, "Yesterday, you said the Pirate King's Mysterious Stealth Navigation was deciphered by the navigator Renior. Do you know Renior?"

Da Fei nodded, "In a sense, I could be considered his student."

Catherine exclaimed, "How can you prove that you're his student?"

What? This needs proof too? Da Fei was taken aback; this bluff of his was quite big, wasn't it? But then again, she was an NPC, after all, and cared about proof; you can't expect her to listen to players' tall tales. But proof? Got it!

Da Fei immediately pulled out the skill book Renior passed to him, "This is it! This is what he gave me, Renior's Sailing Skill Book."

Catherine took the book, and her eyes went dark, "I can't read."

—Ah, poof! Da Fei almost spit it out; this was the only thing that could prove his connection with Renior!

What to do? Should I find someone who can read to recognize it? That violinist might genuinely be into the arts; he should be fine.

Catherine, however, did not immediately throw the book back but instead casually played with it while asking, "So how much do you know about Mysterious Stealth Navigation?"

Oh, not stuck on evidence, huh? That's good.

Da Fei parroted what he had just learned, "Not much; this skill may involve Reconnaissance Skill, Sailing Skill, arcane skills, and even the material of the ship itself. In short, it should be a team skill, not something one person can activate." Hmph, this is all from Sailing Captain Juan's research findings.

Catherine exclaimed, "That's all you know?"

Da Fei nodded, "Yeah, so I want to know how much the pirates know."

Catherine shook her head, then added, "I heard that when Barak, the big bearded one, caught you, you'd already captured a great white shark?"

Hehe, although he didn't know what her intention was with that line of inquiry, it felt like a woman asking, "I heard you knocked down that big shot someone?" As a man, one should never pass up a chance to present a grand image before a beauty.

Da Fei raised a pretentious hand, saying, "As long as the method is right, capturing a great white shark isn't difficult."

Catherine chuckled and then said no more, instead staring idly at the book in her hand, flipping it over and over. I say, when I gifted her a telescope, she tinkered with it eagerly like a child, but now she seemed like an adult, repeatedly toying with a lover's memento in hand, lost in thought.

Da Fei's heart skipped a beat; could it be that she was impressed by my talents and erudition? Could it... no, it's impossible; she is a Legendary Hero!

Finally, after a moment of silence, Catherine asked again, "Have you decided yet?"

Da Fei's heart sank, "Decided what?"

Catherine chuckled, "Of course, whether you've decided to join us. Are you content washing dishes here for the rest of your life? Time waits for no one; while washing dishes, others have already made great strides ahead of you."

Ah, as expected, it's my talents she sees! Though I'm an extraordinary talent, and there's a legendary beauty before me, I'm not swayed.

Da Fei shook his head, "I will not join the pirates." Hmph? Surpass me? I refuse to believe it unless it's calm here forever, giving me no chance to escape. As long as I escape, even without a ship, I can rise with an Epic Quest.

Catherine's eyes grew cold, "You really look down upon pirates, don't you?"

Da Fei sighed, "It's not that I look down on pirates; their scope is genuinely limited."

Catherine said coldly, "That's looking down on us!"

Bang! She slammed the skill book on the table, causing the hard cover to warp out of shape!

Da Fei jumped, heart pounding! No way, he really offended the rich lady!

What happened next left Da Fei wide-eyed—she tore the golden cover of the skill book right off with a brisk tear!

—Ah, poof! The skill book can be torn? Hey, hey, this is my mysterious skill book; you can't do that!

At this moment, a gold-glimmering paper slipped from the torn cover's fold—a treasure! Da Fei's eyes narrowed; that golden glow was unique to a Divine Artifact!

Catherine, beaming, pinched the paper and said jokingly, "I can't read. Can you read it to me?"

Staring at the paper swaying before him, Da Fei was stunned! It wasn't a treasure map or a bank card!

—Navigator Wisdom Scroll: Transforms a hero's innate sailing gift into Professional Specialties for sailors.

Renior's note:

—I have seen many excellent sailors. They possess extraordinary innate skills, but unfortunately, our current occupational system is so outdated it can't support their talents. Many extraordinary inherent talents that cannot be augmented through postnatal training remain buried. If such unique talents are a god's gift, then only gods can enhance them!

—To the finder of this scroll: First, you must be a navigator! Then, your discovery of this paper proves your exceptional insight, a qualifying trait for using this Divine Wisdom Scroll, which contains my lifetime's knowledge, my lifetime's collection.

...

Only then did Da Fei realize the line on the back page of the skill book, "The truth is hidden in the mundane" referred to this! The secret of the Heavenly Sword and Dragon Slayer Sword was that they contained hidden treasures! In his hands, an item with no clues revealed its secret in hers, showcasing the gap between her Legendary Level and his Newbie Level!

This was something that could change a hero's fate!

What did this mean? It meant he could convert his innate trait of Storm Navigation into Professional Specialties, which meant his innate trait was gone! This meant he could choose a new innate trait again! It was said that players could change their traits through hard work later!

No, I'm more advanced than them. I essentially have two specialties! Under normal circumstances, he might have taken ages to discover the book's secret, but now, the Legendary Hero unveiled it for him, opening the door to a shortcut to ascend!

Watching Da Fei's shocked expression, Catherine chuckled, "What is it? Read it to me?"

Dang it! This is a god-level artifact that can defy fate! As a pirate, if she got hold of it, what consequences might there be? I must find a way to get it back!

Da Fei coughed and said, "It's a letter."

Catherine deadpanned, "What kind of letter requires such high-end material?"

Da Fei frowned! Tell the truth? She's a pirate, a female thief! The system setting is a profession that can legally take things from players! This paper was beyond his ability to find; she found it, giving her reason enough to claim it. So deceive her? She doesn't recognize words anyway! But if caught, wouldn't he suffer even worse?

But, with money, women become clever, and with love, they grow foolish. I have to take a chance!

Da Fei's heart stirred, and he coughed, "A letter to the Goddess..."

Catherine teased, "Goddess? Then read it to me."

With deep affection, Da Fei scanned her from head to toe: "My Goddess, I remember the day we met. We traveled the world on a luxury ship, carrying a whole ship of gold to sell, buying an island, and building our kingdom manor on it!"

If she were deceived, he might retrieve the paper. If she saw through it, he would claim he was expressing his love, with no intent to deceive her. This is called attacking when feasible and retreating when prudent!

Catherine shook the paper in surprise, "That's it?"

Da Fei nodded, "Yes, yes. So, could you return the letter to me?"

But Catherine laughed, "What is it?"

Da Fei gazed off, "That's the sound of waves crashing against the ship's hull."

Catherine burst out laughing, “I like this letter! It sounds like it was meant for me!”

—Ah, poof! Da Fei nearly spat blood...

#### Chapter 45: Catherine’s Test Mission

Da Fei snapped back to reality and hurriedly said, “Miss, this is an important item from my teacher, a relic... Please, please give it back to me!”

Catherine shook her head with a smile, “Such high-quality material for a scroll is certainly important, but you’ll have to consider it fully first. Though, right now I need a unit of pearls, can you collect it from a nearby island within two days?”

—System Prompt: Catherine has issued you a quest “Collect 1 unit of pearls in two days”, would you like to accept?

—Task Hint: The beaches near the Desolate Islands have pearl oysters, but there are also extremely dangerous crocodiles and giant reptiles.

Damn it! She’s clearly using me and my awesome scroll to coerce me into joining! But, what can I do in this situation? Da Fei reluctantly accepts.

Catherine then took another proud sip of her drink, “Right, before you set out, you might want to repair your weapons and change your gear at the island’s gear shop. Pearls aren’t something just anyone can collect, and I believe someone who can fight off a great white shark alone won’t disappoint me, right?”

Da Fei said blankly, “I don’t have enough money...”

Catherine smiled faintly, “Just go to Barak’s shop. He took your great white shark, so he shouldn’t have any objections no matter what you take from him. Get prepared and set out, the boat is already arranged for you at the dock. Don’t let me down, or else...”

Da Fei felt a twinge of anxiety and could only nod, "Understood."

...

Leaving the tavern, Da Fei bitterly cursed that female pirate a hundred, no, a hundred times in his mind! Ugh, I mean, metaphorically slapped her.

What to do? Is the scroll or my future more important? My future is uncertain, but the scroll is right before my eyes!

Become a pirate! Get back the Wisdom Scroll! Seduce this Legendary Hero! Then, sell the account! Such a quality account with dual professions, dual special skills, plus a big boat and Legendary and Epic heroes, it would definitely be worth a few million, right? Those major teams and large guilds wouldn't mind that it's a pirate account, right?

Da Fei decisively went to check the current prices online.

The moment he logged onto the forum, two pinned posts made Da Fei's in-app-purchase-lover eyes squint!

—“Warm congratulations! Blood Sea Studio has joined the Dragon Slayer Guild!”

—“Blood Sea Studio announces a server-wide bounty for the trash player Da Fei! 100 yuan reward for each sighting!”

Holy crap! This Blood Sea Wave really wasn't a small fry! And they even collaborated with that what, Hemorrhoid Ointment!

—“Our Blood Sea Studio's motto is, bounties server-wide, wipe them to level zero; expose gear, flay and peel, make sure they never log in again, we recognize the account not the player! Rewards for reports, rewards for kills...”

Damn, damn! Da Fei was utterly shocked.

Recognize the account and not the player? Can I even sell my account still? Even if I do, they will surely knock down the price harshly with this excuse, and an account that could be sold for a million might end up going for a fraction of that! Or, what if Blood Sea Wave sent someone to act as a buyer to scoop up my account on the cheap? In the end, wouldn't I just be benefiting him and spitting back what I swallowed, with profit?

Damn, ruthless! I've been globally wanted before and it didn't scare me to death! Well, it's settled then, I'm not selling this account! I can't bear to part with it! But if not selling, then am I destined to be a pirate under this female thief?

Suddenly, Da Fei felt a jolt.

Wait! Why did she issue me this quest? Is this a test to hire heroes, but I haven't met her prerequisites! How could she give me follow-up tasks? She's determined that I'll surely surrender and become a pirate? No no no, impossible, the other party is an NPC, and NPCs follow rules and logic.

Does that mean being a pirate is not a prerequisite? Or is this task not a test?

Whatever, I have no other options now, I'll just take things one step at a time.

...

Barak's shop was large and easy to find, because it was literally called "Barak's Shop."

Looking at the shop sign with its bold letters, Da Fei pondered—Even a guy with a big beard can read, wouldn't Catherine know how to read? Was she just messing with me?

As Da Fei entered, various weapons, gears, pots, books, oil paintings, potted plants, statues, clothes, and furniture packed the place like a storeroom. What a huge miscellaneous goods store! Needless to say, these must be stolen goods he planned to fence. But who would buy them?

A few pirates playing cards on a clearing swept a fierce glance, “What do you want?”

This must be the world’s worst customer service, right? Da Fei quickly replied, “Miss Catherine sent me to buy... uh, pick up some things.”

“Tsk! Help yourself.” The pirates scoffed and turned their heads back to continue playing cards.

Da Fei was startled, just like that? They don’t care and let me pick myself? Damn, Catherine’s words really do hold sway. Da Fei casually picked up a longsword nearby and his eyebrows twitched!

— Sharp Forged Heavy Sword: Attack +10, Damage +5, Attack Speed -1, Durability 87/120.

Holy crap! This sword has +10 Attack! Don’t scare me, bro! There’s actually good stuff here, this, this, this, is this a free supermarket?! This is clearly the most exhilarating heaven on Earth! Hahaha, bro can casually grab a few hundred pieces, pack them up, and resell them for a fortune!

— “Put down what you don’t need!” A pirate said coldly without turning his head.

Damn! So there are rules after all. Da Fei reluctantly put down the longsword and chuckled, “May I ask, do you have a full set of parts for the Crossbow Cannon?”

The pirate coldly said, “No, we don’t sell Crossbow Cannons!”

Holy shit! They really treat the Crossbow Cannon like a treasure, no Crossbow Cannon yet talking about watermelons, I was really counting on it! Not even allowed to repair it? Truly a poor pirate with no vision and no future!

Da Fei unwillingly asked, “What about Crossbow Arrows? You must have some ammunition, right?”

The pirate impatiently said, “Red box, a maximum of 100 arrows!”

Fine, at least that replenishes plenty of ammunition. After packing up the Crossbow Arrows, Da Fei circled around the warehouse, still no sight of the weapons used by Long Spear Soldiers, people really don't use spears at sea. After selecting the other full set of quality gear including helmets, leather armor, handguards, belts, and boots, his personal defense increased by 30 points. Juan's +3 tattered leather armor was finally retired. But even retired equipment has a market; wealthy Lord Players can buy them to equip their minions.

30 points of defense, the basic defense of a level 7 human Angel. If the opponents are all 0 Attack skeletons, according to the attack and defense formula, a 30-point difference in attack defense equates to exactly 60% damage mitigation—it really feels like a transformation. As long as there isn't a boss, bro can still achieve great things.

— “Have you taken everything? If you’re done, then get lost quickly!” The pirate staff began to shoo people away.

Holy shit, they appear casual but are actually sharp-eyed, bro can’t even take one extra item.

Da Fei reluctantly left the shop. Speaking of which, this kind of free equipment supermarket is really quite something. But this also illuminates a problem, the pirates’ looted goods have no outlet to fence, even the best items are just piled up like trash. This proves once again that being a pirate is a dead-end job.

Suddenly, Da Fei had a realization! Is this an opportunity? If I get on good terms with the pirates, could I help them fence their loot? Could I use that as a reason for them to let me off the hook?

Whether it works or not, I must try. But before that, I must complete the beauty’s task to accumulate goodwill; she is an important figure, cannot afford any mistakes.

Da Fei arrived at the docks, where indeed a few pirates sat on a small boat.

“Go!” The pirates didn’t waste words; they set up the sails and started rowing the boat.

Haha, they brought a few soldiers? Da Fei joyfully asked, “Are you guys here to assist me?”

The people coldly said, "Keep dreaming, you're on your own."

Holy shit, they're actually here to monitor bro, afraid that bro might escape.

The Desolate Barbarian Sea Islands being numerous, after half a day of rowing, they reached the destination, a lush big island on the outer ring of the islands, Crocodile Island. Holy crap, there really is a Crocodile Island, that fat Shopkeeper wasn't joking! Then the small boat docked.

The rowing pirate took out an hourglass and coldly said, "It starts now, you have two days. If you don't finish, we're leaving first!"

Da Fei was shocked: "Really?"

The pirates laughed loudly: "Unless you're willing to join us, you can fend for yourself on the island!"

The rowing pirate added, "Where there's crocodiles, there's clams. Moreover, the crocodiles here are very strong, and there are many fierce beasts on the island, but catching giant sharks should be no problem for you, right?" Then the pirates laughed loudly again, ignoring Da Fei, some drinking, others sleeping.

Da Fei felt uneasy. Could it be because bro single-handedly killed a shark boss, they think bro is very capable, so issued a super difficult task to force bro to submit?

Da Fei's worry quickly became reality.

In the shallow water ahead, sure enough, there were large groups of gigantic crocodiles, all named Desolate Island Cannibal Giant Crocodile! Being able to see their names directly means they are officially disclosed monsters on the official website.

—Desolate Island Cannibal Giant Crocodile: Large boss-level reptile, Attack 30, Defense 50, Damage 85-110, Life 900, Attack Speed 8, Move Speed 14, Experience 15000, Special Skills: Camouflage, Ambush, Rampage, Disabling Bite, Disease Resistance.

The Desolate Sea Area is rampant with pirates, countless dead carried by ocean currents to the nearby Desolate Barbarian Sea Islands, nurturing extremely brutal giant crocodiles. Their skin is as tough as armor, usually lazy like logs, motionless, but once they attack, their massive stride produces speed beyond human imagination, no one can escape their pursuit!

Da Fei's jaw dropped! It's a BOSS, all are BOSSes! So many BOSSes clustering together, surely this is a mission scenario, right? Normally, how could BOSS-level creatures be grouped together? With such thick Blood Defense and shocking Move Speed, definitely not something my 8-point health Crossbow Cannon can handle! Even if my Crossbow Cannon was at full health, it couldn't withstand the wear and tear, 1 unit of pearls is 100 pieces, asking me to collect 100 pearls? To kill all the giant crocodiles here? Is that possible? Bro can't kill even one crocodile!

If the Crossbow Cannon can't handle it, then bro being a gunner is even less capable. Perhaps bro should Stealth underwater and steal? Joking, as awesome as Stealth is, can you not stir a single ripple in the water when entering? Bro isn't a ghost!

In any case, these crocodiles absolutely can't be forcefully killed.

However, since it's a collection task, killing monsters has never been the main point. As an expert, Da Fei began to ponder deeply about the seemingly impossible collection tasks from ancient times to the present, falling into deep agony...