

You Were Told to Lose Money By Making Games, and You Actually Did It?

Chapter 40: So You're Not Going to Turtle Up? Fine, I Will!

On March 1st, Chen Xu once again summoned the system interface in his office.

【Loss Conversion System】

【System Fund: 3.461 million yuan】

【Settlement Time: 31 days remaining (If no official product has been released by the settlement deadline, the settlement date will be postponed.)】

【Personal Funds: 91.91 yuan】

Looking at the numbers displayed on the holographic panel, Chen Xu couldn't help but sigh with emotion.

Finally!

After all this time, there was only one month left before harvest day.

Over the past four and a half months, he had managed to squeeze only five yuan out of the system as personal spending money.

Everything else in his wallet had come from the living expenses his family had sent him.

But after the New Year, thanks to what he had told them, even those living expenses had been cut off.

Fortunately, he'd been clever enough to give the company employees free breakfast, lunch, and dinner as a welfare benefit.

That allowed him to eat along with everyone else.

Otherwise, he'd probably have had to rely on Huabei or Weili Loan just to afford meals.

*'After deducting salaries, employee benefits, and the remaining promotional payments, there should still be a little money left over... though it doesn't really matter. A hundred or two hundred thousand yuan won't change the overall outcome.'*

Thinking through his plans, Chen Xu felt refreshed and optimistic.

Just as he was imagining his bright future, there was a knock on the office door.

"Come in."

The door opened.

Looking up, he saw Xiao Dao and Xiu Fu enter.

"Brother Xu, what should we do? Sekiro's launch date clashes with another game!"

"Yeah. Vencent Tribulation of God and Demon game launches just three days after ours."

Both of them wore worried expressions.

No one in the company had much experience with marketing and promotion.

That went without saying for Xiao Dao and Xiu Fu—they were still learning team management from Gong Qi and Ying Gao.

As for Gong Qi and Ying Gao, while they were highly capable in most other areas, they were equally inexperienced when it came to game marketing.

After all, under their former boss, Mr. Du, even their development budgets had been tight.

There was hardly any money left for advertising.

Their entire marketing strategy back then consisted of registering an official account, posting on gaming forums, having company employees bump their own threads, editing a couple of promotional videos, and releasing a playable demo.

That was it.

Because of that, they hadn't even thought to check whether there would be competing games launching during Sekiro's promotional campaign.

In the past, if their own game happened to run into a competitor, they would simply delay the release.

There wasn't much to lose anyway.

But Sekiro was different.

Although its marketing budget looked modest compared to its development cost, it still amounted to several million yuan.

Advertising placements and trending-topic promotions all had to be booked with the platforms well in advance.

Schedules had already been finalized.

Changing the release date now would mean paying hefty breach-of-contract penalties.

Everything had already been prepared, and only then did they realize something.

The day after Sekiro launched happened to be the release date of Tribulation of God and Demon, the newest title from Chenmei Studio, one of Vencent' first-party development studios.

Its release date had been announced long ago.

Although Chenmei Studio wasn't nearly as famous as Vencent' prestigious Leihuojian Studio, nor did it enjoy the same level of funding and resources, it was still a first-party studio under Vencent.

"So what if it overlaps?" Chen Xu smiled.

"Aren't you confident in Sekiro?"

At first, even he hadn't known about the scheduling conflict.

But after discovering it, he realized it was actually an unexpected piece of good news.

He had looked into Tribulation of God and Demon.

The game had already held an offline playtest.

Visually, it looked impressive.

After all, Vencent had plenty of money to throw at production.

As for the gameplay...

It was still the same old formulaic action game.

The late-game content was especially weak.

At least within Vencent, the project clearly wasn't considered a top priority.

Otherwise, its marketing campaign would already have been flooding every corner of the internet.

When it came to pure quality, Chen Xu firmly believed Sekiro would win.

But that victory would only come later, after players had spent enough time with both games to appreciate their differences.

In the early days, however, Sekiro's brutal difficulty and uncompromising design would almost certainly make it less approachable than Vencent' title.

The competitor would undoubtedly hurt Sekiro's initial sales.

And what could possibly be more wonderful than that?

As time passed, the Vencent title might even become Sekiro's stepping stone.

By then, the system's settlement money would already be safely in his pocket.

Sekiro would continue generating long-term revenue.

And thanks to the comparison, its reputation would only improve.

A perfect triple win.

"Have some confidence."

"Confidence in yourselves."

"And confidence in Sekiro."

"If the moment we see a Vencent title, we immediately back down and change our release date, then what happens in the future?"

"When we run into the big international publishers, are we supposed to retreat every single time?"

Chen Xu raised his right hand, his tone leaving no room for argument.

Seeing the determination in Chen Xu's eyes, Xiao Dao and Xiu Fu opened their mouths as if to say something.

In the end, all they could manage was,

"Got it, Brother Xu."

For some reason, though, recalling what he had just said, both of them felt as if a fire had been ignited inside their hearts.

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"Change the release date! It's only a breach-of-contract penalty. We'll pay it!"

At Chenmei Studio, studio president Liu Yishou made the decision without hesitation after learning that another game, Sekiro: Shadows Die Twice, would be launching around the same time as theirs.

"But, President Liu—"

One of his employees tried to object, only to be cut off immediately.

"I may not understand game development," Liu Yishou said, "but that doesn't mean I don't understand games. You all know exactly what kind of quality Tribulation of God and Demon has."

The employees throughout the studio lowered their heads in embarrassment.

After all, while the game's quality was decent, it was only *decent*.

It was nowhere near the lofty expectations the team had originally had for it.

"That's right. As for Morning Star Games' new title, we still don't know what it's actually like. But it *is* being developed by Hyakukin. What if it turns out to be excellent? We can't rule out that possibility."

Liu Yishou shook his head.

"Besides, Morning Star Games has no grudge against us. What's wrong with taking a step back? Does pride put copies sold on the board?"

"Don't tell me you're not jealous of the year-end bonuses those guys at Leihuojian Studio get."

"Because I sure am."

He paused before continuing.

"Remember this."

"Our enemy has never been Morning Star Games."

"Our enemy is Leihuojian Studio."

Walking to the floor-to-ceiling window and gazing into the distance, Liu Yishou spoke in a low, steady voice.

As president of Chenmei Studio, he couldn't care less about Morning Star Games.

There was only one thing that mattered to him—whether his studio's performance could surpass that of his competitors within Vencent.

So when the promotional platform informed him that Sekiro: Shadows Die Twice was scheduled to launch at almost the same time as Tribulation of God and Demon, and that the other side showed no intention of changing its release date, he made his decision immediately.

‘So...’

*‘You're not backing down, even though you're going up against the second-largest studio under Vencent?’*

*‘You know what kind of quality our game has, and you're still not moving?’*

Combined with the glowing praise he'd heard from that bald producer at Hyakukin Studio, as well as NGI's almost exaggerated feature interview, Liu Yishou came to a swift conclusion.

*‘You're confident.’*

*‘You've got guts.’*

*‘You want to make a name for yourselves by stepping over my corpse?’*

*‘Fine.’*

"If you won't turtle up, then I will."

Being cautious—that was the motto he lived by.

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Note:

Vencent: Vencent is this world version of Tencent