

The People's God: Sacrificing Trillions to Ascend

- Chapter 151 - “Evil God’s” Attack

[1,297 words]

Chapter 151 - “Evil God’s” Attack

Upon their encounter with Han Wen, the Tigerman General, fiercely loyal to its king, immediately issued a stern warning. “That evil god excels at corrupting your thoughts! You must not listen to a single word he utters, no matter what!”

The simple-minded Tigerman soldiers, treating its words like sacred decrees, attacked Han Wen, paying no mind to his attempts at communication.

After being attacked without any apparent reason or provocation, Han Wen, whose body was now inhabited by Han Wu, decided it was time to fight back. He decided to summon the Chaos Saint instead of fighting them himself, as the Tigermen were too weak.

Without warning, the enormous Chaos Saint appeared before the Tigerman soldiers. Its shimmering form instilled such fear that not a single soldier dared to budge. Desperate, the Tigerman General had to resort to threatening them with execution if they deserted, compelling them into combat.

With a contemptuous glance at the insignificant Tigermen below, the Chaos Saint unleashed its Rank 5 skill, Tornado. A monstrous funnel cloud formed, drawing in thousands of soldiers, sending them soaring thousands of meters high. When the tornado finally dissipated, they plummeted, meeting their end upon impact.

The Tigerman General reeled in shock, instinctively recognizing that the Chaos Saint possessed strength comparable to that of the Tigerman King himself. Despite this overwhelming realization, retreat was not an option; the king’s orders were absolute. The Tigerman General was compelled to lead its dwindling forces to their very last man, regardless of the dire circumstances, solely to afford the king even a minute chance of victory. Threatened once more, the Tigerman soldiers were compelled to attack the Chaos Saint.

Showing no mercy for the feeble Tigermen, the Chaos Saint stomped forcefully on the ground. The very earth itself convulsed and fractured, and jagged fissures ripped across the battlefield. Countless Tigermen tumbled inadvertently into these gaping chasms. Those few who clung precariously to the cliff edges attempted to scramble upwards, but another devastating stomp from the Chaos Saint sealed the fissures, trapping them within.

The fissures claimed every Tigerman unfortunate enough to fall in. The Tigerman General recognized the overwhelming might of the Chaos Saint and understood that victory was impossible. However, before it could even issue any further commands, the Chaos Saint attacked, sending out a torrent of blazing scarlet fireballs to strike the remaining Tigerman soldiers. They were instantly engulfed in flames and burned alive as the Chaos Saint relentlessly continued its onslaught, annihilating 70% of the army in just three attacks.

Despite the immense casualties, not a single Tigerman managed to lay a hand on the Chaos Saint. The Tigerman General seethed with fury, yet found itself utterly helpless. It commanded its dwindling forces to encircle the Chaos Saint for one last, suicidal attack. They charged, fighting to stall for precious time, until the Chaos Saint's summoned duration finally expired, and it vanished automatically.

The surviving Tigmens erupted in cheers, celebrating their narrow escape, but their jubilation was abruptly cut short as Han Wu materialized yet another Chaos Saint directly before them.

Han Wu then projected his voice, booming across the vicinity to every single Tigerman. "I can summon as many of these as I desire. I seriously doubt you possess the capability to eliminate every single one of them."

The Tigerman General found itself utterly bewildered. With the vast majority of its army decimated, further resistance was pointless. Consequently, it made the difficult choice to betray its king and yielded.

Han Wu let out a quiet chuckle, realizing he'd stumbled upon the ideal strategy to subjugate all Tigmens within the divine realm. He had been deliberating on a foolproof approach, and ironically, the Tigerman King had just inadvertently handed him the solution: eliminate the king, and every Tigerman would fall into line!

Leading the now-surrendered army, he slowly began to advance towards the Tigerman kingdom. The Tigerman King, upon hearing of its general's crushing defeat, erupted in a furious rage. It detested any circumstance beyond its complete control. The mere existence of the original Hu Hai had already been a significant threat, as it also harbored ambitions of becoming a god. To safeguard its legacy and lineage, the Tigerman King made a decision: it would slay a god!

To recruit allies for its god-slaying quest, the Tigerman King distributed flyers. In response, numerous formidable experts heeded its summons and pledged their allegiance. By simply leveraging its reputation, the Tigerman King had effortlessly assembled a small but elite team of powerful Tigerman experts. Even the least powerful among them was a Heroic life form, while the strongest possessed power nearly on par with the Tigerman King itself.

Despite assembling such a formidable lineup, the Tigerman King remained plagued by a sense of insecurity. In an attempt to bolster its forces, it sent out a message to the forbidden zone, publicly offering generous rewards to any who would assist in the slaying of the “evil god.” However, the experts residing within the forbidden zone were, without exception, Hu Hai’s most devoted and powerful subjects, particularly the three elders who served as Hu Hai’s Saints. Their faith in Hu Hai was absolute, and consequently, not a single one of them accepted the king’s desperate demand.

The Tigerman King, though clearly irritated, realized its hands were tied for now. Although undeniably powerful, it questioned whether it could truly emerge victorious in a direct confrontation with all three elders at the same time.

Three full realm days elapsed before Han Wu finally reached his destination, the city. Trailing behind him was an immense host of several hundred thousand Tigermen, their expressions betraying a mix of reverence and fear towards him.

“Drag that damned Tigerman King that is stealing my Faith Points out right now!” Han Wu bellowed, spurring the captured Tigermen behind him into action, who immediately began their march forward. The Tigerman King, having anticipated this confrontation, swiftly unleashed the powerful experts it had painstakingly assembled to confront the advancing Tigermen.

A brutal clash erupted between the two sides, but while both sides fought fiercely, Han Wu’s side found itself gradually being pushed back. Seeing this, Han Wu summoned the immense Chaos Saint for a second time, which then began to unleash its array of powerful skills, relentlessly cutting down the opposing Tigermen.

Sensing the Chaos Saint’s overwhelming power, the Tigerman King quickly realized that he was the only one present who could possibly stand against it. He channeled his energy, and the formidable aura of a King life form surged outward from him as he deliberately stepped down from his throne.

The weaker Tigermen immediately buckled, forced to their knees by the sheer oppressive presence. The Chaos Saint, upon witnessing the Tigerman King’s display of power, scoffed with disdain, opting to respond in kind. It then unleashed its own formidable pressure which manifested as a surge of the four elements, its immense aura effortlessly eclipsing the Tigerman King’s.

The Tigerman King, feeling insulted in the presence of its subjects, vowed to decapitate the clone—which it mistakenly believed to be Hu Hai—as an act of retribution. With a furious roar, it tried to bypass the Chaos Saint and launch a direct attack on the so-called Hu Hai. In response, Han Wu simply smiled and struck the Tigerman King’s paw, simultaneously activating his Martial God Flash Skill.

The two combatants collided with immense force, and the Tigerman King was sent hurtling backward, slamming into the city wall with such impact that it became deeply

lodged within the stone, rendered immobile. The sight sent shockwaves through the surviving Tigermen, who watched in horror as their mighty monarch succumbed to just one strike from the evil god. It was clear to them that the evil god was overwhelmingly powerful!

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Chapter 152 - Returning to the Embrace of God

[1,513 words]

Chapter 152 - Returning to the Embrace of God

“Surrender or die. Your choice.” Han Wu’s voice cut through the air, giving the Tigerman King a clear ultimatum. The Tigerman King let out a frustrated snarl, its ambition to become an entity stronger than Hu Hai clashing painfully with the undeniable reality of its weakness. Resistance was simply not an option.

In a choice between life and death, the Tigerman King grimly decided its fate. With a pained effort, it slowly extricated itself from the city wall before finally dropping to its knees before Han Wu, the loud, grinding sound of cracking stones echoing sharply as it knelt.

Baring its teeth, the Tigerman King declared in a loud voice, “Oh, most glorious God, please forgive your foolish child!”

The resounding voice reverberated throughout the entire city, reaching every resident within its walls. As a result, a collective realization dawned upon them all: Hu Hai was indeed their true god.

The Tigerman King had deliberately raised its voice—it knew that their god was benevolent to His followers. This was a tactical maneuver designed to prevent Hu Hai from killing it, as the enraged god would be forced to restrain Himself to preserve its public image. Though a blatantly obvious ploy, it was remarkably effective and foolproof.

What the Tigerman King remained blissfully unaware of, however, was that the god it faced was not Hu Hai, as it believed, but rather Han Wen, Han Wu’s new clone. Han Wen’s presence here had but one purpose: to amass as many resources as he possibly could.

Although he harbored no desire to let the treacherous Tigerman King survive, it would be a waste to execute it straight away. His plan was to completely extract every last resource from the Tigerman King before finally putting an end to its life.

Han Wu asked, "I recall hearing whispers about a group of mutated Tigmens that emerged a few years back. Where are they currently located?"

The Tigerman King felt a surge of happiness; for as long as Hu Hai required its aid, its survival was guaranteed.

"Most glorious God," the Tigerman King, adopting a facade of meekness and feigned piety, declared, "those heretics have been imprisoned in the dungeon. I have given orders for them to be subjected to the most brutal torture, to serve as an undeniable lesson on the fate of those who betray you!"

Han Wu, however, was not fooled by the Tigerman King's pretense; he detected not a single strand of Faith connecting the king to himself. With a chilling tone, he simply commanded, "Lead me to them."

Assuming Han Wu wished to observe the gruesome state of the tortured heretics, the Tigerman King stoically endured its wounds and began to lead the way, occasionally faltering and staggering. It entirely disregarded the odd looks cast its way by the regular Tigmens in the city; its survival was paramount, and abandoning its honor was a small price to pay in exchange for its life.

Guided by the Tigerman King, Han Wu descended into the city's dungeon, where he was confronted with the sight of every single Tigerman loyal to him being subjected to brutal torture. Despite the agonizing pain inflicted upon them, their faithfulness to Han Wu remained unbroken. Remarkably, some of them had even ascended in their Faith Rank during the brutal process. Many of them became Zealots, continuously shouting out chants and praises of Han Wu's benevolence amidst their torture, believing it would alleviate their suffering.

Hu Chi and Hu Yong had undeniably borne the brunt of the suffering. They were now reduced to mere skin and bone, while the numerous raw and exposed flesh wounds that covered their bodies exuded a putrid odor of rot and decay.

However, despite being subjected to the most excruciating torture imaginable, their faith in Han Wu remained the purest. Both Tigmens, by this point, had been elevated to Saints. Han Wu was touched upon witnessing his believers' unwavering devotion, even as they endured such brutal torment. He decided in his heart to bring them into his own divine realm no matter what.

"To let them die so quickly is such a waste," he stated.

The Tigerman King waddled over and meekly asked, “Most glorious one, what do you have in mind?”

With a cunning lie intended to fool the Tigerman King, Han Wu coldly commanded, “Heal them, and then subject them to torture a few more times.”

A wave of shock washed over the Tigerman King as it realized Hu Hai was far more vicious than it had thought—He was a demon, not a god! It reluctantly conceded that perhaps only Hu Hai could ever devise such a profoundly cruel method. Compared to Hu Hai, it was still incredibly naive and inexperienced.

Even as skepticism gnawed at it, the Tigerman King nevertheless continued to lavish praise upon Han Wu. “Most glorious one, your plans shall be executed without fail. I will immediately summon our doctor to tend to their wounds. Let someone come forth and release them from their shackles at once!”

“No need,” Han Wu interjected, halting the Tigerman King’s actions. He then approached the brutally tortured Tigermen, cut the tip of his own finger, and carefully dropped his blood into each of their mouths.

The Tigerman King began to salivate uncontrollably as its gaze fixed on the dripping blood. Given that Han Wen was a God, his very body contained highly concentrated Life Energy and Divine Essence. As a result, those who ingested his blood not only recovered swiftly, but a number of them also grew significantly more powerful.

“Release them from the dungeon,” Han Wu ordered.

The Tigerman King immediately protested, its voice filled with alarm, “No, most glorious God! We can’t do that! They are incredibly ruthless—releasing them would be exceedingly dangerous!”

With a frown, Han Wu retorted, “What can they possibly do while I’m here? If they dare to become restless, I can still eliminate them with a single blow.”

The Tigerman King vividly recalled the sheer force with which Han Wu had struck it using the Martial God Flash. That strike had been delivered at twice its own reaction speed, and the memory of that blow caused it to shudder involuntarily each time it came to mind.

It was true, however, that no one imprisoned in the dungeon could possibly withstand such a blow. Furthermore, any misfortune that might befall Hu Hai would be a welcome development for the Tigerman King.

The Tigerman King swiftly commanded its men to untie the prisoners, all while praising Han Wu’s supposed benevolence. Han Wu, however, was far from foolish; he was keenly aware of the Tigerman King’s true intentions. Nevertheless, he deliberately

chose not to execute it immediately—he still wanted to completely squeeze out every last resource from the Tigerman King.

Taking command of the palace, Han Wu immediately ordered the guards to stand down. At the same time, he directed the recently freed prisoners into a large dining hall filled with food. The Tigerman King was bewildered by Han Wu's behavior, secretly harboring the hope that a violent riot would erupt, leading to Hu Hai's demise in the chaos.

The mutated Tigermen trembled visibly as they stepped into the grand palace. They had braced themselves for their immediate execution, but to their utter astonishment, the god before them was, instead, gesturing for them to sit and eat.

Having been imprisoned and starved for what felt like an eternity, they showed no regard for etiquette. They frantically grabbed the food laid before them and shoved it unceremoniously into their mouths. The Tigermen felt genuine relief only after they had begun to eat their fill.

Han Wu then discreetly spent a few of his Divine Points to create a portal leading directly into his divine realm. He planned to send the Tigermen through this portal once the meal was concluded.

The Tigermen suddenly caught the unmistakable scent of their god emanating from beyond the newly opened gate. They went utterly berserk, desperately attempting to push and shove their way through the portal. Their sole desire was to lay eyes on their god one last time before facing their end. Hu Yong and Hu Chi, in their utter confusion, started to wonder if Hu Hai might actually be a benevolent god, rather than the cruel one believed to execute heretics like themselves.

Still completely bewildered by the unfolding events, they felt Han Wen's hand pat their shoulders. "It's your turn now," he said. "Go meet your god. We will see each other again next time."

Han Wen firmly pushed the two through the gate. As they emerged from the other side, they were astonished to see their god, Han Wu, awaiting them.

Han Wu welcomed them and uttered, "Welcome back to my embrace."

That single, simple sentence broke Hu Yong and Hu Chi. They were proud warriors, individuals who had endured daily, excruciating torture without shedding so much as a single tear, yet Han Wu's words alone were enough to make them weep. They were finally home.

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[1,459 words]

Chapter 153 - Enrollment Test

With the portal opened, a steady stream of Tigermen began to enter Han Wu's divine realm. Han Wu specifically assigned Hu Yong and Hu Chi the role of welcoming the incoming Tigermen.

The disintegration of Hu Hai's divine realm was inevitable, primarily because it no longer possessed a Core. Han Wu calculated that, given its considerable size, it would take approximately another two centuries for the entire divine realm to completely break apart and vanish.

During this period, Han Wu leveraged Han Wen's identity, posing as Hu Hai to persuade numerous Tigermen to transfer their devotion to him. This resulted in a daily influx of new worshipers into his divine realm, tremendously increasing the amount of Faith Points he earned.

Han Wu, however, had never for a moment forgotten that his core race was the locusts. After all, regardless of how formidable the Tigermen might become, they were only present to assist him. The only way for him to grow in power was by enhancing the strength of his locusts.

On a daily basis, Han Wu would activate Gene Recombination to nurture a single Locustman Lord. He would also persistently use Controlled Mutation on all his locusts, aiming to improve their overall strength.

One day, after concluding his daily Sacrifice ritual, Han Wu sighed in frustration over the disappointing choices he had been given, despite having offered 100 billion locusts. With a sigh, he reluctantly selected the most valuable option—a 6 Star God weapon—as his reward. Unfortunately, he was unable to wield it yet, since he was still only a Demigod, so he simply stored it away within his vault, where it would probably remain gathering dust for the foreseeable future.

Just as he was about to resume his routine work of applying Controlled Mutation on his locusts, he received a call invitation from Prof. Lina. He swiftly responded, asking, "Professor, is there a problem?"

Her image on the video screen was just as captivating and bewitching as it had ever been. She smiled and said, "Han Wu, after thoroughly reviewing your case, the college has decided to grant you an opportunity for enrollment."

Han Wu was absolutely thrilled. Becoming an official student at Imperial College meant he could finally examine data on the Chaotic Starfield—a privilege he had eagerly been anticipating.

“Thank you, Professor! This is truly excellent news!” he exclaimed.

“Hold on, don’t get ahead of yourself,” Prof. Lina cautioned. “I said the college has granted you an *opportunity*

. The college isn’t simply going to disregard its rules and grant you admission so easily. There were quite a few stubborn old coots who initially rejected your request outright. However, after considerable deliberation and negotiation, they finally consented to your enrollment, but under one condition—you must successfully pass a test designed by them.”

Han Wu’s expression tightened into a frown. He had an unsettling feeling that the test awaiting him would be far from easy.

“Professor, what’s the test about? I simply need to pass, no matter how difficult it might be, right?” he pressed. He was willing to go to any lengths to secure his admission into Imperial College.

“Your test will be quite challenging. You will be sent to a recently discovered foreign civilization for a year to gather intelligence about the place. Should you collect extremely valuable information during that period, the college will officially recognize you as a student and grant you admission.”

“Is the civilization dangerous?”

“Since it is an unknown civilization, we cannot predict how dangerous it might be.”

Han Wu let out a frustrated groan. An unknown civilization was extremely dangerous. This test was nothing less than using him as a mere test subject to gauge the uncharted civilization’s danger level. There was a genuine chance that he could be killed the very moment he arrived on the first day, without even knowing how.

“Han Wu, we genuinely don’t know the true difficulty of this test. It’s your call,” Prof. Lina stated, clearly presenting him with the choice.

After a moment of contemplation, Han Wu gave a firm nod. “My stance hasn’t changed,” he said. “I don’t care how dangerous it is. I will accept this challenge if it means gaining admission to the college.”

A look of curiosity crossed Prof. Lina’s face at his response. “Han Wu, considering your resources, technically, you could train independently for a year and still achieve a strength comparable to that of other students. You can always simply retake the college entrance exam next year. Why take this risk?”

“Someone is waiting for me,” Han Wu replied with a smile.

Prof. Lina immediately thought of Qin Shuang and assumed Han Wu didn't want to waste a year, hoping to be in the same class as her.

"You youngsters have your own perspectives these days, I suppose," she remarked. "Han Wu, I'll relay your decision to them. I wish you the best of luck." With that, Prof. Lina ended the call.

Within minutes, a message regarding the details of the test was transmitted to Han Wu's interface. As expected, the message stated that his mission for this test was to explore an unknown civilization.

To ensure he remained completely undetected by the Will of the Civilization, everything linked to his divine realm would be completely sealed off for the entire duration of the test. This implied that Han Wu would be unable to bring along his own units. He would also be deprived of his Divine Powers, ordinary skills, and his Divine Skills.

He would be very vulnerable should he ever encounter danger. Still, this was a mission he absolutely had to do, so he quickly began preparations.

Following a day of much-needed rest, he proceeded to the designated rendezvous point as per the college's instructions. From there, he boarded a spaceship, beginning his journey towards the edge of the Divine Civilization.

After three days and nights through thousands of wormholes, the spaceship finally reached its destination. On the fourth day, Han Wu finally arrived at the edge of the so-called unknown civilization. He noticed that the outpost bore the number 19853.

The civilization Han Wu needed to explore was currently 2.39 million light years away from his current location. Technically, he could cover that vast distance in six hours if he continued his journey using the spaceship moored at the outpost, which was outfitted with FTL[1] hard drives.

For this mission, however, Imperial College prohibited his use of those spaceships, as absolute clandestineness was paramount. To keep his presence hidden from the Will of the Civilization, they came up with another approach—the asteroid method.

Han Wu would first be dispatched to a location ten light-years from the civilization. There, he would be fitted into a seemingly nondescript asteroid, which would then be directed to enter the civilization's atmosphere as if by natural means. This particular approach was considered among the most inconspicuous methods available, designed to prevent his detection by the Will of the Civilization.

The method, however, was very unsafe. It was not only susceptible to accidents, but also significantly more deadly, given that Han Wu's divine realm was currently inaccessible to him. The chilling possibility existed that the asteroid might completely

burn away during its atmospheric entry, reducing Han Wu to ashes before he even touched the ground.

Furthermore, there were precedents of asteroid shells being so thick that it was impossible for the individual encased within to break out. Should this happen to Han Wu, he would inevitably face a slow death by starvation while trapped inside.

Additionally, numerous other unforeseen incidents posed a threat to Han Wu's life, given his severed connection to his divine realm. Yet, even after understanding all the risks involved with this method, Han Wu remained unafraid.

I doubt I can even back out at this point; Imperial College might probably just force me into the asteroid and chuck me towards the civilization anyway. I'd rather just take a proactive stance and, in doing so, leave a good impression on the college.

He found himself enclosed within a hollowed-out space inside a massive asteroid. The small space was stocked with about two days' worth of food and water, as well as a few magazines to help alleviate any boredom—the ultimate dream of a shut-in. Considering the circumstances, it was, quite frankly, remarkably humane.

Once preparations were complete, a small invisible spaceship dragged Han Wu's asteroid ten light years away from the civilization, then launched the asteroid in its direction.

Though hidden deep within the asteroid, Han Wu could still sense the tremendous speed at which it was hurtling through space. He had no choice, however. Without his divine realm, he was utterly powerless. He could only pray for a favorable landing spot.

1. Faster-Than-Light 📄

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[1,198 words]

Chapter 154 - Wolf Slayer Title

Bored out of his mind, Han Wu was reading a magazine, when he suddenly felt the violent impact of the asteroid crashing into the ground. He instantly knew he had successfully landed within the mysterious unknown civilization. Fortunately, the collision had fractured the asteroid enough for fresh air to filter into the cramped space.

He immediately tossed the magazine aside and strained to pull the crack open wider. However, after being sealed, his overall physical strength had been drastically diminished, making the task incredibly challenging.

Even with his physical strength drastically reduced, Han Wu was still, thankfully, a Rank 3 Super Genesoldier. This meant his raw physical strength was on par with that of a Heroic life form. Moreover, he still possessed the three abilities characteristic of a Rank 3 Supergene Soldier: Controlled Mutation, Gene Lock, and Gene Recombination.

Han Wu had also retained Famine, the ability he had obtained during his time in the Rune Civilization. The combined might of these four abilities elevated his power to a level on par with that of a Lord life form. This was precisely the reason behind his confidence in accepting such a challenging test.

With immense effort, he finally managed to pry open the asteroid and pull himself out. Looking around, he observed that darkness had fallen, and a brilliant purple moon cast its luminous glow, bathing the entire surroundings in light. His gaze also fell upon numerous unfamiliar, glittering purple crystals, which dotted the ground.

Han Wu suddenly heard rapid footsteps approaching and instantly put his guard up. It seemed the asteroid's crash had already alerted nearby life forms to his presence. He turned to face the approaching sound, his eyes locking onto a pack of grey wolves hurtling in his direction. A quick check of their Life Energy confirmed they were just Common life forms.

Han Wu didn't hesitate and swiftly attacked. With his superior physical strength, he effortlessly eliminated all 32 wolves within a minute. However, something strange occurred soon after—a peculiar dim light floated out of their corpses and entered his body.

Fearing he had been afflicted by some curse, Han Wu immediately began to examine his body. To his surprise, upon entering his body, the dim light granted him access to a completely new interface. The information displayed on this interface was quite simple, displaying only his level and an unoccupied slot marked "title."

Is this the core power of this civilization? Han Wu thought.

He carefully scrutinized the data interface. It indicated that he had successfully eliminated 32 wolves, and as a result, his current status was Level 6. Furthermore, he had obtained his first title in this civilization, Wolf Slayer, after his tenth wolf kill.

[Iron Title: Wolf Slayer. Obtained after killing ten wolves. Increases damage to wolves by 10%. Default affinity with wolves toward user set to Hostile.]

Directly beneath the title, a query appeared, asking if he wished to equip it. He deliberated for a moment before selecting and activating the Iron Wolf Slayer title.

Han Wu felt a small wisp of power enter his body. It was a very profound energy, yet it didn't increase his strength; rather, it caused his body to give off a strange scent. Although the scent was mild and didn't personally bother him, he knew instinctively that any wolf catching this particular scent would attack him on sight.

Is this the effect of having the wolves being hostile to me by equipping the title?

Han Wu didn't mind; he wasn't afraid of the wolves anyway. He grabbed the biggest wolf corpse, flayed it, and started a fire to roast its meat.

Despite its pleasant smell, the roasted wolf meat tasted terrible. Han Wu detested it, but with no other options, he compelled himself to eat the sour meat to preserve his dwindling stamina.

With the awful meal behind him, he set out to explore his surroundings and quickly discovered that the area was nothing short of a haven for wolves. The area was so densely populated with them that they consistently roamed in large packs.

Han Wu continued to eliminate every wolf pack he encountered, relying on his superior strength, until he received a notification from his Iron Wolf Slayer title. Upon reading the notification, he learned that successfully killing a Bronze wolf at that point would enable him to upgrade his title.

Since his objective was to uncover more about the civilization, Han Wu was more than willing to accept the challenge. For three hours, he scoured the area for any sign of Bronze wolves but found none, having instead killed at least 400 other wolves in the process.

Han Wu then had a brilliant idea—he'd merge the wolves together to create a Bronze wolf! He swiftly captured ten wolves and activated his Gene Recombination ability. Since their genes were compatible, he extracted the Life Energy from nine of the wolves and infused it into the remaining wolf.

With all the Life Energy fully absorbed, the wolf let out a piercing howl, its body momentarily enveloped in a brilliant golden light. As soon as Han Wu confirmed that the creature had indeed ascended to the rank of a Bronze wolf, he swiftly and unhesitatingly killed it.

The wolf, brimming with confidence after ranking up, was still no match for Han Wu; a single punch was all it took to bring it down. With the wolf's defeat, his title was upgraded to Bronze.

[Bronze Title: Wolf Slayer. Increases damage to wolves by 20%. Affinity of wolves towards user set to Enemy.]

Having now grasped the civilization's fundamentals, Han Wu nodded in satisfaction. After much effort, he managed to raise his level to 16. At last, after patiently awaiting the break of dawn, he finally got to observe the land beyond.

He climbed up an ancient tree and surveyed his surroundings, noticing a wall to the southwestern side. He approached the wall and followed it in one direction, and it wasn't long before he realized that the land he was on was entirely enclosed within it. Clearly, this section of land had been intentionally isolated, likely serving some unique objective.

Han Wu continued his exploration along the wall until he eventually stumbled upon a gate, from which humanoid figures emerged every few minutes. Some appeared individually, while others came out in small groups. However, they all had one commonality—they were weak.

Is this a hunting ground where these humanoids can come to hunt wolves? Maybe they are here to increase their levels and their title grades. I know that increasing my title grade improves my strength, but what does increasing my level do?

Han Wu had spent the entire night tirelessly eliminating wolves, boosting his level to 16, yet he hadn't felt his strength improve in the slightest. It seemed as though the level was nothing more than a numerical display. However, since it appeared on the data interface, Han Wu figured there had to be some use for it.

I should probably interrogate one of these life forms to see what's going on.

Without delay, he swiftly descended the ancient tree and began discreetly stalking one of the isolated figures.

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[1,443 words]

Chapter 155 - Stalking

With his powerful body, Han Wu quickly pursued the humanoid, remaining concealed within the shadows. As he stalked his target, he witnessed the humanoid, now clearly identified as a human, singlehandedly eliminating packs of wolves. It wasn't until the human killed thirty wolves that the exhausted human smiled.

The human began to mutter in a strange, unfamiliar language that Han Wu found incomprehensible. A language barrier was a well-known challenge when exploring an unknown civilization, yet Han Wu remained unperturbed. He calmly persisted in stalking the human, closely observing his actions.

After hunting down the wolves, the human approached one wolf carcass and, raising his right arm, chanted, "Huracan." Immediately afterward, the wolf corpse disappeared, turning into a slab of wolf meat and a piece of wolf pelt. The human then lifted his left arm, revealing a jewel ring, which both the meat and pelt were instantly absorbed into.

Han Wu was utterly astounded to discover that this civilization possessed technology as advanced as spatial storage, especially considering it was wielded by such a weak human. This revelation served as an indication that the civilization could prove to be a valuable target for future invasion.

The human, who was merely an Elite life form at most, remained completely oblivious to Han Wu's presence. After converting the wolf carcasses into usable material and safely storing them, the human located a nearby tree stump, settled down beside it, and began to eat some jerky retrieved from his spatial ring.

An individual without any companions, like himself, always had to maintain his stamina at all times to ensure he possessed enough energy to flee from any unforeseen threats or dangers. Meanwhile, Han Wu carefully observed the human, busily compiling a series of mental notes.

Before long, another group of humanoids appeared in the area. The group consisted of a human, a dwarf, and a Blue Blood. The lone human, who had been resting, immediately noticed their arrival and warily drew his sword, his gaze fixed on them. The three newcomers exchanged a quick, knowing glance among themselves and deliberately encircled the lone human.

A fierce struggle ensued, but the battle was short-lived; the lone man soon perished due to a sneak attack by the Blue Blood. The three wasted no time, quickly stripping the fallen man of his equipment and his spatial ring before fleeing the scene. They felt no apprehension about abandoning the body, as the strong scent of blood had already alerted nearby wolves, which were now hurtling towards the location.

Han Wu quickly approached the fallen human's corpse, only to find that the three had taken everything valuable, leaving nothing of worth behind but a small sack containing some clothes. Just as he turned to leave, his gaze caught a small iron plate fastened to the man's waist, which, surprisingly, had been overlooked by the three assailants.

Some unknown alphabets were engraved on the iron plate, but Han Wu figured it might come in handy since the man had been carrying it. He took the plate, secured it to his own waist, and immediately set off in pursuit of the group.

Han Wu had only just left the area when a ravenous pack of wolves descended upon and completely devoured the corpse. In just three minutes, they left nothing but bones, effectively cleaning up the crime scene. He, meanwhile, diligently shadowed the group of three for half a day, learning much valuable information.

The most valuable information he had gleaned was confirmation that he was in a special hunting ground designed for upgrading an individual's level and title. He realized this after observing the trio take out a map and engage in an extensive discussion.

The map depicted the oval-shaped hunting ground, which was further divided into different smaller regions. There was a forest indicated by tree drawings, a sand region marked by small dots, a marshy region represented by circles of varying sizes, and several others.

The three individuals appeared to be engaged in a serious discussion concerning a particular cave marked on their map. Judging by their grim expressions, Han Wu deduced that the area was very dangerous—for them, anyway. It took a lot of convincing from the human to finally get the dwarf and the Blue Blood to agree to investigate the cave.

Han Wu carefully stalked them. Along the way, they encountered other groups, but no attacks occurred as all parties were equally matched in numbers or strength.

Before long, the three safely arrived at the cave. Once there, the human began to also boast about his recent accomplishments to the Blue Blood, all the while delegating every difficult and unpleasant task to the dwarf. The dwarf was visibly upset at this treatment.

As they stepped into the cave, Han Wu discreetly followed behind. The primary inhabitants of the caves weren't wolves, but instead bizarre creatures—spiders with wolf heads, known as wolf spiders. These creatures also seemed to be influenced by his Wolf Slayer title, because the instant they caught his scent, they aggressively moved to attack him.

Webs shot forth from the wolf spiders, aiming to ensnare him, but he effortlessly tore through them. While these creatures proved stronger than the average wolf, with each wolf spider possessing strength on par with an Elite life form, none of them posed a threat. Unfortunately for them, Han Wu's current abilities put him on par with a Lord life form, making him unstoppable.

He quickly dealt with them, and in doing so, obtained a new Iron title, the Spider Slayer. Equipping the title would increase his damage output towards spiders by 10% and set their default affinity to him to Hostile. The title also stated that Han Wu could unequip his Wolf Slayer title and replace it with Spider Slayer. Without hesitation, he agreed and proceeded to exchange his currently equipped titles.

Upon equipping the Spider Slayer title, Han Wu immediately detected a distinct change in the odor his body emitted and quickly deduced that this new scent would incite hostility in nearby spiders. With his title now switched, he continued to discreetly follow the group, efficiently eliminating every wolf spider that dared to obstruct his path.

With the help of Gene Recombination, he soon upgraded his title to Bronze. In addition to strengthening its current effects, it also granted him the Fireball skill. Fireball had a one-minute cooldown, and each time one was cast, it would consume a portion of the caster's stamina.

Han Wu initially dismissed the Fireball skill as useless, but that opinion quickly changed after he found that it was extremely useful in burning away the webs blocking his path, saving him a considerable amount of trouble. He proceeded deeper into the cave until he came upon a huge cavern. Inside, the three humanoids were locked in combat against the boss—a massive wolf spider that towered at two meters tall even without fully standing up. Its enormous body stretched four meters in length, yet it moved with surprising agility, continuously spitting out thick webs to prevent its opponents' escape.

The three could barely harm the wolf spider and, despite their efforts, couldn't even outrun it. They were quickly overwhelmed, captured in webs, and wrapped in cocoons before being dragged into the depths of the cave. Han Wu carefully trailed the beast, eventually reaching a particular section of the cave. Here, various human-sized cocoons hung suspended from the ceiling, revealing that this was the giant wolf spider's lair.

Clusters of white spider eggs lay scattered beneath the cocoons. Several of these eggs were visibly pulsating, indicating they were on the verge of hatching. However, Han Wu had no intention of allowing them to emerge and immediately unleashed a Fireball. The intense heat generated by the spell consumed most of the eggs, and it was then, from the direction the Fireball originated, that the massive wolf spider finally detected Han Wu's presence.

Enraged, the Unique wolf spider queen charged at Han Wu, its fangs bared, intent on tearing him to shreds. Han Wu, however, responded with a casual yawn and swung his fist in a relaxed, almost bored manner. With that simple punch, the massive wolf spider was instantly reduced to mince meat.

Having successfully slain a Silver wolf spider, Han Wu's title ranked up to Silver grade. This upgrade not only enhanced the benefits of his existing three skills but also granted him a powerful new ability: Summon Wolf Spiders. By exhausting some of his stamina, he could now summon ten to twenty Bronze wolf spiders to attack a designated enemy.

"Not bad," Han Wu muttered, quite pleased with the effects of the new skill.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 156 - Planning to Venture Outside

[1,041 words]

Chapter 156 - Planning to Venture Outside

The people trapped in the cocoons hanging from the ceiling heard movement below and started thrashing violently, trying to catch Han Wu's attention. He saw them clearly but kept himself hidden. He had not yet learned the language of this world, so rushing to save them would only expose him as an outsider.

Still, he didn't want to leave them to die. He needed information about this place, and these people might provide it. After a moment's thought, he launched a Fireball at the ceiling. The blast set part of the webbing alight, and he estimated it would take about ten seconds for the flames to reach the cocoons.

He slipped into a nearby hiding spot to observe the scene in safety. As predicted, the fire soon consumed one of the larger cocoons, and the human tumbled out, gasping for breath. He staggered upright and shouted the names of his companions toward the ceiling. Two cocoons shook in response.

The human quickly freed them, pulling each one down. After surviving the brutal battle, the Blue Blood appeared battered and collapsed into the human's arms, weeping. The dwarf, however, focused on the other cocoons still hanging above. He scanned them with sharp eyes and realized each one seemed to contain a different person.

Han Wu watched closely, assuming the dwarf would help rescue the others. Instead, the dwarf pulled out two axes and hurled one into a lightly trembling cocoon. The blade tore through it, and blood spilled from the opening. A weakened Tigerman fell out, still alive but barely clinging to life after the injury.

The dwarf stepped forward to strip the Tigerman of its possessions. The human and Blue Blood paused their recovery to assist. Within moments, the Tigerman had been robbed of everything valuable. Without hesitation, the dwarf swung his axe, ending its life instantly.

Han Wu watched them in shock. *They are bloody ruthless! They are supposed to be allies in this cave, yet they are killing without hesitation.*

The trio had no qualms about it. They killed and stole with eager greed. What they were doing was pure robbery. Still, the three moved with excitement, looting every piece of equipment they could find. Although the gear was mostly low quality, they knew they could sell it all for a good price if they gathered enough.

Moreover, many corpses wore spatial rings. The trio planned to find experts who could decrypt and extract whatever valuables lay inside. They hoped at least one ring held a fortune.

After opening all the cocoons and looting everything, the three left the cave with smiles. They hadn't slain the wolf-spider queen, but the haul made up for it.

Han Wu kept stalking them for another two days. During that time, the human took advantage of the Blue Blood's low spirits and, by constantly tending to her needs, managed to become her lover. Meanwhile, the dwarf seemed content on his own. He wore spatial rings on every finger and carried himself like a pompous noble.

The three soon decided to return. They wanted to exchange their loot for money as quickly as possible to feel secure. Han Wu had been waiting for this moment, but he had no intention of letting them leave. If they escaped, he'd have to find a new group to track, and the idea of starting over was too troublesome. As such, he decided to abduct one of them to stop them.

That night, the couple slept while the dwarf stood guard. Han Wu moved silently and captured the dwarf. When morning came, the couple discovered the dwarf was missing and searched the area around their camp. They grew worried when they found no trace of him.

They did not care if the dwarf lived or died but feared losing the spatial rings he wore. Those rings represented a large sum of money. Driven by greed, the two decided to stay and look for any sign of the dwarf in the hunting grounds.

Back in the cave, Han Wu bound the dwarf tightly with spider webs and stripped him of every piece of equipment. He interrogated the dwarf slowly, but neither could understand the other.

The dwarf kept shouting a string of random words. Han Wu guessed the dwarf was either begging for mercy or cursing him. Judging by his angry mood, Han Wu concluded it was the latter. He sighed and crushed the dwarf's skull with a single punch. Then silence fell over the cave once more.

Without the dwarf, Han Wu continued to follow the remaining two. Through their speech and behavior, he gradually learned parts of the foreign language. He also noticed that every action he took earned him titles.

For example, while cutting down trees to build a fire, he felled a tree trunk the size of his arm and earned an Iron title called Lumberjack. The title was useless because it only increased the speed of chopping trees.

Han Wu chose not to equip it but did not mind collecting more titles to gain information. As he stalked the two, he gathered extensive knowledge about this civilization's customs and inner workings.

Three months passed before Han Wu finally mastered the language of the hunters who frequented this place. He had already killed the human and the Blue Blood, taking their

identification plates from their waists. The plates revealed that the dwarf was a commoner, while the other two belonged to influential families. They had entered the hunting ground for sport, only to be slain by Han Wu.

Han Wu decided to wear the human's identification plate and attempt to leave. The moment he approached the gate, an alarm blared, and the guard summoned 30 muscular guards to capture him. Several other humanoid sentries also joined the pursuit.

He needed to conceal his strength, so he sprinted into the hunting ground's depths and swiftly eliminated the 30 pursuers. Now, he was facing a dilemma. He could not remain there forever. To enroll in Imperial College, he had to earn a high grade.

After a night of careful thought, an idea came to him. Since leaving legally was impossible, he resolved to disrupt the delicate balance of the hunting ground's ecosystem.

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[1,375 words]

Chapter 157 - Dismantler Mitts

Han Wu spent several days capturing wolves and wolf spiders before using Gene Recombination to create a massive wolf with nine tails, twenty-eight legs, and three heads. This mutated wolf had absorbed the genes of more than 1,000 wolves and hundreds of wolf spiders. It had grown as powerful as a Lord life form.

Along with its newfound power, it had gained a spark of intelligence. It no longer tolerated being confined to the hunting ground and rallied the other wolves to help bring down the wall.

Han Wu aided it from the shadows. Despite their hostility toward each other, they shared the same goal. Together, they managed to break a large hole through the wall, allowing a surge of wolves to escape. The chaos drew the attention of the guards, who rushed to contain the threat. With their focus diverted, the defenses around the gate weakened.

Seizing the opportunity, Han Wu slipped away and fled to a nearby town. There, he quickly sold off the equipment he had looted from those he had killed, earning enough money to live on his own for the time being. He then turned his efforts toward gathering information about this civilization.

Since the culture revolved around acquiring and upgrading titles, Han Wu named it the Title Civilization. As he delved deeper into its structure, Han Wu became fluent in their language and learned that he had first landed in the Wolf-Hunting Ground. This area held special significance, as it was also a designated Iron-rank training site.

The Title Civilization featured several such training sites, each categorized by rank: Iron, Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, and the highest, Diamond. With each rank increase, the strength of the life forms inside multiplied tenfold. Some training sites posed even greater challenges due to harsh environmental conditions.

Those who entered these special training sites to hunt were called adventurers. True to their name, they sought adventures. They ventured into the training sites for two main reasons: to upgrade themselves and to obtain resources.

Han Wu also learned that anyone who reached Level 100 earned a new title slot, with an additional slot awarded every 100 levels after that. The strongest individual in this civilization stood beyond Diamond rank, boasting seven empty title slots. They could equip seven titles at once, making them extraordinarily powerful.

Han Wu longed for that strength. He believed he could earn high marks by surpassing Diamond, but he knew the path would be difficult. At Level 42, he had a long journey ahead just to reach Bronze, let alone exceed Diamond.

The number of title slots did not alone determine one's power. The type of title mattered just as much. After some investigation, Han Wu discovered that titles gained from killing ordinary life forms ranked among the weakest, even when upgraded to Diamond. Their effects rarely justified the effort. The best titles and how to acquire them remained closely guarded secrets among the nobles.

Han Wu lacked a way to obtain those coveted titles, but as an invader, he had his own alternative methods. He was strong and had four powerful abilities at his disposal. He planned to use them to his advantage and rise quickly through the ranks of this civilization.

For convenience, Han Wu spent some money to secure an identification plate from the Adventurer Guild. With the plate in hand, he was officially recognized as an adventurer.

Due to recent events at the Wolf-Hunting Ground, Han Wu could not train there. In truth, he had no interest in going. The wolves and wolf spiders there were weak and offered little experience.

He needed to grow stronger as fast as possible, so he chose Greenland Forest, a higher-ranking Bronze training site. The hunting ground within it was home to Cat Demons, goblins, and minotaurs, all Bronze life forms. Some of the stronger ones even reached Silver or Gold.

However, Gold life forms were still weak compared to Han Wu, and he had little interest in hunting them. Unfortunately, Greenland Forest was the highest-ranked training site available to him. Adventurers with an Iron identification plate could only choose Bronze training sites at best. Choosing anything higher would raise unnecessary suspicions. If the Will of the Civilization detected him as an intruder, all his efforts would be wasted.

Han Wu gathered simple equipment and traveled for a day to reach the entrance of Greenland Forest. The area was noticeably more crowded than the Wolf-Hunting Ground. Many adventurers, including those with Silver identification plates, gathered here.

Native life forms also roamed the plaza connecting to the forest entrance. The plaza was a busy gathering point, with many adventurers selling and buying items and still others looking for team members.

“Minotaur horns! Selling cheap. One gold coin for a pair. Collect 100 pairs and earn the Minotaur Horn Collector title with the Title Scroll.”

“Selling grappling hooks made from the claws of Cat Demons—70 gold coins each!”

“Forming a party! Need one more with a powerful body to serve as the tank.”

“We have a warrior, archer, and an assassin. We only need a healer...”

Han Wu wasn't naive and walked past the crowd, ignoring every attempt to rope him into a party. *Why would I need a team for a place this small? They'd just leech off my experience for no reason.*

He pushed his way to the front of the gate, preparing to enter Greenland Forest when someone's shout caught his attention. “Dismantler Mitts! Selling Dismantler Mitts with the attached Dismantler title. Easily turn corpses into materials. Only 3,000 gold coins a pair!”

Han Wu turned and approached the seller. He had seen a human use a Dismantler to quickly harvest materials from a wolf corpse. Those materials could be traded for money or used in Title Scrolls to create special titles.

The mitts seemed useful, but Han Wu had little money on hand. Still, he decided to try his luck. “Boss, can you lower the price?”

The stall owner stared at him in shock. After years of selling Dismantler Mitts, no one had ever tried to haggle. The mitts had only one purpose, but they were nearly indispensable. He had no worries about finding customers. Thus, he scoffed and shooed Han Wu away. “Get lost. I don't haggle.”

Han Wu refused to give up and tried haggling once more. "I'm not asking for them for free. I just don't have enough money. How about this? I pay you 2,000 gold coins for a single Dismantler Mitt. That way, you don't sell at a loss. In fact, you earn 500 gold coins more on this deal."

The stall owner's eyes lit up at the offer. He had never considered selling Dismantler Mitts individually. They still functioned even if only one was worn, so there was no real reason they had to be sold as a pair.

He cleared his throat and sighed. "I wasn't planning to sell them individually, but since you're being sincere, I'm willing to go against my principles and sell you one."

Han Wu nodded, handed over 2,000 gold coins, and took the left Dismantler Mitt. He slipped it on and entered Greenland Forest without looking back.

The stall owner held the coins in his hand, chuckling as he called out a new sales pitch. "Dismantler Mitts for sale! 3,000 gold coins for a pair, or 2,000 for one! Get yours now!"

The adventurers listened to his pitch and asked for more details. After a brief explanation, many of the poorer ones handed over 2,000 gold coins each for a single Dismantler Mitt. In this way, the stall owner sold all one hundred pairs by the end of the day and earned even more than he had expected. He chuckled and made his way home in high spirits.

Meanwhile, Han Wu stepped into Greenland Forest and immediately found himself surrounded by goblins about 1.2 to 1.3 meters tall. Their skin came in various colors, but all shared the same vicious eyes. They shrieked and barreled toward Han Wu, brandishing their weapons.

"Don't blame me for bullying you when you clearly have no issue doing the same," Han Wu muttered with a chuckle and released the pressure of a Lord life form in response.

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[1,112 words]

Chapter 158 - Title Scroll

Han Wu's intimidating presence froze the goblins in place without him needing to lift a finger. For the first time, the fierce creatures showed signs of fear. They tried to flee, but their legs betrayed them, collapsing beneath their trembling bodies.

Han Wu remained still, relying on the new skill granted by his Spider Slayer title.

“Summon Wolf Spider,” he commanded. Fifteen wolf spiders appeared instantly, moving swiftly to attack the stunned goblins. They dispatched all of them in under five minutes.

Dim orbs of light floated from the fallen goblins into Han Wu’s body, triggering a level-up. Having slain more than ten goblins, he earned the Iron Goblin Slayer title. This title summoned a wooden bat as a weapon and set the goblins’ attitude toward him to Hostile. Han Wu planned to gain a powerful title in Greenland Forest, so he unequipped Silver Spider Slayer and replaced it with the Iron Goblin Slayer.

Next, he pulled out the Dismantler Mitt to collect 16 goblin finger bones from the corpses. Without a spatial ring, he stored the bones carefully in his rucksack, carrying them himself.

As he traveled, the hostile effect of his title drew repeated ambushes from goblins. Han Wu summoned a 30-centimeter wooden bat each time and fought them off with incredible speed, dispatching them effortlessly.

In just half a day, he had slain hundreds of goblins and collected 120 finger bones. His rucksack grew heavy with the bounty. Just as he considered leaving the forest to sell the bones, a group of four men blocked his path.

“Brat, hand over your stuff, or I will chop you.” The man standing before him was a fearsome warrior wielding a massive blade. He flashed his Silver identity plate, signaling his rank as one of the strongest adventurers in Greenland Forest. His team members wore Bronze identity plates, marking them as formidable opponents as well.

A team like theirs was nearly unstoppable in this forest. Solo adventurers rarely dared to provoke them. However, Han Wu was no ordinary fighter. Although he wore an Iron identity plate, it did not mean he was weak.

“Hey, do you have a spatial ring?” Han Wu asked the warrior instead of answering the threat.

The warrior arrogantly lifted his hand, revealing a spatial ring set with a large gem, and said haughtily, “I’m an expert at Silver rank. Of course I have one. See this? You’ve probably never seen a spatial ring with 10 cubic meters of space before, *hehehe*.”

His teammates laughed, mocking Han Wu’s supposed ignorance. Meanwhile, Han Wu remained unimpressed. Ten cubic meters felt small to him, but it was better than nothing. He needed a spatial ring badly.

With a swift motion, he summoned a 30-centimeter wooden bat and pointed it at the four men. “You’re unlucky to run into me. Hand over everything, and I’ll spare you. Resist, and I’ll bludgeon you to death.”

The four men froze briefly, then burst into louder laughter. The warrior laughed until tears formed. "Are you trying to make us laugh ourselves to death? Look around. It's four against one. How do you plan to rob us? With your Iron identity plate or your little stick?"

One of them chuckled. "Maybe he's trying to make us laugh ourselves to death so he can take everything."

The warrior laughed louder. "You might be right, Number Four. It would be easier for him to kill us with laughter than to attack us."

Han Wu looked at them silently before approaching the adventurer whom the warrior had called Number Four. He wasn't worried about Han Wu but instead continued taunting him, "What's wrong brat? You really want to fight against..."

Han Wu swung his bat and smashed the adventurer's head. The skull shattered instantly, spraying blood, bone fragments, and brain matter in all directions.

The warrior and his two companions stared in shock. *Is he really an Iron adventurer, the weakest rank? He's too strong!*

As their leader, the warrior was the first to react and ordered the other two, "What are you waiting for? Attack and avenge Number Four!"

His companions reacted instantly. The mage summoned his staff and launched a Fireball, while the assassin lunged at Han Wu with a dagger. Han Wu barely flinched. The assassin struck from behind, but Han Wu swung his wooden bat back and crushed the assassin's skull with ease. Then, he dodged the mage's Fireball with a smooth sidestep.

Fear crept into the warrior's mind. He couldn't avoid the Fireball like Han Wu had. *Is this Iron rank really just some disciple or scion from an influential family? Is he here just to experience the world?*

Unfortunately, the mage lacked the warrior's insight. With Fireball on cooldown, he shifted to ice magic, quickly forming an icicle to strike Han Wu. Before the spell could complete, however, Han Wu appeared beside him and crushed his head with a single blow.

In less than two minutes, the warrior had lost all his underlings. Defeated, he dropped his blade, knelt, and begged for mercy. "I'm sorry for being so arrogant and ignorant. Please, have mercy... Please, let me go!"

He slapped his face as he begged until his cheek swelled. Han Wu repeated, "Give me all your valuables and your spatial ring."

The warrior didn't want to yield but wanted to live. Han Wu had mercilessly killed his three underlings with just a wooden bat. Faced with no other choice, the warrior stripped naked and fled as soon as Han Wu permitted it.

Han Wu then examined the warrior's valuable items. He knew the warrior would find a way to seek revenge, but he wasn't worried. As a Lord life form, he was confident no number of opponents could threaten him. In fact, he welcomed the upcoming challenge.

While storing the equipment he could not use into his spatial ring, Han Wu noticed a valuable Gold Title Scroll tucked inside. The scroll outlined the steps to earn a Gold Monster Slayer title. It explained that Han Wu first had to collect 10 materials from Gold monsters to activate the scroll. The title could also be upgraded by absorbing more materials from Gold monsters.

Checking the warrior's bag, Han Wu found seven different Gold monster materials. He needed three more to complete the set. Then he recalled the information he had gathered before arriving here.

Three Gold-ranked monsters dwelled in the Greenland Forest: the Thunder Goblin, the Toxicat Demon, and the Minoking. If he managed to kill all three, he could complete the scroll. He happily stored the scroll back into the ring and set off to track down the monsters' traces.

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[1,109 words]

Chapter 159 - The Warrior's Revenge

The fleeing warrior did not leave Greenland Forest. Instead, he returned to a temporary shelter built by adventurers within the forest. This was where he had always sold stolen goods.

"Hey, isn't that Da Meng? What's with the ragged clothes? Did someone rob him?" The black merchants loitering near the entrance jeered and whispered among themselves when they spotted him.

Da Meng ignored their taunts and headed straight for the innermost part of the shelter. A large, well-renovated house stood there, its refined structure rising above the rough tents scattered around it. Inside lived the boss of the shelter—a Silver adventurer in name, but one whose strength rivaled that of a Gold rank.

The black merchants who operated in the area called him Boss Gold. He was a genius in his youth, but someone had betrayed and crippled him. With no hope of growing stronger, he had fled to the shelter in Greenland Forest to survive. Most of the black merchants backed him, so despite his circumstances, he was living a relatively comfortable life.

Da Meng knocked on the door, and a voice answered, "Come in."

He pushed the door open cautiously. Boss Gold looked at him and immediately understood his purpose.

"You look terrible," he said. "Let me guess. You want revenge. I'll make the pricing clear first. Iron adventurers cost 10 gold coins each. If they die in battle, you owe us 100 gold coins compensation. Bronze adventurers cost 500 gold coins, with a 5,000 gold coin fee if they fall. Silver adventurers go for 10,000 gold coins each. You do not have to pay for their deaths since that would be their fault."

Da Meng froze at the steep prices. Yet the urge for vengeance burned too fiercely after losing his companions and belongings. "Boss Gold, the one I want to kill is incredibly powerful. He tore through Bronze adventurers like they were nothing. Even Silver adventurers wouldn't last more than three rounds against him."

Da Meng had exaggerated, but he still underestimated Han Wu.

Boss Gold raised an eyebrow. "Is he really that strong? He must be a Gold adventurer as well. Why would someone like that be in Greenland Forest?"

Da Meng shrugged. "He's not a Gold adventurer but an Iron one. His speed and power are abnormal. I saw him summon a goblin's wooden bat himself. He crushed my teammate's head with it."

Boss Gold stood quickly. "An Iron adventurer? Impossible. Not even I could crush a Bronze adventurer's head with a goblin's wooden bat. Either you're lying, or he's hiding his true strength."

Da Meng stammered, "B-Boss Gold, I swear I'm telling the truth."

Seeing Da Meng's desperation, Boss Gold believed him. "If that's true, I want to meet him and see if he's as strong as you say."

He then summoned five Silver adventurers to follow him outside. They soon reached the spot where Da Meng had attacked Han Wu, but no one was there. They searched and found the tracks Han Wu had left behind.

Following the trail, Boss Gold led the group deeper into the forest. They hadn't gone far when the sounds of a fight reached them. He looked ahead and spotted a lone figure surrounded by goblins.

Da Meng pointed urgently. "That's him! He killed my team and took my equipment!"

Boss Gold motioned for his companions to stay quiet while he studied the battle unfolding before them. His eyes narrowed with surprise as he spotted a goblin glowing with white light at the center of the horde. It was also gripping a massive blade.

He recognized the monster instantly. It was the Thunder Goblin, the most powerful goblin in the Greenland Forest. The blade it wielded carried the power of lightning. Even a glancing blow could paralyze its target and cripple their speed. Many adventurers had fallen to that weapon, including Silver ones.

Boss Gold had clashed with all three Gold monsters in the forest before, including this one, but every battle had ended in a stalemate. So when he saw Han Wu surrounded by the goblin horde under the Thunder Goblin's command, he assumed the outcome was already decided.

Boss Gold sighed. "Looks like you won't be avenging your team after all. He's going to die at the Thunder Goblin's hands."

Da Meng's eyes burned with killing intent as he watched Han Wu fight. The battle dragged on, but something about it unsettled Boss Gold. The Iron adventurer was far too strong. With each strike, Han Wu brought down another goblin. Even the Bronze Goblin Captains fell in a single blow.

The Silver Elemental Goblin Captains survived Han Wu's blow, but the strike left them severely wounded. Without immediate treatment, they would surely perish. Only then did Boss Gold finally accept Da Meng's claim. Han Wu looked nothing like an ordinary human while fighting against the goblins.

The real battle started as Boss Gold and the others watched with full focus. Goblins fell in waves, each one releasing a dim light that flowed into Han Wu. The experience points carried within the light surged through him, pushing his level up to 76. At the same time, the sheer number of goblins he had slain caused his Goblin Slayer title to advance to Silver, unlocking two new effects.

[Effect 1: Stone Toss. Instantly summon a stone in the user's hand to hurl.]

[Effect 2: Magma Toss. Instantly summon a blob of magma in the user's hand to throw.]

The two new effects gave Han Wu fresh ways to attack from a distance. He swung his wooden bat with wild energy, launching stones and magma at the remaining goblins.

Many fell instantly, their heads shattered by stones or their bodies engulfed by magma. Others scrambled to extinguish the fire spreading across their clothes.

The Thunder Goblin grew frantic. Every goblin under its command had been a handpicked elite, recruited from the strongest nests across the region. Yet now, Han Wu was slaughtering them with ease.

If word of this massacre reached the other two races, its reputation would be shattered beyond repair. When it saw Han Wu kill the sixty-third goblin, something in it broke. With a furious roar, it ordered the remaining goblins to clear a path.

The Thunder Goblin swung its blade in wide arcs while chanting in a strange, guttural tongue. As it advanced toward Han Wu, thunderclouds gathered overhead, crackling with surging lightning. A wicked smile spread across its face as it brought the blade down in a sharp motion. At that instant, a bolt of lightning split the sky and struck Han Wu directly on the head.

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[1,218 words]

Chapter 160 - Second Robbery

“He’s dead for sure,” Boss Gold muttered under his breath. He had faced the Thunder Goblin many times and knew how strong its lightning was. The power of that lightning could repel even Gold adventurers, let alone Iron ones.

Da Meng watched the lightning strike on Han Wu but held back from celebrating. Han Wu had not fallen. The lightning faded, and although his body showed signs of scorching, he hadn’t collapsed.

“How is that possible?!” Boss Gold exclaimed.

The Thunder Goblin was surprised too. It started doubting whether its weapon had malfunctioned. Han Wu scoffed at the weak lightning. Having spent time with Qin Shuang, he had learned much about lightning and its true power. The goblin’s lightning was far inferior to Qin Shuang’s. It was not strong enough to break through his defenses.

While the Thunder Goblin was still confused, Han Wu turned his attention to the weaker goblins instead of attacking it directly. He had a reason. To advance his Goblin Slayer title from Silver to Gold, he needed to kill not just one Gold goblin but also a large number of Silver and lower-ranked ones.

Han Wu moved like a phantom, bludgeoning goblins to death until his title hit a bottleneck. He knew the moment had come and fixed his gaze onto the Thunder Goblin. Panic washed over the monster as it summoned lightning again, but it soon found Han Wu dodging every bolt with ease.

Han Wu was faster than the lightning. The Thunder Goblin realized too late that the human had been hiding his true strength. Han Wu appeared behind it and slammed the weak wooden bat against its head.

The powerful strike shattered the wooden bat and cracked open the Thunder Goblin's skull. The monster survived the blow, but Han Wu, drawing on his Lord-level strength, delivered a fierce punch. That single hit crushed the Thunder Goblin's head into fragments.

Han Wu's hand was stained with green blood. He grabbed a cloth and wiped the sticky mess away. The remaining goblins, seeing their leader fall, scattered in fear. Han Wu did not pursue them; his mission had been achieved.

A large ball of light emerged from the Thunder Goblin's body and flowed into Han Wu. The surge of experience points pushed him all the way to Level 100. Then, the energy condensed, creating a new empty slot for equipping an additional title. Now, he could wield two titles at once.

At the same time, his Silver Goblin Slayer title transformed into Gold. He also gained a new skill called Summon Stormfront Blade, which allowed him to summon lightning through the blade temporarily.

Han Wu summoned the Stormfront Blade and tested its power. It proved far superior to the wooden bat. Finally, he held a weapon worthy of his strength. Next, he used the Dismantler Mitt and dismantled the Thunder Goblin's corpse, collecting another goblin finger bone and a rare Gold material called Thunder Goblin's Hair.

This item was what he needed, so he stored it safely in his spatial ring alongside other treasures. Now, only two more Gold materials remained to fulfill the requirements for the Gold Monster Slayer title.

Boss Gold and the others watched in disbelief. They could not comprehend how strong the Iron newbie was. It was one thing to resist lightning, but to kill the Thunder Goblin with a single blow was astonishing. Although the Thunder Goblin did not focus on defense, its resilience was still expected to be high for a Gold monster.

How strong must Han Wu be to crush a head with a single punch? Boss Gold realized Han Wu far surpassed his own strength and exchanged a knowing glance with Da Meng. Without a word, he made it clear he would not fulfill Da Meng's request.

Da Meng was also spooked. If he had truly understood Han Wu's power, he never would have dared seek revenge for his team. A Gold Title Scroll held great value, but it was nothing compared to the worth of his own life.

They tried to slip away quietly as Han Wu approached. Fear gripped them, and they struggled to control their breathing. Han Wu had killed the Gold Thunder Goblin in one blow; there was no doubt he could do the same to them.

Luck was not on their side. As Han Wu passed, he sensed their presence and spotted them hiding in the bushes. At the same time, he recognized the warrior that he had spared earlier.

A smile crossed Han Wu's face at the unexpected chance. *Not bad. I let him go after he handed over the Gold Title Scroll, and now he's already brought me more people to rob. Not bad at all. I almost feel bad about it.*

"Why don't you come out now?" Han Wu said calmly.

Boss Gold and the others wanted nothing more than to bolt, but the Stormfront Blade in Han Wu's hand froze them in place. Its crackling arcs of lightning made their hair stand on end. With no other option, they slowly stood and stepped out from the brushes.

"Hand over everything. Clothes, equipment, treasures. Don't make me kill you," Han Wu brandished the Stormfront Blade, lightning crackling along its edge.

The sight terrified them, and they reluctantly removed their equipment. Still, Han Wu was not satisfied. He noticed their spatial rings remained on their fingers. "Take off your spatial rings as well."

Boss Gold's heart sank. All his savings were stored inside that ring. Surrendering it meant losing years of hard work. "Sir, please leave us something. Don't push us too far."

Unfortunately, his threat fell on deaf ears. "I said take them off. Don't make me say it again."

As Han Wu spoke, he swung his Stormfront Blade and sliced off Boss Gold's left arm. The strike carried a paralyzing effect, so Boss Gold could only watch in horror as his arm dropped to the ground. The pain didn't reach his brain until several seconds later, and when it did, it came like a wave of fire.

"Okay, I'll take it off!" he shouted, fighting through the pain as he stripped away all his valuables. He feared Han Wu would sever another limb if he hesitated for even a second longer. The rest of his underlings quickly removed their spatial rings, desperate to avoid the same fate.

Han Wu waved his hand, signaling them to leave once they no longer carried anything valuable. Boss Gold stared in disbelief. Usually, robbers killed their victims to prevent witnesses.

However, Han Wu had other plans. He wanted these men to escape, hoping they would rally reinforcements seeking revenge. That way, he could rob them all in one sweep. He threatened them with a cold smile, "What's wrong? Do you want me to send you off?"

"No, no need," Boss Gold stammered, terror driving him to grab his severed arm and flee with his underlings.

Han Wu watched them disappear, then bent down to gather the dropped items. He inspected their spatial rings and found a mountain of treasure that made him rich overnight. Among the spoils were five Title Scrolls: three Silver, one Gold, and one Platinum.

He unfurled the Platinum Title Scroll, and his eyes widened with excitement. "Now, this is an amazing title!"

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[1,085 words]

Chapter 161 - Platinum Title: Genocider

Boss Gold had left brimming with confidence but returned in utter defeat. The black merchants in the temporary shelter kept silent, wary of provoking him further. His arm had been reattached after emergency treatment, but his pride remained fractured.

Da Meng opened his mouth to speak, but Boss Gold raised a hand and pointed straight at him. "Drag this bastard out and beat him to death."

"Boss Gold! Have mercy! I didn't know he was that strong!" Da Meng cried out, trying to plead his case, but Boss Gold wouldn't hear it. Moments later, Da Meng's wails echoed from outside.

Boss Gold sank onto his bed, his gaze distant as he replayed the moment Han Wu had robbed them. He recalled every detail before rising abruptly, his voice steady with certainty. "That brat tricked us. He must hold a title that grants immunity to lightning. That's why he could ignore the Thunder Goblin's attacks."

One of his underlings spoke up. "But Boss Gold, he's incredibly strong too. He crushed the Thunder Goblin's head with a single punch."

Boss Gold sneered. "That means he has a title that grants him immense strength. That's also why he didn't kill us. If he could, he wouldn't have let us escape."

His underlings didn't buy it, but none dared speak up. Boss Gold had suffered the greatest loss. He had lost years of savings, and the blow weighed heavily on him. One careless word would earn them the same fate as Da Meng.

Seeing their silence, Boss Gold assumed they were convinced. His stubbornness flared as he launched into a string of commands. "It all makes sense now. That brat dared to trick me. How arrogant! Spread out and search for any trace of him. If anyone hears anything, report back at once. I'll get back what he stole from me!"

His underlings didn't argue. They scattered to carry out his orders, while the black merchants in the shelter stirred, searching for any clue that could lead them to Han Wu.

Meanwhile, Han Wu had entered the Cat Demons' territory. Unlike goblins, these creatures posed more of a challenge due to their speed and skill in ambush tactics. Agile and elusive, they were notoriously difficult to catch.

However, they were no real threat to Han Wu. As a Lord life form, he didn't find their speed difficult to handle. Within moments, he dispatched ten of them and obtained the Iron Cat Demon Slayer title.

The title had two effects. The first increased his movement speed, and the second automatically set all Cat Demons' affinity with him to Hostile. This was the first title he had acquired with a passive effect. He slotted it into his second title slot and felt a slight surge in speed.

At the same time, his thoughts turned to the Platinum title. After reading the scroll's contents, his goal changed. He no longer focused solely on completing the Gold Monster Slayer title. Now, he also aimed to meet the requirements listed in the Platinum Title Scroll, which described the path to obtaining the Platinum Genocider title.

To obtain it, he needed three Diamond titles earned by exterminating three different races. Conveniently, three distinct races currently inhabited Greenland Forest.

When Han Wu first read the scroll, he scoffed at the idea. Exchanging three Diamond titles for one Platinum title felt absurd. Only a fool would make that trade. But his opinion changed as soon as he saw the Genocider title's effects. They were too enticing to ignore, so he swore to complete the requirements at all costs.

The first effect of the title would be unlocked after merging three Diamond titles related to three different races. This effect, called Genocider Weapon, allowed the wielder to manifest a special weapon in various forms, all capable of absorbing one-thousandth of a slain target's strength. While the percentage seemed negligible, Han Wu was confident that, with enough kills, the effect would become terrifying.

The title's power didn't stop there. It could be upgraded. Each time it absorbed a new Diamond title from a different race, it would either grow stronger or gain an additional effect. However, Han Wu had no way of knowing what those effects would be until he upgraded the title again in the future.

He looked forward to that moment. Since he was not a native life form, he faced a unique advantage. The native life forms found it difficult to obtain a Diamond title by killing a specific race because they had to enter training sites where Diamond monsters roamed and personally defeat one. These training sites, at minimum Platinum rank, were death traps for anyone too weak.

Han Wu was different, thanks to Gene Recombination. If he could capture enough monsters in this Bronze training site, he could create a Diamond monster himself and kill it.

With that in mind, he doubled down on his efforts. Relying on his overwhelming strength, he soon tracked down the Gold Toxicat, killed it, and collected the Toxicat's Poison Gland, the Gold material it dropped. Next, he started capturing large numbers of Cat Demons. After enough experimentation with Gene Recombination, he finally created a Platinum Cat Demon with fifty tails, sixteen legs, and three heads.

The newly formed Platinum Cat Demon struggled to control its grotesque body, giving Han Wu the perfect opportunity to sever all three heads and upgrade his Cat Demon Slayer title to Platinum. Unfortunately, since the creature had been formed by fusing many lesser Cat Demons, it dropped only a heap of Bronze materials.

Armed with this experience, he captured more Cat Demons. After three days, he managed to create a Diamond Cat Demon. He killed it while it still struggled to control its new body and upgraded his title to Diamond.

The Diamond Cat Demon Slayer title granted powerful abilities. It greatly increased Han Wu's speed, set the Cat Demons' affinity with him to Nemesis, enhanced his combat skills with Cat Demon Claw, and allowed him to summon a Gold Toxicat to fight alongside him.

Even so, Han Wu found the Diamond title underwhelming. Its summoning ability was limited to a single Gold Toxicat, which wasn't especially impactful. That was when he realized something important: titles earned from slaying monsters weren't particularly valuable. The strong titles were obtained from different Title Scrolls.

Han Wu spent five more days upgrading his Goblin Slayer title to Diamond. With that complete, he only had one race left to focus on—the minotaurs.

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Chapter 162 - Don't Make Me Repeat Myself

[1,253 words]

Chapter 162 - Don't Make Me Repeat Myself

The minotaurs were humanoid, but they were still classified as monsters. Han Wu felt sympathy for them, yet that did not stop him from killing them. Compared to goblins and Cat Demons, minotaurs possessed far greater strength. Their bodies were powerful, and their temper was extremely volatile.

A regular minotaur's strength matched that of an Elite life form. Still, they stood no chance against Han Wu, a Lord life form with two Diamond titles. He summoned the Gold Toxicat through his Diamond Cat Demon Slayer title and ten goblin guards through his Diamond Goblin Slayer title.

He relied on these summons to support him in battle while he personally dealt the killing blows. In just one day, Han Wu decapitated the Minoking with the Stormfront Blade. Using his Dismantler Mitt, he harvested the Gold material from Minoking's horn.

With that, he had finally collected all ten Gold materials required for the Gold Monster Slayer title. He tossed all of them into the Gold Title Scroll, and a golden light burst forth, enveloping him. He noticed the Gold title now appeared in his interface.

Han Wu unequipped the Diamond Cat Demon Slayer and equipped the Gold Monster Slayer title. A warm sensation spread through his body, and his strength rose with it. Although the increase in strength barely registered, given that he was a Lord life form with already formidable strength, even that miniscule increase meant that the power from Monster Slayer was considerable.

"Interesting." He nodded and studied the effects of the new title.

[Effect 1: Massively increases the user's strength.]

[Effect 2: Summons 10 Gold monsters in battle, matching the material used to create this title.]

[Effect 3: Allows permanent sacrifice of the Gold monsters within the title to greatly boost the user's strength for a short time.]

Han Wu nodded with satisfaction. This title was truly powerful. Though only Gold rank, its effects far surpassed the Diamond titles he had gained by killing monsters.

This was the real value of Title Scrolls. Now, he eagerly anticipated testing the strength of the Platinum Genocider title. Without pause, he began using Gene Recombination on the minotaurs while summoning the Gold Minoking to help him rally them.

Thanks to his spy's efforts, Han Wu's efficiency skyrocketed. In just one day, he produced a Platinum minotaur with twenty legs and thirty-two pairs of horns. The newly formed minotaur struggled to adjust to its new body, so Han Wu ended its suffering with the tried-and-true method of severing its head while it staggered.

Over the next two days, he produced a Diamond minotaur. The pitiful monster had barely begun to move when he ended its life as well. With this method, Han Wu upgraded his Minotaur Slayer title to Diamond.

After killing the two powerful minotaurs, he reached Level 100 again by absorbing the balls of experience they left behind. As before, the experience gained at Level 100 converted into an empty title slot, allowing him to equip a third title.

Han Wu wasted no time. After obtaining his third Diamond title, he pulled out the Platinum Scroll and placed all three Diamond titles inside.

In that instant, a 100-meter-diameter sphere of killing intent and bloodlust erupted around him with the Platinum Title Scroll at its center. The air turned frigid, the temperature plunging several degrees as if the season itself had changed. The surrounding life forms scattered, fleeing the oppressive bloodlust as if terrified they would be the next to die.

In the heavy, unsettling stillness that followed, a single blob of black water rose from the Platinum Title Scroll and drifted into Han Wu's body. The icy surge that followed made him shudder, and the jolt snapped him wide awake.

He opened his interface at once and equipped the Platinum Genocider title, which granted him the power to summon the Genocider Weapon at will.

He willed it, and a blob of black water appeared in his hand. With only his thoughts, he reshaped the water into a blade, then a spear, then a massive sword. He shifted its form rapidly, realizing the water could transform into anything he could imagine.

Finally, he settled on a greatsword. Its menacing presence suited him well. Eager to test its power, he walked without direction until he spotted a wandering minotaur and killed it with his new weapon.

At the moment the minotaur died, a surge of pure energy coursed through the greatsword and flowed into Han Wu's body. Though the amount was miniscule, its purity allowed him to absorb it immediately without any need for refinement. This was Genocider's unique trait of absorbing a thousandth of the victim's Life Energy. Given time, he could amass enough to greatly boost his power.

Han Wu nodded with satisfaction. He had slain all three monster races within Greenland Forest, so it was time to leave. As he moved toward the exit, footsteps echoed from every direction. He looked up to see numerous figures surrounding him.

“You brat, we had a hell of a time tracking you down,” shouted Boss Gold, the leader of the mob.

Han Wu glanced at their identity plates and quickly gauged their strength. The group included eleven Silver, eighty Bronze, and twenty Iron adventurers. It was the largest force Boss Gold could recruit.

“You bastard. Don’t think staying quiet will save you. Hand over everything you’ve got, or I’ll beat it out of you!” he threatened.

Han Wu replied coolly, “Oh? Did you manage to reattach that arm?”

Boss Gold’s face flushed with shame. Losing his arm to Han Wu was the deepest humiliation he had ever suffered. “I’ve been more than courteous. Everyone, beat him up! But don’t kill him!”

The adventurers advanced slowly. Five Silver members fell back, choosing to summon monsters rather than engage directly. Han Wu let out a soft sigh. There was no point talking anymore. These people wouldn’t leave him alone unless he taught them a lesson they’d never forget.

His figure blurred as he charged into the crowd, and heads fell beneath his greatsword’s deadly arcs. Within moments, he had slain twenty adventurers.

Boss Gold’s eyes widened in shock. He had believed Han Wu’s titles only reflected lightning resistance and raw strength. No one expected him to move that fast.

“Fall back!” he hollered. “Use ranged attacks to suppress him! Summon your monsters!”

The adventurers obeyed and summoned a lot of monsters. Most were too weak to last more than a single blow. Once again, Han Wu charged into the fray and decapitated twenty more in a blur of motion. His brutal efficiency left the adventurers horrified.

One of them cried out, “Run! Run or you’ll die!”

Panic took hold, and the adventurers scattered, praying Han Wu wouldn’t be fast enough to chase them all down. Unfortunately, Han Wu had other plans. He activated his Gold Monster Slayer title, summoned ten Gold monsters, and commanded them to hunt down the fleeing survivors. Naturally, the Gold monsters easily subdued and captured the adventurers.

Boss Gold also froze at the sight of the monsters. He himself could only fight one at a time, so it became evident he had lost. He realized too late that provoking Han Wu was a grave mistake.

Han Wu stepped forward, a cold chuckle escaping him. "What did you say just now? Hand over everything you've got. Don't make me repeat myself. Oh, nothing left? Then I guess you'll pay with your life."

Han Wu swung his greatsword mercilessly.

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[865 words]

Chapter 163 - Gold Training Site

None of the captured adventurers dared fight back after watching Han Wu decapitate Boss Gold. The latter had already been the strongest among them, so they had no hope of defeating Han Wu on their own. On top of that, the ten Gold monsters were still watching them closely, leaving no room for risk.

"Don't try anything foolish. Hand over everything you have." Han Wu ordered them to strip, then noticed the five Silver adventurers were missing. They had managed to escape.

He didn't mind. Since they had managed to slip away under his watch, it simply meant that they had the luck and skill to deserve it. In fact, he welcomed the idea of them coming back for revenge one day. He wouldn't mind collecting more loot.

The captives surrendered all their valuables. Their equipment alone piled into a small mountain. Han Wu also collected nearly 10,000 ingredients and materials, including two Gold items. He stored everything in his spatial ring and paused to consider what to do with the adventurers.

He was ready to leave. The adventurers were too frightened to chase him or seek revenge, which meant they no longer held any use for him. As an invader, Han Wu had no reason to show mercy and decided to extract every last bit of value by cutting them down and absorbing their Life Energy with his greatsword.

Without hesitation, he swung his weapon. Those in the back could see what was coming but had no power to stop it. All they could do was scream and curse at him for going back on his word. They had done as he asked, only to be killed anyway.

“I told you to give me everything. I never said I’d let you live,” Han Wu muttered after the final blow. However, none of the adventurers were alive to hear it.

He could feel his body growing a little stronger, and the improvement left him satisfied. After hastily cleaning up the area, he sprinted toward the exit and made his way to a merchant group to offload the loot he had collected during his stay in Greenland Forest.

He found a sizable merchant group and laid out his goods for them. The person in charge stared in disbelief, his jaw dropping as he took in the sheer amount. He suspected Han Wu had wiped out a guild of 500 adventurers. Nevertheless, the merchants valued profit above all, so they offered Han Wu a fair price.

Han Wu was in a hurry to reach the next training site and gather information, so he didn’t even bother to negotiate. He sold everything at the offered rate. The merchant, thrilled by the deal, was already imagining how his superiors would heap praise on him for securing such a major transaction.

Once the transaction was complete, the merchant handed Han Wu a card loaded with 820,000 gold coins. The card also served as the merchant group’s VIP pass, granting holders a flat 5% discount on all their items.

Han Wu smiled as he pocketed the card and left for good. Checking his map, he decided to test his luck at the Gold training sites. The nearest one lay less than 50 kilometers from Greenland Forest.

Han Wu chose to travel by cart and arrived at the Gold training site later that night. After checking his map, he confirmed that he had reached the right destination, the Sky Palace. Despite its grand name, the training site was actually a towering seven-floor pagoda. Each massive floor housed a single race of monsters, imprisoned on their designated level.

According to legend, anyone who cleared all seven floors flawlessly in a single attempt would receive the Sky Palace’s blessing, which was said to be a coveted Diamond title. No one had managed to conquer the challenge so far yet though.

“Seven floors, seven races. Interesting.” Han Wu tilted his head up at the towering pagoda and let out a low whistle. The thought of venturing inside to hunt monsters and grow stronger stirred his excitement.

Still, he had to visit the Adventurer Guild to raise his rank before entering the Sky Palace. The administrators drove off anyone with an Iron identity plate, even if they were only passing by on the nearby street. Those without sufficient strength were strictly forbidden from stepping into the area.

In the end, Han Wu spent 1,000 gold coins to upgrade his rank to Silver. He studied his new identity plate, admiring its polished gleam. With this, he could now access the Gold training site.

Han Wu stepped into the training site, and the familiar buzz of a bustling plaza welcomed him. Adventurers filled the space, hawking their wares or calling out to recruit new teammates.

“Third floor of the Sky Palace! A veteran will lead the way, so you don’t need to worry. Secure your spot for just 10,000 gold coins!”

“Gold half-dragon skeleton! Looks great in any hall. Want one, brother?”

“Platinum Title Scroll! Limited stock—get yours now!”

Han Wu’s attention snapped toward the voice shouting about the Platinum Title Scroll. He stepped toward the stall, curious to see what it offered.

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[985 words]

Chapter 164 - Half-Dragon’s Lament

Han Wu pushed his way to the front of the stall and saw a variety of ingredients laid out for sale. His eyes quickly locked onto the shimmering Title Scroll displayed in the center. Many adventurers shared his interest, their gazes filled with greed.

“Hey, name your price. I want to buy it,” one shouted.

“This Platinum Title Scroll is reserved by the Gull Guild. Who dares challenge that?” another growled.

“Hmph! Don’t get ahead of yourselves. Our Fierce Tiger Clan will tear you apart if you try anything.”

The adventurers argued loudly before turning their attention to the stall owner. “Speak. How much are you selling it for?”

The stall owner sighed heavily. “This Title Scroll is a family heirloom. I never planned to sell it, but an emergency forced my hand...”

Some sharp-eyed adventurers saw through the act and snarled, “Cut the pity act. How much?”

The stall owner dropped the pretense and named his price. “I’m not asking for money.”

Confused murmurs spread through the crowd. “What? You don’t want money? Then what do you want?”

“I want to trade it,” the stall owner said. “Specifically, for the Foresight Crystal Ball held by the Light Palace Lord on the third floor. It’s a guaranteed drop if you defeat him. Hand me that Crystal Ball, and I’ll give you this Title Scroll.”

“What? Are you insane? The Light Palace Lord on the third floor is a Platinum monster. Even ordinary Platinum adventurers wouldn’t be able to take it down.”

“Forget it. This guy’s clearly delusional if he thinks the Light Palace Lord is easy prey.”

A good number of adventurers walked away the moment they heard the outrageous demand. Those who remained belonged to powerful guilds. They were strong enough to have a shot at defeating the monster, but they weren’t about to commit without knowing what the scroll offered.

If the title was valuable, hunting the Light Palace Lord would be worth the risk. If it was worthless, the mission would drain their resources and likely ruin them. Han Wu lingered as well, eager to see what the title held. Under their insistence, the stall owner carefully unfurled the scroll and revealed the title.

[Platinum Title: Planeswalker]

[Effect 1: Gain access to a personal space that bypasses all restrictions. Usable at any time.]

[Effect 2: Point Teleportation. Allows teleportation to any previously explored location. Energy cost scales with distance.]

[Effect 3: ??? (Details unlock after equipping the title).]

Two overwhelmingly powerful effects and one unknown—this was the strength of the Platinum Planeswalker title. Everyone present understood that the first two effects alone made Planeswalker a top-tier support title. Those who equipped it could travel anywhere at will, a crucial advantage for guild mobilization.

The guilds moved quickly to prepare a siege on the third floor, aiming to hunt down the Light Palace Lord and seize the Platinum Title Scroll at all costs.

Han Wu wanted the title too. With it, he could save a tremendous amount of time. He had only one year in this civilization, and four months had already slipped away. Time was running short.

I have to get it, he thought. If I can't hunt down the Light Palace Lord, I'll just kill whoever obtains the title and claim it by force.

With his decision made, Han Wu stepped into the Sky Palace. Since it was his first time here, he could only access the first floor. Instantly, he was transported into a ruined palace, its once grand halls littered with shattered decorations. Torn paintings hung on cracked walls, broken pillars bore faded engravings, and dragon-shaped statues lay in pieces.

He looked past the decorations and spotted a lone half-dragon in the distance. The first floor served as a prison for half-dragons. Despite their humanoid form, the civilization classified them as monsters, much like minotaurs.

Han Wu paid no mind to the civilization's labels. He raised his greatsword and struck without hesitation. The half-dragon fell in a single blow. At that moment, a progress bar appeared in his vision. He instantly recognized it as the key to reaching the second floor. He could only ascend once the bar reached 100%. Each half-dragon killed added 0.1%, meaning he had to slay 999 more.

"Fine," he muttered. "I'll kill them all and grow stronger along the way."

He started exploring the palace, gradually delving deeper into its depths. Along the way, he encountered many half-dragons. They patrolled in groups, each one exceptionally strong. Half-dragons were unique life forms that naturally controlled lightning. Many could unleash one or two lightning-based attacks that significantly slowed Han Wu's hunting pace.

To speed up his progress, Han Wu summoned ten Gold monsters to assist him. With their help, his advancement accelerated. After killing the 100th half-dragon, he earned the Silver Half-Dragon's Lament title.

It granted two effects. The first was called Half Dragonification. The second set all half-dragons' affinity with him to Hostile. Intrigued by the first effect, Han Wu equipped it immediately to see what changes it would bring to his body.

Upon activation, a familiar surge of power rushed through him. He transformed, growing half a meter taller as dense white scales covered his skin. His hands shifted into claws, their surface now a deep, glossy black.

Han Wu smiled when he noticed the color. The black on his claws was condensed Dark Energy. The title had partially unlocked his sealed powers. In effect, his Black Dragon

King Transformation had used the title to trick the Will of the Title Civilization into manifesting within him.

Now, the Black Dragon King Transformation was officially recognized as part of this civilization's powers. However, Half Dragonification was too weak to sustain more than a fraction of it. If he wanted to wield a greater share of that power, he would have to strengthen the title quickly. Fortunately, he had a talent for that.

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[1,081 words]

Chapter 165 - Half-Dragon Bakir

To upgrade the Silver Half-Dragon's Lament to Gold, Han Wu needed to kill 100 Silver half-dragons and one Gold half-dragon. For ordinary adventurers, this task would depend heavily on luck. Finding a Gold half-dragon in the vast palace was exceptionally difficult. Only a rare few talented half-dragons could ever hope to reach Gold. Even then, defeating one was no easy feat.

Han Wu had a solution. Thanks to Gene Recombination, he could synthesize Gold, Platinum, or even Diamond half-dragons as long as he had enough half-dragons to use as materials.

He ordered his ten Gold monsters to capture as many half-dragons as possible and used Gene Recombination on them. In just half a day, the world's first half-dragon with four tails and eight claws came into existence. As it struggled to adjust to its new body, Han Wu struck it down with his greatsword and obtained the Gold title.

The new title did not grant him any new skills but instead strengthened his existing ones. When he used Half Dragonification again, he noticed both his arms had turned completely black, now resistant to most elemental and physical attacks.

Elated, he set his sights on fully unlocking the Black Dragon King Transformation here in the Title Civilization. Achieving that could elevate him to a High Lord life form. Driven by this goal, he started hunting every half-dragon he encountered.

Three days passed as he continued his relentless slaughter. He had killed so many that the half-dragons' default affinity toward him shifted to Nemesis. Any half-dragon that spotted him would launch a reckless attack, caring little for its own survival.

This worked to his advantage, drawing even more half-dragons into his path. Among them was Bakir, the strongest half-dragon on this floor and their undisputed king, who now also launched an attack against him.

Bakir towered several times over a typical half-dragon, was a master of lightning skills, and possessed sharp intelligence. When it saw Han Wu cutting down half-dragons left and right, it flew into a rage and ordered the others to stop approaching.

With no more half-dragons left to kill, Han Wu turned his attention to Bakir itself. As a Platinum monster, Bakir possessed formidable strength. Han Wu activated Half Dragonification and wielded his Genocider-crafted greatsword, yet he was surprised to discover that their power was evenly matched.

At the same time, Bakir sensed the blood of the Great Dragons coursing through Han Wu's veins. Half-dragons were said to descend from unions between Great Dragons and humans, and they held that bloodline in deep reverence. Bakir saw a chance to lead the half-dragons out of their prison. It recognized Han Wu's extraordinary skill and the strength of his Great Dragon heritage.

As their king, Bakir's lifelong goal was to free all half-dragons from the cursed Sky Palace. Still, despite being a Platinum monster, Bakir had never found a way to escape using only the strength of half-dragons. Han Wu's arrival gave it new hope.

"Human, let us cease fighting and talk," Bakir proposed. "I want to negotiate."

Han Wu lowered his greatsword but remained wary. Bakir did not press and sat down, explaining the plight of the half-dragons and its plan. "My life is yours to command if you agree to free the half-dragons from the Sky Palace's prison."

Han Wu scoffed. "And what if I go back on my word? I could kill you now and leave the rest to rot."

"I'm afraid of that. But I have no other choice. As their king, I'm prepared to give everything for even a sliver of hope," Bakir answered truthfully.

Han Wu felt a flicker of respect for Bakir's sincerity. To sweeten the offer, Bakir revealed a secret. "If you accept, I will tell you how to obtain a certain Diamond title."

Han Wu's interest peaked. "Speak."

"The Sky Palace is alive," Bakir said quietly. "But none of the adventurers here know this unless they earn the Sky Palace's approval."

Han Wu recalled a rumor from before entering. Those who cleared every floor perfectly would receive the Sky Palace's blessing. Now, he wondered whether it really was true.

Bakir nodded, confirming the rumor. “To clear a floor perfectly on your first try, you have to kill the strongest individual on that floor the first time you enter. If you kill me, you will clear the first floor of the Sky Palace perfectly.”

Han Wu frowned. “What’s the point of that? Even if I clear this floor perfectly, there are still six more to go. I doubt the other floor leaders will just line up and surrender.”

Bakir had already considered that. “Don’t worry. I’ve sensed the Great Dragon bloodline in you, and it’s on the verge of awakening. If you kill me, your title will upgrade and your bloodline will fully awaken. You’ll become powerful enough that none of the kings on the remaining floors will be able to stop you.”

Han Wu could tell Bakir was serious. It genuinely intended to sacrifice itself for the sake of its race. But the more sincere it became, the less Han Wu wanted to kill it. He wanted to bring Bakir into his divine realm; killing it would be a waste.

He considered for a moment, then proposed a solution. “You say I have to kill the strongest being on every floor to clear it perfectly, right? I have an idea.”

Bakir nodded. This was a matter of its own life and the future of its race. It would never lie.

“Then it’s simple. I’ll just nurture a half-dragon far stronger than you,” Han Wu said with a calm smile, then gave Bakir its instructions.

Though unsure of his intentions, Bakir obeyed without question. Han Wu activated Gene Recombination, merging 1,000 half-dragons into a Diamond half-dragon. The result was a powerful but unwieldy half-dragon, burdened with too many limbs to move or attack effectively. In the end, Han Wu stabbed it to death. As it died, a notification appeared, confirming that he had cleared the first floor perfectly.

Han Wu glanced at the interface and let out a long breath. “It’s done.”

At that moment, his Half-Dragon’s Lament title turned into a Diamond title called Half-Dragon’s Hope. Its effects had also changed drastically. The first effect became Black Dragon Transformation, which fully awakened his bloodline and granted him the power to transform into his Black Dragon Form. The second effect set the affinity of all half-dragons toward him to Reverence.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,602 words]

Chapter 166 - Second Floor

Bakir bore witness to the entire process, its heart aching with the loss of a thousand of its kin. However, it was well aware of the fact that its own life was worth more than a thousand half-dragons.

With the aid of his new title, Han Wu once again felt the familiar power of the Black Dragon King Transformation surge within him. What was once an ability had now been unlocked as a title. He transformed before Bakir's eyes, the nostalgic energy radiating outwards and rapidly covering his body in dense black scales.

The sight of Han Wu's new form almost compelled Bakir to fall to its knees in prayer. This was an innate instinct stemming from its very bloodline, one it could never suppress regardless of how powerful Bakir itself became.

"The Great Dragons' authentic bloodline..." Bakir whispered, its voice filled with awe and reverence.

With his Black Dragon King Transformation fully activated, Han Wu's strength soared, elevating him to a level on par with High Lords. He was now fully confident in facing the remaining six floors.

"Wait for me. I will free all of you upon my return," he said, ascending into the air with powerful beats of his wings. He had finally achieved enough strength to gain entry to the second level of the Sky Palace.

Bakir watched intently as Han Wu vanished into the enveloping darkness, then softly murmured, "Please, oh Great Dragon, quickly return and free your kin..."

Han Wu successfully entered the second floor of Sky Palace. This floor looked more like an ancient ruin than a dilapidated palace. Before long, he spotted a narrow entrance before him. However, the nature of the monsters sealed within remained a complete mystery to him.

In a moment of self-reproach for his oversight, he slapped his forehead. "Ah, crap! I totally forgot to ask Bakir about the second floor!"

However, it was too late to go back. The risk of being teleported to a random location on the first floor was too high to consider retreat. He had no choice but to venture into the unknown.

He walked slowly down the dark corridor, drawing out an illumination source from his spatial ring to cast some light around him. However, due to the rules of the second floor, the illumination from his fire was restricted to a mere five-meter radius.

Even with his enhanced vision, Han Wu could, at most, see objects up to fifteen meters away. Anything beyond that was obscured by an ominous darkness. He maintained his steady pace until he came upon a split in the corridor, where three identical paths lay before him.

Having no idea what kind of treacherous trap might be lying in wait, he decided to play it safe and summoned three smaller-sized Gold monsters, sending one down each corridor to scout ahead. Two hours ticked by, and to his surprise, none of his summoned creatures had died. Moreover, while waiting, he even managed to acquire the Silver Noble Soul Liberator title.

The title came with two effects, the first being a passive skill called Noble Soul's Gift. He would be able to obtain a random piece of equipment that a Noble Soul had used during their lifetime, provided he successfully liberated them. The second effect, Noble Soul's Trust, set the default affinity of Noble Souls toward him as Friendly.

Han Wu stared at the new title with confusion. *It seems my summoned monsters were responsible for the deaths of these Noble Souls... But why in the world are they friendly towards me even though my monsters killed them? Are they masochists?*

With much confusion, he recalled his monsters, intending to explore the path on his own. To his surprise, his monsters didn't return alone; they brought back hundreds of Noble Souls with them. Each of these beings was armed with a different weapon, and they attacked Han Wu on sight. Given the narrow space in the corridor, Han Wu transformed his Genocider greatsword into a more manageable short sword and began to fight back.

With his newfound strength, he cut them down effortlessly. As he did, he noticed that the Noble Souls seemed to smile as they were destroyed, as if finally freed from their shackles. This piqued Han Wu's interest even more. What exactly were these Noble Souls? Were they trapped here?

As he continued to eliminate them, the familiar progress bar flickered into view. Killing hundreds of Noble Souls had granted him an 11% increase on the progress bar. Once the bar was completely filled, he would gain access to the third floor.

Han Wu wasn't content with just filling the bar, however—he intended to clear the floor perfectly. To achieve that goal, he not only had to raise the progress bar to 100%, but also had to defeat the strongest monster on the second floor.

Han Wu delved deeper, relentlessly slaying the Noble Souls he encountered. Strangely, as he did, more and more popped up around him. It became evident that his Noble Soul Liberator title was effectively acting like a magnet, drawing them directly towards him regardless of how far away they were.

Han Wu was, however, beginning to develop a headache. The Noble Souls were utterly relentless in their attacks, and the cramped, narrow corridor made defending against them incredibly tough. Fortunately, his ten Gold monsters stepped in and helped him share the burden, even if only temporarily.

While his Gold monsters were locked in battle with the Noble Souls, Han Wu focused on plotting a map. He carefully marked down the path he had already taken to ensure he would not get lost in the maze-like corridors. He spent a considerable amount of time in the dark eliminating uncountable Noble Souls, and even crossed paths with many adventurers during his journey.

After a period of exploring the corridors and diligently marking his progress on the map, Han Wu once more encountered a split in the path, with three paths stretching before him yet again. Referencing his map, he deliberately chose a corridor he had not yet explored.

While walking, he suddenly noticed a faint light emanating from the far end of the corridor. To him, this light was a welcome sight, especially after spending such a long period in nothing but darkness. Without hesitation or fear, he stepped forward, soon finding himself at the edge of a vast, open space.

Inside the vast opening, a massive entity resided. Its numerous tentacles writhed unsettlingly in the air, a sight that immediately sickened Han Wu. What truly shocked him, however, was the immense pressure emanating from the creature, which appeared to be even more powerful than Bakir himself.

Though half-dragon Bakir was categorized as a Platinum monster, the colossal entity looming before Han Wu appeared to possess a strength on par with, if not surpassing it to the Diamond ranks. Recognizing the immense power of his adversary, he finalized his preparations for the impending battle and underwent his own transformation.

His transformation complete, Han Wu found his strength soared to the level of a High Lord, which was synonymous with the Diamond rank within the Title Civilization. With his Genocider greatsword firmly in hand, he lunged into the attack. The massive entity, however, instantly detected his approach and lashed out with a tentacle, easily intercepting him and sending him flying.

Even with the protection of his dragon scales, Han Wu felt a sharp sting on his skin. It also appeared that the entity's attack wasn't merely a physical blow but also inflicted spiritual damage. It was only due to the remarkable resilience of his spirit that he managed to resist its full effect; otherwise, the strike would have been fatal.

Han Wu quickly realized he was outmatched, even with the power granted by his transformation. However, he still had a card up his sleeve. Activating the third effect of his Monster Slayer title, he chose to tribute his summoned monsters, permanently sacrificing them in exchange for a temporary power boost.

With the sacrifice of his ten Gold monsters, Han Wu felt an exhilarating surge of power blossoming throughout his body. Gripping his greatsword, he charged at the colossal monster once more. This time he wasn't whipped away by those tentacles; instead, he carved through one with ease and plunged his greatsword directly into the monster's heart.

Having critically wounded the monster by striking its vulnerable point, Han Wu wasted no time in delivering the final strike. Upon the creature's death, a large orb of light drifted from its remains and merged with his body. His level surged significantly, elevating him to level 90, leaving him just 10 levels shy of reaching level 100.

As the monster fell, Han Wu was granted the Diamond Noble Soul Liberator title, accompanied by a clear notification confirming his perfect completion of the floor. Only then did he realize that the creature he had just defeated was not only a Diamond rank monster but also the boss of the second floor, which perfectly explained its immense power.

Glancing over the spot where the colossal monster had fallen, Han Wu discovered the equipment it had dropped. It was a Diamond necklace with one powerful effect: resistance to mental corruption. Although he had no idea how to activate the necklace, he decided to wear it nonetheless. As he did, he felt his spirit become stronger and more relaxed, and he even noticed his breathing becoming easier.

"Time to head to the third floor. I wonder if they've already dealt with the Light Palace Lord," he muttered, entering the third floor.

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[1,227 words]

Chapter 167 - Genocider Gatling

The third floor was completely different from the two lower floors. This floor was situated above the clouds and filled with light, with many light spirits playing amidst the clouds.

At the same time, Han Wu's gaze took in the numerous adventurers scattered across this floor. He was fairly certain that the presence of so many adventurers here indicated the boss of the third floor, the Light Palace Lord, had yet to be defeated.

Oh, thank goodness! I still have a chance to kill it myself! he thought, a wave of gleeful excitement washing over him.

He stepped on the fluffy clouds and jumped. Suddenly, two Gold adventurers with the Gull emblem engraved on their armor blocked his path.

“The third floor has been reserved by the Gull Guild,” one of them sternly informed him. “We ask that you kindly withdraw and return to explore here at another time.”

Han Wu paid them no mind, continuing his ascent. Suddenly, one of the Gold adventurers attacked with a massive fireball. Han Wu narrowly dodged the fiery projectile, causing him to lose momentum and fall back to his original position.

“Are you deaf?” the second Gold adventurer roared. “Turn back if you value your life. If you continue to push our limits, do not blame us for the consequences.”

“Show some respect and head back now,” growled the one who had fired the fireball. “The consequences of ignoring our warning aren’t something a mere Silver adventurer like you can handle.”

The implicit threat within their words was barely veiled. However, Han Wu merely scoffed, completely disregarding the two figures he considered mere weaklings. Seizing his greatsword, he challenged them with a sneer, “Oh? Just what kind of consequences are you referring to?”

“You brat! We’ve been courteous enough,” the Gold adventurer hissed, his voice laced with menace. “Don’t blame us for what happens next!”

With a roar, he activated his title, transforming into a towering blue bear. The beast immediately swung a massive paw at Han Wu.

Han Wu didn’t dodge the attack; instead, he swung his sword and struck the incoming paw. Without any warning, the adventurer’s paw was severed from his body. A gush of blue blood sprayed out from the stump as the adventurer roared in pain, reverting from his bear form into that of a human.

Keeping a watchful eye on Han Wu, the other adventurer carefully assessed the situation. Convinced that Han Wu’s strength lay in close-quarters combat, the adventurer unleashed a colossal fireball, launching it directly at Han Wu with the clear intention of incinerating him.

In a swift motion, Han Wu swung his greatsword, cleanly cleaving the incoming fireball in half before leaping past the dissipating energy. Leveraging his speed, he quickly closed the distance and cut down the adventurer before the latter could summon a second fireball. The adventurer was instantly bisected, dying on the spot. The other, visibly shaking and overcome by fear, scrambled to make an escape.

Han Wu had no intention of allowing the adventurer to flee, however. With a swift leap, he landed directly in the adventurer’s path, cutting off any hope of escape.

The adventurer pleaded desperately, “Please don’t kill me! My brother is—”

However, before he could complete his statement, Han Wu swung his greatsword, severing the man’s head in a single strike. The head plummeted from the cloud, vanishing into the depths below, its final resting place unknown.

With the demise of the two Gold adventurers, Han Wu felt a surge of strength coursing through his body, a clear indication of just how powerful his Platinum Genocider title truly was.

As Han Wu continued to admire the power of his title, he recalled a crucial detail: Diamond titles linked to hunting specific races could either grant him additional skills or reinforce the already powerful abilities of his Genocider title. He swiftly retrieved the Diamond Noble Soul Liberator title and had Genocider absorb it.

Just as Han Wu had anticipated, the Platinum Genocider title grew more powerful after absorbing the Noble Soul Liberator title. However, it still didn’t quite manage to breach the threshold required to ascend to the Diamond rank. Despite this, its new effects were quite appealing. Its current ability, Genocider Weapon, gained a new passive bonus that granted him an additional 5% spiritual damage.

In short, any attack he made with the weapon would now come with a dual effect: the standard 100% physical damage, plus an extra 5% spiritual damage. Though it wasn’t much, it was still a rare and unique asset against spirits and spirit entities.

Very few skills could attack the spirit directly; even a 5% increase was considered rare. This was largely due to the fact that most life forms possessed virtually no innate protection against spiritual attacks.

There’s a lot of potential in this. I must nurture it more, he thought, admiring the ability even more now.

Han Wu also possessed one more Diamond title: Half-Dragon’s Hope. However, despite its potential, he chose not to offer it to Genocider because this particular title was instrumental in enabling him to activate his Black Dragon King Transformation.

Rather than dwelling on his title, he focused instead on the light spirits gracefully prancing amidst the clouds around him. It didn’t take long for the light spirits to notice his presence, as he was radiating an aura of darkness, which coincidentally happened to be their bane.

After a moment of hesitation, the light spirits shot numerous light lasers at him. Though his physical strength prevented any actual injury, each laser strike pushed him back slightly, making his progress incredibly frustrating.

“Do you think you’re the only ones with ranged attacks? I’ve got one too!” Han Wu morphed his Genocider greatsword into a gatling gun. Since Genocider Weapon could turn into any weapon he wished, he could naturally turn it into a gatling gun as well.

A wild sense of freedom roared in Han Wu's heart as he gripped the gatling gun. “Light spirits,” he exclaimed, a note of sheer delight in his voice, “let me show you the true power of suppressive fire!”

With that, he squeezed the trigger, unleashing a barrage of bullets that rained down mercilessly upon the light spirits. Many of them were struck by the bullets, but as spirits, they were capable of ignoring all physical damage, including the impact of the bullets themselves. However, the 5% spiritual damage inflicted by each bullet was an entirely different story. The light spirits were unable to withstand even a few such hits before violently shattering into fragments.

Han Wu mowed down the light spirits with his gatling gun before pausing to retrieve the fallen materials. Each light spirit dropped a material called a Light Crystal, which also served as their cores. These crystals possessed the remarkable ability to absorb large amounts of light energy which, in turn, could be used to enhance one’s strength, making it an exceptionally rare and valuable light-attribute material.

At the same time, as the light spirits fell, Han Wu received a new Platinum title: Light Spirit Reaper. The title came with two effects: it now imbued his weapon with light attribute damage, and it set the default affinity of all light spirits towards him to Hatred.

Han Wu had finally obtained another title he could upgrade into the Diamond rank.

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Chapter 168 - Fighting Against the Adventurer Group

[1,678 words]

Chapter 168 - Fighting Against the Adventurer Group

Han Wu jumped from cloud to cloud, searching for any clues leading to the Light Palace Lord. However, despite days of continuous searching, he ended up in the same frustrating situation as all the other adventurer groups—none of them had managed to find anything at all.

Meanwhile, Han Wu's earlier actions had not gone unnoticed; in fact, he had captured the attention of the powerful adventurer guilds. As a result, the Gull Guild, the Fierce Tiger Clan, the Flying Dragon Clan, and several other renowned guilds soon issued a warrant for his capture.

Now, Han Wu had to face not only the light spirits but also the waves of adventurers sent to capture him. Despite this, he wasn't afraid; his strength grew with every kill, regardless of whether the target was a light spirit or an adventurer. In fact, he grew even faster after eliminating the adventurers pursuing him.

He wasn't worried about being surrounded either—he had the gatling gun. In just a few days, the tables turned, and Han Wu began hunting down the adventurers who had pursued him instead.

The guilds' adventurers were terrified, constantly haunted by memories of Han Wu dominating the battlefield with his fearsome Genocider gatling gun. Some were so gripped by fear, even in the midst of battle, that they abandoned their guilds and fled in panic.

The guild leaders, witnessing the utter chaos into which their guilds had descended, knew they had to deal with the situation immediately. Han Wu's mass killings had decimated their ranks to such an extent that they now had no choice but to eliminate him, no matter the cost, to appease their remaining members.

However, they knew perfectly well that Han Wu was too formidable for any one guild to face alone. Therefore, prioritizing their collective self-interest and survival, the guilds put aside their rivalries and banded together to forge an alliance with the sole purpose of defeating Han Wu.

With their considerable numbers, the allied guilds were able to continuously collect precise information regarding Han Wu's whereabouts. He was, after all, the only "unauthorized" person present on the entire floor.

After confirming the authenticity, they hurried over to where Han Wu was last seen. The guild leaders were determined to kill Han Wu today at all costs, to avenge their fallen members.

Han Wu, however, remained completely unaware that the various guilds had put aside their differences and formed a unified alliance specifically to eliminate him. Even if he had known, it wouldn't have bothered him in the slightest—he was clearly stronger than them. On the contrary, a confrontation would actually prove more advantageous for him; he could defeat them all in one fell swoop without wasting precious time tracking them down individually.

He kept hunting the light spirits, steadily improving his strength and resistance to light damage. It wasn't long before the allied forces of the guilds surrounded him.

On a cloud roughly 1 sq km large, Han Wu found himself entirely hemmed in by the allied adventurer guilds. From their ranks, three Platinum ranked leaders, each leading an influential adventurer guild, stepped forward. All three were fixated on Han Wu's gatling gun, their expressions undisguised with greed. Even before the fight began, they were already mentally divvying up the spoils, specifically who among them would get the weapon once Han Wu was defeated. However, the initial priority remained the same: Han Wu had to fall.

"Wall formation!" The leader of the Gull Guild commanded the adventurers positioned at the front lines to raise their shields, which were inscribed with various effects specifically designed to help them withstand and block the torrent of bullets from the gatling gun.

"Magicians, get ready!" bellowed the leader of the Fierce Tiger Clan, instructing the magic-wielding adventurers to start activating their respective spells. The air above the mages lit up with numerous different balls of light. Fireballs, icicles, wind blades, snow balls and various other magic attacks charged up.

"Fire!" the Flying Dragon Clan leader roared, commanding them to unleash their magic at Han Wu simultaneously. To their surprise, Han Wu merely chuckled at the incoming assault. He instantly activated his Black Dragon King Transformation, and with powerful flaps of his wings, he soared high into the air, avoiding every elemental attack launched his way.

A wave of shock rippled through the adventurers—none of them received any intel indicating that Han Wu possessed the ability to fly! However, it was far too late to retreat; they were already locked in a desperate battle with him. There was no turning back now; they had to eliminate him, regardless of his ability to fly, or they would all soon be dead.

The leaders quickly reorganized themselves and ordered, "Shoot him down!"

Numerous magic attacks were launched into the air, but Han Wu dodged all of them perfectly. At the same time, his gatling gun transformed into a massive cannon. He had turned it into a handheld cannon!

Han Wu charged the massive cannon with raw energy, then unleashed a devastating shot downwards, aiming directly for the most densely packed section of the crowd.

Boom!

The fired energy slammed into its target with immense force, followed by a thunderous yet spectacular explosion. The resulting blast, imbued with light attribute damage and the 5% spiritual damage, proved catastrophic: ten Silver-ranked adventurers were instantly annihilated, and two Gold-ranked adventurers were left severely wounded.

All those present, including the guild leaders, were horrified at the sight.

Had he been toying with us this whole time?

Han Wu, entirely unconcerned by the terror etched on their faces, swiftly charged his massive cannon for a second shot and fired once more. The resulting explosion was so powerful that it shook the very cloud beneath their feet, killing even more adventurers as chaos and panic gripped their ranks.

“Run! We can’t win!”

“No, I don’t want to die! I don’t want to die... No, don’t shoot me! I don’t want to die... Don’t... don’t aim at—”

“Save me, mommy!”

“Let me leave! I want to withdraw from the guild!”

The adventurers’ panic spiraled out of control, and the entire area quickly devolved into utter chaos, a situation even the guild leaders were powerless to contain. The three Platinum guild leaders exchanged grim glances and nodded in unison. Since their numerical superiority no longer offered any significant advantage, they had no choice but to personally confront and eliminate Han Wu to salvage the situation and save what remained of their forces.

The three guild leaders simultaneously used their powers. The first morphed into a massive bird that immediately began firing razor-sharp arrows at Han Wu. Another transformed into a fierce tiger, directing powerful blasts of sound waves at their opponent, and the last leader turned into a massive flying dragon, its gaping maw spewing torrents scorching flames, intending to incinerate Han Wu.

The guild leaders had confidently assumed that their combined battle strength would be more than enough to defeat Han Wu. However, they had severely underestimated him. In his current form, Han Wu was as strong as a High Lord, which was the equivalent of a Diamond adventurer. The Platinum adventurers, therefore, were considerably outmatched and stood no chance of beating him.

With an agile spin, Han Wu flawlessly evaded every single attack launched at him, before flying directly towards the leader of the Gull Guild. In a swift motion, he transformed his cannon back into his greatsword and brought it down on a swift and brutal swing. With the combined might of the Genocider greatsword’s physical, light, and spiritual damage, the Gull Guild leader instantly perished.

As the corpse spiraled downwards, Han Wu turned his attention to the fire-breathing dragon. With incredible speed, he dodged the flames and appeared behind the dragon, grabbing its wings and ripping them off its back.

The dragon let out a deafening roar of agony as it plummeted from the skies. Without its wings, it could no longer stay aloft. In a cruel twist of fate, it tumbled directly into the path of one of the fierce tiger's terrifying sound cannons. In a horrific spectacle, the leader of the Flying Dragon Clan was utterly annihilated by his own ally's attack, his body splattering into countless pieces.

The leader of the Fierce Tiger Clan was gripped by profound terror at Han Wu's undeniable and overwhelming strength. It had taken Han Wu shockingly little time to dispatch two Platinum adventurers! Desperate, the Clan leader turned to flee, but Han Wu proved to be even faster. With a swift, powerful swing of his greatsword, he cut the tiger in half, ending its life.

In the end, all three guild leaders lay dead, and the remaining adventurers scattered, fleeing for their lives. Han Wu was left standing alone on the cloud, breathing heavily as he undid his transformation. His head dropped, and his legs gave out, leaving him slumped on the ground. The intensity of the battle had most likely pushed him to his absolute limits.

In reality, this display of exhaustion was, however, nothing more than a carefully orchestrated ruse. Any discerning observer would have immediately noticed the unsettling calmness in Han Wu's eyes. However, not a single soul remained alive or conscious on the corpse-covered cloud to see through his act.

Out of nowhere, a brilliant flash of light suddenly flared up behind him. Perceiving the attack instantly, Han Wu sharply twisted his body to evade it, then spun around to confront its source.

A massive light spirit stood there, a dazzling crown atop its head, holding a clear crystal ball that displayed an image of Han Wu battling the adventurers.

Han Wu smiled. His assumptions had been right; the Light Palace Lord really did exist, but it seemed it had been evading capture with the help of an artifact: the Foresight Crystal Ball. Seeing Han Wu seemingly dying from fatigue, it had intended to deliver the final blow.

It was at this moment that Han Wu realized the full extent of the Light Palace Lord's cunning.

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Chapter 169 - Obtaining Platinum Title Scroll

[2,086 words]

Chapter 169 - Obtaining Platinum Title Scroll

Despite its renowned cunning, the Light Palace Lord was successfully deceived by Han Wu's performance. It tried desperately to escape once it realized Han Wu was still capable of moving so nimbly, it required at least three seconds to activate its teleportation skill.; With Han Wu incessantly harassing it, however, that window simply never materialized, giving it no opportunity to cast the spell.

After numerous failed attempts to escape, the Light Palace Lord decided to face Han Wu in a direct confrontation. With the help of the Foresight Crystal Ball, it generated ten light orbs that orbited around it. These orbs then began to fire light bombs at Han Wu at random intervals.

Activating his Black Dragon King Transformation, Han Wu weathered through the blistering attacks of the light bomb, thrusting his clawed hands into the Light Palace Lord's chest and immediately crushing its core.

The moment the Light Palace Lord fell, a flurry of notifications appeared before Han Wu. He had finally reached level 100, a milestone that granted him an additional title slot, allowing him to equip four different titles simultaneously. Almost immediately afterward, another notification confirmed the floor's perfect clear, and, as a bonus, his Light Spirit Reaper title had been upgraded to Platinum rank.

Han Wu wasted no time in securing the Foresight Crystal Ball that the Light Palace Lord had dropped, stowing it safely within his spatial ring. To prevent any unforeseen complications, he quickly left the third floor, not even pausing to examine the effects of his newly acquired Platinum title.

He made his way back to the plaza, finding it just as bustling and vibrant as he had left it. His gaze swept across the numerous stalls, specifically searching for the one that offered the Platinum Title Scroll, until his eyes finally landed upon it. The stall owner was still there, persistently attempting to trade his title scroll for the Foresight Crystal Ball.

The exceptional rarity of the title scroll meant that numerous adventurers had gathered around the stall, creating quite a bustling scene. In fact, it was rather astonishing that, despite its value, no one had yet attempted to outright snatch the scroll. The large foot traffic around the stall had also eventually prompted quite a few individuals to purchase various materials from the nearby stalls as well.

Han Wu made his way to the bustling stall and, with a swift motion, pulled the gleaming Foresight Crystal Ball from his spatial ring. “Hey, mister. I have the Foresight Crystal Ball right here. Can we complete the trade for the title scroll now?”

The other adventurers surrounding the stall laughed at his words.

“How many times this month has a clueless adventurer tried to deceive the stall owner? Do you honestly think you can just take a regular crystal ball and masquerade it as the Light Palace Lord’s Foresight Crystal Ball?”

“Hey brat, aren’t you embarrassed spouting such blatant lies in public? Have you no shame? Youth these days...”

“Get out of the way; don’t block our view of the Platinum Title Scroll!”

A palpable, chilling bloodlust erupted from Han Wu as he leveled a furious glare at the sneering adventurers. Every single person present clamped their mouths shut, instinctively sensing the grave danger they had foolishly invited upon themselves by their careless words. The stall owner, though unnerved, clearly recognized that Han Wu was not to be trifled with, yet surprisingly, he harbored no fear of being robbed, despite the murderous aura Han Wu had just displayed.

After all, the very fact that he was able to openly sell a Platinum Title Scroll in such a public place implied a great deal about the stall owner. He himself had to be not only an exceptionally strong Gold adventurer but also possess a formidable background and powerful connections. Any individual foolish enough to attempt to harm or steal from him would definitely face a terrible demise.

“Young man, may I have a look at it?” the stall owner asked eagerly, anticipation rising in his eyes.

Han Wu nodded and passed him the Foresight Crystal Ball.

As the stall owner’s fingers grazed the Ball’s perfectly smooth surface, he immediately sensed the powerful, mysterious energy pulsating within. With a nod, he confirmed that this was, beyond a doubt, the genuine Foresight Crystal Ball, unmistakably the one dropped by the Light Palace Lord.

“Wow, this is the real deal! Young man, how did you get this? As far as I know, the Light Palace Lord is very sly, and no one has ever found it before.”

“That’s my secret,” Han Wu said, not wishing to explain. “You just need to give me the scroll, and our business ends.”

The stallowner realized he had overstepped his boundaries. He promptly accepted the Foresight Crystal Ball and, with a respectful gesture, used both hands to present the

Platinum Title Scroll to Han Wu. “Young man, I am very interested in that information. Should you ever feel inclined to part with it, please come and find me. I assure you, we can always strike a good deal.”

Han Wu brushed off the stall owner’s lingering comments and, with the title scroll confirmed to be genuine, prepared to leave. However, the adventurers encircling him had no intention of allowing him to simply walk away. Their earlier restraint with the stall owner stemmed from a fear of his background; robbing Han Wu, however, was an entirely different proposition. No matter how ferocious he might appear, he would surely cower and flee once they called in a hundred of their allies to surround him, wouldn’t he?

Han Wu had barely taken a few steps from the bustling area when his path was abruptly cut off by a menacing group of adventurers.

“Brat, hand over the title scroll, or face the consequences!” snarled their leader, a Gold-ranked adventurer whose tone dripped with arrogance and contempt. Intimidating a mere Silver adventurer was an effortlessly simple task.

Han Wu had no desire to waste a single moment on what he considered mere trash, and with a swift, fluid motion, he pulled out his gatling gun and immediately unleashed a torrent of bullets upon them. The rounds tore through the adventurers blocking his path, killing them instantly. He even made sure to give the Gold adventurer special attention, turning him into a gory, bullet-riddled mess.

An adventurer watching from the sidelines immediately recognized Han Wu’s gatling gun. By a grim coincidence, she was one of the few survivors who had escaped the brutal annihilation of the guild alliance on the third floor. The moment her gaze fell upon the gatling gun, a flood of repressed, traumatic memories came rushing back, overwhelming her. Her carefully reconstructed state of mind instantly shattered, forcing her to vividly relive the horrific experiences she had endured on the third floor.

“*Ahhhh!* Someone, please help me! No, no, please don’t shoot at me! I swear, I’ll leave the guild right now, I promise!” she shrieked, her voice cracking with terror. Huddled tightly into a ball against the cold corner of a wall, she continued to sob uncontrollably and scream.

Han Wu paid no mind to the distraught adventurer, stepping over the fresh corpses as he made his way back into the Sky Palace. With a rapidly growing list of enemies, his immediate priority was to acquire the Planeswalker title as quickly as possible. Finding a reliable method of escape in a tight spot was now absolutely imperative for his survival.

With the title scroll now in his possession, Han Wu quickly realized that he still required a few additional ingredients to complete his objective, so he headed straight for the most prominent shop in the plaza. He planned to buy the necessary materials he lacked and sell off the ones he didn’t need at the same time.

After successfully clearing all three floors perfectly in one go, Han Wu had accumulated a decent amount of materials. Once he brought out everything he intended to sell from his inventory, the sheer volume of these materials piled up, forming a small mountain.

The shopkeeper, recognizing the unusual nature of these materials, urgently summoned their most experienced appraiser to analyze the goods Han Wu had presented for sale. Among them were rare items like half-dragon scales, Noble Soul equipment, light crystals, and an array of other bloodstained materials. Soon, the appraiser's initial curiosity turned to stark alarm as he realized something shocking: a significant portion of the bloodstained materials unmistakably originated from the recently decimated Gull Guild, Fierce Tiger Clan, and Flying Dragon Clan!

His urgent report reached his supervisor, who was instantly overcome with fear. The supervisor had already caught wind of an alarming piece of news: the three powerful guilds had encountered a truly "crazy" individual on the third floor. What he never anticipated was that this very crazy person was now standing within their shop! This stark realization also confirmed that the guild alliance had suffered a complete and utter defeat.

The more the supervisor analyzed the situation, the more his apprehension mounted. Soon, he came to the conclusion that this complex predicament was far beyond his paygrade, so he wisely deferred the decision-making to his boss.

The boss himself swiftly rushed to the scene upon receiving the alarming news. After witnessing the sheer mountain of equipment, which had unmistakably been looted from the fallen adventurers of the guild alliance, he became absolutely certain in his heart that the man standing before them posed a greater threat than all three guilds combined. Despite his strong personal preference against purchasing such ill-gotten and ominous equipment, he chose to suppress his reservations and reluctantly proceed, unwilling to risk angering Han Wu.

"Young man, my appraiser has submitted his report and concluded that the estimated worth of your wares is approximately 2 million gold coins. However, given that some of these items possess special value, we've decided to offer you 3 million gold coins instead. How does that sound to you?"

The additional 1 million was, in essence, a form of protection money being offered by the boss. Han Wu naturally understood the boss's subtle implication but hadn't actually desired such funds. Nevertheless, since the shop itself had offered it willingly, there was no reason to refuse.

"Sure."

The boss inwardly sighed in relief after Han Wu agreed. This strongly implied that Han Wu would likely refrain from causing any trouble or disruption for the shop now that he

had accepted the money—that was the concept of “protection money”, after all. Fortunately, a loss of 1 million was something the boss could afford to absorb.

After receiving the 3 million gold coins, Han Wu asked, “I need to buy some materials. Do you have them?”

He gave them a list of materials needed to obtain the Planeswalker title. Upon reviewing it, the boss’s expression grew serious; every single material on the list was exceptionally rare and valuable. He quickly calculated the cumulative cost, realizing the total would amount to a staggering 3.5 million gold coins.

The boss felt his stomach churn after calculating the price, but for the sake of his shop, he gritted his teeth and replied, “We have them, but the price...”

“Is 3 million not enough?”

“No, no, 3 million is just enough.” The boss was clearly on the brink of breaking down, yet he somehow managed to force a smile onto his face.

An hour later, he had painstakingly gathered all the requested materials and displayed them before Han Wu. His voice trembled slightly as he said, “Dear customer, these are all the materials you requested.”

Han Wu collected the materials he had requested, then smoothly placed the card, loaded with 3 million gold coins, onto the counter. From a financial perspective, he realized that this transaction effectively meant he hadn’t gained any profit.

Just as he was about to exit the shop, Han Wu abruptly paused, turned back, and calmly delivered a chilling piece of news to the owner. “The heads of the Gull Guild, Fierce Tiger Clan, and the Flying Dragon Clan are all dead. They met their end on the third floor.”

After dropping such a bomb, he simply walked away. The boss, despite his lingering sting from his recent financial losses, suddenly perked up at the revelation. This information alone was worth more than 3 million gold coins!

“Mobilize as many adventurers and mercenaries as we possibly can! Follow me! We’re going to go and claim their territories!”

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 170 - Sky Palace's Eighth Floor

[1,776 words]

Chapter 170 - Sky Palace's Eighth Floor

Having concluded his business at the shop, Han Wu made his way back to the third floor of the Sky Palace. He paid no mind to the Light Spirit Reaper title, instead focusing his attention on combining the materials he had gathered with the Planeswalker title scroll.

Upon absorbing the prepared materials, the title scroll shimmered with an intense, bright light before seamlessly merging into Han Wu's body. Without delay, he accessed his interface and, to his satisfaction, saw the newly acquired Platinum Planeswalker title now prominently displayed.

Equipping it immediately, he began to scan through its full list of effects.

[Effect 1: Grants user access to a personal space that ignores all restrictions. Can be accessed at all times.]

[Effect 2: Point Teleportation. Can be used to teleport the user to any previously explored location. Energy consumed is proportional to distance.]

[Effect 3: Switch. Can be used to switch locations with any object in sight.]

The effects of the Planeswalker title are quite powerful! he thought.

Eager to experiment with the newly acquired Platinum title, Han Wu soon spotted a cluster of light spirits. cluster of ethereal light spirits. Aware that a careless approach would inevitably send them scattering, he activated his new ability, Switch, instead.

According to the Platinum Planeswalker title's effect, Han Wu simply needed to lock onto a target and then clap his hands to instantly switch locations with it. He selected a random light spirit from the cluster, clapped, and in a blink, found himself instantly transported to the exact spot where the light spirit had been moments before.

Disoriented and alarmed, the light spirit suddenly found itself in Han Wu's previous location. It looked around, its confusion quickly turning to horror—a horrifying demon had silently appeared behind the friends it had just been playing with! It desperately tried to warn them, but its cries were in vain; it was already too late. The vile demon unhesitatingly swung his massive Genocider greatsword, annihilating them all in one fell swoop!

Gripped by overwhelming terror, the light spirit attempted a desperate escape. Yet, it had barely managed to move when its surroundings abruptly warped. Han Wu had used Switch to exchange the light spirit's location with the corpse of another. Before the bewildered spirit could react, Han Wu thrust his greatsword deep into its body, ending its fleeting attempt at freedom.

Han Wu actively sought out additional light spirits, eager to practice and become proficient with his newly acquired skill. His practice quickly transformed him into an unstoppable assassin, materializing and vanishing without a trace after eliminating his targets. Within the span of just one day, he successfully managed to upgrade his Light Spirit Reaper title to the Diamond rank, which he promptly fed to his Platinum Genocider title.

With the absorption complete, the Genocider title surged in power, also ascending to the Diamond rank. Han Wu experienced a deep satisfaction, much like a parent witnessing their children grow. Indeed, the Genocider title had finally ascended to the Diamond rank after successfully absorbing five similarly ranked titles.

After its upgrade, Genocider had not only reinforced its original skill, but had also obtained a new one:

[Effect 1: Genocider Weapon. Can be transformed into any weapon. After killing its victim, it absorbs a thousandth of its Life Energy to increase the user's strength. Currently has +5% spiritual damage and +10% light attribute damage.]

[Effect 2: Genocider Afterimage. Can copy the user's attack to deal an additional blow equal to half the damage.]

Han Wu was absolutely overjoyed the moment he saw the new effect. The ability to deal an extra 50% damage on each strike, without any limitations, was a truly significant enhancement. While he already possessed the raw strength of a Diamond adventurer when his Black Dragon King Transformation was active, this new, unrestricted 50% damage increase meant he could now effortlessly defeat regular Diamond adventurers without even needing to transform.

Han Wu now felt an even greater surge of confidence in his capabilities to obtain more information regarding the Title Civilization. Having flawlessly cleared the entirety of the third floor, he then proceeded to the fourth floor. The days blurred into weeks, and before he knew it, another month had swiftly slipped away.

Han Wu had now been in this mysterious civilization for half a year, and in that time, he had achieved the remarkable feat of perfectly clearing the Sky Palace all the way up to its seventh floor. During this period, his mastery of Gene Recombination allowed him to obtain seven Diamond titles, each derived from a different race. Throughout his series of battles, his Genocider title had also undergone substantial improvements, becoming even more powerful.

While the title's second effect remained unaltered, its first effect had undergone massive changes. In addition to its original 5% spiritual damage and 10% light attribute damage, it could now deal 10% poison damage, 10% fire attribute damage, 10% lightning damage, and 20% holy damage.

The Genocider Weapon could be considered as a top-tier weapon of destruction at this point. The newly acquired additional damage significantly amplified its destructive potential. Furthermore, the 50% damage boost from the second effect made it even more monstrous. It was this overwhelming power that instilled Han Wu with unwavering confidence as he prepared to confront his next challenge.

After perfectly clearing all seven floors of the Sky Palace, Han Wu discovered that an eighth floor actually existed. He had previously heard whispers that this was the very floor where the true owner of the Sky Palace resided. Furthermore, Bakir, the half-dragon who guarded the first floor, had once mentioned that this place was, in some sense, alive. Fully prepared for whatever lay ahead, Han Wu then stepped confidently into the eighth floor.

Upon arrival, Han Wu was instantly transported to a towering mountain, its entire form forged from solid black stones. These stones, under the sun's gaze, radiated a heat more intense than glowing charcoal. Enduring the burning sensation gripping his feet, he forced himself to scan the desolate landscape around him.

There was nothing hiding here—everything was laid bare and exposed. Nothing struck him as particularly strange or out of place, save for a statue standing approximately twenty meters ahead. With a clap, he instantly switched locations with a random pebble on the ground, bringing him much closer to closely inspect the mysterious statue.

The statue before him was of a disheveled man with a long, messy beard. Due to the harsh sunlight beating down, half of the sculpted figure was dramatically shrouded in deep shadow.

“Who is this guy?”

The words had barely left Han Wu's lips when the statue's surface dramatically began to crack. Shards of black stone flaked away, revealing the flesh that had been concealed beneath. Within moments, the stony exterior of the statue completely peeled off, leaving behind a colossal ten-meter-tall giant.

At the sudden sight of the towering giant, Han Wu instinctively raised his guard. Despite the fact that the colossal figure remained motionless and didn't exude any discernible energy, Han Wu had an undeniable feeling of its strength, a conclusion he drew purely from the sheer density of its muscles.

The giant appeared to be rousing from a very long slumber, letting out a huge yawn and stretching its massive hands high into the air. At the deafening sound, Han Wu felt an

intense ringing in his ears and instinctively clapped his hands over them, desperately trying to prevent any permanent hearing damage.

After yawning, the giant's eyes snapped open, blinking with unexpected surprise, and its voice, booming with a resonant, ringing quality as it addressed Han Wu filled the air.

"You were the one who managed to pass through all seven floors perfectly, weren't you?"

Han Wu simply nodded in confirmation.

The giant then let out a booming laugh, its voice echoing across the mountain. "*Haha!* To think that you, at such a tender age, would possess the capability to perfectly clear all seven floors! Without a doubt, you are destined to become the supreme ruler of a vast kingdom one day."

Han Wu, however, had never even entertained such grand ambitions. The giant's words were irrelevant, as he had no intention of remaining in this place for long anyway.

"Just tell me what you are going to give me as my reward," he stated, cutting straight to the chase. He was already aware that those who cleared all seven floors would receive a Diamond title known as the Sky Palace's Finisher. However, having perfectly cleared every single floor, he was expecting to receive an even greater reward.

Han Wu's bluntness didn't seem to bother the colossal being in the slightest. Without a flicker of hesitation, it opened its massive palm, revealing a gleaming medal crafted from pure diamond. "This is for you."

The moment Han Wu grasped the medal, a stream of data instantly materialized before his eyes from the medal itself.

[Diamond Title: Sky Palace's Pioneer]

[Effect 1: Independent Title. Does not take up a slot.]

[Effect 2: Can be used to transport the user to any location within the Sky Palace.]

[Effect 3: The user obtains a miniature Sky Palace. Can be used to capture and imprison anyone threatening the civilization.]

[Effect 4: ...]

The medal had a total of seven effects, and Han Wu's excitement surged with each one he read. However, just as he was about to put the medal and claim full ownership, an unexpected, burning sensation erupted on his neck.

Han Wu's hand instinctively went to his neck, where he felt the familiar presence of the necklace he had claimed from the monster on the second floor. He recalled that the necklace's sole effect was to provide resistance against mental corruption.

A sudden, chilling realization jolted Han Wu to full alertness. Without hesitation, he immediately released the diamond medal from his grasp. The instant it struck the hard ground, it violently exploded into a swirling cloud of sinister black smoke.

The giant sighed. "You found out? What a shame. You would've been such a perfect substitute."

Looking up, Han Wu gasped in utter disbelief. The giant, before his very eyes, had transformed into a massive, grotesque black octopus, its surface covered in repulsive pustules. The terrifying realization then dawned on him: the mountain he stood upon was, in truth, the creature's immense body!

The colossal octopus, no longer bothering with its disguise, dropped all pretenses. "Since you've already discovered my true form, you should just remain here to manage the Sky Palace. You will take my place in this prison and become its most wretched inmate!"

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,480 words]

Chapter 171 - Sky Palace's Conqueror

The massive black octopus lashed out, swinging its colossal tentacles wildly to strike Han Wu. Though he reacted swiftly and managed to evade the main attack, one of its tentacles still grazed his arm. Immediately, he felt a sharp stinging sensation, and to his alarm, observed the skin touched by the tentacle rapidly blackening, the discoloration creeping further up his arm with each passing second.

Realizing with alarm that he had been poisoned, Han Wu swiftly drew a knife from his personal space and brutally shaved off the affected flesh to prevent the poison from spreading further. Almost immediately, thanks to his powerful physique, his wounds began to heal up and scab over at a rapid speed.

Still, he now knew that the octopus in front of him was not just strong but very deadly. One wrong move, a direct hit from a tentacle, could mean his eternal imprisonment here, condemned to become yet another captive in this ominous place.

There was no way he'd become a prisoner here. With that resolve, Han Wu immediately transformed into his black dragon form. The Genocider greatsword in his hand resonated deeply with his surging fighting spirit, vibrating with raw power. With chilling efficiency, his greatsword effortlessly cleaved through the massive tentacles whenever they dared to make contact.

The additional damage from Han Wu combined with his disorienting Genocider Afterimage made it exceedingly difficult for the octopus to mount an effective counter-attack. Driven to a furious rage, it secreted a black poison, coating its massive body entirely. With each swing of its tentacles, a deadly shower of poison droplets sprayed everywhere, making them incredibly difficult to evade.

Thankfully, Han Wu was well-protected by his dragon scales. These scales not only boasted incredible magical resistance but also effectively isolated even the most miniscule of poison droplets, preventing them from making any contact with his body.

Unable to engage in close-quarters combat against the creature, Han Wu swiftly altered his strategy. He transformed his greatsword once again into a rapid-fire gatling gun. Aiming steadily at the octopus, he unleashed continuous streams of bullets. While these projectiles left barely any discernible physical wounds on its resilient body, the elemental and spiritual damage infused within each bullet proved quite effective, inflicting significant pain upon the creature.

The octopus, driven into a frenzy by the barrage of bullets, began whipping its tentacles around with blinding speed, forming a pseudo-barrier that blocked off the incoming damage.

Shifting tactics once more, Han Wu transformed his weapon from a gatling gun to a massive cannon, then proceeded to blast off the octopus's tentacles, one by one. Each explosion ripped through its flesh, leaving behind massive, gaping holes.

This time, the octopus was completely outmatched. Its tentacles simply couldn't keep pace with Han Wu's agility, its attempts at mental corruption proved utterly ineffective, and its poison was effortlessly repelled by the resilience of Han Wu's dragon scales. It was as if Han Wu had been crafted to be its perfect counter!

Observing the devastating effectiveness of the cannon, Han Wu pressed his assault, continuously firing at the octopus while deftly zipping through the air. The intense battle lasted an entire day and night. Even with his formidable power and stamina, Han Wu soon found weariness setting in by the dawn of the second day.

The octopus however was in an utterly dire state. Its colossal body was riddled with devastating injuries from numerous cannon blasts, its skin and muscle torn away, leaving chunks of flesh dangling. It was clear that the creature was slowly but surely dying from its grievous wounds. Han Wu allowed himself a brief moment of rest while suspended in the air, before delivering one final shot to end its suffering.

The octopus finally succumbed to the attack, and at that very moment, an overbearing presence suddenly materialized, pressing down on everything. Han Wu was instantly pinned to the ground, unable to stand. He strained his neck, managing to glimpse a blurry black figure slowly crawling out from the colossal octopus's corpse. The figure swiftly vanished, and with its disappearance, the overwhelming pressure that had paralyzed Han Wu immediately dissipated.

Still slightly unsettled by the encounter, Han Wu quickly accessed his interface. His gaze immediately fell upon a brand new Diamond title proudly displayed: Sky Palace's Conqueror.

[Effect 1: The user can teleport to any location in the Sky Palace.]

[Effect 2: The user can imprison any life form within the Sky Palace.]

[Effect 3: The user can release any prisoner in the Sky Palace.]

The three effects granted by the new title offered absolutely no direct combat benefits, yet Han Wu couldn't help but acknowledge that it had come at the right time. With the title, he could finally fulfill the promise he had made to the half-dragons regarding their release. Beyond that, he could even bring in the various races inhabiting the remaining six floors and incorporate them into his army.

He was very happy at the thought of gaining so many soldiers with just that title. Moreover, he obtained a decent amount of Diamond materials after using the dismantler mitt on the octopus corpse. There were materials like Mental Corruption Crystal, Fatal Poison, and Tough Flesh Crystals, all of which would fetch a high price. He was giddy thinking about how much money he'd earn.

Furthermore, once the octopus was fully dismantled, Han Wu uncovered a small box. Inside, he found a collection of books detailing the precise reasons the various races had been imprisoned within the Sky Palace. As he began to check their content, what he read struck him as so absurd that he found himself almost dying of laughter.

The half-dragons had been imprisoned for a rather petty reason—their overwhelming arrogance. They never ceased boasting to others about being descendants of the Great Dragons. This persistent pride ultimately managed to provoke the ire of someone powerful. The Light Spirits had been imprisoned simply because their brightness was so intense that they had, quite by accident, momentarily blinded a powerful expert.

Han Wu kept reading through the records, his eyes scanning the pages, until a particular detail caught his full attention: the massive black octopus was, in reality, a Noble Soul. Because of a strange mutation, the octopus had been ostracized by the other Noble Souls and had endured a history of bullying. Yet, one day, a powerful being discerned its hidden potential and gave it their blessing, which explained how the octopus was able to become so strong.

With its newfound strength, the octopus, seeing revenge, captured the Noble Souls and ruthlessly imprisoned them within the Sky Palace. Not content with mere imprisonment, it even sent a clone to corrupt their minds and twist their will. This torment continued until the Noble Souls were reduced to a state where they fervently wished for death, explaining their desperate desire to die and be set free when Han Wu visited their floor.

A deep frown creased Han Wu's brow as he finally finished the book. While he found some of the reasons for imprisonment amusing, his primary concern revolved around the enigmatic, powerful figure the text continuously referenced. This particular entity appeared to wield such immense power and influence that even the very author of the book had meticulously avoided even a direct mention of their name.

Han Wu was worried that the mysterious individual, the one the book dared not name, would soon appear to demand compensation for the disruption he had caused within the Sky Palace.

I shouldn't think about it too much. I have five more months before I have to leave here anyway. I just need to improve my strength even more!

After clearing out the eighth floor and confirming there were no more valuables to be found, Han Wu returned to the first floor in search of Bakir. The half-dragon, immediately sensing the overwhelming power radiating from Han Wu, quickly knelt, offering his loyalty. Following his lead, the rest of the half-dragons also knelt down in a display of reverence and loyalty.

Han Wu felt hundreds of threads of Faith extending from them, directly connecting to him. He realized with satisfaction that he had finally succeeded in acquiring his own devoted believers within the Title Civilization, purely through his own powers. Unfortunately, for now, he couldn't take them with him.

He gave Bakir specific instructions to remain in place for another five months. Once that period had passed, Han Wu himself would be transported back to the Divine Civilization, at which point he would finally be able to bring all of them with him.

After concluding his business, Han Wu left the Sky Palace. Knowing he had just five months left, he wanted to try his luck in other training sites, aiming to collect as many powerful titles as possible to further enhance his own strength.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,511 words]

Chapter 172 - Missing Person

Han Wu's first stop was the adventurer guild's branch located in the Umbral Sea. There, he submitted his application to upgrade his identification plate. The administrator, upon reviewing his record, couldn't help but frown. According to the records before her, Han Wu was progressing through the ranks far too quickly.

Han Wu's advancement was astonishing—it had taken him only about a month to climb from the Iron to the Silver rank, and then from Silver to Gold in just another. Becoming a Gold-ranked adventurer in just two months was unprecedented, a feat completely unheard of in the guild branch's history. Since such rapid progression was beyond her authority to approve, she immediately forwarded the matter to her higher-ups for a decision.

The guild's branch leader was deeply engrossed in a discussion with a group of Gold adventurers when the report was handed to him. Upon receiving it, he briefly paused the conversation, stepping out of the room. It was clear he had been experiencing some considerable difficulties recently.

Within his administrative area of the Umbral Sea, there had been an alarming increase in reports of missing civilians lately. What was particularly troubling was that all these disappearances were concentrated in one specific area. He had already dispatched several teams of Silver-ranked adventurers to investigate, yet not a single one had ever returned.

Faced with limited options, he reached out to a Gold adventurer team. However, their demands for the investigation were excessively high. Not only did they insist on a reward of 2 million gold coins, but they also requested three Platinum Title Scrolls in addition!

The branch leader was experiencing a significant headache. The Umbral Sea was hardly an ideal training site, and the guild simply didn't have 2 million gold coins to spare. However, the escalating number of missing persons cases had unfortunately drawn the attention of the higher-ups, leaving the branch leader with no choice but to find a way to urgently address the pressing issue.

The branch leader, just on the verge of biting the bullet, suddenly received a timely report from the administrator regarding Han Wu's application to rank up. This unexpected news immediately ignited a new idea in his mind. He promptly excused himself from the meeting room and personally went to meet Han Wu, intending to evaluate his strength firsthand.

After putting Han Wu through a series of tests, the branch leader confirmed that he indeed possessed strength comparable to that of Gold-ranked adventurers, at least. He then proceeded to inform Han Wu about the troubling cases of missing people within the Umbral Sea and promised him a substantial reward of 1 million gold coins for his assistance.

Han Wu remained completely uninterested, considering he could effortlessly acquire that amount of money by simply selling some of the valuable materials he had already collected. Noticing Han Wu's lack of interest, the branch leader decided to enhance the offer by including a Platinum Title Scroll.

The prospect of receiving a Platinum Title Scroll after the investigation indeed piqued Han Wu's interest. Getting more titles was a priority for him at the moment, as he possessed four empty slots but had just three titles he could equip[1].

He already had the powerful Diamond Genocider, the Half-Dragon Hope, and Gold Monster Slayer titles activated. He did, in fact, hold another Diamond title, the Sky Palace Conqueror, but he left it unequipped for the moment. After all, there was simply no reason to use a title whose effects were confined to the Sky Palace.

In a sense, Han Wu still had an empty title slot to fill, and it would be great if he could fill it with another Platinum title. He decided to accept the mission for the sake of the title.

With his registration complete, Han Wu took the clues provided by the branch leader and headed straight for the area plagued by disappearances. What Han Wu didn't realize, however, was that just as he left, the three Gold adventurers with whom the branch leader had been in a heated discussion angrily stormed out of the guild branch.

"Big brother, that old bastard is looking down on us! Does he not realize that we are the only Gold adventurer team here in the Umbral Sea?" Blackbeard, the youngest, grumbled.

"Yeah, big brother! What if we kill him tonight?" The second, Yellowbeard, made a throat-slitting gesture.

Despite his simmering anger and a furious glare directed at the guild's building, Whitebeard managed to maintain his rationality.

"Don't let your anger cloud your judgment," he warned. "While the branch leader himself might be easy enough to eliminate, the adventurer guild isn't an organization that we can afford to provoke so recklessly. If we were to kill him, the adventurer guild would almost certainly dispatch their executioners, and that would undoubtedly spell the end for us."

"But I simply cannot tolerate this humiliation! We've finally achieved the rank of Gold adventurers, and despite that, the arrogant bastard still treats us with contempt!" Blackbeard fumed, his voice laced with indignation.

Exasperated, Whitebeard rolled his eyes. "He went and found someone else, didn't he? Let's just track down that person and kill them. After that, we can come back here and make them hire us, whether they like it or not."

“Now that’s what I call good thinking, big brother!” Yellowbeard exclaimed, a grin spreading across his face. “This way, we won’t have to worry about the adventurer guild coming after us at all, and to top it off, we can even earn ourselves some extra money!”

Han Wu remained completely oblivious to the fact that he had become the target of three resentful Gold adventurers. He diligently followed the information provided by the branch leader, eventually locating the area where people had been mysteriously vanishing.

The moment he stepped into the place, however, a deep frown creased his brow. Though he hadn’t activated his Black Dragon King Transformation, his heightened senses as a Lord were more than capable of picking up critical details. He had barely set foot in the area when his nose detected the scent of miasma hanging heavy in the air.

The miasma itself was harmless to Han Wu, but for regular people, it was quite fatal. Those who inhaled a significant amount of the miasma would succumb to hallucinations, eventually dying without understanding the cause.

“Is this why so many of the adventurers went missing? No, that just can’t be right...”

Silver adventurers simply weren’t weak enough to perish so easily, even if continuously exposed to miasma. Puzzled, Han Wu cautiously advanced deeper into the area. With every step, the miasma grew noticeably denser, and unsettling sounds began to emanate from all directions around him.

Through the murky miasma, Han Wu’s keen sight picked out several monstrous spiders lurking in the undergrowth. He swiftly transformed his Genocider Weapon into the gatling and opened fire, riddling the arachnids with countless holes. However, the sound of gunfire drew an even larger horde of spiders to attack him.

Han Wu aimed his gatling gun and unleashed a torrent of fire. Bullets streaked through the air, tearing the attacking spiders into countless shreds. Five minutes later, the ground around him was strewn with their mangled corpses. He took a moment to inspect one of the creatures and found that they were called Man-eaters.

The Man-eaters were large spiders, yet their venom was surprisingly weak. Han Wu examined their drops and quickly confirmed that they were just Bronze monsters. Even accounting for their overwhelming numbers, it was highly improbable that Silver adventurers would be defeated by such weak foes.

Having eliminated the wave of spiders, Han Wu pressed onward, venturing deeper into the area. Interestingly, one of his original titles, the Spider Slayer, emitted a unique scent that provoked the hostility of all nearby spiders, drawing them towards him. Perceiving this as an unexpected boon, he decided to capture the arachnids rather than simply eliminate them.

Using Gene Recombination, Han Wu fused the captured spiders into a single, massive Gold Man-eater, a grotesque creature with hundreds of legs. The creature barely had time to register its existence before Han Wu ended it with a decisive blast from his cannon.

His Spider Slayer title had now been successfully upgraded to Gold rank, and as a result, its initial skill to summon Wolf Spiders was significantly reinforced. This meant he could now summon a force of 20 to 100 Bronze Wolf Spiders or Man-Eaters.

Given his prior experience commanding swarms of locusts, Han Wu found it incredibly simple to exert control over such a large number of spiders. With a mere thought, the spiders he had summoned became his drones, forming a large intelligence network at his disposal.

He meticulously inspected his surroundings through the eyes of his spider drones, and his investigation progressed at an incredible pace. It wasn't long before he stumbled upon a significant discovery—one of his spider drones had located several half-eaten adventurer corpses!

1. We aren't sure why the Planeswalker title wasn't listed here 

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

Chapter 173 - Stalker and Being Stalked

[1,765 words]

Chapter 173 - Stalker and Being Stalked

Armed with the information provided by the branch leader and the silver identity plates he had recovered from the corpses, Han Wu was able to confirm that the deceased were, in fact, the Silver adventurers who had vanished while on a mission to investigate the area.

After conducting a brief but thorough investigation, Han Wu made a discovery: the adventurers had perished from poison rather than being bitten to death. He also verified that this poison was not related to the miasma. Despite a careful search of the immediate vicinity, he found no additional clues.

Just as Han Wu was preparing to delve deeper into his investigation, one of his Wolf Spiders transmitted a surprising piece of information: three Gold adventurers were

actively stalking him! Han Wu was slightly puzzled by this development. While it was somewhat unusual for other adventurers to be in this area, it was an entirely different matter for them to be specifically trailing him.

He had deliberately chosen a very discreet and desolate path, focusing solely on his search for clues—a route ordinary adventurers wouldn't typically take. This definitely meant the three adventurers were specifically here for him.

Han Wu, curious to understand their intentions, leaped and took cover behind a boulder, waiting to see what the adventurers would do. It wasn't long before the three figures entered his field of vision.

To his surprise, all three adventurers sported extremely lush beards, each distinct in color, which made differentiating them quite simple. While intently tracking Han Wu's path, the trio eventually came across the half-eaten corpses.

"What bad luck to find corpses here," Blackbeard said in disgust.

Yellowbeard nervously scanned the ground, but when he found no further traces of Han Wu's footprints, a sense of unease quickly turned into suspicion. "His footprints just vanished right here. Big brother, do you think he might have discovered us?"

Whitebeard shook his head, scanning the surroundings. "We've been quite careful, so it's unlikely we've been discovered. This might simply be a coincidence. Let's continue our search a bit further."

Affirming their plan with a nod, the brothers proceeded onward, gradually fading from view until they eventually vanished completely in the distance.

Han Wu let out a scoff. The three brothers hadn't actually walked away—they'd instead found a boulder in the distance to hide behind. Having confirmed that Han Wu's footprints had vanished, Whitebeard concluded that Han Wu had detected their presence and was deliberately evading them by going into hiding himself.

The three brothers hatched a plan: they'd pretend to leave, then hide behind a boulder, waiting for Han Wu to emerge from hiding. What they couldn't have known, however, was that Han Wu wasn't alone. His large group of summoned spiders were working as his eyes and ears—he could see virtually everything the three brothers were doing!

An hour dragged by as both parties remained in their hidden positions, but the three brothers' patience soon wore thin.

Blackbeard couldn't take it anymore and rose to his feet. "Big brother, perhaps you were mistaken. He still hasn't appeared. Is it possible he just ran away?"

Yellowbeard nodded in agreement. “Yeah, I think he did. Big brother, maybe you read too much into it.”

Whitebeard seethed inwardly, a knot of frustration tightening in his gut. It was almost inconceivable that his sixth sense, which had saved him countless times in the past, was failing him now. “Fine. We’ll press on with our search. It’s possible he’s stumbled upon some important clue further down.”

Changing their path, the brothers began searching the area for any sign of Han Wu’s traces. They quickly disappeared from view in the distance, yet Han Wu couldn’t help but chuckle. The brothers proved to be exceptionally cunning, repeating their earlier tactic—pretending to leave while actually hiding nearby, patiently waiting for him to reveal himself.

Han Wu knew better than to fall for that trick, not with his spiders serving as his eyes and ears. He remained perfectly still, concealed behind the boulder, and casually took out some snacks from his personal space to munch on. After another thirty minutes of waiting, the three adventurers, clearly frustrated, stood up once more.

“An hour and a half, and he’s still nowhere to be seen,” Blackbeard muttered, frustration evident in his voice. “Did he actually vanish into thin air, or just fly off? I find it hard to believe he even knew we were searching for him.”

Whitebeard harbored a nagging feeling that Han Wu was still close, but after such a prolonged and fruitless wait, even he began to question his own instincts. His brothers, observing his lack of success, concluded that Whitebeard had misjudged the situation entirely.

It was then that Yellowbeard decided to shift their approach. “Let’s just continue our search. We might just rediscover his footprints.”

Whitebeard gave a decisive nod, and the three adventurers at last truly departed. Only after confirming their departure did Han Wu climb out from behind the boulder, now absolutely certain that the trio was specifically targeting him. The perplexing part was that the details of this missing person case were supposed to be privy only to him and the branch leader.

Is the branch leader actually pulling the strings, the true culprit behind the kidnappings? If so, his eagerness to have the missing person case resolved so swiftly makes no sense whatsoever.

Han Wu’s mind raced, trying to reconcile the conflicting pieces of information. Unable to make sense of it, he decided to stalk the three brothers instead, hoping to uncover the truth of the situation. In this turn of events, the stalker had now become the stalked.

Thanks to his expansive network of spiders, Han Wu effortlessly kept a significant distance between himself and the three brothers. The brothers, on the other hand, encountered nothing but frustration: their search for further footprints proved fruitless, and they were constantly harassed by the aggressive monsters in the area, prompting continuous complaints about their terrible luck.

Thankfully, their immense strength allowed them to effortlessly cut down the monsters that attacked them. However, Whitebeard soon realized something was off. Their original objective had been to take over the mission from Han Wu, but instead, they found themselves embarking on an unplanned expedition! The entire scenario had been flipped!

More importantly, they were completely ignorant of the escalating danger rapidly closing in on them. Han Wu, observing through the eyes of his summoned spiders, soon noticed something terrible.

From the depths of a concealed cave, several colossal centipedes began to emerge, each spanning roughly ten meters in length. These were no ordinary insects; each was at least Gold-ranked. They moved with an eerie silence, rapidly closing the distance between themselves and the unsuspecting three brothers.

Han Wu secretly chuckled at their misfortune. The three had been searching for him, only to accidentally stumble into the hunting grounds of powerful centipedes. He briefly considered warning them, but ultimately decided against it. He also wanted to gauge the centipedes' strength.

He continued his observation until a sharp cry of pain erupted from Blackbeard. The adventurer hadn't even grasped the fact that they were completely encircled until a bite had already landed. Whitebeard and Yellowbeard immediately activated their titles, engaging the giant centipedes, while Blackbeard quickly retrieved an antidote from his spatial ring to apply to his wound, hoping to impede the venom's spread.

However, the giant centipedes proved too strong, and the antidote only slowed the venom; it couldn't neutralize it completely. Blackbeard panicked, and his two brothers naturally couldn't let him succumb to the venom.

They quickly repelled the centipedes, seizing an opening to pull Blackbeard out of danger. Han Wu was disappointed by their performance. If they couldn't even win against several Gold centipedes, how could they ever hope to win against him?

With a faint sigh, Han Wu materialized directly in front of the three adventurers. Upon seeing him, the brothers instantly recognized him as their target. This particular zone was well-known as a high-danger area, strictly for adventurers, and Han Wu was wearing a gold identification plate. Under these circumstances, only someone truly oblivious would fail to realize he was the very person they were seeking.

The three brothers, however, remained blissfully unaware that their supposed “prey” unraveled their entire scheme. Adopting the guise of concerned comrades, they urgently informed Han Wu that they were being pursued by powerful monsters, suggesting they flee together. Naturally, their real intention was to lure him to a secluded, seemingly safe spot where they could carry out their assassination.

A scornful scoff escaped Han Wu’s lips as he swung his greatsword, aiming directly for the poisoned Blackbeard. The third brother, his movements already sluggish and his strength severely compromised by the poison, couldn’t evade the powerful strike. The blade bit deep, instantly cleaving him in two.

Snapping out of their horrified shock, the two remaining brothers erupted in a blaze of fury and fear, pointing accusatory fingers at Han Wu and screaming that he was a killer. At this, Han Wu finally dropped his facade of ignorance.

“Stop pretending,” he stated calmly. “You three came here specifically to kill me. Don’t for a second believe that I’m unaware of your malicious plans.”

The moment they saw that Han Wu had unraveled their intentions, the two brothers abandoned their act. Their faces contorted with rage and hatred, and they snarled, “You rascal! We will avenge our brother’s death right here, even if it costs us our very lives!”

Discarding any further conversation, Han Wu brought his greatsword down, grievously injuring both brothers. Yet, he chose not to end their lives immediately. Instead, he patiently waited for the centipedes to reach them. He then calmly observed as the two brothers slowly succumbed to the centipedes’ venom, before he personally dealt with the remaining creatures.

By examining the wounds on the two fallen brothers, Han Wu confirmed that the previous Silver adventurers had indeed perished from the very same venom. The centipedes were clearly responsible for those deaths as well. With this new information, he decided to investigate the source of these creatures and determine their full numbers.

He followed the trail left by the centipedes until it led him to a small, almost imperceptible hidden cave. Locating the widest entrance, he cautiously sent in several spiders to scout the interior. What he witnessed through their shared sight left him utterly aghast.

Deep beneath the grassy plains lay a massive labyrinth, teeming with giant centipedes. They roamed freely, yearning for the taste of blood and flesh.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,659 words]

Chapter 174 - Five Poisons

It wasn't just hundreds, but thousands of giant centipedes that Han Wu discovered swarming the labyrinth. More horrifying still, his Wolf Spiders showed him countless bones strewn and trapped amongst the centipedes. The bones belonged to those who had gone missing.

Gold giant centipedes... I've never seen them before.

He commanded his spiders to widen the hole, so he could personally enter and annihilate every single centipede. Displaying his formidable strength, he effortlessly annihilated the multitude of Gold centipedes within a mere three hours, obtaining the Platinum Centipede's Executioner title as a result.

Possessing the title granted him two effects. The first effect set the default affinity of centipedes towards him as Nemesis, and the second rendered him impervious to Intermediate-rank poisons and all weaker venoms, a powerful protection active so long as the title remained equipped.

What kinds of poison fall under this rank, though?

Driven by curiosity, Han Wu deliberately inflicted a small wound upon his forearm and carefully applied a single drop of centipede venom from a fang. The moment the toxin entered his bloodstream, his wound instantly blackened, an unmistakable sign of its toxicity. However, just as quickly, the dark hue faded, and the wound itself seemed to knit shut with astonishing speed, leaving his forearm perfectly intact as if nothing had ever happened.

Han Wu deduced that the centipede's venom must be of Intermediate rank—his newfound immunity wouldn't have neutralized it with such remarkable ease otherwise. As he observed the centipedes more intently, his attention was drawn to a set of gates which most likely led directly into the heart of the labyrinth.

The gates, though crafted from solid stone, let out a curious metallic clang when tapped, leaving Han Wu baffled. He paused, marveling at its unique nature before he, without hesitation, brought his Genocider greatsword down to slice it in half.

However, to his surprise, his greatsword—a weapon which had effortlessly cleaved through even the toughest foes in countless battles—bounced off the gates with a clang. He had channeled his entire strength into that single strike, yet it had left nothing more than a faint, insignificant scratch on the doors. This only served to intensify his curiosity about the gates and what lay beyond.

It became clear to Han Wu that creating a hole large enough for himself by cutting through the gates was implausible, given their astonishing thickness. His thoughts instead turned to his Planeswalker title—it gave him the ability to instantly swap locations with anything within his line of sight.

There was no need for him to carve a massive opening. All he needed was a simple glimpse at any object beyond the gate. He willed for his Genocider greatsword to morph into a compact drill. With his strength and energy, the drill hummed to life, its tip biting into the tough material. Despite the gate's incredible durability, he steadily worked for half an hour until a small opening finally appeared.

Peering through the small hole, Han Wu finally gained a clear view of the chamber beyond the gates, illuminated by flickering torches mounted on its walls. The vast hall was densely packed with what appeared to be tens of thousands of terracotta soldiers. Each soldier was clad in armor, exuding the aura of warriors who had endured countless battles.

However, that wasn't all. As Han Wu looked further into the chamber, he spotted a colossal pit, spanning at least 10 km sq. From its depths, an endless stream of centipedes, snakes, scorpions, lizards, and toads intermittently crawled out. Looming ominously above the pit was a massive swirling cloud of green miasma.

Peering through the dense, swirling green miasma, Han Wu could just barely discern the faint silhouette of a colossal throne, upon which a figure was seated. Despite his efforts, he couldn't identify the individual; the considerable distance combined with the thick, green fog rendered the figure indistinct.

"This appears to be a tomb... but why is it swarming with so many venomous creatures? And with the gates completely sealed, what could they possibly be consuming to survive?"

He grappled with numerous questions, but he knew that the only way to uncover the truth was to personally explore the tomb's depths.

Through the narrow hole, he focused his vision on one of the terracotta soldiers closest to him. With a clap of his hands, he instantly switched places with the statue, finding himself now standing inside the vast chamber. However, the moment his feet touched the ground, the silent terracotta soldiers unexpectedly sprang to life.

The outer shells of the terracotta soldiers fractured and crumbled away, exposing the blackened, decaying bodies encased within. These reanimated warriors, still clutching their spears and halberds, menacingly approached Han Wu. Sensing the imminent assault, he swiftly leaped backward towards the gate, simultaneously pulling his gatling gun into position.

He unleashed a torrent of bullets, each inflicting high physical damage and imbued with various elemental properties. The terracotta soldiers, unable to withstand the relentless barrage, crumbled and disintegrated, mowed down like a field of wheat.

Still, the sheer numbers of terracotta soldiers were astonishing. Even with the rapid-fire power of his gatling gun, Han Wu spent three hours obliterating most of them. The few remaining terracotta soldiers were temporarily obstructed by the piles of their shattered companions' bodies, so they posed no further threat to him.

The fierce battle concluded, Han Wu at last found the time to inspect the new title he had been awarded for annihilating the terracotta army.

[Platinum title: Terracotta Soldier Smasher.]

[Effect 1: Sets default affinity of terracotta soldiers towards user to Nemesis.]

[Effect 2: Summon Terracotta Armor.]

A title possessing such a limited number of effects typically signified that they were powerful. Han Wu swung his arm, summoning the newly acquired armor directly onto his body. In a flash, a beautiful set of terracotta armor materialized, perfectly fitting and encasing his entire body. Remarkably, despite its appearance, he registered no increase in his physical weight, the armor feeling as light as air.

As he tapped the armor, a curious metallic ringing resonated from its surface. To his surprise, he realized it was composed of the same incredibly durable material as the door he had just encountered! This instantly indicated that the armor boasted significant defensive capabilities.

Just as Han Wu was basking in the satisfaction of his recent gains, a small, barely perceptible cloud of translucent green miasma floated towards him. Its translucent nature caused Han Wu to completely miss it at first, and by the time he finally became aware of its presence, he had already inhaled most of it.

Thankfully, the Platinum Centipede's Executioner title remained equipped, instantly neutralizing the green miasma. Without it, he easily could have met his end right there.

The closer Han Wu ventured towards the massive pit, the more powerful and oppressive the surrounding poison became. He soon began to worry that his Intermediate Poison Immunity might not be strong enough to withstand it. While he was still contemplating how best to advance further, a large number of the pit's poisonous inhabitants suddenly surged forth, leaping from its depths and charging directly towards him, their coordinated movement making it seem as though they were acting on a specific order.

Han Wu gripped his gatling gun and rained down bullets upon the venomous beasts, killing many. Yet, with each creature that perished, a strange, green, poisonous miasma erupted from their corpses, adding to the potency of the already ominous miasma cloud hanging in the air.

He accidentally inhaled some of the extremely noxious green miasma, and immediately, a searing, fiery torment surged through his entire body, as if molten fire was coursing through his veins!

This hurts! Even with the Intermediate Poison Immunity, the pain is so overwhelming! If I keep inhaling too much more of this miasma, I will definitely die here!

Han Wu decided to pull back, but the oppressive green miasma relentlessly advanced, forcing him back until he found himself trapped against the solid stone gates with nowhere else to go. He was just about to activate his Switch ability, aiming to look through the small hole in the gate to teleport to safety, when a sudden system message caught his attention.

After quickly reading through the message, he instantly ceased his retreat. He had amassed a decent number of Platinum titles from the sheer scale of poisonous beasts he'd obliterated: Toad Cleaner, Snake Catcher, Scorpion Slayer, and Lizard Killer. This meant, alongside his Centipede's Executioner, he now had a total of five Platinum titles!

Each of the newly acquired titles came with identical effects: setting the default affinity from their respective creature species towards him to Nemesis, and granting him Intermediate Poison Immunity. However, in the very next instant, under Han Wu's astonished gaze, the five Platinum titles fused, forming an entirely new Platinum title, the Five Poisons.

[Effect 1: Sets default affinity of all poisonous beasts towards the user to Nemesis.]

[Effect 2: Grants the user Advanced Poison Immunity.]

[Effect 3: The user obtains the Five Poison Sacred Vessel. Can absorb poisons to increase the strength of the user's body.]

To his surprise, Han Wu realized the thick green miasma, which had previously caused him so much agony, was now subtly fortifying his body from within. Seizing this unexpected opportunity, he boldly opened his mouth and inhaled deeply, consuming the swirling green miasma surrounding him.

To his astonishment, he detected a slight yet definite increase in his body's strength. Though the process was gradual, it was unmistakably enhancing his physical constitution. Content with this unexpected benefit, his earlier urge to flee vanished entirely.

Han Wu intended to stay and further enhance his abilities. His theory was that, much like how the five Platinum titles had combined to form the Platinum Five Poisons titled, he could potentially elevate this new title to Diamond rank if the original five titles could somehow be upgraded to the Diamond rank themselves.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,536 words]

Chapter 175 - Poison Nemesis

Han Wu deliberately ignored the swirling poisonous miasma, effortlessly wading through it. His goal was to capture as many of the venomous creatures as possible for merging. This task consumed three full days of relentless effort before he finally succeeded in killing five Diamond poisonous beasts.

Upon successfully upgrading all five individual titles to the Diamond rank, Han Wu automatically received the Diamond Five Poisons title. While it retained its original three effects, some of these effects had been significantly enhanced.

[Effect 1: Sets default affinity of all poisonous beasts towards the user to Nemesis.]

[Effect 2: Grants the user Special Poison Immunity. Immune to most poisons.]

[Effect 3: Grants the user the Myriad Poisons Sacred Vessel. Can absorb poisons to increase the strength of the user's body. Also grants the user a body filled with vile poison.]

Han Wu was utterly astonished to discover that the latter two effects of the Diamond Five Poisons title had been enhanced—they had become incredibly powerful! A title formed from the combination of five other Diamond titles was, as expected, exceedingly powerful.

The first effect alone had turned Han Wu into a Nemesis for all poisonous creatures. However, their venoms would not only be completely ineffective against him, but would also paradoxically serve to nourish and strengthen his body.

More importantly, Han Wu's own body had now become a source of deadly poison. From this point forward, any creature that dared to consume his flesh or blood would immediately be poisoned. This unique ability served as a powerful deterrent, far more effective than the majority of other defensive skills he possessed.

Staring into the massive pit before him, he noted that he had successfully eradicated most of the poisonous creatures. All the while, he had been deliberately inhaling the dense green miasma to increase his own strength, which had visibly thinned the toxic miasma cloud in the air.

Having consumed most of the miasma, Han Wu could finally see beyond the haze, allowing him to clearly observe the massive throne. Seated upon it was a regal-looking figure, whose wide, glaring eyes were fixed directly upon him, inexplicably igniting a primal fear deep within Han Wu's heart.

A powerful, authoritative voice reverberated directly within his mind. "Who are you to be so brazen, to show such disrespect as to not bow before me? Kneel!"

The figure's voice, both hypnotizing and authoritative, filled Han Wu's mind, subconsciously compelling him to kneel. Just as he felt this unconscious urge, however, the diamond necklace he wore around his neck suddenly became scalding hot.

Han Wu abruptly snapped out of the trance, quickly realizing it was mental corruption again! He forcefully resisted the urge to kneel and, whipping out his gatling gun, opened fire on the figure on the throne. The countless bullets relentlessly tore into the mysterious figure, each bursting with various elemental damages that illuminated the darkness like a display of fairy lights.

"How dare you injure my body? You shall surely perish today!" the figure thundered, his voice echoing with furious power. As he raised his arms, in an instant, a massive array shimmered into existence beside him.

From the shimmering array, a dozen colossal golden giants materialized, each towering roughly a hundred meters high and encased in a lustrous, gold-like metal. Half of them immediately positioned themselves to defend their king, while the other six lumbered menacingly towards Han Wu, each monumental stride sending tremors through the ground.

The deafening sound of clanking metal filled the air, causing Han Wu's ears to ring long before he made contact with the giants. Reacting swiftly, he shifted into his dragon form, his gatling gun seamlessly transforming back into a greatsword. He then swung with immense force at one of the towering giants, only to be met with surprise as he realized their power was evenly matched.

His powerful Genocider greatsword barely scratched the giant's surface, leaving only a superficial cut. He immediately understood he was facing incredibly tough foes this time, and there were twelve of them! Knowing that overwhelming them through sheer force was highly improbable, he began to consider a different approach.

Han Wu timed his move, patiently waiting for one of the giants to attack him. The instant a giant struck, he activated his Switch ability, instantly swapping places with another

golden giant, causing the powerful blow to land on its unsuspecting comrade instead. The resulting impact was devastating, emitting a piercing screech of protesting metal that reverberated throughout the labyrinth.

The impact left a clear dent mark on the golden giant's body, and its subsequent movements became noticeably sluggish. Observing the immediate effectiveness of this tactic, Han Wu consistently applied the strategy. He continuously swapped places with the other golden giants, forcing them to relentlessly attack each other. In time, they all fell, their vital Life Energy completely expended, collapsing into dormancy forever.

The king, seated on his throne, became visibly enraged. He lifted his arms, and an inexplicable, mysterious power caused the fallen golden giants to violently explode, their immense bodies dissolving into a dense, suffocating green miasma that rapidly spread throughout the labyrinth. It was a truly devious and unpredictable maneuver.

With a laugh, the king watched as Han Wu was caught in his trap. "Consider it an honor to meet your end by my unique poison. This is a Special-grade poison, one that absolutely no one else in this world can survive, except for me!"

Several minutes elapsed before the king, with growing unease, began to realize that something was amiss—the dense green miasma emanating from the fallen golden giants was visibly dissipating! Though he thought he was seeing things, he decided to observe closely.

Three more minutes passed, and this time, the king's initial suspicion was confirmed—the miasma was indeed growing more translucent! He raised his arm, actively recalling the dispersed green miasma, only to be met with the shocking sight of Han Wu, still very much alive. Even more shocking, he seemed to have grown even more powerful.

"Oops, it seems I've been found out," Han Wu said, scratching his head sheepishly, a wry grin on his face. He had genuinely not anticipated such a powerful figure resorting to poison as a method to try and end his life.

He had previously harbored genuine apprehension about what terrifying method the king might use to eliminate him. However, at the sight of the "Special" poison, he almost burst into laughter. Thanks to his Diamond Five Poisons title, not only was he completely immune to numerous types of toxins, but he could also gain strength by inhaling them.

The king's Special-grade poison was effectively a valuable rare herb for Han Wu. After inhaling it, he observed that his physical strength had increased by 15%. This meant he now possessed the raw physical power of a High Lord, even in his untransformed state!

"How can this possibly be? My poison is supposed to be able to dissolve everything in this entire world!" The king's voice was filled with utter disbelief, his eyes wide as he watched Han Wu emerge from the deadly miasma completely unscathed.

The king had been certain that Han Wu, even after eradicating all the poisonous beasts within the pit, would at most obtain just the Platinum Five Poisons title, which would grant him immunity only to Advanced poisons. The Special poison was, by all accounts, supposed to be his absolute end.

The king could never have imagined, even in his wildest dreams, that Han Wu was, in fact, an invader from another civilization, possessing the extraordinary ability to cultivate and enhance monsters through Gene Recombination. This ability was precisely how he had managed to obtain his Diamond title, by fusing numerous Platinum-ranked monsters into a single Diamond entity.

This was a critical oversight on the king's part, and Han Wu was determined not to afford him any opportunity to unravel the mystery. Capitalizing on the king's momentary confusion, Han Wu swiftly executed a Switch, instantly swapping positions with one of the remaining six golden giants, then powerfully swung his greatsword directly at the bewildered king.

In his powerful transformed state and wielding the mighty Genocider greatsword, Han Wu cleaved the king, who could not defend himself in time, in half. Simultaneously, the remaining six golden giants flickered and dissipated into nothingness. Han Wu released a breath he hadn't realized he was holding, savoring the victory, when suddenly, an overwhelming, powerful pressure slammed down upon him, forcing him to his knees.

With gritted teeth, he strained against the powerful force, his bones protesting audibly as he fought to remain standing. In that desperate struggle, he caught a fleeting glimpse of a blurry black figure as it crawled out from the king's lifeless corpse, sprang upwards, and vanished without a trace into thin air.

The instant the blurry figure vanished, the oppressive, crushing pressure lifted as suddenly as it had appeared, allowing Han Wu to finally breathe freely again. He collapsed onto the ground, panting heavily, and it took him a full five minutes of rest before he could gather enough strength to stand. As he did, he checked his interface and discovered a brand new Diamond title awaiting him.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,065 words]

Chapter 176 - Monster Ender

The Diamond title was called Labyrinth Crusher.

[Effect 1:Teleport to any location within the labyrinth.]

[Effect 2: Imprison any poison monsters inside the labyrinth.]

[Effect 3: Summon the labyrinth's army to fight (includes 1,000,000 terracotta soldiers and 12 golden giants. The number of summoned units scales with the energy used).]

Han Wu noticed the title looked strikingly similar to the Sky Palace Conqueror. Comparing the two, he found them almost identical. He then recalled the mental corruption, the overwhelming pressure, and the same blurry black figure that had vanished after he defeated the boss.

He connected these clues to a particular person recorded in the book he had found in the Sky Palace. It seemed likely that the labyrinth was linked to, and possibly created by, the same individual. Still, he couldn't understand why this person had built both the Sky Palace and the labyrinth.

He turned toward the throne, where the shadow had disappeared after he killed the king. Only the throne remained. Upon closer inspection, he found it was crafted from Radiant Ingot, an incredibly rare material valued at over 10,000 Divine Points per gram in the Divine Civilization's market.

Han Wu estimated the throne's weight at over ten tons. To him, it represented unimaginable wealth, so he stored it in his personal space without hesitation.

Once done, Han Wu retraced his steps to the Black Sea Adventurer Guild's local branch. He presented his findings to the branch manager, who distilled the report into a concise dossier and forwarded it to headquarters. The decision rested with them. They could either repurpose the underground labyrinth as a training ground or seal it off indefinitely.

After the report was filed, the branch manager invited him into his office. He placed a card worth one million gold coins on the table, along with a list of Platinum scrolls for Han Wu to choose from.

Han Wu kept the card in his personal space and scanned the list. It recorded every Platinum title the guild had collected over the past thousand years. All he had to do was choose one, and the branch manager would use his authority to request it from headquarters as a reward for Han Wu's investigation.

He read through the entries until he found a title that fit him perfectly. It was called Monster Hunter.

[Effect 1: Allows the user to seal the souls of Diamond-ranked monsters and summon them for battle. Summons last 15 minutes. The soul is destroyed once the time expires.]

[Effect 2: Allows the user to permanently sacrifice a Diamond monster's soul to temporarily grant a significant boost to one of their abilities. Duration: 15 minutes.]

The title required imprisoning a Diamond monster's soul to activate, which was a harsh condition. Diamond monsters always ruled large territories, making them nearly impossible to defeat. But Han Wu had a plan. By capturing enough monsters, he could create a Diamond monster through Gene Recombination, then kill it to claim its soul. This was why he wanted the Monster Hunter title as his reward.

The branch manager sighed in relief when Han Wu made his choice. He knew the restrictions of the Monster Hunter title. Because of them, it had remained locked away in the guild's vault for centuries without anyone choosing it.

The branch manager felt as if he had resolved a major crisis with minimal effort after Han Wu made his selection. A twinge of guilt followed when he realized that Han Wu had just resolved a huge headache for him yet asked for such a modest reward.

After some thought, he decided to share a bit of inside knowledge. "Young man, I'm sure you have your reasons for choosing this title over the others. I have a piece of information you might find useful. It seems the Monster Hunter title has the potential to evolve into a Diamond title, but you'll first need to acquire another one called Monster Slayer.

"No one knows where to find it, though. I've been with the guild for over a decade and have never once heard of its location. Whether you manage to rank up the title now depends entirely on luck..."

The branch manager rambled on, but Han Wu only focused on the first part. He hadn't expected Monster Slayer to be the key to upgrading Monster Hunter. As it happened, he'd already been lucky enough to obtain it early on. Now all he needed was the scroll for Monster Hunter.

Two days later, the headquarters delivered the scroll to the Black Sea branch. Han Wu unrolled it and carefully studied the requirements. Following the list of ingredients, he spent every last coin he had, even tossing in several Diamond materials, to gather everything he needed.

Once complete, he merged the ingredients with the scroll, and a gleaming Platinum title appeared on his interface. It lasted barely three seconds before merging with the Gold Monster Slayer title, transforming into the Diamond title called Monster Ender.

[Effect 1: Can absorb Diamond materials and summon the corresponding monster to aid in battle. Summon lasts 10 minutes. The summoned unit inherits 10% of the original monster's strength.]

[Effect 2: Can absorb Diamond monster souls and summon them to aid in battle. Summon lasts 15 minutes. The summoned unit inherits 20% of the original monster's strength.]

[Effect 3: When conditions of Effect 1 and 2 are met, the corresponding Diamond monster gains increased summon duration and strength. Summon lasts 60 minutes. The summoned unit inherits 50% of the original monster's strength.]

[Effect 4: Permanently sacrifice soul or materials to temporarily boost an aspect or ability of the user. Effect lasts 10 minutes.]

Han Wu's excitement soared when he saw these four powerful effects. The title fit him perfectly. Now, he could summon multiple Diamond monsters to fight alongside him.

At that moment, he realized that he didn't have much time left in this civilization and decided not to linger. After bidding farewell to the Black Sea branch manager, he immediately set out for his next destination: Myriad City. As the most prosperous city in this civilization, it was surrounded by several training sites, including four Platinum and two Diamond ones.

However, Han Wu paid little attention to the training sites' ranks. Instead, he focused on the number of monsters inside. With enough monsters, he could use Gene Recombination to quickly strengthen himself.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,712 words]

Chapter 177 - Banquet Invitation

Han Wu had the Gold identity plate, which limited him to entering only the Platinum training sites at most. Instead of rushing in blindly, he first visited the Adventurer Guild of Myriad City to gather detailed information about the monsters dwelling in those areas.

After collecting the intel, he stocked up on plenty of food before setting out to explore each training site. His goal was not to raise his rank but to acquire more Diamond titles. He had developed a strategy to fully exploit these titles by focusing on slaying specific monster species, even if they were considered weak.

He could merge these weaker Diamond titles into his Genocider title and use the Diamond Monster Ender title to seal away the monsters' souls or materials. This approach allowed him to increase his power significantly.

On top of that, he wielded an advantage others lacked—the Diamond Labyrinth Crusher. With it, he could summon the terracotta army and the twelve golden giants. Facing the Platinum monsters became simple with such overwhelming support, which also boosted his efficiency dramatically.

In just a month and a half, he cleared all thirty Platinum training sites around Myriad City, earning seventy-two distinct Diamond titles linked to different monster species. He merged every one of them into the Genocider title and enhanced its most powerful effect, the Genocider Weapon, to a terrifying new level.

[Effect: Genocider Weapon. Can transform into any weapon form. Inflicts 200% critical damage, 20% spiritual damage, 40% light damage, 60% poison damage, 30% ice damage, 40% fire damage, 30% lightning damage, 20% darkness damage, and 30% holy damage. Additionally, it has a 10% chance to inflict Stun, a 20% chance to inflict Break, and a 30% chance to inflict Bleed.]

The Genocider title's second effect, Genocider Afterimage, remained unchanged, adding an extra 50% damage. These two effects worked together seamlessly, granting him overwhelming power. He even felt confident he could defeat a Diamond monster without transforming the weapon at all.

Han Wu's remarkable performance had drawn the attention of all four major factions in Myriad City. Clearing all thirty Platinum training sites in just six weeks was no small feat. Even large adventurer groups struggled to accomplish that much in such a short time. While many admired his strength, just as many were impressed by how quickly he was amassing wealth.

Every monster he killed dropped valuable materials. Han Wu had slain so many that people stopped keeping track. Whenever he returned to sell his haul, merchants bowed as if he were a revered elder, grateful for the fortune he brought them.

Any faction that recruited Han Wu would gain a guaranteed source of profit. All four factions, along with several prominent adventurer groups, recognized this and wasted no time sending him invitations. However, Han Wu ignored them all. He preferred to work alone and saw no benefit in joining a group that would likely slow him down.

As usual, he returned to his hotel one day to find numerous invitations wedged into the doorframe. He opened them one by one, discarding any that invited him to a meal. He wasn't interested. Some invited him to join expeditions to hunt Diamond monsters. He set those aside, planning to follow up later and ask for more information. Others proposed various activities, most of which he ignored.

After sorting through the pile, only four invitations remained on the table. Three came from Myriad City's largest factions, while the fourth came from the city's biggest adventurer group. All shared the same purpose: to recruit him to their faction and have him represent them in an upcoming contest. The winner would gain the authority to allocate Myriad City's resources for the next five years, and every invitation promised numerous resources to persuade him.

Han Wu read through them and selected the most lavish invitation. It came from one of the four largest factions, the Merchant Alliance. Being the richest of the four, they

offered the highest rewards. They promised him two Diamond Title Scrolls and up to 100 Diamond materials. Their offer was a clear attempt to fill his pockets with wealth. Han Wu felt it would be inappropriate to refuse.

Two days later, he arrived at the Merchant Alliance headquarters with the invitation in hand. The alliance's leaders had heard of his arrival and welcomed the news with excitement. Han Wu's choice gave them renewed confidence for this year's contest. Upon entering, he saw five other strong adventurers seated nearby. They had also been invited by the Merchant Alliance and all wore Platinum identification plates on their waists.

Han Wu stood out with his Gold identification plate, which made him appear weaker in comparison. The banquet started as the leader of the Merchant Alliance rose to deliver a speech. Through it, Han Wu learned more about the factions that shaped Myriad City.

The four most powerful factions in Myriad City were the Adventurer Guild, known for its unmatched strength; the Imperial Knights under the control of the royal family; the Shadow Alliance with the widest information network; and the Merchant Alliance, the richest of them all.

Although the Merchant Alliance had the most resources, it was considered the weakest in terms of combat strength. Over the years, it had suffered repeated losses at the hands of the other three factions.

Beyond these dominant powers, Myriad City was also home to more than ten large-scale adventurer groups, each led by a Diamond adventurer. Collectively, their strength rivaled that of the four major factions and could not be dismissed.

The contest mentioned in the invitation traced back to an ancient law that had stood for hundreds of years. Every five years, the factions competed to determine the distribution of the city's resources.

Since the contest's inception, the Merchant Alliance had never once emerged victorious. In fact, they had nearly been pushed out of the top four by one of the larger adventurer groups the last contest.

That was why they had gone all out this time, sending numerous invitations that promised heavy rewards to lone experts willing to represent them. Winning was their only chance to secure their place among the city's top four factions. Despite these efforts, only six adventurers, including Han Wu, accepted the call. Many experts seemed to have little faith in the Merchant Alliance's chances this time.

As the leader gave a passionate speech on stage, Han Wu glanced around nervously. Officially, Han Wu held the rank of Gold adventurer, but in truth, his strength surpassed even Diamond. Still, the others around him were all Platinum adventurers, and he

doubted they would stand a chance if the opposing factions fielded Diamond representatives.

At the same time, the other five doubted Han Wu's ability, especially after noticing his Gold identification plate. The Platinum adventurers looked down on him.

The Merchant Alliance's leader wrapped up his speech and stepped aside, giving the adventurers a chance to introduce themselves.

"My name is Saurman, a Platinum-ranked adventurer. You may call me the Desert King."

Once he finished speaking, the scantily clad woman beside him stepped forward with a coy smile. Her voice dripped with charm as she introduced herself. "I'm not as strong as Saurman, but please call me Lady Mei. If you ever need help with that, I'd be more than happy to assist."

She punctuated her offer by licking her lips in a slow, suggestive motion. Some of the higher-ups in the Merchant Alliance found her charms hard to resist, and their little brother nearly stood at attention. Still, everyone knew her true identity and dared not make a move. Her Widowermaker nickname was no exaggeration.

Next came a powerful-looking Platinum adventurer. His tone was sharp, dripping with disdain as he glanced at Han Wu. "I am Xiong Zhan. I can become a Bugbear strong enough to shatter the earth itself. I hope my teammates match my strength. If they drag me down, I won't hesitate to crush their skull."

His gaze locked on Han Wu made it clear who he meant. After him, a handsome young man barely twenty years old stepped forward. The platinum identity plate on his waist marked him as a prodigy. "I am Xue Feng. I specialize in magic, and my friends call me the Wind Knight."

The higher-ups of the Merchant Alliance murmured in admiration. They had heard his name before but never expected someone so young to carry such a reputation.

Finally, a young woman with soft baby fat still rounding her cheeks appeared. She looked younger than Xue Feng and trembled slightly as she introduced herself. Her inexperience showed clearly. "I am Alice. I am a support who can heal everyone's wounds."

The previous four adventurers all regarded her with warm, approving eyes. She was not only meek and adorable but also a vital backliner who could heal them. At critical moments, she could save their lives, so they had to respect her.

Finally, it was Han Wu's turn. He stood and said, "I am Han Wu. I'm here for the money. As long as you pay me well, I'll handle any enemy, no matter how strong they might be."

Xiong Zhan let out a mocking laugh at the bold declaration. He eyed Han Wu as if he were just another Gold adventurer talking far too big for his boots. Han Wu didn't spare him a glance. As long as Xiong Zhan didn't get in the way of his earnings, he wouldn't bother with him.

Still, Xiong Zhan's displeasure grew at what he saw as Han Wu's insolence.

"You lowly Gold adventurer," he spat. "Are you upset? Do you actually think you're qualified to sit at the same table as us?"

Han Wu scoffed and refused to respond. This only made Xiong Zhan angrier.

He stood and shouted, "You little bastard! Clearly, your bones need breaking. I'll teach you how to show respect to those stronger than you!"

Without hesitation, Xiong Zhan lunged from his seat and threw a punch at Han Wu. The higher-ups of the Merchant Alliance watched without intervening, eager to enjoy the show. It didn't matter to them who lived or died. What they wanted to see was strength. Only the strong deserved the rewards, while the weak deserved to die.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,010 words]

Chapter 178 - Soul Scholar

Han Wu laughed and clapped his hands just as Xiong Zhan's fist nearly struck him. In the blink of an eye, Han Wu swapped places with him, and Xiong Zhan's punch slammed into the ground instead, leaving a gaping hole where Han Wu had just stood.

The other four Platinum adventurers looked on, puzzled. None of them had expected Han Wu to possess such an unusual title.

The Merchant Alliance's higher-ups were just as stunned. They had invited Han Wu largely because of his recent notoriety. Although he didn't qualify for the competition, they had planned to bring him into the alliance anyway. They never imagined he would put on a display like this.

Xiong Zhan's anger grew after missing his strike. He resented having to share the same rank with a Gold adventurer and had planned to defeat Han Wu to prove his own strength. He never imagined Han Wu would toy with him so effortlessly.

Driven by rage, he transformed into his ten-meter Bugbear form and swung his massive paws at Han Wu, who calmly clapped his hands and switched positions once more. Each time Xiong Zhan attacked, Han Wu avoided the blow with a casual clap.

Xiong Zhan was getting exhausted after he missed numerous times. Not once had he managed to touch Han Wu's hair. If this continued, his reputation would be ruined.

Just as he prepared to strike again, the Merchant Alliance's leader stepped forward. "Master Xiong Zhan, Master Han Wu, you are on the same team. There is no need to go too far."

He was clearly giving Xiong Zhan a reason to back down. Han Wu shrugged and stopped, unfazed since he had not suffered a single injury. Xiong Zhan had no choice but to stop when the opportunity arose. If he kept pushing, he would die of exhaustion before he ever touched Han Wu's skin. Though the fight ended, Xiong Zhan still burned with anger and quietly plotted how to handle Han Wu during the upcoming contest.

Once the brief incident ended, the Merchant Alliance assigned six escorts to lead the six adventurers to get their rewards. Before the contest, each could only claim up to 30% of the prize as a deposit. In total, they were each entitled to one Diamond Title Scroll and 15 Diamond materials.

Han Wu took the item list and skimmed through it. Among the options, he spotted 32 Diamond Title Scrolls listed in the Merchant Alliance's vault. That alone confirmed just how wealthy the alliance truly was.

He scanned the list and found a title that suited him perfectly. It was called Soul Scholar and was related to souls and spirits. Without hesitation, he selected it, thinking it was worth claiming even if he ended up losing the contest. The moment he selected it, the Soul Scholar title vanished from the other five lists, signaling that it had been taken and unavailable to the others.

Lady Mei gasped when she saw Soul Scholar disappear from the list. She had planned to claim it herself. After confirming Han Wu had taken it, she approached him with a deliberate, seductive sway.

"Little Han Wu, I really like the Soul Scholar title too. Could you give it to me instead? I don't mind spending a night with you. What do you think?" As she spoke, she pressed her arms together, offering a provocative glimpse of her otherworldly cleavage in an attempt to seduce him.

Everyone from the Merchant Alliance fell under her spell. Han Wu wasn't immune to her allure either. He was a man, after all. But for him, power mattered more than a one-night stand. He held her gaze firmly and declined her offer. Then he claimed the Title Scroll and the 15 Diamond materials before turning to leave.

Lady Mei's smile only widened at his rejection. She murmured to herself, "What a cute little boy. We'll meet again. I wonder how you'll hold up next time."

Back in his room, Han Wu took a cold shower to calm the fire burning inside him. He pulled out the Soul Scholar Title Scroll and studied its requirements. Besides some Diamond materials, he needed to sacrifice five Diamond monster souls. This task was nearly impossible for ordinary adventurers but far too easy for him.

That night, Han Wu chose two Gold training sites and summoned his terracotta army along with two golden giants to help capture the monsters. Within two days, he met the requirements to get the Soul Scholar title and quickly checked its effects.

[Effect 1: Soul Cut. Releases blades of Soul Energy from the eyes to strike enemies. These blades target the soul directly, severing it from the target's body without causing any physical harm.]

[Effect 2: Soul Eater. Consumes souls to enhance and fortify the user's soul strength.]

It only had two effects, but both were impressive. He was pleased with their power, yet struggled to decide how to equip the new title. As a Gold adventurer, he had just four title slots, but he usually needed more.

Genocider served as his primary source of damage, so it had to stay equipped at all times. Monster Ender was a powerful title that could summon monsters or boost his own strength, making it essential. Five Poisons granted immunity to all poisons and even allowed him to absorb poison to increase his power, so it deserved a slot as well.

Half-Dragon's Hope was crucial since it unlocked the Black Dragon King Transformation. Planeswalker, though only a Platinum title, offered such valuable effects that it had to remain equipped. Now he had the Soul Scholar title too, but he had run out of slots. To use all six titles, he needed two more slots. This was a very fortunate problem to have.

Soon, the day of the contest arrived. All six adventurers were summoned to a designated location before boarding a carriage. They traveled toward a secret training site outside the official list of Myriad City, where representatives from other factions had already gathered.

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,395 words]

Chapter 179 - Contest Start

Han Wu scanned the crowd and noticed that most of the adventurers wore Platinum identity plates, while four of them carried Diamond ones. He stood out as the only one with a Gold identity plate.

The others eyed his Gold plate and snickered, mocking the Merchant Alliance for sending such a weak representative. Despite being one of the largest factions in Myriad City, the Merchant Alliance had failed not only to recruit a Diamond adventurer but even settled for a Gold one just to fill the slots. The sight was humiliating.

As the adventurers discussed among themselves, a massive stone podium rose from the ground at the entrance to the training site. Standing atop it were the representatives of the city's four major factions, gazing down at the contestants.

The leader of the strongest faction, the Adventurer Guild of Myriad City, spoke first. "Everyone, standing here today is a mark of honor and proof of your strength. But strength alone isn't enough. You'll need sharp instincts and a bit of luck if you hope to come out on top. I won't take up too much time, so let me explain the contest's rules."

The guild leader then pulled out a folded sheet of paper and read aloud, "Behind me is a training site filled with tokens. These tokens release a scent that draws monsters to them. You'll find many creatures gathered around each one. Powerful monsters roam the area, so be prepared. Your objective is simple: collect as many tokens as you can. The faction with the highest total score at the end will be declared the winner."

Once he finished, he handed out manuals and point lists to each participant. Han Wu flipped open the manual and studied the illustrations. There were Iron tokens worth one point, Bronze tokens worth two, Silver tokens four, and so on, each rank doubling in value. The rarest, the Diamond token, was worth 32 points.

"Is it really that simple?" Han Wu asked, puzzled.

"Simple? You foolish boy. Have you never watched this contest before? Every token's scent attracts monsters. Even the weakest Iron token has at least one Gold monster guarding it. A Diamond token draws an entire squad of Gold monsters," Zhan Xiong sneered, laughing.

Saurman cleared his throat and interrupted. "I've competed in this contest twice before, so I know the rules well. Everyone, when we enter the training site, don't rush in recklessly. Stay calm and think before you act. Understood?"

Han Wu frowned as Saurman tried to act like their leader just because he was older. Alice, though, gave a small nod in agreement, accepting his suggestion. The others paid him no mind. The training site was dangerous, but they all believed in their own strength.

Lady Mei seized the moment and approached Han Wu. “Little Han Wu, my offer still stands. Hand me the title, and I will serve you until you are fully satisfied.”

Han Wu looked away, thinking, *I've already used it. Even if you tried to please me until I was satisfied, you'd still be going home empty-handed.*

The handsome Xue Feng warned, “I think the other competitors are underestimating us. Everyone, stay alert.”

Saurman sighed. “You’re right. The most dangerous part of the competition isn’t the monsters. It’s the other competitors. They’ll do anything to eliminate us. They’re the biggest obstacle between us and the tokens.”

Xiong Zhan scoffed and even threw a glare at Han Wu as he spoke. “If anyone tries to rob me, I’ll smash their heads in.”

Han Wu ignored him, waiting quietly for the event to start.

Up on the podium, the guild leader was wrapping up. “The contest will run for ten days. We expect everyone to return with their pouches full when the time is up.”

As soon as he finished, the contestants charged through the gate, worried that the best loot would be snatched up early. Han Wu and his team didn’t fall behind. Thanks to Xue Feng’s wind manipulation, they surged ahead and quickly pulled in front of the other competitors.

Each of the other three factions had hired a Diamond adventurer to guard their teams. Seeing Han Wu’s group overtaking them, the three Diamond adventurers reacted by releasing a wave of pressure, furious at being outpaced.

Xue Feng’s ability faltered under their pressure, and he lost control. The other teams seized the opportunity and sprinted past them. Saurman cautioned the group not to be hasty. It was only the first day of ten, so it was too soon to clash with other contestants. Though Xue Feng scoffed, he didn’t confront the three Diamond adventurers whose sheer pressure had disrupted his ability.

Drawing on his experience, Saurman advised them to prioritize finding food and water over searching for tokens. Ten days was no short span, and even Diamond adventurers needed proper nourishment to maintain their combat performance throughout the duration.

Just as Saurman was about to share his survival tips and methods for finding food in the wild, Han Wu clapped his hands. A rift opened in front of him, spilling out an endless supply of food and water. The provisions piled into a small mountain, enough to satisfy everyone.

Saurman, who had already rolled up his sleeves in excitement at the thought of hunting for dinner, rolled them back down in disappointment. It was frustrating for a hardworking man like him to have no task to complete. Still, eating food usually served only in restaurants while out in the wilderness felt like a dream come true.

After having their meal, Saurman used his experience and age to start delegating tasks to the others. Xue Feng and Alice would form one group, Han Wu and Zhan Xiong another, while he would team up with Lady Mei. Each group would search for information and tokens on their own before meeting at a designated spot two days later.

Han Wu was unhappy with Saurman's arrangement. Both other groups paired a man and a woman, but Han Wu had to spend two days with the muscular but dumb Zhan Xiong. More importantly, Zhan Xiong openly despised Han Wu. If they were stuck together searching for clues, it was likely one of them would never return.

Thankfully, Lady Mei volunteered to join Han Wu's team. Saurman had no choice but to partner with Zhan Xiong instead.

Han Wu and Lady Mei set off to look for clues. Throughout their journey, Han Wu kept his distance. Although Lady Mei was stunning, he sensed she was extremely dangerous. They traveled without encountering any monsters, but soon they ran into other contestants who spotted them at the same time.

"Hey, look. It's the Gold-ranked adventurer with a gorgeous woman."

"Kill the guy and capture the lady. We can all have our turn with her."

"Once we're out of here, we'll spread the word that we crushed the Merchant Alliance. That'll make the other factions see us in a better light. Everyone, our chance to be rich is in front of us right now. Seize them!"

Lady Mei's expression turned serious as the other contestants shouted. Han Wu felt a deadly intent radiating from her and took two steps back consciously, giving her room to fight.

Lady Mei started dancing on the spot, her body moving and twisting with a seductive grace. The contestants nearby watched her with hungry smiles, their faces twisted like lustful orcs.

From his position at the back, Han Wu observed everything clearly. He caught the strange scent drifting from Lady Mei as she danced. The fragrance was enticing but very poisonous. He quickly realized that it was an Advance poison, judging by how rapidly his body grew stronger.

The scent hung in the air, spreading among the contestants. Those who inhaled it soon forgot their purpose and started dancing on the spot as well. The poison had taken such

a strong hold that none of them realized what they were doing. Even when Lady Mei stopped dancing and drew a pair of scissors to castrate them, not one reacted. The pain failed to break through the haze the poison had cast.

Han Wu realized for the first time that poison could serve both to kill and to castrate. Despite Lady Mei's brutal act, the castrated contestants continued dancing in revelry.[1]

1. First of all, wtf. Second, holy wtf? 🙄

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,101 words]

Chapter 180 - Mortal Danger

Han Wu found five tokens among the contestants. Four were Iron, and one was Bronze, giving him six points in total. He took the Bronze token and one Iron token before handing them to Lady Mei, splitting the points evenly.

She accepted the tokens and studied him with curiosity. "Little Han Wu, are you feeling alright? Do you sense anything unusual?"

Han Wu smiled and placed some distance between them. "Sorry, but I'm immune to most poisons."

Lady Mei's eyes widened in surprise. This was the first time someone showed immunity to her illusory poison. Her interest in Han Wu deepened instantly.

They pressed onward until they spotted a Platinum token, guarded by a swarm of monsters. Three Platinum and several hundred Gold monsters surrounded it. A regular adventurer would struggle to approach, let alone seize the token.

Meanwhile, Han Wu had a foolproof plan. He clapped his hands, instantly swapping places with the token. Before the monsters realized what had happened, he switched places again with a nearby stone. Lady Mei stared at the Platinum token in his hand with awe. The solution had been far simpler than she expected!

Han Wu pocketed the token and called out, "Run! The monsters will chase us soon."

Lady Mei snapped out of it and sprinted alongside him, quickly putting distance between themselves and the pursuing monsters.

Once they escaped, Han Wu opened his personal space and tossed the token inside. Isolating its scent from the world ensured that the monsters could never track them, no matter how sharp their noses.

Using the same tactic, they quickly gathered many tokens as they traveled and steadily accumulated numerous points. Their growing activity, however, didn't go unnoticed. One of the major factions, the Shadow Alliance, had caught wind of their movements. They had also sent six contestants, including a Diamond adventurer.

"Boss, that brat has some kind of title with spatial effects. If we capture him, we can take it for ourselves and claim first place," one of the adventurers reported to the Diamond adventurer.

The Diamond adventurer shared the same thought. Adventurers with spatial abilities were notoriously difficult to catch, but he had a secret weapon. One of his own titles, Isolated Void, created a zone within 100 meters that blocked any spatial powers. It was, essentially, an anti-space title.

"Kill them. The Merchant Alliance will lose once those two are dead," he commanded. The five Platinum adventurers nodded and moved quickly to surround Han Wu and Lady Mei.

"Young man, we are from the Shadow Alliance. We've tracked your every move. Be smart and hand over your tokens. At the very least, we'll leave your corpses intact," one said.

Lady Mei trembled. The Shadow Alliance was among the four largest factions, renowned for their reconnaissance and intelligence gathering. It seemed they knew everything about her and Han Wu, leaving no chance to escape.

Their threat didn't faze Han Wu. "If you're so strong, try taking it from my personal space yourself."

"Fine. We'll do it the hard way. Everyone, kill that bastard." The five lunged forward at once.

Han Wu prepared to fight seriously. Platinum adventurers were still formidable opponents. He summoned his Genocider greatsword and charged at one of the nearest attackers.

The Shadow Alliance's contestants chuckled.

How strong can a Gold adventurer's title really be? One of them thought confidently, I am a Platinum adventurer standing near the top, with a Diamond title that grants powerful defenses. I could take that sword without even trying.

That contestant's confidence soon proved fatal. He became the first unlucky one out of the five. He didn't dodge the attack, and Han Wu swung the Genocider greatsword from above, slicing the man clean in half, from head to leg.

Han Wu blinked in confusion. This was the first time he had seen someone surrender their life so easily in the Title Civilization. The remaining contestants snapped to attention, alarmed by their comrade's swift death.

"Everyone, be careful. Iron Head just got cut down. There's something strange about that greatsword!"

For him to easily kill a Platinum adventurer with the greatsword meant that he possessed a Diamond title. They couldn't help but suspect that he was the Merchant Alliance's leader's bastard son. Otherwise, how could Han Wu have obtained such a powerful title on his own?

The remaining four hesitated until the Diamond adventurer stepped forward and pushed the men back with overwhelming pressure. Han Wu nearly faltered under the intense pressure.

"A mere Gold adventurer dares to ambush us of the Shadow Alliance? What a pathetic stunt!" the Diamond adventurer spat as Han Wu stood up. It was a cheap shot, and the other four nodded.

"Yes, we must avenge our brother. How dare he ambush us like this!"

"Despicable bastard. Fight me!"

Han Wu laughed at their insults. They were about to die, yet they still tried to shift the blame onto him. It seemed the Shadow Alliance valued their honor more than their lives.

"Stop talking crap and come at me," Han Wu taunted.

The Diamond adventurer knew the risks and wouldn't step forward. Han Wu had already killed the Platinum adventurer effortlessly, so the Diamond adventurer feared he would suffer the same fate. Instead, he kept his distance and cast powerful magic, enclosing Han Wu and Lady Mei within a formidable barrier. He then stood still and performed gestures to compress the barrier. With each movement, the barrier contracted.

"It will be an honor for you to die under my strongest title, Isolated Void." The man moved his hands again, tightening the barrier further. If he continued, Han Wu and Lady Mei would be crushed into meat paste.

Han Wu tried to use Planeswalker to escape with Lady Mei, but he couldn't sense the surrounding space. Even worse, the cramped conditions made it impossible to wield the Genocider greatsword; there wasn't enough room to swing it.

Han Wu would die if this kept up, so he unleashed his full strength. Activating Soul Cut, he locked eyes with the Diamond adventurer and blinked. In the next instant, two invisible scalpels forged from Soul Energy pierced deep into the man's soul.

The Diamond adventurer froze in agony, and the barrier stopped shrinking. Han Wu seized the opening and transformed into his black dragon form, shattering the barrier with sheer physical force.

The Platinum adventurers saw Han Wu's transformation and fled. They had no chance against him in his normal form, let alone this one.

Han Wu ignored them and glared at the injured Diamond adventurer. "You bastard. Now, it's my turn."

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,324 words]

Chapter 181 - Senior Han Wu

"Flowing Fire Shield, Summon Wyverns, Golden Bell, Void Barrier!" The Diamond adventurer stopped holding back and unleashed his trump cards. He activated every protective skill he had, including the spatial barrier he'd used against them earlier.

Han Wu chuckled and charged effortlessly through the flames. In a blink, he swapped places with one of the wyverns. With a powerful swing of his greatsword, he shattered the supposed impenetrable spatial barrier. Stepping through the gap, he brought his greatsword crashing down on the Diamond adventurer.

The Golden Bell's elasticity absorbed much of the strike's force, but the adventurer's panic grew as the greatsword slowly pressed deeper into the bell's surface.

He had fought and won many battles climbing to Diamond rank, but never had he felt such raw fear. While others said fear of death grows with age, this adventurer seemed to fear it more as he grew stronger. He refused to die now. He had earned enough wealth and wanted to enjoy it. Dying here would be a waste.

Desperation crept in as he begged for mercy. "Let me go. I will hand over all of the Shadow Alliance's tokens to you."

Han Wu sneered. "I can take them myself after I kill you."

"I have money too! I will give you everything. I have a lot of Diamond materials and even a Diamond Title Scroll!" The adventurer offered all he had to save his life.

Han Wu paused at the mention of the Diamond Title Scroll. He already had several Diamond titles, but he didn't mind picking up another. Each one carried tremendous potential, and even if he couldn't use it himself, he could always hand it off to someone else later.

"I want it. Now."

The adventurer had been planning to bargain for his life, but the moment the edge of the Genocider greatsword brushed his skin, he gave up. He was clearly weaker, and any negotiation would be pointless. Surrendering everything was his only chance to survive.

He used his title to manipulate space, opening a small rift in the air. A flood of precious materials spilled out, piling up until they formed a small hill. Han Wu glanced at the mound and saw that all the items were exquisite Diamond materials.

"Can I leave now?" the adventurer asked weakly, staring at the pile with a heavy heart. After all, it was his entire life's savings.

Han Wu ignored him and severed his head without hesitation. "Did I ever promise to let you go?"

Unfortunately, the adventurer could no longer hear the words. Lady Mei stared in disbelief at the scene, convinced she must have swallowed some hallucinogenic or fallen under an illusion spell. She had never seen a Gold adventurer defeat someone two ranks higher!

She snapped out of her daze when Han Wu called her over. Hurriedly, she stepped forward and addressed him with newfound respect. "Senior Han Wu, this little one is ready to listen."

After witnessing Han Wu's overwhelming strength, she couldn't help but regret her earlier attempt to flirt with him. What if he decided to force himself on her? But then she reconsidered. Sleeping with someone powerful enough to kill a Diamond adventurer didn't sound so bad. In fact, if not for his strength, she would have been the one trying to force things.

"Split the tokens in half and pick ten materials you want. I'll take the rest," Han Wu said. He coughed lightly, grabbed the two Diamond Title Scrolls from the pile, and tucked them into his personal space.

“You’re really giving them to me?” Lady Mei stared at him, clearly shocked. She hadn’t contributed anything to the fight, so it made sense for him to keep the loot.

Han Wu waved his hand. “You’re my teammate. You deserve a share.”

Lady Mei was elated. She needed Diamond materials to complete the title that the Merchant Alliance had given to her. Without delay, she selected what she required and obtained a new Diamond title, further strengthening herself. Still, she held back, unwilling to appear greedy. After all, Han Wu had killed a Diamond adventurer with ease. Killing a Platinum adventurer like her would be a simple matter.

“Done? Then the rest is mine,” Han Wu said, tossing the remaining items into his personal space while splitting half the tokens with her. Thanks to this haul, the Merchant Alliance gained 124 points, nearly guaranteeing a spot in the top four.

However, it was still too soon to celebrate. This was only the second day of the contest, and time was quickly slipping away. Han Wu and Lady Mei turned and sprinted back to the spot where their group had agreed to meet.

They waited there until Saurman and Xiong Zhan returned safely. Judging by their injuries, the two had fared worse than Han Wu and Lady Mei. They had likely clashed with other contestants or run into particularly vicious monsters.

As soon as Xiong Zhan saw that Han Wu was unscathed, he scoffed, assuming he had done nothing. “Useless brat. I knew you’d just slow us down.”

Lady Mei saw a chance to repay Han Wu. She stood up, placed her hands on her hips, and scolded Xiong Zhan. “You brainless oaf. Don’t throw around accusations without proof. This senior isn’t someone you can afford to offend.”

“Senior?” Saurman was confused. As the oldest among them, he couldn’t wrap his head around Han Wu being called that.

“Of course,” Lady Mei said with a bright smile. “Seniority goes to the strongest, doesn’t it?”

Xiong Zhan laughed scornfully. “Strongest? He’s just some useless trash at the Gold rank.”

“Idiotic bear. If you keep slandering him, I won’t forgive you,” Lady Mei snapped, clearly offended. Though usually soft-spoken and coquettish, she was far from harmless when angered.

Xiong Zhan wanted to argue, but Saurman placed a hand on his shoulder and motioned for silence. “We are all on the same team. There’s no need to fight among ourselves.”

Strength matters less in this contest than who can collect the most tokens. This competition is not only between the factions of Myriad City but also between us.”

At that moment, Xiong Zhan found an opening to challenge Han Wu. He reached into a small pouch at his waist and revealed what he had gathered. Tokens of various ranks filled the pouch, except for Platinum and Diamond, totaling 40 points. “Look at this. These are the tokens both of us have earned. Think you can gather more than that?”

Han Wu remained still. Lady Mei stepped forward, grabbed the pouch, and counted the tokens inside. Then she laughed mockingly. “Only 40 points? How foolish. I will show you real power today.”

She pulled out her own pouch and spilled its contents onto the ground. Except for Diamond tokens, she had every rank, adding up to 84 points.

“How is this possible?” Xiong Zhan muttered in disbelief. For two relentless days, he and Saurman had fought monsters and other contestants, narrowly escaping death countless times, yet only earned 40 points.

Meanwhile, Lady Mei had scored 84 points, even with Han Wu dragging her down. She had more than twice their total. But the truth was clear, and Xiong Zhan could only spit out bitter words. “You bastard. Count yourself lucky to be teamed with her.”

Lady Mei glanced at Han Wu, worried he was angry. When she saw his calm expression, she sighed and turned back to scold Xiong Zhan. “You brute. How could you accuse your senior like that? He was the one who gathered the tokens with ease while I was the one slowing him down. In fact, he split his tokens evenly with me.”

Saurman nearly stumbled in shock. “You split the tokens? Does that mean you have another 84 points?”

Han Wu opened his personal space, and tokens spilled out. Among them, a single Diamond token gleamed with dazzling brilliance.

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Chapter 182 - Fighting the Imperial Knights

[1,393 words]

Chapter 182 - Fighting the Imperial Knights

“A Diamond token!” Xiong Zhan exclaimed.

Saurman’s breathing quickened at the sight. Diamond tokens were nearly impossible to obtain. Even seasoned Diamond adventurers struggled to obtain one, let alone a Gold adventurer like Han Wu.

“You worthless bastard... How did you get it? Did you steal a Diamond token?” Xiong Zhan’s mind jumped to only one conclusion—Han Wu must have stolen it.

Lady Mei scoffed. “Steal? Do you really think anyone would be careless enough to lose a Diamond token that way?”

Saurman cleared his throat. He knew she spoke the truth. Diamond tokens were guarded by powerful Diamond adventurers or massive groups of monsters.

Could Lady Mei and Han Wu have taken down a horde like that on their own? Considering Lady Mei’s unique skills and Han Wu’s spatial ability, it seemed plausible under certain conditions.

Xiong Zhan did not share Saurman’s thoughtful approach. He stared greedily at the Diamond token. The Diamond token was worth 32 points and symbolized true strength. It could not be compared to the other tokens.

“Give me the Diamond token, and I will forgive all your past and future offenses. *Hmph!*” Xiong Zhan said while rubbing his knuckles. His intentions were clear.

Han Wu spoke up this time. “I’ll give you another chance, but remember to be kinder as my teammate—or else. *Hmph!*”

Xiong Zhan’s anger flared. Han Wu had just copied him. “Do you think I’m a pushover? I’ll show you my true strength now!”

Xiong Zhan roared and turned into his Bugbear form. His body swelled, sharp metallic fur sprouting across his skin. His arms thickened to the size of massive tree trunks.

Saurman didn’t intervene this time. He wanted to test Han Wu’s true power, using the brainless brute as his proxy.

Han Wu decided to teach Xiong Zhan a lesson today and gently pushed Lady Mei back. Then, under Xiong Zhan’s arrogant stare, he transformed. Black scales spread over his body, and his energy suffocated the people around him.

His regal presence and overwhelming strength made Lady Mei worship him all over again when she saw his dragon form. Saurman stepped back, fear evident in his eyes. He sensed that Han Wu’s strength and magical resistance far surpassed anything Xiong Zhan could muster.

Xiong Zhan stared dumbfounded at Han Wu with beady eyes. He finally realized he had challenged a stone wall this time. Just as he was about to give up, Han Wu struck first.

Han Wu moved faster than lightning, hoisting Xiong Zhan over his shoulder and slamming him into the ground. His dragon claws clamped down like iron traps, immobilizing Xiong Zhan completely. The transformed Xiong Zhan could not fight back and became little more than a sandbag, pummeled without mercy.

After a few minutes, Saurman stopped Han Wu. He hoped the beating would calm Han Wu's anger. Xiong Zhan still served as a useful meat shield; they could not afford to lose him just yet. Han Wu nodded respectfully to Saurman, then shifted back into his human form and settled on the ground to rest.

Xiong Zhan growled in pain, rolling across the ground. To avoid further conflict, Saurman changed the subject. "The time is up. Why is Xue Feng still not here?"

Lady Mei was confused as well. She found it hard to believe that Xue Feng and Alice would be late. That meant they had likely run into trouble. Before they could process this, a strong wind swept past, and Xue Feng tumbled out of it, barely clinging to life.

"Save... Save Alice. She's... caught by the Imperial Knights..." he gasped, weakly pointing back the way he had come.

Han Wu considered them his teammates, so he sprang to his feet and sprinted toward the direction Xue Feng indicated. Saurman told Lady Mei to tend to Xue Feng before following Han Wu using his Sandwalk ability.

They traveled several kilometers before catching up with the Imperial Knights. Alice was bound and carried by a man in golden armor, her eyes filled with despair.

Han Wu clapped his hands, instantly switching places with Alice. Then he clapped again, swapping with a stone on the ground nearby. In two simple moves, he freed Alice from the golden-armored captor.

"Enemy attack! Protect the Crown Prince!" the silver-armored Imperial Knights shouted as they closed ranks around their companion.

One more elderly man stood outside the protective circle. He wore a linen robe, and Han Wu was certain that this was the Diamond adventurer the Imperial Knights had picked.

The old man glanced at Han Wu with a playful smile. "Young man, this is not how you rescue a pretty lady. I'll let you go since you have spatial abilities and a promising future."

Han Wu brandished his greatsword and taunted, "What if I don't?"

The old man's eyes sharpened. "Then I will teach you a lesson and show you the strength of a Diamond adventurer."

Suddenly, the old man conjured a staff out of thin air. Four large stones, each the size of a human head, were embedded along its length. Each stone pulsed with the energy of water, fire, earth, and wind.

He slammed the staff's base against the ground, and everything within a 1,000-kilometer radius lost its color. The four elements had been repelled and isolated outside this space.

Saurman instantly lost all his powers, including his famed sand-controlling techniques. Han Wu felt a heavy restriction pressing down on him; he could no longer access any elemental abilities.

"Young man, there's still time to leave," the old man warned again.

The golden-armored man spoke up. "Master, don't let him go. His spatial ability will cause us great trouble if you release him now."

The old man sighed deeply. "Young man, you have bad luck today. You won't live past this day since the Crown Prince wants you dead."

He approached Han Wu slowly. Alice's muffled wails rang out as she tried to warn him to run. They could only use their abilities once they escaped the staff's range. Unfortunately, Saurman was too weak to move and collapsed.

"You should feel honored to die by the hands of the Imperial Knights' court mage," the old man said as he stood before Han Wu and brought his staff down on his head.

Naturally, Han Wu wasn't about to take the blow quietly and swung his greatsword in a vicious arc. Even though the old man's senses had sharpened to perfection after becoming a Diamond adventurer, he couldn't avoid it completely. The blade grazed his chest, and blood poured from the wound.

Han Wu yawned. "You've been rambling for so long. I'm starting to get sleepy. Are you done yet?"

The old man clutched his bleeding chest, his expression twisted with disbelief. "Who are you? How are you unaffected by my Four Elemental Isolation?"

Han Wu cracked his knuckles. "Why don't you take a guess?"

He was under heavy restrictions, but they did not stop him from attacking the old man standing before him. With a swift move, he swapped places with a pebble behind the

old man and swung his massive greatsword without pause. The blade cut through cleanly, and the old man's head flew into the air.

The prince and the Imperial Knights froze in horror. The moment the old man fell, it felt like death had gripped their legs.

"You four, stop him!" the prince ordered cruelly and fled in panic.

Unfortunately for the prince, Han Wu was faster. He clapped once and vanished, reappearing beside a rock near his target. In the same breath, he drove his greatsword forward and landed a solid hit. But instead of cleaving the prince in two, the greatsword only sent him crashing to the side. Some kind of protective treasure had blunted the blow.

Han Wu switched places once more and appeared before the prince. He knew the Genocider greatsword could cut through anything, even the prince's protective treasure.

The prince tried to use his authority to threaten Han Wu. "You cannot kill me. I am the Myriad King's sole son. My father will never spare you if you kill me!"

Han Wu couldn't care less. He could only sleep soundly after his enemies were dead. Without hesitation, he swung his greatsword down and severed the prince's head the moment the protective treasure gave out.

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- Chapter 183 - Merchant Alliance's Bounty

[1,447 words]

Chapter 183 - Merchant Alliance's Bounty

The four remaining silver-armored Imperial Knights fell into despair when they saw the old man and the prince dead. Though they ranked as Platinum adventurers near the top of the hierarchy, they were nothing more than pawns under the Myriad King's command within the Imperial Knight forces.

Their mission was to protect the prince, the golden-armored armor, during the contest this time. Once the prince was dead, survival was impossible for pawns like them. The Myriad King would probably spare them if they avenged his son by killing Han Wu. With nothing to lose, they threw everything into their attacks.

Unfortunately, Han Wu was too strong. Even when they threw their full strength into the fight, they couldn't protect their own lives. He cut them down in moments, then casually flicked the blood from his greatsword. Afterward, he turned to Alice and Saurman, checking if they were hurt.

Alice had been rescued, but her heart still raced. Though she was already a Platinum adventurer, she was still very young, barely twenty. She spoke meekly. "Thank you."

Han Wu gave a casual smile as he gathered the tokens from the corpses. They had earned 195 points in total, including a dazzling Diamond token. He offered to split the spoils, but the other two declined. Alice was shy, while Saurman was adamant in his refusal. The tokens belonged to the Imperial Knights, and he didn't want to get involved with anything that troublesome.

Han Wu didn't press the matter and took everything. He had no reason to fear the Imperial Knights. The three returned to their gathering point only after night had fallen. They chose to camp there for the night.

Alice used the opportunity to heal Xue Feng and Zhan Xiong. Though her strength was limited, her healing skill was exceptional. Still, it took her two hours to fully heal Xiong Zhan after Han Wu's beating.

After the fight, Xiong Zhan understood he could not challenge Han Wu and kept his distance. Meanwhile, Lady Mei gazed at Han Wu dreamily, impressed that he had defeated two Diamond adventurers alone. She would gladly throw herself at him if he so much as glanced her way tonight.

Unfortunately for her, Han Wu showed no interest. After a night of rest, they set out together to hunt for more tokens. Having defeated two Diamond adventurers, they were unofficial champions. Yet it was only the third day, so they moved cautiously to avoid drawing the attention of other contestants

While they risked their lives fighting in the training site, the outside world buzzed with excitement. Using a secret technique, spectators could watch each team's points update in real time.

At first, they saw the Shadow Alliance lose a significant number of points, followed by the Imperial Knights losing all of theirs. Meanwhile, the Merchant Alliance steadily gained points on both occasions. The factions were stunned by the unfolding events.

Even the Merchant Alliance was surprised by the unexpected bounty. Despite being one of the four largest factions, they hadn't fielded a single Diamond adventurer. In fact, they had even recruited a Gold one. By all accounts, their lineup was weak. No one had expected a result like this.

The Merchant Alliance's higher-ups were grinning from ear to ear.

“It must be Saurman,” one of them speculated. “He’s a seasoned fighter and has entered this contest twice already. I doubt even Diamond adventurers can match him.”

“No, I think it’s Xue Feng. He has the greatest potential and shouldn’t be any weaker than Saurman,” one man said confidently.

“It could be Lady Mei. With her tantalizing body, she could seduce anyone there,” another added with a smirk.

“Hey, do you think it could be Han Wu?” someone else asked, sounding uncertain.

“That’s impossible. He’s a genius, but only Gold rank. How could he defeat a Diamond adventurer two ranks above him?” a skeptic replied.

“That’s true. His spatial title is unusual, but it can’t make up for such a gap. He might handle Silver monsters but would flee from a Platinum one,” another added thoughtfully.

Someone laughed in agreement. “You’re right.”

Compared to the lively Merchant Alliance, the Imperial Knight squadron stood in heavy silence. Their points had been wiped out and remained at zero even after an entire night had passed. Even the slowest among them had figured out what had happened. It was almost certain the entire representative team had been eliminated.

“Damn it. The old man was with them, so how could this happen? How are we supposed to report this to the Myriad King?”

“Wait. When their points dropped, the Merchant Alliance gained the exact same amount. They must have been the ones who took out our team.”

“Merchant Alliance... They are just a bunch of rich snobs. How dare they trample on us? Do they want to die? We don’t have to wait for the contest to end. Send someone to inspect every single Merchant Alliance shop immediately.”

The Imperial Knights’ higher-ups issued their orders, and the lower ranks obeyed without question. They stormed into every shop affiliated with the Merchant Alliance, seizing on any excuse to wreck the premises.

The Merchant Alliance leader soon caught wind of the chaos and smirked. “*Hmph.*”

I never expected the Imperial Knights to lose their temper so quickly. Let them rage. Once this contest ends, we will overtake them and become Myriad City’s rulers.”

Inside the training site, Han Wu and the others remained oblivious to the turmoil outside. They focused on searching for every token they could find. Thanks to their unique abilities, the six of them worked surprisingly well as a team.

Hunting tokens on their own took longer than stealing from other contestants, but it wasn't so bad. In just three days, they had accumulated 200 points. While they hadn't found any Diamond tokens yet, their collection of Platinum tokens already rivaled those of other groups.

While hunting as usual, they entered the Berserk Wolves' territory. In the center of the pack, a Diamond token floated in plain sight. The scent it gave off seemed to please the wolves, who howled in eerie satisfaction as they circled around it.

Xue Feng hovered in the air, reporting everything back to the team. Xiong Zhan was the first to shout, "A Diamond token? What are we waiting for? Let's go!"

He had been searching for a Diamond token for a long time to prove his strength. One Diamond token outweighed 32 Iron tokens in value. Saurman remained silent, glancing at Han Wu. Lady Mei did the same, but her gaze toward Han Wu held a quiet yearning.

Han Wu cleared his throat. "We can fight. The pack is huge, but their average strength is only around Gold rank. They are weaker compared to other monsters we've faced."

Xiong Zhan's excitement surged. "Then what are we waiting for? Let's tear through their entire den!"

Saurman coughed, scolding him, "Why rush in? We can fight, but if we want to kill such a large pack, we need to prepare. There are too many of them. If we're careless, they'll tear us apart and gnaw our bones clean."

He then proposed a plan and carefully instructed the team on how to handle the siege. His role was to shape the battleground using his abilities. By the time Saurman finished his detailed briefing, Xiong Zhan had already started dozing off. He was too dumb to listen to the strategy and earned Saurman's complete disregard.

Once the preparations were complete, Saurman led the team closer to the Berserk Wolf pack. The wolves noticed them and howled a warning before charging forward.

Saurman summoned a towering wall of sand, encircling the wolves. He deliberately left three small gaps in the wall, allowing a limited number of wolves to escape at a time. This way, the team could face the wolves in manageable groups, ensuring easy victories.

Xiong Zhan, Han Wu, and Xue Feng positioned themselves near the openings, unleashing their abilities to strike down the escaping wolves.

"Bugbear Earthquake!"

"Golden giants!"

“Violent Windcut!”

The three powerful attacks dealt devastating damage, cutting down dozens of wolves. Behind them, Lady Mei and Alice provided vital support. Lady Mei enhanced the trio’s power while Alice kept their stamina and strength replenished without pause.

They fought for over an hour, killing 10,000 Berserk Wolves. Their pace remained steady, and they expected the Diamond token to fall soon—until two thunderous howls shook the ground.

Han Wu and the others peered through the small openings and saw two massive Berserk Wolves standing in the middle of the field. The overwhelming pressure they radiated confirmed they were Diamond monsters.

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Chapter 184 - Ranking up to Platinum

[1,160 words]

Chapter 184 - Ranking up to Platinum

“Two! There’s two Diamond Berserk Wolves!” Saurman shouted in alarm. He thought that their team could handle one, but two Diamond Berserk Wolves was an entirely different threat.

The two Diamond Berserk Wolves charged forward. They were already as intelligent as humans, so they jumped over the sand wall to attack them. When they landed, the force created gusts of wind that knocked Lady Mei and Alice backward, causing minor injuries.

The Diamond Berserk Wolves showed no mercy. Each targeted one of the women, intent on biting them to death to avenge their fallen descendants.

Saurman attempted to block their advance with sand walls, but the effort proved futile. The wolves nearly caught the women when four summoned monsters dropped from the sky, halting their charge. Han Wu had acted swiftly, using his Diamond Monster Ender title to summon four monsters, each at a tenth of their original strength.

Han Wu had chosen to summon the mutated Noble Souls that resembled black octopuses as they could use skills with mental corruption to weaken their foes. The four octopuses wrapped around the two wolves, continuously corrupting them.

Berserk Wolves excelled in physical combat but were almost helpless against mental and spiritual attacks. Their only defense was sheer willpower, which proved as ineffective as using flesh to block bullets.

Within three minutes, the wolves' consciousness faded, and they collapsed. Seizing the opportunity, Han Wu clapped his hands and swapped places with Lady Mei. With a mighty swing, he brought his greatsword down with full force.

With no strength left to resist, the greatsword—enhanced with various additional damage—sliced clean through the thick flesh, decapitating the wolf effortlessly. The second wolf met the same fate moments later.

When the two Diamond Berserk Wolves died, their souls floated up, and Han Wu absorbed one while the Genocider greatsword consumed the other. With Soul Scholar active, Han Wu's soul grew stronger. The greatsword sealed its soul and added it to Han Wu's summon options.

Then two glowing orbs of light rose from the corpses and flowed into Han Wu's body. The surge of experience pushed him to Level 100, and he finally became a Platinum adventurer. He could now equip another title and use up to five simultaneously. Meanwhile, only when his body radiated a brilliant Platinum glow did the others realize Han Wu had been a Gold adventurer all along.

With the two Diamond Berserk Wolves defeated, the rest of their pack became irrelevant threats. The team spent the next four hours hunting down the remaining wolves, eventually securing the Diamond token. Thanks to Han Wu's outstanding performance, they unanimously agreed he should keep it.

After claiming the Diamond token, the team turned to clearing the battlefield. Corpses of Berserk Wolves lay scattered across the area, each one a valuable source of materials that could fetch a high price. Unfortunately, none of them had the storage capacity to carry so much—except for Han Wu. In the end, he generously exchanged everyone's share for Diamond materials, leaving the entire team satisfied.

Unbeknownst to them, a small team lurking nearby had witnessed the entire battle.

“Boss, they fought so many Berserk Wolves for so long. They must be exhausted. Why don't we steal their tokens and materials?” a Platinum adventurer suggested to the Diamond adventurer.

“We need to watch out for the young man who killed the two Diamond Berserk Wolves. His titles are unusual.”

“Boss, we’re the legendary team of the Adventurer Guild. Why fear that runt? Besides, we have the Seal Master with us. If we seal his titles, he won’t stand a chance.”

The Diamond adventurer glanced at the Seal Master in their group. Thanks to the Seal Master, they had recently defeated a Diamond Mountain Ape by sealing part of its abilities and limiting its attacks. Without that, the cost to kill it would have been devastating.

The Diamond adventurer spoke cautiously. “Let’s give it a try, but we need to retreat the moment something goes wrong.”

His subordinates nodded. Without delay, they equipped the special titles they had prepared in advance and summoned a horde of monsters, aiming to test how exhausted Han Wu’s team truly was.

Han Wu and his companions were resting after killing all the wolves when suddenly a swarm of monsters ambushed them. Despite their fatigue, Xue Feng and Saurman rose to their feet and unleashed powerful large-scale magic attacks. The battlefield erupted into chaos, split between a massive tornado and a vast sea of swirling sand.

The monsters fell in great numbers. Soon, the team realized something was off. None of the slain monsters left behind corpses. This clear sign revealed the monsters had been summoned through titles.

Saurman barked, “Who dares hide in the shadows to ambush us? Show yourselves and fight!”

Xiong Zhan rose as well. “Cowards! Face us directly! Do you still call yourselves men if you attack from the dark?”

Han Wu scanned the area but found no one. After summoning the monsters, the adventurer group had vanished.

The Diamond adventurer was extremely cautious, and his team followed every command without hesitation, focusing on every detail. After ambushing Han Wu, they relocated and concealed themselves. Then, they unleashed summoned monsters to wear down their enemy before engaging in direct combat.

Hearing distant shouts, the Diamond adventurer issued a new order. “They’re still strong. Summon two waves of monsters that can release poison. We need to weaken them first.”

His subordinates nodded, giving thumbs up in approval. They admired their leader’s clever strategy.

Soon, a wave of Gold Poison Orbweavers appeared, spitting venom toward Han Wu and his team. The venom was corrosive and volatile, quickly evaporating into a thick, poisonous mist. Han Wu's small team soon found themselves enveloped in this toxic veil. Alice continuously cast cleansing magic to keep the poison at bay, but her power could only protect a limited space.

Despite the cleansing efforts, the poison had already seeped into their bloodstream. They grew dizzy and their vision blurred as the toxin spread through their veins. When the mist thickened further, they all fainted.

Confident in their victory, the adventurer group emerged from hiding. "Boss, you're incredibly strong. We captured them without much effort."

The Diamond adventurer raised an eyebrow in pride, but he knew to stay vigilant. He ordered the Seal Master to suppress the abilities of Han Wu's team. Only then could he truly relax.

The Seal Master drank the antidote and stepped into the poison mist to seal the abilities and titles of Han Wu's team. Just as he reached for Han Wu, who had pretended to be unconscious, the latter suddenly grabbed his arm with unexpected strength.

Even the Platinum Seal Master winced in pain under Han Wu's immense strength and shouted, "Help me! He's not poisoned—"

Before the Seal Master could finish, Han Wu grabbed his neck. "Shut up and hand over the antidote. Or I'll snap your neck."

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[1,053 words]

Chapter 185 - Comparing Summons

The Seal Master turned out to be far more stubborn than Han Wu had expected. Despite Han Wu's threats, the Seal Master would rather die than yield. While Han Wu searched for the antidote, the Seal Master seized the moment to attempt sealing his titles.

Han Wu reacted faster, easily blocking the Seal Master's hands before breaking both his arms. The Seal Master howled in pain, rendered nearly helpless until his arms healed. Without them, he could no longer use his sealing abilities.

The Seal Master's teammates dared not intervene. He was a prized talent, one the Adventurer Guild had invested heavily in. Losing him in this contest was not an option.

The Diamond adventurer spoke up first. "Young man, we admit we're in the wrong here. Release him, and I'll give you the antidote. We promise no further trouble."

Han Wu had already searched the Seal Master and found nothing. Though the poison didn't affect him, his teammates weren't immune. They would die if they wasted time arguing. He needed the antidote quickly. Still, he distrusted the adventurer team—those who resorted to poison were hardly trustworthy.

"Give me the antidote," he demanded. "I want to test it first."

With the Seal Master in Han Wu's grip, the adventurers had no choice but to comply. Han Wu took one antidote and forced it down the Seal Master's throat. When the Seal Master showed no ill effects, Han Wu quickly administered the antidote to his teammates.

The poison's effects faded quickly after they took the antidote. Once they stabilized, Han Wu made the Seal Master undo the seals placed on his team. However, their previous battles with the Berserk Wolves and the swarm of summoned monsters had drained their energy. None had the strength to fight any longer.

The opposing adventurer team urged Han Wu, "Hey, we've already neutralized the poison in your teammates. Return our teammate now."

Han Wu would never make such a foolish mistake. His objective had already been achieved, which meant he could do as he pleased with the Seal Master. Without hesitation, he seized his greatsword, reshaped it into a dagger, and drove it straight into the Seal Master's chest in full view of everyone. The weapon's various types of damage caused the Seal Master's chest to explode, and he died with his eyes wide open.

Han Wu taunted the opposing team, "Did I ever say I'd let you leave just because you gave me the antidote?"

His actions ignited a fierce blaze of anger in the hearts of the adventurers. One who had been close to the Seal Master shouted, "You bastard! You actually killed him! You won't leave here alive today!"

Even the usually cautious Diamond adventurer lost his composure. "Kill them all. Avenge the Seal Master and bury them together!"

They summoned the Gold Poison Orbweavers once more. The deadly spiders launched venom at Han Wu and his team. Although Han Wu's group had taken the antidote and could temporarily resist the poison, exhaustion left them vulnerable. They had no strength left to fight back.

Xiong Zhan scowled and accused Han Wu sharply, "This is all your fault! They already planned to let us go. Are you blind? Why kill the hostage? Now we're all going to die here."

Lady Mei's eyes flashed with anger at his words. "You stupid bear. If Senior Han Wu hadn't gotten the antidote, we'd be dead by now. Instead of repaying him, you accuse him? Do you even understand what gratitude is?"

"Gratitude? That won't save our lives. I'd rather join them if it means I survive." Xiong Zhan's words sent a wave of disgust through the team. No one wanted to stand beside someone willing to betray his teammates to save his own skin.

"Why? Did I say something wrong? I just want to survive. I'm young, and I have a future. I don't want to die!" Xiong Zhan barked defiantly.

They all stared at Xiong Zhan as if he were some revolting insect. Han Wu grabbed him and lifted him effortlessly. Despite Xiong Zhan's massive size, Han Wu hoisted him high into the air like a mere toy.

"I'll send you to them since you want to join their side," Han Wu said, then flung Xiong Zhan like trash toward the adventurer group. He soared several hundred meters before crashing to the ground. His powerful body absorbed most of the impact, leaving only minor wounds.

The adventurer group approached him, and he begged for his life. "Please don't kill me. I surrender. I'll help you fight them."

The Diamond adventurer glared at him with pure disgust. One of the Platinum adventurers stepped forward. "Boss, what should we do with him?"

"Kill him. He could be playing us, waiting to stab us in the back."

"Alright!" The Platinum adventurer then summoned a powerful Platinum Wicked Tiger, which opened its jaws wide and lunged at Xiong Zhan.

"Wait, don't kill me! I can still—" Xiong Zhan begged for mercy, but the Wicked Tiger clamped its jaws around his neck and ripped his head off.

Hatred filled Xiong Zhan's final moments. He never imagined he would be the first to fall, especially when he wanted to live the most. From a distance, Han Wu's remaining teammates watched the brutal death with heavy hearts. Despite everything, Xiong Zhan had once been one of them.

The Diamond adventurer tried to sow discord among them. "I'll spare your lives if you sever the limbs of the one who killed my teammate."

Xue Feng and the others exchanged glances and then looked at Han Wu.

Han Wu scoffed. "What's wrong? You want to chop off my limbs?"

The four shook their heads firmly.

Alice said, "You saved me, so I won't betray you, even if it costs me my life."

Xue Feng added, "I don't harm my teammates."

Saurman nodded. "I've lived long enough to learn one truth: never trust your enemies."

Lady Mei chuckled softly. "Senior Han Wu, stop teasing us. You must have a trick to deal with them, right?"

Han Wu's smile grew confident once he saw their loyalty. "They're just summoning monsters. I have something similar."

With that, he summoned rows of terracotta soldiers and the twelve golden giants behind him. "Let's see who's summons are stronger!"

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Chapter 186 - I've Just Warmed Up

[1,153 words]

Chapter 186 - I've Just Warmed Up

The two groups of summoned monsters collided with brutal force, tearing into each other without mercy. Bodies disintegrated by the second, falling like broken statues. Han Wu's terracotta army proved more resilient, with many soldiers enduring the Poison Orbweavers' savage onslaught.

The adventurer team quickly grasped the situation and summoned every creature at their disposal: the Platinum Wicked Tiger, Platinum Berserk Wolf, Platinum Unideer, and more. The Platinum summons arrived and quickly turned the tide, effortlessly tearing through the terracotta soldiers and engaging the twelve golden giants in fierce combat.

The golden giants managed to withstand the attacks for a time, but many still fell in the process. The adventurers observed that each time a golden giant was destroyed and re-summoned, it was defeated even faster than before.

The situation grew dire for Han Wu and his team. Once all the golden giants had perished and been re-summoned, multiple Platinum monsters would assault them simultaneously. Unfortunately, most of Han Wu's allies lacked the strength to mount any meaningful defense.

Lady Mei's worry deepened. She knew Han Wu had the power to turn the tide. She suspected he could not act because the four of them were holding him back. Otherwise, he would have already escaped or slain their enemies.

Her resolve hardened, and she shouted, "Senior Han Wu, just leave us. I know you can easily avenge us with your strength."

Saurman, Xue Feng, and Alice shared her thoughts. Rather than drag Han Wu down, they preferred to let him survive alone and seek revenge on their behalf.

Saurman's voice came hoarse but firm. "Young man, don't worry about us. It's a blessing we've lasted this long. Escape now while you still can. At the very least, survive."

Xue Feng nodded slowly. "Thank you for the antidote, but I fear I won't be able to repay you."

Alice plucked one of her hair accessories and handed it to Han Wu. "If you live and escape, give this to my family. I'm sure they won't blame you."

Han Wu smiled warmly at them, moved by their gestures. Though their time together had been brief, he felt certain they saw him as a reliable teammate. After witnessing their loyalty, he knew he could never let them down.

"If you want to show me your resolve, then shut up already. The battle isn't over yet." He turned just in time to see the Platinum monsters finish off the last of his golden giants. "I've only just finished warming up."

Han Wu raised his palm, activated his Diamond Monster Ender title, and summoned every Diamond monster he had registered. Each looked strange, bearing features that no creature of their race should possess, yet the pressure they radiated matched that of a true Diamond monster.

Although their pressure measured only about a tenth of a regular Diamond monster's strength, it still posed a serious threat to the Platinum monsters. Despite being summons, the Platinum monsters retained some of their instincts. The moment they

sensed the Diamond monsters, they surrendered; some even fled with their tails tucked beneath them.

The adventurer team had no idea what had just happened. They stared in shock as their enemy suddenly summoned over twenty Diamond monsters. Such creatures were native only to the most remote regions; they did not appear out of nowhere.

Only the Diamond adventurer sensed something was off. He had a Diamond monster summon and could tell that the pressure radiating from Han Wu's summoned Diamond monsters was unusual. They felt too weak, as if their power had been diluted.

"Boss, what's wrong? Do we keep fighting?"

The Diamond adventurer hesitated, then gave a slow nod. "Fight."

He then stepped forward and summoned his own monster, the Diamond Mountain Ape. It appeared out of nowhere, and he commanded it, "Go and destroy those summoned monsters."

The Mountain Ape charged on all fours toward Han Wu. At once, the summoned monsters surged forward to protect him, but something was off the moment they clashed. The twenty summoned monsters shattered like fragile paper under the Mountain Ape's relentless punches. In the end, the Mountain Ape killed all twenty of Han Wu's summoned monsters while sustaining only minor injuries.

Saurman and the others stood frozen in shock. What had just happened? Had Han Wu only been putting up a brave front? Their enemies shared the surprise but quickly erupted with joy.

"Those monsters are useless! Like porcelain—nice to look at, but they shatter too easily."

"My Wicked Tiger could've taken out two or three of them. Can't believe I got fooled again."

"When we catch him, don't kill him. We need to find out how he can summon that many Diamond monsters at once..."

While they reveled in what they thought was a guaranteed win, Han Wu silently used his title to summon something else. A single monster appeared, radiating a far stronger presence.

Saurman and the others assumed Han Wu was struggling before his inevitable death because the summoned monster seemed too weak. It could not even challenge the Mountain Ape.

Lady Mei, ever observant, sensed something amiss. The monsters Han Wu had summoned earlier were strong, yet their movements had been stiff and unnatural. They could barely display even 5% of a Diamond monster's true strength. This one, however, felt different. She could sense a fierce battle spirit radiating from it.

She also recognized the summoned monster this time. It was one of the Diamond Berserk Wolves Han Wu had slain earlier. Watching closely, she saw the wolf charge at the Mountain Ape. Despite a fierce fight, the Mountain Ape's massive fist crushed it. Still, the wolf managed to leave a savage wound on the ape.

After watching the Diamond Berserk Wolf vanish, Han Wu finally grasped the true power of the Monster Ender title's summons. They were nearly useless. Combining a material and soul for a summon reduced the monster's battle strength to just 25% of its original power. Even then, it was still very weak.

Thankfully, the title had one last effect that could help him: permanently sacrificing a monster to temporarily boost his own physique. He could activate it immediately.

After defeating its opponent, the Mountain Ape approached Han Wu and the others. As a summoned monster, it was bound to follow its owner's orders.

Han Wu stepped forward and intercepted the attack. He did not grip his greatsword but instead raised his fist. The Mountain Ape swung its powerful fist in anger. Han Wu met the blow head-on, striking the ape's fist with his own.

Everyone watching thought Han Wu was crazy, yet what followed stunned them all. Han Wu actually stopped the Mountain Ape's fist. More surprising, the ape seemed weaker compared to Han Wu.

The Diamond adventurer's eyes widened in disbelief. "What's going on? Isn't the Mountain Ape known for its raw power? How could a human overpower it?!"

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Chapter 187 - It's A Sin to Stand Out

[1,029 words]

Chapter 187 - It's A Sin to Stand Out

"Incredible!" Han Wu gasped as endless strength surged through his body.

The Diamond Monster Ender title offered four effects. The first three allowed summoning monsters using materials, souls, or a combination of both. The final effect permanently sacrificed a monster to temporarily boost the user's power.

He had just undergone this process ten times and could already fight a Diamond Mountain Ape barehanded.

What if I strengthen myself again? Han Wu tested it, and his muscles swelled with power. Gripping the Mountain Ape's fist, he twisted with such force that the monster spun like a pinwheel.

The surreal scene astounded the onlookers. None had ever witnessed power so overwhelming, surpassing even the heavens and the earth.

"Is he still human?" the Diamond adventurer muttered, uncertain how to respond. He had already reached the Title Civilization's peak, yet Han Wu's strength made him feel insignificant.

"Boss, run! The Mountain Ape is falling right here!" one adventurer shouted just in time for him to look up. The Mountain Ape was plummeting from the sky, headed straight toward him.

Rather than dodge, he stood his ground and summoned another, the Diamond Jade Mantis. Its raptorial legs gleamed like blades. With a swift strike, it sliced the Mountain Ape in half, causing the body to crash harmlessly beside the adventurer.

"How could I be a Diamond adventurer specialized in summoning monsters if I only had the Mountain Ape?" Despite Han Wu's shocking display of power, he remained confident. After all, he still had many monsters left to summon.

Han Wu clapped, swapping places with the fallen Mountain Ape. He raised his Genocider greatsword to strike the adventurer, but the Jade Mantis intercepted swiftly with its powerful raptorial legs. Han Wu parried, then punched the Jade Mantis away several hundred meters, leaving the adventurer exposed.

"Battle Snapper!" the adventurer shouted, summoning another monster.

The Battle Snapper raised its mighty shell to block Han Wu's strike, but the damage incapacitated it. Han Wu kicked it aside. The adventurer summoned more monsters in desperation, but none lasted beyond three rounds against Han Wu's relentless assault.

Han Wu advanced steadily as he cut down each summoned monster. When he stood directly before the adventurer, the man tried to summon one last monster. "Summon—"

Han Wu glared at him and unleashed Soul Cut, launching scalpels forged from Soul Energy. They pierced the adventurer's soul and sent waves of unbearable pain through him. He collapsed, unable to summon anything through the agony.

The other adventurers rushed to assist, but he shouted, "Run! At least one of you has to survive!"

Han Wu didn't give them the chance. With five sharp claps, all four adventurers collapsed, dead. The Diamond adventurer watched their deaths, his body trembling.

"Who are you? Why are you helping the Merchant Alliance? You—" His words cut off as Han Wu swiftly decapitated him. Fear filled his eyes at the moment of death.

"You talk too much," Han Wu muttered with a sigh. He then rifled through the corpses, collecting everything of value—tokens, materials, and more. Returning to his team, he found all four staring at him as if he were a god.

"I've taken their points. Didn't expect them to have 1,290. This should put us in first place," he said calmly.

The Four teammates swallowed hard, stunned that the Adventurer Guild's contestants held so many points and amazed that Han Wu had slaughtered them all alone.

It was chilling to realize Han Wu had single-handedly bested contestants from the Adventurer Guild, Shadow Alliance, and the Imperial Knight. Yet, the contest was far from over. After clearing the battlefield, they set off to search for other tokens.

...

Myriad City descended into chaos as events unfolded rapidly. The Shadow Alliance had lost most of their points, followed by the Imperial Knights, who lost all of theirs. Now, even the strongest Adventurer Guild had been wiped clean of points.

Meanwhile, the Merchant Alliance rocketed into first place, outscoring second place by a staggering 1,300 points. The runner-up had barely reached 880 points.

Today marked the ninth day of the contest, making it almost certain that the Merchant Alliance had secured the top spot. Still, the Merchant Alliance's higher-ups were far from pleased. They had just gotten news that their warehouse had been broken into, with many precious materials stolen. The Merchant Alliance paid a steep price to confirm the culprit: the Shadow Alliance. It was an unmistakable act of retaliation.

The Imperial Knights had also targeted shops linked to the Merchant Alliance, inflicting significant losses. Fortunately, the Merchant Alliance's wealth allowed it to absorb the damage from both attacks. That changed today, when news arrived that the Adventurer

Guild's points had been wiped out, while Han Wu's team gained an equal number of points.

The news hit like a bombshell, leaving the Merchant Alliance's leader with a numb scalp. He had hoped Han Wu and his team would work hard to earn points for the Merchant Alliance, but now their outstanding performance was backfiring.

He had to admit he'd been too vocal in recent days, so he decided to pay a large sum to the Imperial Knights and the Shadow Alliance as a gesture of apology. However, neither faction even allowed him inside their headquarters. It was clear they would not forgive him.

All he could do was smile bitterly. He was damned if he tried, damned if he didn't. If he could, he would have begged Han Wu and the others to stop earning points, but contestants were forbidden from outside contact during the contest.

If the situation continued, the Merchant Alliance would lose its business foothold in Myriad City. His face grew pale at the thought of having to visit the Adventurer Guild to apologize. He prayed that Han Wu and his team would not push further. If they did, the other three factions could easily band together and wipe out the Merchant Alliance.

Thankfully, Han Wu's team spent the last few days quietly hunting monsters without causing further incidents.

Finally, the contest ended. After the tenth day, all contestants were sent out of the training site.

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[1,130 words]

Chapter 188 - Welcome

The other factions welcomed their contestants at the front of the training site. Some were smiling, while others looked devastated. The factions that scored zero points knew their entire teams had perished in the contest. Still, they refused to give up and waited patiently, clinging to whatever hope remained.

Some had come simply for amusement, drawn by the feud between the Merchant Alliance and the three other factions. For the others, this event served as both a test and an opportunity. They hoped to seize their chance amid the chaos and elevate their status among the four dominant factions.

A heavy scent of gunpowder lingered over the four factions. Each had reigned as a superpower in Myriad City for over a century, and the grudges between them ran deep. This time, however, the Merchant Alliance had grievously offended the other three factions. In response, those factions united to force the Merchant Alliance out.

Today marked only the beginning of their plan. Hundreds of Platinum adventurers gathered near the area controlled by the three factions, including five elite Diamond adventurers. Even the Myriad King, who commanded the Imperial Knights, had arrived. He sat on his throne with a cold, unreadable expression, leaving everyone guessing his thoughts.

The Merchant Alliance had spent a fortune recruiting fifty Platinum adventurers to stand with them. Yet it was clear they could not match the overwhelming power assembled by the other three factions.

The Merchant Alliance's leader wiped sweat from his brow under the intense gaze of the other factions. Though he had faced many major events, even he trembled before the hundreds of Platinum and five Diamond adventurers glaring at him as if ready to devour him.

One of the higher-ups close to the leader finally lost his composure and suggested, "Leader, why don't we withdraw now? We shouldn't be here to greet them. We can just hand them over to the other three factions to appease their anger. At least that way, our alliance won't suffer as much."

The leader heard the suggestion and slapped him sharply. The sound echoed through the room, drawing the attention of the other higher-ups. All of them were sharp enough to guess what had just been said, and the slap made the leader's stance clear.

"You've followed me for so long, and you still don't understand what we merchants stand for? Why do you think we've managed to establish ourselves for so long in Myriad City? Why do you think the adventurers continue to do business with us? It's because of our trust and honor. Trust, not money, must be the foundation of the Merchant Alliance.

"Abandoning our friends today may prevent immediate losses, but it will brand us as untrustworthy in the eyes of everyone in Myriad City. Without trust, no adventurer will work with us. Without customers, we become nothing more than drifting leaves on water. Even with money, the factions will despise us and tear us down in a single day. Your suggestion won't save us money—it will kill us all."

The leader's voice trembled with anger, while the higher-up broke out in cold sweat. "I'm so sorry, Leader. Please forgive me. My mind must have been clouded to say such things. Please don't take it to heart."

The leader sighed heavily. "You are no longer fit to hold your position. Once this ends, please resign. You have served me for a long time, and I will never forget your contributions."

The higher-up regretted voicing his suggestion but knew it was too late. His leader had made his decision, and all he could do was return and wait with a heavy heart.

The leader's decisive action also silenced any further attempts to persuade him. It was clear he expected them all to stand with him and the Merchant Alliance, no matter the cost. They would uphold their honor, even if it meant dying for it.

The brief scuffle within the Merchant Alliance drew little attention, as all eyes were fixed on the training site's entrance. Soon, the first contestant appeared. Blood stained his body, evidence of the fierce battles he had endured during the contest.

His faction quickly rushed over to greet him. After a quick discussion, their leader turned angrily to another faction and shouted, "Black Sheep! How dare you kill my brother? How are you going to compensate us?"

Black Sheep was a middle-sized adventurer guild with some experts. Their leader rose defiantly. "Anyone who dies in the contest has only themselves to blame. They were weak. I will not compensate for their deaths."

"You bastard! Come and fight me! We'll settle this with a fight to the death. This ends no matter who wins!"

"Fine. Come at me then."

The two leaders then moved to a clearing to face off to the death. Meanwhile, the other contestants streamed out from the training site. Many listed everything they had faced during the contest, especially naming the groups that had attacked them.

Some planned to seek compensation from those factions. Typically, the stronger contestants chose to fight to the death, while the weaker ones pursued monetary settlements.

A contestant stepped out, and the Shadow Alliance erupted with joy upon seeing it was their own. The Shadow Alliance's leader approached and asked what had happened.

By the time the adventurer finished recounting the events, the leader was cursing under his breath. After all, the Merchant Alliance's Gold adventurer had killed their Diamond adventurer and looted all his items. It was humiliating.

A Diamond adventurer falling to a Gold adventurer was bad enough, but now the leader had to speak up for their fallen warrior. To avoid disappointing his followers, he steadied himself and demanded, "Merchant Alliance, hand over your Gold adventurer for

punishment as we see fit. If you comply, we will let this matter rest. If not, we will continue to harass you in the future.”

His words left no doubt. He believed the Merchant Alliance would see reason. Trading one Gold adventurer for peace seemed like a generous deal.

The Merchant Alliance’s higher-ups were already discussing the situation. They were profit-driven by nature and doubted their leader would make the wrong decision. From their perspective, giving up Han Wu to buy peace was a bargain.

Meanwhile, the leader was considering something else. *Why does the Shadow Alliance want only Han Wu? He’s well-known, yes, but still just a Gold adventurer. Why go to such lengths for him alone? Could he be connected to the Diamond adventurer’s death? If that’s true, I can’t hand him over. How strong will he get if I nurture him to the Diamond rank? He already has the power to kill a Diamond adventurer at Gold rank, which means...*

The Merchant Alliance’s leader shuddered at the implication.

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[1,047 words]

Chapter 189 - Questioning

After seeing the Merchant Alliance’s leader remain silent, the Shadow Alliance’s leader pressed, “Do you agree or not? Give me a clear answer.”

The leader shook his head. “Those who die in the contest bear full responsibility. They are simply weak, and I will not compensate for their deaths. Why should the Merchant Alliance hand over our contestant for you to decide their fate?”

“Fine. This won’t be the last time you see me,” the Shadow Alliance’s leader grumbled.

He returned to his seat, glaring at the merchants as he calculated when they would die. Despite losing their Diamond adventurer, the Shadow Alliance still awaited the return of four of their Platinum adventurers.

The Imperial Knights and the Adventurer Guild both had zero points, confirming their contestants were likely all dead. Their grudge against the Merchant Alliance ran deeper than the Shadow Alliance’s.

Naturally, the Merchant Alliance's leader knew exactly what everyone was thinking. He pulled out a silk handkerchief and wiped the sweat from his forehead.

Contestants continued to stream out from the entrance. Soon, Han Wu and the others appeared. The leader hurried over to greet them. Except for Zhan Xiong, the rest looked unscathed; their clothes remained pristine, as if they had come for a leisurely stroll rather than a fierce contest.

The leader quickly turned to the eldest among them. "Master Saurman, did your team clash with the Adventurer Guild, Imperial Knights, and Shadow Alliance?"

Saurman glanced at Han Wu but remained silent, waiting for Han Wu's permission to speak. Han Wu stepped forward and asked the leader if everything was all right.

The Merchant Alliance's higher-ups buzzed anxiously. "We have a serious problem! When the contestants from the other three factions died, all their points were transferred to the Merchant Alliance. Without any points, those factions cannot determine resource allocation for the next five years! This cuts off their main source of income. Of course, we're in trouble!"

"Are the deaths of their representatives connected to you?"

Han Wu nodded. "Yes. I killed all three of their Diamond adventurers."

"What?!" the leader and others exclaimed.

The leader had considered the possibility but dismissed it outright. Diamond adventurers stood at the top of the pyramid. It seemed nearly impossible for Gold adventurers to kill them. Yet Han Wu's words implied he had done exactly that. Did he have some sort of trump card up his sleeves?

Lady Mei nodded firmly. "Senior Han Wu is that powerful. Those Diamond adventurers were no match for him."

Saurman added, "I saw him kill them with my own eyes. I will never forget his heroic deeds."

Even the youngest, Alice and Xue Feng, stepped forward to defend Han Wu.

"Brother Han Wu saved me from the Imperial Knights' pigs. Leader, you can't give him trouble, or I will tell my parents."

"Han Wu is my partner. Anyone who tries to harm him will have to go through me."

The Merchant Alliance's higher-ups were astounded. The Platinum adventurers they had recruited were known for their pride and strength, yet now each one defended Han Wu without hesitation. What spell had Han Wu cast to earn their unquestioning loyalty?

The leader was about to ask more when two Diamond adventurers approached.

"I am Woody, a guest of the Adventurer Guild. May I ask if my overly cautious brother died by your hand?" Woody immediately confronted Han Wu about the death of their fellow Diamond adventurer.

Han Wu did not hesitate to admit the truth. "His summoning skills were strong, but I suppose I'm slightly better than him."

Woody's anger flared so fiercely his beard seemed to stand on end. He knew his brother's abilities well and was certain no one matched him in summoning. How could an enemy claim his brother's skills were inferior? He refused to let his brother's reputation be tarnished even in death.

The other Diamond adventurer, Hei Xiang, patted Woody to calm him down a little. He wanted Woody to hold back until after the questioning. "Brat, do you know the only son of the Myriad King joined the contest as a representative of the Imperial Knights?"

Han Wu nodded. "Yes, of course."

"Then where is he? Is he still alive?"

Han Wu shook his head. "He's dead. He tried to kidnap my teammate, so I killed him on the spot."

Hei Xiang lost control and snarled, "You arrogant bastard! That was the Myriad King's only son!"

Han Wu sneered. "And what does that matter to me? Just because he was the Crown Prince, he could do whatever he wanted without consequences? Tell your king to stop whining if he can't play fair. Also, he should hurry and produce another heir since his only son is long gone."

"You brat!" Hei Xiang jabbed a finger at Han Wu's head, but without the Myriad King's approval, he couldn't twist it off just yet.

The Shadow Alliance's leader also approached and demanded, "Did you kill our Diamond adventurer?"

Han Wu had no reason to lie and nodded. "Yes. He tried to kill me first, so I killed him in the process."

“Killed him in the process?” the leader shrieked. “You are far too arrogant!”

“You bastard. I’ll kill you for your sins.”

“Kill him here and now. The Myriad King is watching.”

They planned to kill Han Wu on the spot, hoping to preserve their factions’ honor and quell the fury of their people.

The Merchant Alliance’s leader stepped in. “Everyone, don’t forget Han Wu is our representative. We have a duty to protect him after the match. I’m too weak to stop you, and no words will change your minds if you are set on revenge. But I swear on my name, as long as I lead, I will use all my authority to assassinate your talented younger generations.”

“How dare you!”

“I will kill you too!”

“You are only a merchant, yet you spout such words...”

The three Diamond adventurers prepared to fight when a regal voice echoed from above. “We will announce the winners first. Grudges can be settled afterward.”

It was the Myriad King himself. Hearing his voice, the three Diamond adventurers fell silent, meek as frightened chicks.

Noting their sudden submission, Han Wu watched the Myriad King with keen interest.

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[1,164 words]

Chapter 190 - Collaboration

Han Wu’s goal in infiltrating the Title Civilization was twofold: to gather intelligence about this world and to increase his strength. Myriad City was the largest city of this civilization, so it was only natural that someone exceptionally powerful would be guarding it. The Myriad King fit that role perfectly.

The three Diamond adventurers didn’t know Han Wu’s intentions. Their only task was to obey the king’s command and ensure Han Wu’s safe return to the Merchant Alliance.

When the final contestants emerged from the training site, the Myriad King rose to his feet and announced each team's score. The Merchant Alliance came in first, securing a staggering lead over the rest. They had obtained 3,246 points and held six Diamond tokens.

The runner-up was another large adventurer team. They had a Diamond adventurer in their ranks, the only one who had survived among the four who had entered. They had obtained 1,134 points and had collected two Diamond tokens.

In third place came the Shadow Alliance, managing only 621 points.

Everyone had anticipated the results to some degree, but the Merchant Alliance had surpassed all expectations. Not only had they defeated two seeded teams, but they had also crippled the Shadow Alliance's team. That performance explained the vast gap between their score and the others'.

The Myriad King continued to announce the results, his face devoid of expression, "The first four factions will receive the rights to allocate the resources acquired by Myriad City over the next five years."

The Adventurer Guild and the Imperial Knights were gnashing their teeth in anger. Had the Merchant Alliance not eliminated all their contestants, neither faction would have lost their seats or fallen outside the top four.

Meanwhile, the Shadow Alliance's leader was conflicted. His faction still resented Han Wu for killing their Diamond adventurer, yet their position remained unchanged. Their share of profits for the next five years was unaffected.

Overall, they had lost only one Diamond adventurer. Though significant, the loss remained manageable. After all, casualties were expected in every contest.

Several factions had lost all their representatives, yet not a single one voiced a complaint. In the end, strength dictated everything. The weak didn't even qualify to speak.

Once the ceremony ended, the Myriad King stepped toward Han Wu. He lowered his voice to a near whisper, quiet enough that only Han Wu and the Merchant Alliance's leader could hear. "I will not tolerate you killing my son. Return in three days for a fight to the death, or the Merchant Alliance will be wiped out of Myriad City."

The king's voice remained calm, but Han Wu sensed the fierce anger he was holding back. He was not surprised by the outcome; he had predicted something like this would occur.

The Merchant Alliance leader's face drained of color when he heard the king's words. The threat was not aimed at Han Wu, but at the Merchant Alliance. Han Wu was strong

and operated alone, able to slip away whenever he wished. The Merchant Alliance, however, was deeply rooted in Myriad City and could not disappear completely within three days. The leader already envisioned his faction's destruction at the hands of the three rival factions.

After the ceremony ended, everyone returned to their homes. Han Wu and his team headed to the Merchant Alliance's headquarters to collect their final payment. Given their exceptional performance, the alliance should have increased their reward. Instead, the fifty Platinum adventurers surrounded them the moment they arrived.

"Leader, what is the meaning of this? Are you going back on your word?" Saurman howled.

Xue Feng and Lady Mei braced themselves, ready to fight at any moment.

The Merchant Alliance's leader waved his arm weakly, signaling the fifty adventurers to step down. The higher-ups looked clearly displeased. They all believed Han Wu and his team were to blame for the Merchant Alliance's downfall. They had drawn too much attention

"I said stand down. Did you not hear me?" the leader shouted, and the other higher-ups left with dissatisfaction.

Only the leader and Han Wu's team remained in the hall. The leader handed them a list of rewards to choose from. He had originally promised this, and although Saurman and the others hesitated at first, they soon watched as workers delivered their rewards. On top of that, the leader gifted each of them an additional Diamond Title Scroll.

With that, their contract was complete, and they were free to go. The Merchant Alliance's leader waved goodbye. Saurman and the others urged Han Wu to leave quickly, fearing the alliance would block their path again. At least they could fight together if that happened.

Han Wu shook his head. "I want to stay here a few more days. You guys can leave first. The leader won't hold you back."

The Merchant Alliance's leader stared at Han Wu in confusion. Now was the perfect moment for Han Wu to escape, yet he showed no sign of fleeing.

Does he have something else up his sleeve? Is he not afraid of the Myriad King? he wondered.

Saurman and the others chose to trust him but left shortly afterward. Only Han Wu and the Merchant Alliance's leader remained in the hall now.

The leader spoke bluntly. "The Myriad King has ruled this city for decades. Even at Platinum rank, you still lack the strength to defeat him."

"You can't be certain of that," Han Wu replied. "I could defeat Diamond adventurers at Gold rank. Why wouldn't I defeat him at Platinum?"

The leader fell silent. Han Wu's abilities had clearly surpassed his expectations, yet he remained uncertain if Han Wu could win.

Han Wu proposed, "What if I do defeat the Myriad King? Your crisis would end, and you would become the strongest faction in Myriad City."

"That depends on whether you can truly defeat him," the leader said gravely. "Forgive me, but I still cannot trust you."

"Don't worry. Let me prove my full strength." Han Wu then revealed his interface and all of his titles.

Thirty minutes later, the leader seemed like a different man. His vigor had returned, now stronger than before.

"If you have no objections, we can base our alliance on the death of the Myriad King," Han Wu suggested.

The Merchant Alliance's leader nodded. "If what you've shown me is real, then I'm willing to take that gamble. Tell me what you need over the next three days, and we'll do everything in our power to secure it."

"Thank you. Then I look forward to a fruitful partnership." Han Wu smiled, then followed the maid to the quarters the Merchant Alliance had prepared for him.

Even after Han Wu left, the leader's heart pounded fiercely. "Unlimited reinforcement and strengthening... Two of the strongest Diamond titles. Even the Myriad King won't stand a chance. *Hahaha*, the Merchant Alliance has finally found a powerful ally. With him on our side, who would dare make a move against us?"

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[1,640 words]

Chapter 191 - Black Figure

Three days later, Han Wu arrived at the pre-arranged location, where the Myriad King had already been patiently waiting. The King's gaze lingered on the training site, filled with an undeniable longing. Due to a set of specific restrictions, he could not even enter the training site to retrieve his son's corpse.

"I'm surprised you didn't run away," said the Myriad King, his back facing Han Wu.

"Let's do this. I don't have time to waste," Han Wu declared impatiently.

The Myriad King turned, a deep frown etching itself onto his face. "Very well, then. It is time I sent you to join my son."

A sudden, explosive release of power emanated from him, accompanied by a crushing pressure. An endless surge of energy swelled and coursed through his entire body.

With practiced speed, Han Wu raised his Genocider greatsword, just in time to block the incoming attack. Simultaneously, he activated Monster Ender, sacrificing numerous monster souls to boost his physical strength. Amidst this, a sudden, searing heat erupted from his neck, and he quickly realized that his necklace was reacting to something. The Myriad King was using an ability with mental corruption, clearly intending to break his will and bring him to his knees!

Han Wu refused to back down, rapidly launching the invisible scalpels of Soul Cut towards the Myriad King. The King, however, seemed to sense their presence, deftly avoiding the invisible attack.

Han Wu then shifted into his black dragon form, immediately bringing his greatsword down in a devastating arc onto the Myriad King. The overwhelming force of his swing was so immense it almost seemed to tear the very fabric of space around the King. Incredibly, despite this power, the Myriad King was able to block the blow with just one hand.

Han Wu's eyes widened as he saw crystal scales slowly emerging from the king's palm. The realization that these scales could withstand his greatsword's blows greatly shocked him. He quickly pulled back his greatsword and retreated several paces, all the while focusing on rapidly increasing his body's strength, speed, and stamina.

"You are exceptionally powerful," the Myriad King acknowledged, a note of genuine praise in his voice, "and you genuinely possess the ability to defeat even a Diamond-ranked individual."

As he spoke, he proceeded to cover his arms entirely with the dazzling scales. His limbs, now seemingly forged from pure diamond, radiated an exceedingly striking and formidable appearance.

Han Wu probed, his voice laced with caution, "Why do you know how to use mental corruption? How are you related to the Sky Palace and the labyrinth?"

The Myriad King scoffed. "I will tell you when you are dead."

Without another word, he then disappeared from sight in a blink, striking Han Wu's stomach with immense power. In that instant, the protective scales covering Han Wu's abdomen splintered, and he felt an unrelenting force tear through his internal organs.

He reeled backward, unable to control his movements, a wave of surprise washing over him that just a single punch had inflicted such severe injuries. Clearly, the Myriad King's power was far greater than he had anticipated.

"You are not a life form from this civilization, right?"

Han Wu was visibly jolted by the Myriad King's sudden question, a wave of fear causing his hair to stand on end. His identity as an invader was the most carefully guarded secret he'd kept since first setting foot in this civilization. Even the Half-Dragons, his closest allies, possessed only minor details. Besides, he trusted that they would never betray him by revealing to others that he hailed from an entirely different civilization.

"Does this surprise you? Do you know why I know this about you? I sensed that you were not of this place the very instant you first set foot here. Even with your powers suppressed, I can still detect a distinct scent emanating from your body. If I'm not mistaken, you must've come from the Divine Civilization!"

Han Wu was already drenched in a cold sweat. He had believed his disguise was flawless, but it never occurred to him that the Myriad King had seen right through him from the very moment he arrived.

"So what if it's true?" Han Wu said, feigning nonchalance.

"So what if it's true, you ask? *Hahaha!* You don't understand how valuable you are! In the chaotic regions sprawling beyond the borders of this civilization, countless other civilizations have dedicated their entire existence to the fervent study and research of the Divine Civilization. To such civilizations, a living individual from the Divine Civilization who possesses high potential is nothing short of a literal gold mine! Believe me, those obsessive maniacs would have an extraordinary interest in you."

Han Wu couldn't believe what he was hearing. In any case, he'd never let anyone use him as a lab rat.

"And who are you?" he pressed, trying to extract more information from the King. "Are you a life form from this place?"

“My civilization? *Hehehe*, my home was consumed and destroyed ages ago by the relentless fires of your Divine Civilization. I can never, ever forget how your people summoned armies of countless races. They descended upon us, invaded our lands, plundered every valuable item they could lay their hands on, and left nothing but ruin in their wake.

“Your people,” the Myriad King snarled, his face twisting into a mask of pure rage, “committed every despicable act conceivable under the heavens. The mere thought of the atrocities your kind inflicted upon mine never fails to enrage me!

“And now, my only son is dead, killed by *you*, a being from the Divine Civilization! So, tell me, how exactly do you propose we settle this score between us?”

Han Wu frowned. Invading another civilization was never about fairness; it was simply the strong stripping the weak of everything they had. This was an ironclad universal rule. Trapped by this realization, he could neither defend his people’s actions nor provide any meaningful answer to the Myriad King.

“What’s wrong? Why the sudden silence? Since you seem incapable of providing an answer, then quietly endure the full force of my rage!”

An ominous black smoke began to rise from the Myriad King, coiling around and completely enveloping his entire body. The swirling tendrils of smoke seemed to distort and twist everything in their surroundings as if actively attempting to corrupt and alter whatever they came into contact with.

As his mind began to go numb, Han Wu’s necklace grew searingly hot, like a piece of red-hot iron. He had an ominous feeling that the Myriad King’s mental corruption far exceeded the protective limits of his necklace. As predicted, under the immense, unrelenting pressure, the necklace swiftly gave way, snapping and breaking into numerous fragments.

The coiling, black smoke surged directly towards Han Wu, its sinister purpose clear: to utterly corrupt him. The Myriad King was clearly trying to transform Han Wu into his personal puppet! Recognizing that he might actually fall, Han Wu abandoned all reservations, preparing to unleash his full power.

He swiftly retrieved a piece of black flesh, which he had preserved from the black octopus he had previously battled within the Sky Palace, and immediately consumed it. The special energy contained within the black octopus exploded in his mouth the moment he activated Gene Lock—an ability he was now using for the very first time since his arrival in this civilization.

In that instant, his cells rapidly absorbed the potent energy unleashed by the black octopus’s flesh, causing his entire body to undergo a profound transformation. He

became disconcertingly soft, and numerous black tentacles burst forth from his skin, whipping and flailing wildly in the air.

More importantly, he had obtained the power to wield mental corruption himself. He unleashed this newfound ability at its absolute full force, directly countering and suppressing the Myriad King's own mental assault. The two powerful forces collided, and as they did, the disorienting and dizzying effects of the mental corruption instantly dissipated.

The Myriad King's mental corruption had, for the moment, been rendered ineffective against Han Wu. However, the situation remained dire; Han Wu was aware that he had only a limited window of time before Gene Lock's duration ran out. His primary objective now was to eliminate the Myriad King before that happened.

With a surge of newfound power, Han Wu swung his black tentacles, attempting to coil around and capture the Myriad King. While the King possessed enough raw might to tear through individual tentacles, he was soon engulfed and immobilized by their sheer, overwhelming number. Recognizing his opening, Han Wu swiftly brought his Genocider greatsword down, delivering multiple brutal slashes to the Myriad King's head before finally severing it completely.

No sooner had Han Wu exhaled a sigh of relief than another blurry black figure began to crawl out from the Myriad King's lifeless corpse. An overwhelming pressure immediately sought to force Han Wu to his knees. Yet, fortified by the combined might of Gene Lock, his Black Dragon King Transformation, and numerous reinforcements from Monster Ender, the pressure proved almost entirely ineffective, leaving Han Wu free to move as he pleased.

He wasted no time, rapidly launching Soul Cut scalpels that shimmered with an infusion of mental corruption directly at the blurry black figure. The blurry black figure let out a tormented wail, its struggle against the attack draining it of any remaining power to flee.

With ruthless efficiency, Han Wu rapidly diced the blurry black figure into countless strips using his Genocider greatsword, ensuring its permanent and irreversible demise. The very instant the figure was killed, a new title materialized on his interface, catching him completely off guard.

[Diamond Title: Schizophrenic]

Han Wu looked at the new title with confusion. Since when was he a schizophrenic?

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Chapter 192 - Excising Origin of Mutation

[1,713 words]

Chapter 192 - Excising Origin of Mutation

The sheer intensity of Han Wu and the Myriad Kings's battle had created such a commotion that it was a certainty many experts would soon be drawn to the scene to investigate what had transpired. Han Wu, his body heavy with exhaustion, dragged himself back to the Merchant Alliance with all the speed he could muster, not even bothering to glance at the new title he had just acquired. It was only after he had retreated to the privacy of his room that he finally inspected his new title.

[Diamond Title: Schizophrenia]

[Effect: Separates a part of the user's persona to form a clone. The clone will absolutely obey the main body's order. When the main body perishes, the clone will inherit everything from the main body.]

Han Wu's face brightened with satisfaction as he analyzed the effects of his new title. He saw it as a literal godsend, offering a means to finally confront and manage the troublesome Origin of Mutation that had been dwelling within his body.

Despite the considerable increase in his own strength since the Origin of Mutation began residing in his body, Han Wu couldn't ignore its persistent efforts to gather Divine Essence to enhance its powers. This observation fueled his growing concern and fear that the internal dynamic would inevitably shift, with the Origin of Mutation becoming too powerful and ultimately seizing complete control of his body.

He adamantly refused to allow that future to materialize, and so he had been limiting the amount of Divine Essence the Origin of Mutation could absorb, all the while desperately searching for a method to resolve this escalating issue permanently. It had never once crossed his mind that the key to his problem would be found within the Title Civilization.

I'll have to excise the Origin of Mutation from my body once I return to the Divine Civilization.

From that day forward, whispers of the Myriad King's mysterious disappearance spread quickly across the city. Numerous powerful factions poured vast amounts of time and resources into locating him. They investigated so thoroughly they practically excavated the entire city, but their search ultimately yielded no results.

Without the presence of someone as strong as the Myriad King to uphold order, the city rapidly plunged into utter chaos. During these turbulent times, everyone scrambled

desperately, attempting to claim as many resources as possible. The other three large factions even went so far as to openly attack the Merchant Alliance.

The three factions had fully expected the Merchant Alliance to turtle up to minimize any potential losses. Thus, they were caught off guard when the Alliance chose to aggressively push back instead. What they didn't realize was that, behind the scenes, the Merchant Alliance was closely cooperating with Han Wu.

Han Wu systematically assassinated the five Diamond-ranked adventurers belonging to the other three large factions, finally instilling enough fear in them to cease their attacks. He didn't just stop there, however; he compelled them to submit to the Merchant Alliance, solidifying its position as the undisputed strongest faction.

Having successfully suppressed the three rival factions, the Merchant Alliance cemented its position as the strongest power within Myriad City. Their wealth and influence expanded at an astonishing, unparalleled pace. Within a single month, their initial assets had already doubled.

With the newly acquired wealth of the Merchant Alliance at his disposal, Han Wu gathered information from every corner of the Title Civilization, intending to purchase a large number of Diamond Title Scrolls and Diamond materials.

The allotted time for Han Wu to collect information about the Title Civilization soon ran out. After meticulously compiling all the intelligence he had gathered, Han Wu became absolutely certain that the Title Civilization was the Divine Civilization's next target for invasion.

On account of their partnership, Han Wu divulged his home civilization and purpose to the Merchant Alliance before his departure. Regrettably, he would remain unaware of the kind of treatment the Merchant Alliance would receive once the Divine Civilization eventually launched its inevitable invasion.

As the year drew to a close, Han Wu's seal finally became undone. In that moment, the omnipresent Will of the Title Civilization at last recognized him as an unauthorized intruder and, without hesitation, forcibly ejected him. Thankfully, a ship was already stationed and prepared for him outside the Title Civilization. Using his authority as a being from the Divine Civilization, he deftly piloted the vessel, successfully making his way back to the Divine Civilization's Imperial College.

The Divine Civilization's lecturers meticulously examined the vast amount of information Han Wu had obtained, who then diligently compiled it into a comprehensive and thorough report for submission. Just a day later, the leadership at Imperial College unanimously concurred that the intelligence he had gathered was remarkably detailed and complete, subsequently awarding him a very high score for his efforts.

After enduring such a grueling ordeal, Han Wu was, at last, an officially recognized student of Imperial College. He was utterly ecstatic, as this newfound identity meant he could at last explore Imperial College's Chaotic Starfield in his quest to locate his missing parents.

He was now one step closer to finding his parents. However, there remained a few administrative procedures that needed to be finalized before his admission could be considered truly complete. He wisely used this period to return to his divine realm and thoroughly examine all the items and insights he had obtained from the Title Civilization.

He had amassed quite a significant collection this time around. In addition to powerful titles and a large quantity of various materials, he also utilized his unique Sky Palace Conqueror and Labyrinth Crusher titles to transport the two training sites directly into his divine realm. Curiously, the moment they materialized within his realm, both training sites automatically converted into official buildings.

[Rank 8 Building: Sky Palace. The interior is separated into eight segments. Possesses large areas that can be used to imprison life forms.]

[Rank 7 Building: Labyrinth. Medium area can be used to culture many poisonous creatures. The best training site for poisonous creatures.]

As soon as the labyrinth building appeared, many of Han Wu's poisonous units eagerly entered it to begin their training. Han Wu was certain that, in the near future, he would possess a force of highly powerful, poisonous units.

With the two new structures successfully integrated, he took the time to inspect his divine realm and found its progress during his time away quite satisfactory. Thanks to the tent from the Ancient Battleground, which artificially expanded his territory, his units had been able to multiply in vast numbers without any hindrance.

He now commanded a colossal force of 400 billion locusts, yet the vast majority of them were remarkably weak. In fact, the strongest among them, a Dark Locust, was just a High Lord. Discounting his core race, the Tigermen had become the second most numerous race inhabiting his divine realm. This was largely due to his clone, Han Wen, who, in Han Wu's absence, had been diligently and fervently disseminating his faith within Hu Hai's deteriorating divine realm, converting a significant portion of the Tigermen into Han Wu's devoted units.

The scale of a God's resources proved to be truly astonishing. In his divine realm, he now boasted a billion Tigermen, an impressive number despite the fact that only 40% of Hu Hai's Tigermen had acknowledged him as their god.

Furthermore, these new followers generated an immense daily influx of Faith. Upon making a rough calculation, he discovered that each individual Tigerman provided

hundreds of times more Faith than a single locust, rapidly accumulating numerous Divine Points for him daily.

Once he had accumulated a sufficient quantity of Divine Points, they would automatically convert into Divine Essence. He now possessed 20 Essence within his body—he had finally fulfilled the quota required to fully utilize the Divine Defiance Aspect.

He decided to infuse the extra Divine Essence into his new Divine Destruction Aspect. By expending the majority of his accumulated Divine Essence, he successfully met the necessary quota, thus enabling him to fully utilize the power of Destruction. This meant Han Wu, a recently ascended Demigod, had now secured two Rank 5 Divine Aspects as his very own! His astonishing improvement was nothing short of a miracle.

Before he could proceed with merging the Destruction Aspect into his body, however, Han Wu had one final, critical task. He needed to use his Diamond Schizophrenia title to forcibly excise the parasitic Origin of Mutation from his body. Having recovered its full vitality upon their return to the Divine Civilization, it was now vehemently berating Han Wu after somehow perceiving his intentions.

“Vessel, why are you trying to get rid of me? Have you considered why the Will of the Title Civilization didn’t discover you for an entire year? It’s because I’d been working tirelessly to conceal your presence the entire time!

“If it wasn’t for me, you would’ve been discovered and expelled ages ago! Also, if it weren’t for my Gene Recombination, how would you have so easily gotten all those Diamond titles from regular monsters? All your success can be traced back to—”

“And how many Divine Essence did you secretly consume while I wasn’t in my divine realm?” Han Wu countered, completely ignoring its rant.

He had already confirmed from his interface that he was now a Rank 4 Super Genesoldier. He was well aware that advancing further as a Genesoldier would necessitate consuming twice the usual amount of resources for each subsequent rank-up. Progressing from Rank 3 to Rank 4 alone required at least 40 Divine Essence, which was more than enough for him to merge another Divine Aspect into himself!

This solidified his resolve: he would excise the Origin of Mutation from his body, no matter the cost. The Origin of Mutation, sensing Han Wu’s unwavering determination, immediately attempted to forcibly seize control of his Rank 4 Supergene Soldier body. However, Han Wu was far from the weakling he had once been.

His soul was now remarkably resilient, and he was able to temporarily defend against the Origin of Mutation’s efforts to seize control of his body. He then dedicated six realm months to the process, finally succeeding in extracting it from his body.

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[1,028 words]

Chapter 193 - Life Creation

After excising the Origin of Mutation, Han Wu saw his interface return to normal.

[Name: Han Wu]

[Rank: Demigod]

[Talent: Chosen One (Exclusive), Defiance]

[Divine Powers: Sacrifice (Exclusive), Famine, Life Infusion, Merge (Exclusive)]

[Skills: Black Dragon King Transformation...]

[Divine Essence: 20]

[Divine Aspects: Defiance (Rank 5. Awakened Divine Skills: Souleater Gaze, Defiant Sword, Conduitborn. Other skills remain locked)]

[Divine Points: 67.9 million (Personal) / 234 million (Foreign)]

[Faith Points: 23.9 million]

[Core Level: 20 (Rank 4 Sacred Object: Law of Gluttony (Sealed), ...)]

[Core Race: Locust]

...

Once the Origin of Mutation was successfully excised, it became Han Wu's clone, now possessing its own distinct interface. Due to his authority as the main body, Han Wu was also able to readily access and inspect this new interface.

[Rank: Rank 4 Supergene Soldier]

[Abilities: Controlled Mutation, Gene Lock, Gene Recombination, Life Creation]

After becoming a Rank 4 Supergene Soldier, it gained a new ability: Life Creation.

Han Wu clicked on it to inspect the details.

[Life Creation: Allows the user to create a new species of life form using related energy. As their creator, the user permanently obtains 10% of all Faith Points generated, no matter what civilization they ultimately choose to believe in.]

Han Wu's eyes gleamed with undisguised greed upon seeing the new ability's effects—it was absurdly powerful! While 10% might appear insignificant at first glance, its true magnitude became clear when considering that this skill would claim 10% of all Faith Points generated by an entire species; the accumulated total would quickly reach an astronomical scale!

For example, goblins were a resilient species capable of surviving in a multitude of habitats. Their population was estimated to be in the trillions, making 10% of their collective Faith Points an overwhelmingly vast amount.

This, however, was only true for species robust enough to adapt and survive. Species that lacked these adaptive qualities would consequently generate a significantly lesser amount of Faith Points. Yet, even that reduced amount was still considered remarkably substantial for someone who was merely a Demigod.

The Origin of Mutation let out a derisive scoff, its voice dripping with sarcasm as it observed Han Wu's clearly impressed reaction.

"What's wrong with you?" it jeered. "Having second thoughts about getting rid of me now?"

Han Wu shook his head in response. "Not at all," he stated. "This arrangement is mutually beneficial. I no longer have to live with the apprehension of you taking over my body, and in exchange, you also receive something."

"Something in return? As if!"

"Of course you do. You're now free to do whatever you want. You can go anywhere you want to, instead of being trapped inside me, constantly worrying about getting discovered at any time."

The Origin of Mutation's eyes lit up at Han Wu's explanation.

Han Wu continued, "Also, you can now find ways to collect Divine Essence on your own, so you won't have to beg or steal from me anymore."

The Origin of Mutation's expression immediately soured upon hearing that stinging remark.

I am the terrifying Origin of Mutation, a hazard so great that even the mighty Divine River Civilization found it necessary to seal me! To imply that I was stealing Divine Essence from you is borderline insulting, you insolent brat!

After its fury subsided, the Origin of Mutation thoughtfully considered Han Wu's proposition. "I will definitely return every single bit of Divine Essence that I took from you—I swear it."

Han Wu let out a light chuckle. Considering his divine realm now contained 400 billion locusts and 1 billion Tigermen, 40 Divine Essence was hardly a significant sum to him. He simply needed a little time to fully recoup his losses. What he truly desired was the Origin of Mutation itself.

"If it's at all possible," Han Wu offered, a hint of earnestness in his tone, "I hope you'll choose to remain within my divine realm."

A dry chuckle escaped the Origin of Mutation. "Do you honestly believe that's possible?" it asked, clearly amused. Finally free from all restrictions, it was now free to roam and experience numerous other civilizations.

"Oh, of course it's possible. As long as I give the order, you'll have no choice but to stay. Don't forget, you're still my clone—I'm the main body here."

The Origin of Mutation slumped, a wave of disappointment hitting it. Despite finally possessing a body of its own, it quickly realized its freedom was an illusion; it remained bound to Han Wu's every command. Han Wu even had the power to decide if the clone could continue to exist or not.

Should Han Wu order the clone's death, the Origin of Mutation would inevitably perish alongside it, given that in its excised state, it was currently incapable of infesting another host. Han Wu, on the other hand, would remain completely unscathed by this.

The Origin of Mutation absolutely hated this feeling of being suppressed—it felt like it was being choked. It recalled how, while inhabiting Han Wu's body, it could at least ignore his commands, even if it didn't have the freedom it truly craved.

"Honestly, that's not something I want to do," Han Wu admitted with a sigh. "Ideally, I would prefer to consider and treat you as an ally, provided, of course, that you never betray my trust."

While feeling somewhat inclined to accept, the Origin of Mutation couldn't resist maintaining a taunting expression.

"Don't even think about tricking me. I've witnessed enough of humanity; lying comes as naturally to them as drinking water. If you truly want me as a comrade, grant me complete freedom—don't treat me like a mere slave you can order on a whim."

Han Wu frowned. The Origin of Mutation clearly wasn't cooperating, but he wasn't in a rush. He could simply attempt to persuade it again tomorrow.

Since the Origin of Mutation couldn't leave his divine realm without his explicit permission, he possessed more than enough time to patiently work on persuading it later.

In the meantime, he temporarily imprisoned it on the eighth floor of the Sky Palace. Only then did he focus on unlocking more Divine Skills for the Divine Defiance Aspect.

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Chapter 194 - Complete Awakening of Divine Aspect Defiance

[1,528 words]

Chapter 194 - Complete Awakening of Divine Aspect Defiance

To unlock the next Divine Skills of Defiance, Han Wu needed enough Divine Essence and a sufficient number of souls.

Han Wu unleashed every soul he had previously held captive within Monster Ender's storage, and they were immediately absorbed by the Defiance Aspect. He soon unlocked the next stage, which, in turn, offered him the selection of two new Divine Skills.

[Defiance Divine Skill: Reincarnate Body. During the duration of the Divine Skill, all dying units will be revived. Can be used on all units.]

[Defiance Divine Skill: Battleworn Body. Absorbs all of the damage received during the duration of the Divine Skill. Unleashes all of the accumulated damage back to the enemy when duration runs out. Can be used on all units.]

A sharp gasp escaped Han Wu as his eyes scanned the two available choices; both were very impressive Divine Skills. Reincarnate Body fundamentally operated as a revival skill. Even with its limited duration, it was still a true revival, allowing his fallen units to truly return from the grasp of death.

Battleworn Body, however, operated on an entirely distinct principle. It provided an absolute guarantee that his units would not perish for the duration of the skill.

Furthermore, once the duration ended, it could be used to slay his enemies through its retribution damage. This made it a particularly essential Divine Skill for enabling weaker units to overcome significantly stronger opponents.

He hesitated, torn between the two choices. Ultimately, considering the weak attacks of his locusts, he chose Battleworn Body as his new Divine Skill.

Having selected his fourth Divine Skill, Han Wu discovered he didn't possess the required number of souls to unlock the Defiance Aspect's final Divine Skill. After weighing his available options, he concluded that collecting the necessary souls from Hu Hai's deteriorating divine realm was his best course of action.

Han Wu summoned Han Wen, his first clone, and together they stepped into Hu Hai's divine realm. Without a protective Core, the divine realm was in a state of slow decay, its edges visibly crumbling into oblivion. Devastating natural disasters ravaged the realm with increasing regularity and frequency, a clear sign that, in just a few hundred realm years, the entire domain would forever cease to exist.

However, the grim truth remained hidden from the regular Tigermen. Instead, the Tigerman King had been cunningly and secretly spreading fabrications, proclaiming that the new religion being propagated by Han Wen was nothing but a deception, and that its very existence was the reason for their world's demise, a divine retribution from their actual god.

Numerous Tigermen who remained loyal to the King accepted these claims without reservation, actively disseminating the allegations far and wide. As a result, a significant number of Tigermen became disinclined to believe Han Wen's words, ultimately driving many existing believers to align themselves with the Tigerman King's narrative instead.

Drawing upon the fervent Faith of the Tigermen, the Tigerman King dramatically increased its power, even managing to obtain the physical form of a Demigod. This ascension instilled in it a newfound arrogance, making it increasingly confident in its capacity to stand against Han Wen. Yet, unbeknownst to the King, Han Wu had long since assessed and factored in the Tigerman King's Demigod-level strength into his plans.

Han Wu was keenly aware that converting the Tigerman King into one of his loyal subjects was an almost impossible, and quite frankly, futile feat. Therefore, he had long ago decided on a different strategy: to allow it to accumulate a bit more power before ultimately slaughtering it. As fate would have it, that opportune moment had finally arrived.

Han Wu looked down from above, a sigh escaping him as he regretfully shook his head. Though several billion Tigermen still inhabited the divine realm, every single one of them had become a devout believer of the Tigerman King, resisting Han Wu's influence.

Resolved to purify the Divine realm once and for all, Han Wu opened a portal through which he summoned an endless swarm of locusts to surge into Hu Hai's divine realm and eliminate the Tigermen. With Han Wen providing protection, Han Wu enjoyed the full liberty to activate every Divine Skill at his disposal, all for the singular purpose of amplifying his locusts' fighting capabilities.

“Divine Skills: Defiant Sword and Conduitborn.”

The activation of the two Divine Skills greatly boosted the fighting prowess of Han Wu's locusts. Meanwhile, the Tigerman King remained seated on its throne. Leveraging its status as a Demigod, it had transformed the entire city into a pseudo-divine realm, granting it complete awareness of every event unfolding within its boundaries.

“What?! Mere locusts dare to attack us, the powerful Tigermen? Those pathetic critters shall be annihilated!”

Following this, the Tigerman King commanded its forces to strike. The Tigermen displayed extraordinary mastery of martial arts and considerable brute strength. Nevertheless, while most of the locusts were individually frail, their collective strength had been significantly amplified by the influence of Han Wu's Core and his active Divine Skills. Moreover, there were special existences interspersed within the locust swarm.

Earlier, Han Wu had used Merge to cultivate truly massive locusts. Over a considerable span of time, they had each matured and grown to the size of a deep-sea tanker. Their sheer mass alone was enough to demolish walls and crush Tigermen, even without using any skills.

He also had his Ten Cockroaches under his command. Blessed with both Hyper Regeneration and Gluttony, these creatures possessed virtually indestructible bodies, making it simple for each one to effortlessly take on and overwhelm as many as ten Tigermen simultaneously.

With each passing second, countless Tigermen and locusts fell in droves. High above the chaotic battle, Han Wu unleashed his Souleater Gaze, drawing in the abundant souls scattered throughout the divine realm. His intention was clear: to finally unlock the Defiance Aspect's final Divine Skill.

Over the course of three whole days, the battle raged, resulting in the destruction of 100 billion locusts. Several billion Tigermen also met their end on the battlefield. It was only then that the Tigerman King finally succumbed to fear, witnessing the decimation of 70% of its Tigerman forces, while the locust swarm still numbered close to 300 billion.

The surviving Tigermen were in no condition to mount a defense against the relentless locust army—their injuries were too severe. The Tigerman King recognized the absolute futility of further resistance and, in a desperate bid for a slim chance at survival, opted to surrender.

With cold indifference, Han Wu completely disregarded the attempted surrender, instead ordering his locusts to launch a decisive, final attack. The colossal swarm of 300 billion locusts then descended, spreading across the entire surface and devouring every shred of living matter, from all the plants to the last of the remaining Tigermen. The Tigerman King, unable to comprehend or accept its own defeat, tragically took its own life by crushing its own skull.

With the Tigerman King dead, the battle came to an end. Han Wu then proceeded to absorb the immense quantity of souls, a feat that finally allowed him to unlock the Defiance Aspect's final Divine Skill. This time, however, he was not presented with any choices; the skill was simply granted.

[Defiance Divine Skill: Inverse Domain. Inverses the effects of everything within the domain. Rate of inverse proportional to Divine Points spent.]

This new Divine Skill appeared straightforward, yet its potential applications were vast. Han Wu, eager to understand its capabilities, resolved to put it to the test, beginning by allocating 10 million Divine Points to activate its power.

Immediately, he gained an acute awareness, realizing he possessed absolute control over everything within a 100-meter radius. His attention fell upon a blade of grass beginning to grow, and with the expenditure of a single Divine Point, he effortlessly reversed its development until it was once again a mere seed.

With a mere 2 Divine Points, after firing an arrow, he effortlessly redirected its flight, sending it hurtling back towards himself. He then experimented further, spending 10 Divine Points to observe that he could reverse the wounds on a dying locust, restoring it to a state of complete health. The more he experimented with this ability, the more its incredible, almost ridiculous, power became apparent to him.

He realized that, with proper application, the skill could easily revive units on the verge of death. The sole drawback, however, was its exorbitant cost. Despite expending a massive 10 million Divine Points, he could only sustain the domain, effective within a 100-meter radius, for a mere five minutes.

Additionally, certain more powerful applications, such as completely reversing a wound, also required a substantial number of Divine Points. The skill wasn't without its limitations either, possessing several effects it was incapable of reversing. For example, it could not revive the dead; any unit that perished would remain permanently deceased.

He wasn't troubled by these restrictions, however, as he fully understood that even he, with his immense power, was still subject to the inherent laws of this world. No Divine Aspect, regardless of its power, could ever be considered truly perfect.

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Chapter 195 - First Year Transfer Student

[1,772 words]

Chapter 195 - First Year Transfer Student

Having at last moved beyond his identity as a newly ascended Demigod after fully comprehending Defiance's Divine Skills, Han Wu now set his sights on mastering his second Divine Aspect—that of Destruction. This Aspect had been a closely guarded secret of his for a very long time.

The process for unlocking Destruction's Divine Skills mirrored that of Defiance, in that he needed a sufficient quantity of Divine Essence. In addition, however, mastering the Aspect demanded a profound understanding of the very "essence" of Destruction, which required both mental and spiritual comprehension. With this daunting requirement, however, Han Wu found himself utterly clueless as to how to proceed. Perplexed, he decided to search for clues in Imperial College's library the following day, once he officially enrolled as a student.

The next day soon arrived, and Han Wu at last received his official confirmation from the college. Shortly thereafter, a notification arrived from his newly assigned instructor, Saliya, instructing him to report to classroom number three, where the rest of the first-year students were attending classes.

Han Wu stepped into the classroom, observing a number of students he didn't recognize already settled in. He smiled faintly and quickly found an unoccupied seat. To his relief, he managed to blend in, with none of the other students appearing to notice his arrival. As the minutes ticked by, more students gradually trickled into the classroom, among them Qin Shuang, who arrived with two other companions.

Qin Shuang subconsciously glanced up, and her gaze, as if guided by an invisible magnetic force, settled with sudden clarity upon a familiar figure. A rush of excitement quickened her breathing, and with sheer delight bubbling in her heart, she instantly ditched her two friends, making a beeline straight for Han Wu.

"Good morning, Qin Shuang."

"Good morning, Han Wu!"

After a quick exchange of greetings, she settled into the seat next to him without a moment's pause. Her bold action immediately sent a ripple of shock through the entire classroom, particularly among the male students. Since their enrollment at Imperial

College, Qin Shuang had consistently maintained an image of aloofness, akin to a rare and unreachable flower blooming on a remote mountain peak—she had consistently turned down all romantic advances and had almost never offered a smile to her male peers.

Before long, whispers began to circulate, suggesting that Qin Shuang wasn't interested in men because she was a lesbian. Yet, to everyone's astonishment, she not only walked up to that unfamiliar guy unprompted, but also initiated the greeting and, most shockingly, sat down directly next to him!

Many of the male students grumbled, a flurry of questions bubbling in their hearts: Who was that guy? Where did he come from? Why was he in the first-year classroom? And, more importantly, what exactly did he do to make Qin Shuang, the class beauty, smile so brightly?

Just as the murmurs died down, another student walked into the classroom: it was Sun Qingnian! His face was deathly pale, and he looked utterly ragged, as though his very soul had been siphoned away. While his classmates had previously underestimated him due to his unassuming appearance, the results of their last test were undeniable: Sun Qingnian had placed second, demonstrating a startling level of power on par with a High Lord!

It had also recently circulated among the class that Sun Qingnian had a girlfriend who was not only a God but also served as an instructor at Imperial College. This meant that anyone foolish enough to offend him would, without a doubt, draw the ire of a God.

Sun Qingnian sluggishly entered the classroom and settled into his seat. He then turned his head to the side and, with a jolt of surprise, noticed that the person seated directly beside him was none other than his close friend, Han Wu.

"Han Wu, you actually did it! You successfully passed the test and are now an official student!" Sun Qingnian exclaimed with a mix of relief and excitement, rising from his seat and walking towards Han Wu.

Han Wu said humbly, "It was just luck."

"What do you mean by 'just luck'? I heard from one of the instructors that your test involved traveling to an unknown civilization to gather information. They even went so far as to completely seal off all your authority as someone from the Divine Civilization!

"Honestly, I'm pretty sure I wouldn't have made it out alive if I'd been given a test like that. But you? You not only came back, but you even earned a high enough score to qualify for this class! Seriously, bro, you are truly incredible!"

Han Wu chuckled. "That's all in the past now."

Using his authority, he took out gifts he had prepared for Qin Shuang and Sun Qingnian: two Diamond Title Scrolls and all the necessary materials to complete them.

Qin Shuang received the Stormcaller title scroll, which granted its wielder the ability to control incredibly powerful lightning and significantly increased the power and effectiveness of all lightning-based attacks. Moreover, the wielder would also absorb a thousandth of the victim's original strength, should they be eliminated by the wielder's lightning. This particular attribute bore a striking resemblance to Han Wu's Genocider title. Sensing the palpable surge of pure lightning energy emanating from the Title Scroll, Qin Shuang accepted it with evident delight.

Sun Qingnian, on the other hand, was presented with a remarkably peculiar Title Scroll named Iron Kidney Conqueror. As its name suggested, this Diamond title focused solely on the user's kidneys, and had just one function: to enhance the user's kidneys by a hundredfold. Given Sun Qingnian's circumstances, this proved to be a brutally effective title for him.[1]

Once he had thoroughly examined the title's effect, he quickly tucked the title scroll out of sight, ensuring no one else could analyze it and notice its unique power. Of course, this action wasn't motivated by shame or embarrassment, but by a genuine concern that someone might actually attempt to seize it from him.

"*Aha!* I knew it! There was no doubt in my mind that my brother Han Wu is absolutely the best!" Sun Qingnian burst out. "As of today, even though we may not share the same parents, I declare you my sworn brother!"

A slight chuckle escaped Han Wu as he rolled his eyes. His philosophy had always been to give practical gifts over those that were purely decorative or symbolic. Seeing Sun Qingnian's enthusiastic reaction, it was clear he had chosen wisely.

Their conversation was cut short by the ringing of the bell. Class commenced almost immediately, and Sun Qingnian quickly scrambled back to his seat. Once seated, he instantly fell silent, his attention fixed intently on the podium.

Han Wu felt a mix of surprise and mild bewilderment. He had genuinely never considered Sun Qingnian to be the studious sort. Turning his attention towards the podium, he saw a woman, presumably their instructor, step into the room. Dressed in a vibrant green blouse and a long white skirt, she greeted the class with a warm smile.

The lady stood tall, her luscious black hair sharply contrasting with her fair skin. The moment she appeared, nearly every student in the class, irrespective of their gender, experienced that familiar, nostalgic rush of a first crush.

"Good morning, students." Her voice, soft and clear, resonated through the air like the gentle chime of heavenly bells, immediately putting everyone at ease.

“Good morning, Professor Saliya! You look so pretty today!”

“Professor Saliya, what are you going to teach us today?”

“I don’t care what class you are teaching. I like all of your classes, Professor Saliya.”

“Professor Saliya...”

...

Saliya gently cleared her throat, drawing the class’s attention. “Before we delve into our lesson, I’d like to take a moment to introduce our newest student, Han Wu. Due to certain circumstances, he was unable to join us at the very beginning of the semester. However, I want to assure you all that there’s no need for concern. The college has thoroughly verified and formally approved his capabilities, so you can rest easy knowing he possesses all the necessary skills to be a part of our class today.”

While a portion of the students had initially been on the reserve list, the overwhelming majority were those who had successfully passed the entrance examinations to gain entry into the college. These new students, being completely unaware of Han Wu’s unusual predicament, remained somewhat displeased by his presence in the classroom, even after Professor Saliya’s explanation.

After all, every class had a limited amount of resources, meaning a portion of those resources had to be reallocated for each new student joining, diminishing the existing students’ shares. Consequently, some of the existing students naturally expressed displeasure regarding Han Wu’s arrival, as it directly impacted their own allocation of resources.

“Professor Saliya,” one student interjected, “just because the college has given him their approval doesn’t automatically mean that we approve. What if he turns out to be a liability, a weakling who will only pull down our scores and performance?”

“If our scores are dragged down, we’ll receive even fewer resources than we already do, and that’s simply unacceptable,” another student declared. “He must first prove himself to us if he genuinely wishes to be a part of this class. We need to ensure that his strength, at the very least, meets the average standard of our class!”

“We will not accept weaklings!”

A significant number of the students who had gained entry by successfully passing the rigorous examinations loudly voiced their strong disapproval. Professor Saliya let out a weary sigh, seeing their determined efforts to have Han Wu removed from the class. She then looked at him and asked, “Han Wu, are you willing to take their test?”

Han Wu chuckled. “Of course.”

He was fully aware that, as a transfer student, to firmly establish his position in this new classroom, he would first need to demonstrate his strength to the other students. Fortunately, he had already anticipated this challenge and was more than prepared to illustrate the true meaning of being overpowered.

1. For context, in traditional Chinese medicine, there is a symptom called "Shenkui" or "Shenxu", or Weak/Overexerted Kidneys. While there are many types of it, they are most commonly associated with the imbalance of yin and yang within the kidneys due to excessive orgasm. Common symptoms include anxiety, fatigue, dizzy, tinnitus, excessive sweat, weak joints, dry throat, weakened memories, and losing focus. My man here could go all day and night with that title. 📖

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Tip: You can use left, right keyboard keys to browse between chapters.

[1,225 words]

Chapter 196 - Students' Test

Saliya used her authority and granted Han Wu and the other students access to a 10,000-square-kilometer arena for sparring. Each student transferred their units onto a card and sent it to the field.

Those who opposed Han Wu joining them packed their cards with numerous units. In contrast, those who had once been on the reserve list already recognized Han Wu's strength and added only a few units to avoid unnecessary losses.

After everyone finished summoning their forces, Han Wu stepped into the arena.

Saliya scanned the units on the field and instructed him, "Han Wu, you are free to use all your abilities and powers for this test."

Han Wu nodded and projected his visage onto the field. The other students watched eagerly, hoping to see how he would handle the challenge. Inside, Han Wu found himself surrounded by countless units from various races and ranks, representing different students.

He quickly identified roughly 42 races, with their numbers reaching as high as 30 million. This army was powerful enough to destroy a micro civilization. Yet, they invested such vast numbers for what was essentially a simple test. The students awaited the outcome with anticipation.

"Thirty million units," one whispered. "I doubt even Qin Shuang could handle that. Are we going overboard?"

“Overboard? No way. He broke the rules by entering as a transfer student. He has to prove why he deserves a place in the classroom.”

“Exactly. We don’t accept weaklings here. If he’s weak, he can’t just do whatever he wants.”

Many transfer students had never witnessed a battle on this scale, and they worried about Han Wu.

“I think the new students are overdoing it. Can Han Wu really handle this?”

“I doubt it. Sure, Han Wu always ranked first when we were still on the reserve list, but that was a long time ago. Since becoming official students, we’ve gone through two major courses and grown a lot stronger. I don’t think he’s had the same opportunities or challenges. I really don’t think he can pull it off.”

“It’s not that simple. Have you ever wondered why the college would break the rules to accept him if he were truly weak? Look at how Qin Shuang and Sun Qingnian treat him. They’re unusually courteous. Do you think talented people like them would bother with someone weak?”

“Hey, did you notice the gifts he prepared for Qin Shuang and Sun Qingnian? I sensed an energy comparable to Divine Skills in them. Those treasures definitely aren’t from the Divine Civilization. Could someone weak give away such precious treasures without hesitation?”

“There’s no point arguing here. Let’s just watch and see what he does. This is also our chance to find out if he’s improved or fallen behind.”

...

Qin Shuang and Sun Qingnian sat side by side, silent and focused on Han Wu. They were confident that he would pass the test with ease.

Han Wu glanced at the units around him and scoffed. Sending out 30 million units to test him was a steep investment, but no one had ever heard of him before. They did not know he welcomed sacrificing vast numbers of units in battle.

As the timer ticked on, he stretched out an arm and opened a gate to his divine realm. A black wind howled through the rift, and a massive swarm of locusts came pouring out. They rose into the sky in a churning black tide that quickly blotted out the sun.

The students gasped at the sight, then burst into laughter at the locusts.

“I thought he’d summon something powerful. Locusts? Seriously? They’re ridiculously weak. Even evolving them to Unique is a waste. I can’t wait to see his face when they’re all wiped out.”

“The Imperial College’s reputation must be fading if someone using locusts as their core race can pass. I’ll report this and the instructors who admitted him to the authorities. The college needs to restore its honor.”

“Locusts? That’s ridiculous. Their only advantage is sheer numbers, but how many could he really have? Wait, there are already 10 billion swarming in the air, and he’s still summoning more? Oh my goodness, is he going all out and cutting off his own retreat?”

Han Wu summoned all 30 billion of his locusts before closing the gate. Then he opened another gate, and skeletons shuffled out slowly.

At the head of the skeleton army stood two familiar figures: the Osteomancer and the Skeleton Reanimator. Freed from the suppression of the Skeleton Lord, both had become Lord life forms. Each commanded hundreds of Heroic skeletons and tens of thousands of Unique ones.

He was very pleased with their growth and decided to let them join the battle this time, sharing in the spoils. Skeletons thrived by killing others; every fight was an opportunity to increase their ranks. After summoning the locusts and skeletons, Han Wu stopped summoning more units.

There were too few enemies to go around, and he didn’t want his forces fighting each other over the remains. He sealed his gate as the countdown ended.

The opposing 30-million-strong army received its orders and launched their attack on Han Wu. At the same moment, the locusts and skeletons surged forward, defending their god with ruthless fury.

The locusts swept through the air at blinding speed, exploding in the midst of the enemy ranks. A hundred million locusts sacrificed themselves in the first wave, but in return, they wiped out 8 million units and severely wounded 7 million more. Only half of the original 30 million units remained capable of fighting, but their advance was blocked by the skeletons.

The Skeleton Reanimator raised 8 million new skeletons from the fallen corpses and turned them against their former comrades. Caught off guard, many enemy units were ambushed and slaughtered. The cycle continued as the Reanimator summoned more and more, dragging the entire battlefield into chaos.

Meanwhile, the students in the spectator stands were grumbling in frustration.

“Ah, damn it. If only I were down there with my units. I could’ve used my Divine Skill: Cleanse to reduce those skeletons to ashes. This is so frustrating.”

“Yeah. I have the Divine Skill: Celestial Sunfire. I could’ve turned all of them to ashes too. They won’t even have the chance to stand back up.”

“Wait, my core race is the Lamias. They aren’t affected by the Skeleton Reanimator’s skills. But those locusts are so annoying. They exploded for no reason and injured so many of our units. I have to order my Lamias to spray venom into the air to kill them.”

The student then used a secret method to contact the Lamias’ leader and instructed it to follow their plan. The leader commanded the troops to release a vast cloud of venom into the air to kill the locusts. Soon, a poisonous fog blanketed the sky, trapping the swarm inside.

The other students erupted into applause, cheering the one who had come up with the plan. Unfortunately, their celebration was short-lived. As the poison fog lifted, they realized none of the locusts had died. Worse still, the locusts went berserk, and the sounds of explosions rocked the field.

The student who had proposed the plan shouted in confusion, “What’s wrong? Did the locusts get high off the venom? What the heck is happening?”

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[1,146 words]

Chapter 197 - Future Prospects

Saliya had been watching the battle closely and soon uncovered the reason behind it. “Those locusts... They survive in the poison mist because they have incredibly high poison resistance! I’ve never seen locusts endure poison without relying on Sacred Objects or Divine Skills before...”

The idea of someone nurturing a swarm of locusts resistant to poison had never crossed her mind. After all, locusts were fragile life forms, and attempting to boost their poison resistance was a risky gamble. Any effort or resources spent getting them used to weaker poisons would be wasted if they died trying to adapt to stronger toxins later.

Saliya admired what Han Wu had accomplished. He clearly understood his locusts’ poison resistance. Not only were his locusts naturally compatible with poisons, but he had also enhanced their toxicity using Sacred Objects. Yet the key factor behind their remarkable resistance lay in his Rank 7 Building, the labyrinth.

Han Wu had been delicately controlling the dense miasma cloud within the labyrinth to avoid killing his units. Instead, he used it to train their poison resistance to a terrifying degree. He nodded in approval as he watched the results unfold.

Meanwhile, the other students scrambled for alternatives now that poison had failed. They tried fire, water, wind, lightning, and various other attributes, but nothing worked. The locusts relentlessly launched explosive attacks, cutting down many from the opposing army.

The students didn't know what to do. They were seriously wondering whether Han Wu's locusts were actually some kind of indestructible cockroach. Each time a locust took damage, it regenerated almost instantly and attacked with even greater ferocity, like a berserker. None of them had ever faced an opponent this difficult to handle.

The locusts kept detonating themselves, wiping out all 30 million units of the opposing army within half an hour. Meanwhile, Han Wu lost only 200 million locusts.

The students were stunned. This was the first time they had suffered a total defeat. They expected Han Wu to celebrate, but instead, he looked surprisingly upset.

Han Wu's dissatisfaction came from the cost: sacrificing 200 million locusts to eliminate 30 million foes meant a harsh death ratio of nearly 7:1. The outcome didn't sit well with him at all. Fortunately, the skeletons had picked up the slack, converting 21 million of the fallen into new undead soldiers. At the very least, his reserves of cannon fodder had been partially restored.

"The test is over. Han Wu is victorious!" Saliya announced, her voice ringing like a bell.

The students no longer opposed Han Wu joining their class; his strength spoke for itself. The incident soon passed, and classes resumed as usual.

Han Wu listened to the lesson with focus, but having missed too many classes, he struggled to keep up with Saliya's explanations. Qin Shuang noticed his difficulty and patiently clarified the material for him during class.

When the session ended, Han Wu realized he would need to study on his own to avoid falling further behind. Qin Shuang offered to tutor him, and from then on, they met in the library whenever they had free time to review together.

A month passed, and Han Wu's progress improved steadily. He had just finished mastering the basic theory of Intermediate Mystic Arts when a group notification from Saliya arrived.

The third major class for first-year students would take place tomorrow. For the test, everyone would be sent to a ruined world that once belonged to an advanced civilization. The full details of the class had been sent to their inboxes.

Qin Shuang's eyes sparkled as she read the details. "Han Wu, we're going to the ruins of the Warring Kingdom Civilization."

Han Wu scanned the details and recalled what he had learned about the place during his earlier library studies. "*Hmm...* The Warring Kingdom Civilization was obsessed with war. They are said to be one of the founding civilizations of the Divine Civilization."

"Yeah. The various authorities in the Divine Civilization are based on the laws of the Warring Kingdom Civilization. I remember the most famous was the Army Caste System. I think the college wants us to figure out what role we should play in the future." Qin Shuang then asked, "Han Wu, do you want to become an Invader or a Support?"

Han Wu paused to consider. "I think I can do both."

Thanks to his overwhelming swarm of locusts, Han Wu felt confident he could match or surpass his peers in army strength, making him a strong candidate for the Invader role. At the same time, he also had the potential to thrive as a Support.

In his divine realm, the Tigermen and Epistians had recently launched an agricultural revolution. They had cultivated so much food that Han Wu no longer needed to buy corpses from other realms to feed his locusts.

Moreover, the intelligent races within his divine realm were already taking martial arts lessons from the Tigermen. As their skills improved, they produced more literature and scrolls related to their disciplines, generating a significant income for Han Wu.

To top it off, his units' unwavering faith allowed him to accumulate enough Faith Points each day to condense a single Divine Essence. He anticipated the moment he could start generating even more.

Altogether, it was clear he had what it took to serve as both an Invader and a Support.

"Fine, you win. You are the best. *Hmph,*" Qin Shuang grumbled. Though she was a stellar student, she always felt inferior beside Han Wu.

"Hey, could you tell me more about the Warring Kingdom Civilization?" Han Wu asked. It was his first time attending a major class at Imperial College, and nerves had already crept in. He wanted to learn everything he could ahead of time.

Qin Shuang perked up. For once, she had found an area where she outshone him. "Fine. I shall grant you my infinite wisdom and tell you about the Warring Kingdom Civilization..."

The next day arrived quickly. All 51 students filed into the classroom on time, waiting as Saliya prepared to deliver a short introductory lecture. She took the task seriously,

walking them through the key details of the Warring Kingdom Civilization with clarity and precision.

The Warring Kingdom Civilization was one of the founding pillars of the Divine Civilization. Yet it soon fell into ruin because its people relied too heavily on a power known as Martial Manifestation. Their overdependence on it led to its gradual decline under the relentless march of time. Still, Martial Manifestation remained a vital subject of study due to its formidable strength.

Saliya's explanation was thorough, and the students listened with rapt attention. They took the lesson seriously. After all, their performance in the major class depended on it, and their scores were on the line.

Once she finished her detailed overview, the major class officially began.

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[1,231 words]

Chapter 198 - Warring Kingdom Civilization

A bright light flashed, and everyone was transported to the Warring Kingdom Civilization. Han Wu opened his eyes to find himself inside a dilapidated wooden shack. At the center of the room stood an altar.

Han Wu checked his interface and discovered most of his information had been censored. Only his talents, Divine Powers, and some details related to the Warring Kingdom Civilization remained.

[Name: Han Wu]

[Talent: Chosen One (Exclusive), Defiance]

[Divine Powers: Sacrifice (Exclusive), Famine, Life Infusion, Merge (Exclusive)]

[Shelter Level: 1 (Dilapidated Wooden Shack. Upgrade Requirements: Wood: 100, Gold Coins: 20)]

[Altar: 1 (Unspecified)]

[Resources: Wood: 0, Food: 0, Stone: 0, Iron: 0, Gold Coins: 0]

Han Wu examined the altar and a notification popped up.

[Confirm Caste?]

He was then presented with nine options. This was the exclusive power of the Warring Kingdom Civilization known as Martial Manifestation, or the Nine Martial Castes. The available roles were Worker, Technician, Physician, Infantry, Vanguard, Lancer, Archer, Light Cavalry, and Heavy Cavalry. Each represented a distinct caste within the Nine Martial Castes system.

Han Wu scanned the list and realized he could select only five: Technician, Infantry, Vanguard, Lancer, and Archer. Each caste corresponded to a unit type under his command.

His Scorching Dwarves embodied the Technicians. The Tigermen, Epistians, and skeletons formed his Infantry. Abyss Bugs and minotaurs made up his Vanguard. The Heavenly Demon Insect and his new half-dragon units served as Lancers. Finally, the Dark Cursed Bugs stood as his Archers.

The major class would start only after he selected his caste and bound the corresponding units to the altar.

Han Wu muttered, “*Hmm... The Martial Manifestation of the Warring Kingdom Civilization excels at fostering armies, but its focus feels too narrow. It’s easy to devise counters against them. Maybe that’s why their civilization declined.*”

He weighed his options carefully. *Since I’m in the Warring Kingdom Civilization, where everyone’s Divine Skills face restrictions, there must be few effective ways to counter the skeleton race...*

In the end, he bound the skeletons to the altar.

[Altar confirmed. Level 1 Infantry Altar: Skeletons. It summons 100 Common skeletons daily.]

Han Wu nodded. “A hundred skeletons will do. They increase their numbers through battle anyway. I doubt the altar can provide me with a larger army right now.”

Soon, 100 Common skeletons crawled out from the altar. Their bones were yellowed and brittle, snapping at the slightest touch. They clearly suffered from severe calcium deficiency.

Han Wu frowned. He had never expected the altar’s summoned skeletons to be so weak. They were fit only to serve as the lowest-ranking cannon fodder on the battlefield. Any stronger monster would shatter them instantly.

He was already starting to regret choosing skeletons for his first army. Still, there was one way to salvage the situation: Merge. Using his Divine Power, he merged ten

skeletons into one Elite Iron Skeleton. Its bones were visibly stronger, and its power noticeably greater.

Even so, Han Wu wasn't satisfied and continued merging until he created one Unique Skeleton Knight by combining ten Iron Skeletons. The Skeleton Knight was far tougher than the Iron Skeletons and possessed a new ability—it could summon additional skeletons using the corpses of his enemies.

Han Wu nodded with approval. As long as he had the Skeleton Knight, he could finally unleash the skeletons' warfare strategy and flood the battlefield with countless undead soldiers.

"Alright. Now I just need to gather the necessary resources quickly to upgrade my shelter and grow my army." He clearly recalled everything Saliya had explained in class.

Han Wu and the Skeleton Knight stepped out of the wooden shack to find an unusual silence hanging over the area. Han Wu scanned his surroundings and spotted some Wood near the shack. However, the Wood appeared as a large tree that needed to be felled before he could collect it.

He ordered the Skeleton Knight to punch the tree. With every blow, the Skeleton Knight left deep dents in the bark, but it still took two full minutes to bring the tree down. Once it fell, the tree transformed into 13 units of Wood and transferred automatically into Han Wu's resource storage.

Han Wu had to admit that the Warring Kingdom Civilization's law of automatic resource gathering was incredibly convenient. Yet, the crashing tree had made a tremendous noise, drawing unwanted attention from nearby wildlife. Three wild dogs burst from the bushes, alerted by the commotion.

Han Wu quickly accessed their information.

[Wild Dog (Infantry). Common life form. Weak as a wild animal but still a nightmare to some creatures. You might find an altar connected to them near their habitat.]

The wild dogs' eyes gleamed with excitement at the sight of the Skeleton Knight, like men spotting a beautiful woman. Without hesitation, the three wild dogs lunged at the Skeleton Knight, eager for a taste. Han Wu commanded the Skeleton Knight to punch them to death.

The gap between a Unique and a Common life form was vast, and all the wild dogs fell to a single punch. Han Wu collected 3 Gold Coins from their remains and ordered the Skeleton Knight to raise skeletons from the corpses. Soon, three wild dog skeletons joined his ranks, expanding his army to 4 Infantry units.

Han Wu was not satisfied yet. He still recalled the information he had just read about a possible altar that could summon wild dogs. Altars held great importance in this civilization because they could summon the corresponding units to fight on his behalf. Even if the wild dogs' altar turned out to be weak, he could dismantle it and use it as material to upgrade his own.

Eager to claim it, he ordered his skeletons to search the surrounding area. Before long, one of the wild dog skeletons perished.

Instead of anger, Han Wu felt a surge of excitement. The death meant it had encountered enemies—probably more wild dogs. He immediately sent out his Skeleton Knight and the two remaining wild dog skeletons to scour the area. That was how he discovered the wild dogs' gathering spot, where hundreds of them surrounded a single altar shaped like a dog's head.

Han Wu was elated and ordered his Skeleton Knight to attack the wild dogs. The wild dogs' resistance quickly crumbled against the Skeleton Knight's overwhelming power. Its body, tough as iron, withstood their attacks while it turned the fallen into skeletons one by one.

Han Wu's army grew quickly and wiped out the entire pack. He then collected the altar and stored it without hesitation.

[Level 1 Infantry Altar: Wild Dogs. After activation, it can summon 10 wild dogs daily. It can also be used as material to level up another Infantry Altar.]

Han Wu also obtained 123 Gold Coins and a Common weapon, the Dogtooth Dagger. He handed the dagger to his Skeleton Knight and began merging the wild dog skeletons. After merging 100, he finally obtained one Unique Bonehound.

As a Unique skeleton, it gained a new ability called Wicked Dog Pounce. This move allowed it to swiftly close the distance to an enemy and deliver a powerful bite. The ability was devastating against many units, leaving Han Wu very satisfied.

Before returning happily to his wooden shack, he ordered the Skeleton Knight to cut down large trees using the Dogtooth Dagger. Now, it was time to upgrade his place.

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[1,208 words]

Chapter 199 - Level 3 Shelter

Han Wu invested 100 Wood and 20 Gold Coins to upgrade his shelter to Level 2. The wooden shack glowed as the dilapidated planks were replaced with fresh, sturdy boards. Now, he no longer had to worry about wind or rain. After transforming the shack into a proper wooden house, he checked the requirements for the next upgrade: 200 Stone and 200 Gold Coins.

With his new shelter, Han Wu could equip a new altar. He had the option to equip an altar obtained from outside, like the Level 1 Infantry Altar: Wild Dogs, or pay 100 Gold Coins to activate an altar based on his units.

Han Wu dismissed the Wild Dogs Altar as useless and chose to spend 100 Gold Coins to activate a new one. The altar materialized inside his shelter, presenting him with a selection of units to summon.

Han Wu weighed the materials he needed for the next upgrade and selected the Technician Scorching Dwarves. As soon as he chose it, the second altar transformed, taking on the fiery appearance of a scarlet furnace.

[Altar confirmed. Level 1 Technician Altar: Scorching Dwarves. It summons 5 Elite Scorching Dwarves daily.]

Han Wu was at a loss for words. Summoning only five Scorching Dwarves each day felt far too few. Based on the pattern of his first altar, he had expected to summon at least ten Elite Scorching Dwarves daily.

When he summoned them, he noticed each dwarf wielded a different tool—axes, hammers, and even a mining pickaxe. He nodded with satisfaction at that. With proper equipment, their work would go much faster. Choosing the Scorching Dwarves had been the right call.

Han Wu instructed the dwarves to gather materials around the shelter, while the Skeleton Knight and Bonehound set out to hunt enemies for Gold Coins. The two returned in the evening, bringing back 130 Gold Coins, 5 Rabbit Meat, 8 Rabbit Pelt, and 201 pairs of Chainsaw Ant mandibles. It was clear they had ventured deep into the Chainsaw Ants' territory and slain many.

Given the large number of Chainsaw Ants in the area, Han Wu suspected an altar was nearby. He made a mental note to investigate and retrieve it when the opportunity arose. With that altar, he could enhance his own.

First, he roasted the rabbit meat. The Skeleton Knight and Bonehound did not require food, but the Scorching Dwarves did. They consumed most of the rabbit, leaving only a small portion for Han Wu.

Night fell soon after their meal. Han Wu ordered the Skeleton Knight and Bonehound to patrol outside since they did not need rest, while he and the Scorching Dwarves rested

inside the wooden house. The dwarves had built a bed for Han Wu, so he no longer had to sleep on the floor.

Unfortunately, the night didn't pass quietly. Han Wu had barely drifted off when the sounds of an intense battle erupted outside. He sprang up and saw the two skeletons locked in combat with a large, shadowy figure. He immediately checked the beast's stats.

[Boulbear (Vanguard). Unique life form. Skills: Stone Skin, Rending Claws. A strong unit with high defenses and Life Energy. It fights to the death on sight. You might find a corresponding altar near where it is found.]

The beast was powerful and swatted the Bonehound aside with ease. Wicked Dog Pounce had barely any effect, leaving only a shallow scratch on its hide. The Boulbear was enraged after being bitten a few times and charged at the wooden house in a frenzy. It was determined to tear it down.

Its massive paws slammed against the structure, and Han Wu heard the boards groan and crack under the force.

[Warning. The Boulbear is destroying your shelter. Defeat it quickly. You will be expelled from the major class if your shelter is destroyed.]

Panic surged through Han Wu. If the Boulbear destroyed his house, he would be disqualified. He refused to let that happen.

"You damned bear. How dare you try to bully me? I will kill you now!" he shouted, snatching up the Scorching Dwarves' axe and hammer before leaping onto the Boulbear's head.

He brought the axe down hard, sparks flying as the blade struck the creature's skull. Although the Boulbear howled in pain, the blow left only a faint dent. It writhed and twisted, trying to throw him off.

Most of Han Wu's skills had been sealed, but his battle instincts remained razor sharp. He darted around the Boulbear's body and used the hammer to drive the axe deeper into the skull. After three strikes, the axe finally pierced the Boulbear's brain. The beast collapsed and died.

Han Wu sighed deeply and stepped off the corpse. The Skeleton Knight knew what to do next. Still, since the Boulbear was a Unique life form, completing the summoning would take some time.

After three hours, the Skeleton Knight summoned a powerful Boulbear skeleton. Its injured skull reduced its strength slightly, limiting it to an Elite life form. Despite this, its

thick bones and destructive power remained deadly to most foes, and its Rending Claws had been enhanced.

Han Wu gained another formidable unit and looked forward to future expeditions. He also collected 40 Gold Coins, 8 Bear Meat, and 1 Bear Pelt. He was now confident he would have no trouble upgrading his wooden house to Level 3.

Though the Boulbear was dead, its presence had already terrified the nearby animals, so none disturbed Han Wu's rest during the second half of the night.

When morning came, Han Wu summoned 100 more Common skeletons and five Elite Scorching Dwarves from the altar. He then merged the skeletons into a single Skeleton Knight and sent it out to hunt. As for the ten Scorching Dwarves, he ordered them to gather resources near the shelter.

By afternoon, Han Wu had collected enough materials to upgrade his shelter. He spent 200 Stone and 200 Gold Coins to transform his wooden house into a Level 3 stone house spanning 200 square meters. The new stone walls significantly increased its durability.

With the upgrade to Level 3, Han Wu could add another altar to his shelter. At the same time, he gained the ability to chat online. Opening the group chat, he found only three members, including himself. Unfortunately, the others were not Qin Shuang or Sun Qingnian, but two newer students.

Since they were all students, Han Wu decided to greet them.

[Han Wu: Hello, I'm Han Wu.]

One of them replied cheerfully.

[Duan Meng: Hello, Han Wu, I am Duan Meng.]

The other, Li Chunming, responded with disdain.

[Li Chunming: Han Wu, I thought you were strong, but I never expected you to be slower than me in upgrading your shelter to Level 3.]

Han Wu felt confused. He didn't recall offending Li Chunming or even knowing his name before. Since Li Chunming had taunted him first, Han Wu decided to call him out.

[Han Wu: Li Chunming, what kind of nonsense are you talking about?]

The group chat erupted as Li Chunming cursed Han Wu, who only chuckled. He reminded himself that no matter how the major class developed, he would make sure Li Chunming ended up dead.

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Chapter 200 - Mutant Black Skeleton (Infantry)

[1,951 words]

Chapter 200 - Mutant Black Skeleton (Infantry)

Duan Meng showed less hostility than Li Chunming. She even sent Han Wu a private message to exchange information.

[Duan Meng: Han Wu, what kind of unit did you summon?]

Han Wu frowned. He had never met her before and didn't trust her, so he had no intention of being honest.

[Han Wu: My core race is the locust, and I summoned one of their mutated forms called the Heavenly Demon Insect. They act as Lancers here, wielding sharp horns. They can fly and fight fiercely.]

Duan Meng already knew about Han Wu's core race and had witnessed the Heavenly Demon Insects slaughtering enemies during the small test after Han Wu's transfer.

[Duan Meng: My core race is the Elite lizardmen. I summoned their mutated version, the Stony Lizardmen. They serve as Technicians here. They're not strong, but they excel at gathering resources.]

Han Wu had seen Stony Lizardmen before. Apparently, their gaze could petrify any life forms. They were weak in combat but invaluable as support units.

[Han Wu: Why do you want to know this?]

Duan Meng answered honestly.

[Duan Meng: My brother is also a student at Imperial College. I asked him for advice before our major class, and he said we should focus on upgrading our shelter as much as possible and acquiring a powerful altar. We need to upgrade the altar too, because a terrible calamity will strike on the fourth day.]

[Han Wu: Calamity?]

[Duan Meng: Yes. According to my brother, the calamity usually involves a powerful beast attacking your shelter. You can survive it easily if your shelter reaches Level 5 or if you can summon Heroic units from your altar. Once you make it through the calamity, you'll unlock the ability to trade with others.]

Han Wu didn't fully believe it since Saliya had never mentioned it before. More importantly, he had never found any record of it himself. Still, since Duan Meng had taken the time to explain it carefully, he chose to accept it as truth.

[Han Wu: There are two more days before the calamity. I will do my best to prepare.]

[Duan Meng: Han Wu, I know you are strong. After the calamity, could I purchase some of your powerful units?]

Han Wu frowned. *Why does she need to buy units from me? Is she trying to learn my army's weaknesses to defeat me?*

Seeing that he hadn't replied, Duan Meng grew anxious. She didn't want him to get the wrong idea.

[Duan Meng: I'm not trying to buy your core race. I only want to purchase a few powerful altars from you. Since you're strong, you should be able to collect high-level ones. If you have any you don't need, I'd like to buy them. I promise I'll offer the best price.]

Han Wu considered her request and agreed.

[Han Wu: Alright. I'll contact you if I acquire any.]

[Duan Meng: Great. I hope you survive the calamity.]

Duan Meng ended the conversation with a smiling emoji.

After their conversation, Han Wu pondered the looming calamity. If it were real, he would need to prepare quickly. A fragile shelter or weak units could spell his downfall.

He didn't want his major class to end so soon. He chose his third altar slot carefully, weighing his options. Ultimately, he selected the powerful half-dragons, which were excellent starting units, and spent 500 Gold Coins to activate the third altar.

[Altar confirmed. Level 1 Lancer Altar: Half-Dragons. It can summon 2 Elite half-dragons daily.]

Due to their strength, he could summon only two per day. As the altar activated, two half-dragons appeared, gripping their lances.

Han Wu quickly inspected their stats.

[Half-Dragons (Lancer). Elite life form. Skill: Thunder Lance. Extremely powerful dragon life forms with an affinity for lightning. They revere species with pure dragon blood.]

Han Wu nodded with satisfaction as he reviewed the half-dragons' starting stats. If he had them yesterday, he would not have had to face the Boulbear alone.

The half-dragons looked intelligent. Noticing Han Wu's gaze, they knelt down. "We await your orders, Master."

Han Wu loved units that took initiative. "Patrol the area and locate powerful altars for me."

The two half-dragons nodded in understanding. As units summoned by altars, they instinctively recognized their significance. They departed while Han Wu stayed inside the shelter, directing the ten Scorching Dwarves to gather more resources.

The Scorching Dwarves worked diligently, and he amassed a substantial stockpile. Still, when he calculated their pace, frustration crept in. Even if they labored nonstop for an entire day, they could not collect 2,000 Wood, 1,000 Stone, and 1,000 Gold Coins. He would have to wait until tomorrow to upgrade his shelter.

The calamity loomed just two days away. He wouldn't have time to raise the shelter to Level 5 in time. Summoning a Heroic unit also looked out of reach. With only three Level 1 altars, he didn't have the means to summon one.

Han Wu was wrestling with this dilemma when his Skeleton Knight returned with urgent news. They had discovered a massive Chainsaw Ant nest and were calling for backup. Without hesitation, Han Wu grabbed a hammer and axe from the Scorching Dwarves and ordered the two half-dragons to regroup with him.

By the time he arrived, the two half-dragons were already on site. Alongside two Skeleton Knights, a Bonehound, and a Boulbear skeleton, they formed a formidable force ready to assault the nest.

Chainsaw Ants swarmed out to defend their home but fell one by one to the half-dragons' Thunder Spear. Han Wu pressed forward, gathering resources as he fought deeper into the sprawling nest.

The nest was so vast that Han Wu could stand upright without issue. He directed his units, and they battled relentlessly for three hours before reaching the nest's deepest chamber. There, a glittering altar shaped like a queen Chainsaw Ant awaited. The Chainsaw Ants tried to protect it, but the Skeleton Knights intercepted them.

Han Wu grabbed the altar and stored it away. They fled the nest and kept running until the Chainsaw Ants finally gave up the chase.

Back in his shelter, Han Wu took out the Chainsaw Ant Altar and inspected it.

[Level 4 Infantry Altar: Chainsaw Ants. It summons 1,000 Common Chainsaw Ants daily. It can also be used to upgrade an Infantry Altar.]

Without hesitation, Han Wu used it to upgrade his Level 1 Infantry Altar: Skeletons. The altar quickly absorbed experience points, leveling up twice to reach Level 3. Now it appeared even more ominous, with faint black mist curling from the jade-white skeleton engraving.

When Han Wu checked the altar again, he discovered that he could now select between two upgrade paths. Three initial options appeared before him.

[Option 1: Double the amount of summoned skeletons.]

[Option 2: Summon 50 additional Iron Skeletons.]

[Option 3: Increase summoning rate of mutated skeleton variants.]

The second option promised fifty Iron Skeletons daily, a tempting boost. The third piqued his curiosity about the types of mutated skeletons he could summon. Still, he stayed pragmatic and chose the second option.

After his first choice, three new options appeared.

[Option 1: Double the amount of summoned skeletons.]

[Option 2: Summon 2 additional Skeleton Knights.]

[Option 3 (Rare): Summon a Unique mutated skeleton variant, the Black Skeleton.]

Han Wu noticed the *Rare* label behind the third option and selected it without hesitation. Once he confirmed his choice, the information for the Level 3 Infantry Altar: Skeletons transformed dramatically.

He could now summon 100 Common skeletons, fifty Iron Skeletons, and one Unique Black Skeleton each day. Having already summoned the 100 Common skeletons, he still had the Iron Skeletons and the Black Skeleton available. He summoned all of them at once.

Next, he merged the fifty Iron Skeletons into five Skeleton Knights while inspecting the Black Skeleton.

[Unique Black Skeleton (Infantry). Skills: Black Iron Bones, Corpse Poison. A mutated skeleton variant. Its bone hardness far exceeds that of its peers, and its attacks carry corpse poison with powerful corrosive effects.]

“Not bad,” Han Wu said, approving of its strength. Although it could not summon additional skeletons like the Skeleton Knights, it boasted far stronger offensive capabilities.

Han Wu felt more confident facing the coming calamity. He also realized just how crucial stronger altars were. Upgrading it to Level 3 had already doubled his combat power. What would happen at Level 10? Eager to find out, he ordered his army to search for more Infantry Altars to upgrade his own.

Night fell quickly.

Han Wu ate his fill alongside the Scorching Dwarves and the two half-dragons before settling down in his shelter. Meanwhile, the skeletons remained busy carrying out his orders. Using the Scorching Dwarves’ tools, they tirelessly gathered resources from the surrounding area. As undead, they did not suffer fatigue, making them perfect for such labor.

However, their activity soon drew the attention of a pack of wolves. The alpha towered over two meters tall, massive and imposing. The wolves watched the skeletons closely, unsure what they were. They only noticed that these skeletons looked thinner than their usual prey.

The pack grew restless, pacing with hunger. None dared attack without the alpha’s command. After a moment of consideration, the alpha let out a sharp howl, signaling the pack to strike. The wolves sprinted and quickly attacked the Skeleton Knights that were cutting down trees. The Skeleton Knights retaliated at once, fending off against the wolves.

The Black Skeleton was a special variant, and its ebony bones blended seamlessly into the darkness; even the alpha failed to notice its presence. It slipped silently through the shadows, emerged at the alpha’s side, raised its fist, and drove it into the alpha’s skull with brutal force.

Its bones were naturally dense, seemingly reinforced with iron. The blow was enough to knock the alpha unconscious in a single strike.

Without hesitation, the Black Skeleton drew the Dogtooth Dagger and finished the job while the alpha lay motionless. Meanwhile, the other Skeleton Knights continued their fight. None had suffered injury, and they dispatched the wolves with ease. Once the battle ended, they raised fresh skeletons from the corpses to swell their ranks.

Han Wu praised them when he learned what had happened, which sparked the Black Skeleton’s dissatisfaction. It had been the one to kill the alpha, yet the Skeleton Knights received all the praise. Feeling indignant, it swiftly grabbed the skeleton formed from the wolf alpha’s corpse and even signaled to Han Wu that it was its killer.

He chuckled and decided to reward the Black Skeleton with the alpha wolf's skeleton. Overjoyed, it mounted the wolf skeleton and dashed out of the shelter.

Watching its retreating figure, Han Wu had a bold idea. Perhaps he could use the Warring Kingdom Civilization's rules to organize a proper Skeleton Knight brigade.

Dawn arrived, and Han Wu finally gathered enough materials to upgrade his shelter. He spent 2,000 Wood, 1,000 Stone, and 1,000 Gold Coins. In return, his shelter underwent a dramatic transformation. The wood piled neatly, and the stones stacked themselves with precision. His Level 4 shelter had become a mansion!

The upgrade not only expanded the shelter's size but also granted him one additional spot to place an altar.

Han Wu commanded a powerful army, but his altar acquisition rate remained slow. He considered this weakness carefully and chose the Dark Curse Bugs Altar. They could fly, hide in the shadows, and launch dark-attribute attacks, making them ideal scouts.

Just as he was about to activate the altar, Han Wu realized he had spent all his Gold Coins. Panic gripped him. The calamity was approaching, and he lacked the funds to prepare.

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