

# **The People's God: Sacrificing Trillions to Ascend**

## **#Chapter 21 - Lord Skeleton - Read The People's God: Sacrificing Trillions to Ascend Chapter 21 - Lord Skeleton**

### **Chapter 21 - Lord Skeleton**

*How on earth did an undead appear in my divine realm?* Han Wu, completely baffled, proceeded to investigate, sending his visage to view the fierce battle Divine Hammer was engaged in.

Divine Hammer wielded a Faith weapon which closely resembled Hellforge, attacking the invading skeleton with powerful swings. Curiously, this particular skeleton was merely a meter tall, its jade-white bones glistening like a finely crafted artwork.

Han Wu instantly remembered the Skeleton Lord that had appeared during the twenty-first wave of his exam. The little skeleton greatly resembled the Skeleton Lord. After observing the fight for a while, he came to the conclusion that the little skeleton was very strong. Its bone claws left clear marks on Divine Hammer's Faith weapon and fought him evenly, all while remaining completely unharmed.

"Incredible!" Han Wu exclaimed in shock. He tried but ultimately failed to use his authority to view the little skeleton's data and abilities. In his excitement, he had forgotten that he could only observe the data of his believers, and the skeleton definitely wasn't one. He didn't have any inspection-type skill either, so the skeleton remained unobservable to him.

Seeing that Divine Hammer was beginning to lose his ground, Han Wu quickly called Steely to aid in the fight against the skeleton.

Steely, a Heroic life form, effortlessly sliced the little skeleton to pieces. However, the bones sprang back to life, seamlessly reassembled themselves and once again pounced onto Steely. With his swords, Steely once again destroyed the little skeleton, but its bones reassembled themselves yet again. However, Han Wu noticed a minor difference the second time—it had taken an extra second to revive.

He perceived that there was a limit to the number of times it could reassemble itself and his suspicions soon proved to be true. Having been repeatedly destroyed, the little skeleton's strength began to wane, its regenerative abilities weakening.

Han Wu persuaded, "Submit to me and become my worshipper. I will grant you a new life." Upon hearing those words, however, the little skeleton attempted to tear Han Wu's visage apart, but such an act was useless. After all, they were in his divine realm. As long as his Core existed, his visage could never be destroyed.

“Smash it until it submits to me,” he ordered. Steely and Divine Hammer obeyed his command without hesitation. They worked together, taking turns to attack the little skeleton. The beating lasted three whole days before Steely and Divine Hammer finally delivered the now dull bones to the Temple.

A weak feminine voice slowly floated into Han Wu’s mind—the little skeleton’s prayer.

“I... submit... willingly... to God...”

Han Wu appeared and gently patted the smooth skull of the little skeleton in satisfaction. He had to admit, it was smooth and pleasant to the touch.

He could now use his authority to observe the little skeleton’s information.

[Race: Skeleton.]

[Rank: Lord. (Weakened) (Incomplete) (Sealed)]

[Talent: Crystal Bones. Reanimation.]

[Faith: Believer.]

[Faith Points: 1 million/day.]

Han Wu was temporarily baffled by the little skeleton’s missing lifespan data, until he remembered that skeletons were undead. After all, undead beings, having already experienced death, had no concept of lifespans.

More importantly, he had discovered that the little skeleton before him was a bona fide Lord life form, despite the fact that the title had three negative status effects attached. If he could nurture it properly, the little skeleton could one day regain its powers.

As he was thinking of how to raise the little skeleton properly, its prayers reached his mind once more.

“God... Hungry... I’m hungry...”

Han Wu, completely stumped, found himself unsure what to do. The little skeleton claimed it was hungry, but it had no stomach to digest flesh. How was he supposed to feed it then?

Noticing his confusion, the little skeleton specified what it needed. “I need... bone... bone marrows...”

“Oh, you need bones. Why didn’t you say so?” Han Wu exclaimed in relief and ordered his locusts to bring in the skeleton of a Flesh Golem. The Flesh Golem corpses were completely devoid of all flesh, thanks to the ravenous locusts.

The little skeleton sprang onto the bones without hesitation, immediately proceeding to absorb the energy contained within. In one minute, it managed to completely absorb the energy residing within a femur much larger than its body. Though the femur rapidly lost its luster, the little skeleton briefly gained a bit of its initial glow.

Han Wu, however, frowned in dissatisfaction. Judging by how long it would take for the little skeleton to completely absorb the energy from just one Flesh Golem skeleton, it would take a lot more time for it to regain its strength than he had expected, not to talk of increasing it.

After thinking about various possible solutions, he finally came up with an idea. After ordering his locusts to throw a large amount of bones into the Refiner, he brought the result, a Bone Stone, to the little skeleton.

The spiritual fire in the little skeleton’s eye sockets danced wildly the moment it noticed the Bone Stone. The little skeleton viewed the bones as nothing more than pieces of bread, but the Bone Stone it was given was more like a buffet!

The little skeleton, drooling over the alluring Bone Stone, desperately and earnestly prayed. *God... please... give... I want... need...*

Han Wu finally handed over the fist-sized Bone Stone. The little skeleton hurriedly grabbed and absorbed the Stone as if afraid Han Wu would take it back, restoring the former luster of its bones at a rapid pace.

Han Wu, using the opportunity to try deepening the little skeleton’s faith in him, urged, “Submit fully to me and follow me, and I will give you more in the future.”

The spiritual flames of the little skeleton jumped wildly, displaying its excitement, and it turned from a Believer to a Worshipper. As a result of the little skeleton’s advancement, Han Wu would receive a daily output of 10 million Faith Points, representing a tenfold increase, which equated to one-tenth of a Divine Point.

Han Wu admitted inwardly that Lord life forms were indeed strong, even with negative status effects. To think that the little skeleton could provide as many Faith Points as 10 million Heavenly Demon Insects!

After dealing with the little skeleton, he noticed that both Steely and Divine Hammer were staring enviously at the Bone Stone. They wanted something for themselves from their God too. As their God, Han Wu had to be fair, so in order to appease them, he immediately purchased wind and fire attribute ores from the market, costing him 100

million Divine Points. He threw the ores into the Refiner, which consequently produced a number of Fire and Wind Stones.

*If they can't use them all, I can still sell the Stones, so ultimately, it's still a net profit.*

After purchasing more Flesh Golem corpses for his locusts with the Divine Points he had left, he checked the time in the real world and saw that it was 07:59 am. With class about to begin, he quickly got ready and got to class just in time to hear Tian Wen's question. "Class, are you ready for a new challenge?"

## **Chapter 22 - Demonic Civilization**

The students patiently waited for Tian Wen to announce the details of the challenge he had mentioned.

Tian Wen began, "First of all, I want to once again congratulate all of you for passing such a demanding exam. Although you have all proven that you're elites, we will be having another test which will evaluate your strength relative to your classmates, subsequently influencing your college admission prospects."

Han Wu raised an eyebrow upon hearing that. His grandfather's dying wish had been for him to enroll into the Imperial College to find his missing parents in the Chaotic Starfield.

"This test will be held in a small base that our school is currently protecting," Tian Wen continued. "While it's not dangerous, you must understand that it's not entirely safe either. You will be sent out to base C-793826 on the Demonic Civilization. The details of the test will be sent to you upon your arrival. You have exactly one hour to prepare."

The students, though initially caught off guard, quickly leaped into action upon hearing the one hour time limit, engaging in discussions about the impromptu exam.

"A base in the Demonic Civilization! I've heard that the place is perpetually saturated with demonic energy, and that if our races are affected by it, they would most likely turn into mindless demonic beasts! Only demonic beasts and undead can survive in such a place."

"I even heard that the undead are relentless, endlessly chasing the living. I'm curious as to what kind of beings could possibly survive in that location."

"Does anyone have a race related to demonic beasts? I need someone to protect me."

Having heard that their test would be held in the Demonic Civilization, a triumphant grin slowly spread across Zhang Xiaolong's lips. He held the advantage over his fellow students, since his core race was part of the demonic beasts.

Time was very precious in a test that involved invading other civilizations. Those adapted more quickly to the environment possessed a significant advantage over those who couldn't.

Zhang Xiaolong was certain that his ranking would rise considerably after the exams. He visualized himself emerging victorious against Han Wu, Xu Sun, and the others. His golden age was imminent!

He wanted to impress Qin Shuang during the exam, so he decided to offer her a position on his team, but he suddenly received a notification alerting him about an incoming anonymous call. His curiosity piqued, Zhang Xiaolong answered, and to his surprise, he found himself speaking with his former teacher, Liu Letian.

“Zhang Xiaolong, it's me.”

“Mr. Liu, is something wrong?”

Resentment evident in his voice, Liu Letian replied, “I need you to kill someone for me.”

“Are you referring to Han Wu? You don't need to worry—I was planning on killing him anyway.”

Zhang Xiaolong was already aware of the news concerning Liu Letian's loss of five Divine Essence, the cause of which was Han Wu. Those were five Divine Essences—an amount more than enough to raise a lower ranking Demigod!

“Good. You are among the select students I've recognized as possessing great potential. If you help me, I'll make sure you're properly compensated. Here, take this. Consider it an investment from a teacher. It will help you in your exam.”

Upon opening the gift, Zhang Xiaolong discovered it contained a card with a Unique life form sealed in it—a Demonic Drake!

“A Unique Demonic Drake is a strong unit that can fight on equal ground with Heroic life forms! Thank you for the gift, Mr. Liu,” he gratefully responded, immediately releasing the Drake into his divine realm.

The other students, doing their best to protect themselves, urgently reached out to their families, desperate to gather as many items as possible that could aid in resisting demonic energy.

Soon, the hour was up, and Tian Wen started the teleportation, transferring the students to base C-793826 and further separating them into different districts. Only when all their starting positions had been confirmed did they finally receive an email about the exam.

Han Wu opened the email, and his shock escalated with each passing sentence. The test this time would be particularly difficult, especially for students whose core races were inherently weak.

[1. The students will have to enter the Demonic Civilization with the physical body of one of the races they control. If their physical body dies, the student's real body will be transported to the Demonic Civilization. If they die again, they will die permanently.]

[2. The students will have a chance to summon up to 100 units daily from their controlled race.]

[3. The exam will be rated based on accumulated points. Every mission will have their designated points and rewards.]

Just the first two requirements effectively made the exam impossible for students with weak core races to pass.

[List of missions:]

[Mission 1. Destroy the base of a skeleton army. There is a large army of about 8000 to 10000 skeletons based in the Undead Basin. Destroy at least 90% of their units and their flag. Weakest: Common skeleton. Strongest: Unique skeleton. Reward: 60 points and a random Rank 1 Sacred Object.]

[Mission 2. ...]

After scanning through the list, Han Wu found that there were over 500 missions, which included eradication of bases, collecting certain resources, and establishing a stronghold in specific regions. With so many missions available, students would be able to pursue tasks which aligned with their individual talents.

The exam would only conclude once all missions were completed or every student had either surrendered or died.

The email also detailed a list of rewards for the exam to motivate the students.

[First place: 1 Divine Essence.]

[Second Place: 1000 Class Points.]

[Third Place: 500 Class Points.]

[Top 10: 200 Class Points.]

[Top 50: 100 Class Points.]

[Top 100: 50 Class Points.]

Han Wu grew excited after checking the rewards, noticing that the rewards had improved drastically—they were practically on par with the rewards given during the major exam.

He recognized, however, that an extraordinary reward indicated an equally high level of danger. The Demonic Civilization was very dangerous, and anyone could die without even knowing what killed them, so he had to be very careful.

He suddenly received a notification. “Please choose which race you wish to descend into the Demonic Civilization with.”

Four choices appeared in front of him, and he instantly knew what to choose.

### **Chapter 23 - In the Midst of a Mission**

[Option 1: Locust.]

[Option 2: Scorching Dwarf.]

[Option 3: Steel Swordwind.]

[Option 4: Skeleton Lord (Weakened) (Incomplete) (Sealed).]

The system inspected what type of race Han Wu had in his divine realm, transforming them into options for him to choose.

Han Wu immediately ignored the first option. The locusts could only injure other creatures by exploding themselves. Choosing them would be nothing short of suicidal. The Scorching Dwarves were better, but they were still far too weak when compared to the Swordwind race.

Han Wu hesitated, unable to immediately decide between the Swordwind race and the Skeleton Lord.

With their devastating offensive skills, individuals of the Swordwind race were capable of attaining Heroic life form status. They could defeat a thousand enemies on their own.

The Skeleton Lord wasn't a pushover either, though. After all, it was still a Lord life form—a level higher than a Heroic life form. Also, as an undead, a Skeleton Lord could completely ignore the effects of demonic energy.

Even though its full strength was suppressed by the three additional negative statuses, in terms of overall advantage, it surpassed the Swordwind race. In the end, Han Wu chose to appear in the Demonic Civilization in the form of a Skeleton Lord.

His body swiftly shrank down to a meter as his flesh and blood disappeared, becoming nothing but a glittering skeleton.

He examined his new body, noticing that he closely resembled the little skeleton in his divine realm. He patted his bald skull and touched the burning Spiritual Fire in his eye sockets out of curiosity.

The demonic energy in the air didn't affect him at all; it actually felt quite pleasant.

"I can now see why the Demonic Civilization is a haven for demonic beasts and the undead," he mused.

Having selected his body, he began deliberating over which race to summon. According to the exam email, he could summon 100 units a day, so as a test, he chose to summon 100 Elite Glutton Locusts.

Immediately after appearing, the locusts were impacted by the ambient demonic energy. Within an hour, 94 Glutton Locusts died after being eroded by the demonic energy. Out of the surviving six, three of them were incapacitated while the other three had been mutated by the demonic energy.

The outcome was within Han Wu's expectations. Demonic energy was like poison to living beings. When exposed to demonic energy, they usually either died or mutated into demonic beasts. However, after the transformation, they would usually lose their sanity, becoming relentlessly violent.

Thankfully, the surviving locusts didn't lose their sanity, as they never possessed any. Consequently, even after their mutation, they still heeded Han Wu's orders faithfully.

Han Wu officially started his test after the successful mutation of three of his Glutton Locusts.

He surveyed his surroundings and noted his starting position according to the map he had been given. He revisited the mission list, now focusing on selecting one he could feasibly attempt.

[Mission 49: Collect 100 Skeleton Fruits. Reward: 20 Points.]

[Mission 280: Destroy a Flesh Golem nest. Reward: 60 Points and one random Rank 1 Sacred Object.]

[Mission 423: Mine 100 Demonic Flame Ores. Reward: 50 Points and one random piece of Faith equipment.]

Han Wu chose to tackle the Skeleton Fruits first; he had recognized its relative simplicity. He followed the map and led his three Demon Locusts into a black forest.

From the blackened trees hung black fruits, each bearing an ominous imprint of a skull. Those were the Skeleton Fruits that he needed.

With his newly acquired one-meter height and evident inability to climb trees, Han Wu had no choice but to instruct his three Demon Locusts to pick some up for him.

Unlike those of the Glutton Locusts, the Demon Locusts' mandibles were serrated, allowing them to easily pluck over 100 Skeleton Fruits within moments.

Han Wu collected the Skeleton Fruits and sealed them into a card. Just as he was about to turn the mission in, he heard growling nearby.

He glanced downward and saw multiple corpses pushing up from the ground.

The corpses, surrounded by a greenish gas, were in an advanced state of decay, their bones clearly visible beneath the rotten flesh.

*Thank goodness I don't have a nose in this form. I'm certain the stench alone could kill me!*

Despite their inability to rationalize and process information, the corpses, also known as ghouls, retained the primal instinct to attack any nearby creatures.

They slowly approached Han Wu, intent on attacking him. He mumbled to himself, "This is the perfect opportunity to test out my strength as a Skeleton Lord."

With a swift motion, he drove his bony claws into a ghoul's chest with ease. Due to its undead nature, however, it remained unaffected by the injury. Even with his arm through its heart, it persisted in its assault, flailing its arms in an attempt to attack.

In retaliation, Han Wu instantly crushed the ghoul's head to pieces. The ghoul, now headless, fell limply to the ground.

He systematically shattered the heads of roughly twenty ghouls, effectively incapacitating them and finally restoring tranquility to the area.

"I didn't think a mission worth just 20 points would be this annoying. Just how hard will a mission worth 100 points be?"

Han Wu finally sealed the Skeleton Fruits into a card, submitted it as proof of completion of the mission and obtained the rewards, once again browsing the mission list.

Upon checking the mission which rewarded 100 points, he almost fell over in surprise.

[Mission 500: Kill a Demigod Dark Frogman. Rewards: 100 points, 1 Divine Essence, 1,000 Class Points.]

“I need to kill a Demigod? That’s crazy. I might as well do the other missions first.”

Even the weakest Demigods had at least five Divine Essence and tens of thousands of underlings. They were entities that he couldn't defeat at the moment, especially not with his three Demon Locusts.

Han Wu closed the mission list and noticed his Demon Locusts actively devouring the ghouls. He felt his stomach churn at the gruesome sight, even though he didn't have one at present.

He looked deeper into the black forest, observed that there were many more Skeleton Fruits and suddenly had an idea. He ordered his Demon Locusts to pluck all of the Skeleton Fruits in this forest. The three Demon Locusts stopped feeding and proceeded to follow his orders.

After an entire day of effort, all the Skeleton Fruits in the black forest were finally in Han Wu's possession.

He sealed 100 Skeleton Fruits each into a card, and soon, he had 40 cards in his possession, with each card containing 100 Skeleton Fruits. If he could repeat the mission, he could obtain 800 more points.

Unfortunately, each student could only attempt a particular mission once. Han Wu might not be able to complete it again, but other students still could. He was certain that many of them would be happy to exchange some resources for 20 points.

He opened his interface and navigated to his class's chat group to announce his trade.

“Does anyone want to buy 100 Skeleton Fruits to complete mission 49? I can accept resources too.”

For about ten seconds, the chatroom was completely silent. However, seeing that Tian Wen did not forbid it, the other students quickly bombarded Han Wu with messages.

“Wait, we can do that? Isn't this cheating?”

“What are you talking about? This is resource management. Han Wu, I want a set of Skeleton Fruits. I'll send you 50 Divine Points.”

“I want a set too. I can pay 50 Divine Points.”

This time however, Tian Wen gave them a stern warning. “Students, you may only exchange resources with what you've obtained in the Demonic Civilization. Those who

break this rule will be given a warning, and receiving three of such warnings will get you disqualified.”

The students grew even more excited, sending out trade requests to Han Wu, who replied to them one by one.

“I have 30 Dark Frogman skins. Can I trade them for a set of Skeleton Fruits?”

“Deal.”

“What about 100 ghoulish teeth?”

“Deal.”

“I have 20 stalks of Black Grasses.”

“Get out.”

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Zhang Xiaolong, carefully monitoring the chatroom, snickered.

*I've been thinking about how to find you. I never thought you would reveal yourself like this so quickly. Prepare to die!*

Zhang Xiaolong, now a Demonic Drake, sped towards Han Wu's location, with 100 Hellhounds following directly behind.

## **Chapter 24 - Recruiting a Skeleton Army**

Han Wu exchanged his Skeleton Fruit cards for quite a lot of resources. He consolidated the resources and completed two more missions, gaining 60 points. He now had 80 points in total, and was ranked eighteenth out of his four hundred classmates.

However, he was certain that his advantage wouldn't last long, since his core race was incredibly weak. Three Demon Locusts, though mutated, still weren't enough for him to do anything impressive.

It was also impossible for him to clear out the nearby Flesh Golem nest with his current strength. There were 8,000 to 10,000 Flesh Golems in that nest alone. Even if they offered no resistance, he would succumb to exhaustion long before he could eliminate them all.

“If only I could call out more of my units from my divine realm,” he sighed helplessly.

The three Demon Locusts finally finished their meal and began laying eggs. A single Demon Locust could produce a hundred eggs, but due to demonic energy erosion, ninety percent of the eggs would fail to hatch. Han Wu realized that creating an army of locusts outside his divine realm was way too problematic, due to the excessive time it would require.

Han Wu's irritation grew when a group of skeletons appeared in his vicinity. Given that the Skeleton Fruit was an important ingredient used in enhancing the strength of skeletal beings, it was only natural that skeletons would be drawn to it.

The skeletons had intended to gather some Skeleton Fruits, but were taken aback to find all the trees completely bare. The spiritual flames in their eye sockets flickered in frustration. If they returned empty handed, their superior, the Skeleton Knight, would definitely crack open their skulls and use their spiritual flames as torches!

Meanwhile, Han Wu slowly walked out from the forest just as the skeletons were on the verge of panicking. Recognizing him as a Skeleton Lord, their bones quaked in fear. Han Wu could discern their reverence for him, evident in the quivering of their spiritual flames.

Without a moment of hesitation, the skeletons hurriedly kneeled, instantly submitting to him. He was able to tell that they were loyal to him with the help of a display which had popped up in front of him.

[Name: Skeleton.]

[Race: Skeleton.]

[Rank: Common.]

[Talent: Tough Bone.]

[Faith: Worshipers.]

[Faith Points: 500/day.]

Han Wu was surprised, as he hadn't expected things to turn out this way. Without doing anything, he had suddenly acquired several skeleton underlings, just like an actual Skeleton Lord! He had been thinking about what to do since he didn't have any army, but with this new discovery, he could actually raise an army of skeletons!

The skeletons' spiritual flames danced in relief, sensing that the strange but powerful Skeleton Lord had readily and easily accepted them. Eager to obtain more followers, Han Wu hastily instructed the skeletons to lead him to their base. They walked on, finally reaching the skeleton army base camp at the bottom of a valley in about an

hour's time. Finally arriving at the base camp, he was taken aback by the sheer number of skeletons present, definitely numbering in the thousands!

The skeletons were pleasantly surprised by his arrival and completely submitted to his authority without any action on his part. Although the Skeleton Knight was puzzled by Han Wu's unusually diminutive build, it ultimately decided to yield to him. After all, a Skeleton Lord's spirit couldn't be faked, so it had no reason to think otherwise.

Han Wu was pleased to have suddenly gained a Unique Skeleton Knight as part of his army since it was several times stronger than a regular skeleton. He had successfully subdued an entire army without fighting or needing to sacrifice any of his units. He reaffirmed his belief that his decision to enter the Demonic Civilization as a Skeleton Lord had been the right one.

Han Wu subsequently analyzed the Skeleton Knight in detail.

[Name: Skeleton Knight.]

[Race: Skeleton.]

[Rank: Unique.]

[Talent: Iron Bone, Skeletons Summon.]

[Faith: Worshipper.]

[Faith Points: 50,000/day.]

Since the Skeleton Knight had acknowledged Han Wu as its master, it carefully explained the situation of the army to him in great detail. Though it was a non-verbal communication based on whispering between souls, Han Wu could hear and understand everything clearly.

Apparently, the Skeleton Knight was having a really hard time. It was once a part of an even larger army led by a Heroic Osteomancer. However, during a skirmish with the Flesh Golems, it found itself unintentionally isolated from the main army along with some of its troops. Out of desperation, it had set up camp in the valley.

Regrettably, the valley proved to be an unsafe location for setting up camp. They had to face off against ghouls, zombies, and Flesh Golems practically everyday. They were losing soldiers daily, so the Skeleton Knight sent out a small group of skeletons to find some Skeleton Fruits to strengthen the army; they would be wiped out in a few days otherwise.

Han Wu carefully considered his options. Since he now had command over the army, it was his obligation to make them stronger. He soon figured out a plan.

A day later, Han Wu's points were still stuck at 80 points, causing his ranking to drop from 18th to 179th. The other students, seeing this change, thought Han Wu was not going to do so well this time. Han Wu, however, knew he hadn't gone all out yet, so he ignored both the ranking and his fellow students.

The second day soon arrived, and Han Wu once again summoned 100 locusts, this time ordering them to bring over a lot of equipment as well as a couple of Bone Stones. The Skeleton Knight froze, sensing the pure energy radiating from the Bone Stone, a palpable longing evident in the flickering of its spiritual flames.

Han Wu pleased the Skeleton Knight by gifting it a Bone Stone, and then ensured the rest of the skeleton army would benefit by leaving another. After completely absorbing the energy within the Bone Stone, the Skeleton Knight's bones became denser and stronger. It was still far from transforming into a Heroic life form, however. Several other skeletons, on the other hand, transformed into Elite Iron Skeletons after absorbing part of the energy from the Bone Stone.

Han Wu proceeded to distribute the equipment to them as well in order to help increase their strength.

It was now time for Han Wu to complete his missions. He ordered the skeleton army to head for the Flesh Golem's nest!

## **Chapter 25 - Correct Decision**

According to the mission, there were roughly 8,000 to 10,000 enemies within the Flesh Golem nest, and Han Wu knew that a full-on assault with just 1,000 skeletons wouldn't be close to enough, so he decided to employ the use of hit-and-run tactics to slowly wear the numbers of the Flesh Golems down. The Flesh Golems weren't very intelligent; they wouldn't see through such an obvious trick.

Han Wu instructed one of the Iron Skeletons to openly flounce around the nest to lure the Golems out. The Flesh Golems easily fell for such an obvious provocation, and about a hundred of them ran out of their nest, relentlessly pursuing the Iron Skeleton. The Iron Skeleton heeded Han Wu's instructions and immediately fled towards a place Han Wu had designated for an ambush on the Flesh Golems.

The ignorant Flesh Golems did not notice the trap until a thousand skeletons jumped out from their hiding spots, aiming to eliminate them. Each Flesh Golem was forced to contend against ten skeletons, each equipped with quality equipment, so it was no surprise that they were very quickly overwhelmed.

After the skirmish was over, the Skeleton Knight approached the fallen Flesh Golems and used its skill, Skeleton Summon, to add them to their numbers. The Flesh Golem skeletons slowly detached themselves from their corpses and joined the skeleton army.

Han Wu had to admit that the skeleton army's method of replenishing their numbers was very effective. He utilized the same method several times until his skeleton army was 7,000 strong, which meant there were at most 3,000 Flesh Golems left in their nest.

Han Wu finally decided to launch an all-out attack. Before that, however, he gave out a few more Bone Stones to his recently added skeletons, successfully transforming 800 of them into Elite Iron Skeletons.

With their newfound strength, they charged into the Flesh Golems' nest for an all-out, full-scale war. In just three hours, they managed to completely annihilate all the Flesh Golems.

After the battle, the Skeleton Knight retrieved a still-beating heart from the nest, handing it over to Han Wu, who regarded it with disgust. The heart was actually a Rank 1 Sacred Object, the Flesh Heart, known for improving the physical resiliency of any race when incorporated into a Core. Though it was useless for the locusts, Han Wu had no real reason to discard it either, so he just held on to it.

He submitted the mission and obtained 60 points for clearing out the Flesh Golem nest, raising his position to 108th.

Since he wasn't in a hurry anyway, Han Wu patiently waited as the Skeleton Knight slowly converted all the Flesh Golem corpses into loyal skeletons; he would soon command a powerful army numbering ten thousand. With an army that size, he could easily breeze through the rest of the missions later on.

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Back in the eerie black forest, where the Skeleton Fruits used to thrive, Zhang Xiaolong, in the form of a Demonic Drake, ordered his 200 Hellhounds to sniff out Han Wu's scent, but they still hadn't found anything. The only clue he found was several locust eggs on the ground.

"Damn it! Where is that bastard?" He fumed.

Just then, as he was going through the chatroom to find any trace of Han Wu, he noticed that Han Wu's ranking had increased by 60 points. He closely scrutinized the mission list to detect any recent changes, finally deducing Han Wu's new location.

*Han Wu, you most likely used your locusts' innate devouring ability to consume the Flesh Golems, successfully clearing the Flesh Golem nest mission. You might be incredibly intelligent, but your luck has run out this time! There's no way you can escape me!*

After hastily checking his map, he sped towards the location of the now extinct Flesh Golems' nest.

Upon arriving at the nest, however, he paused in confusion at the sight before him. *Didn't Han Wu exterminate the Flesh Golems with the help of his locusts? Why then is there a skeleton army here instead?*

After giving it a bit of thought though, he quickly realized what had occurred, especially after seeing Han Wu in the form of a Skeleton Lord.

“Han Wu, you sneaky little bastard! I did not expect you to secretly raise skeletons just for this test. No matter. You die today!”

Zhang Xiaolong immediately ordered his Hellhounds to attack. Hellhounds were innately strong demonic beasts, and with the nourishment they had obtained from the demonic energy, their bodies had grown stronger than regular Elite life forms.

Before the Common skeletons could even react, the Hellhounds moved with incredible speed and decimated their ranks, ripping through hundreds of them before finally launching themselves at Han Wu.

Nevertheless, the remaining skeletons had finally regained their composure. Knowing their leader's safety was paramount, they quickly rose and created a massive bone barrier to deflect the assaults. The Iron Skeletons and Skeleton Knight inside the nest, having heard the clamor outside, hurriedly emerged to protect their lord.

Zhang Xiaolong was astonished to see thousands of Elite Iron Skeletons pouring out from the nest, with even a Unique Skeleton Knight in their midst. It was only the second day, and yet Han Wu had already amassed such a force! Convinced that Han Wu's power would become insurmountable if left unchecked, he resolved to eliminate him by any means necessary.

Personally descending onto the battlefield in his massive Demonic Drake form adorned with thick, protective scales, Zhang Xiaolong effortlessly overpowered the Elite Iron Skeletons, leaving the Skeleton Knight to face his onslaught alone. Unfortunately, the Skeleton Knight's body had reached its absolute limits; its bones were already fracturing under the immense pressure.

Despite bearing minor injuries, Zhang Xiaolong remained perfectly capable of combat, swiftly incapacitating the Skeleton Knight and subsequently charging towards Han Wu.

Han Wu, on the other hand, had finally recognized the Demonic Drake to be Zhang Xiaolong, his classmate.

“Zhang Xiaolong, we aren't enemies, and there is no bad blood between us, yet you're attacking with lethal intent. Why are you doing this? Is there a misunderstanding I am unaware of?”

Zhang Xiaolong replied plainly, "I don't have a particular reason; I guess I just don't like you. What can you do about it? Nothing. So, just die."

The Demonic Drake's muscular tail possessed extraordinary power, transforming stones into dust with a mere sweep across the ground. Han Wu did his best to block the attack, but his jade-like skeletal form shattered into pieces in the end.

Assuming Han Wu's skeletal body had been destroyed after his bones were crushed, Zhang Xiaolong waited for Han Wu's real body to manifest on the spot. However, even after a couple of minutes had passed, Han Wu's real body still hadn't materialized. Zhang Xiaolong naturally concluded that Han Wu was afraid of true death and so had chosen to withdraw from the test. He was so delighted by that thought that he howled loudly in excitement.

The remaining skeletons, visibly furious at having lost their leader, which was obvious from how intensely their spiritual flames flickered in their eye sockets, recklessly charged at the Demonic Drake in an attempt to take him down. Though they were skeletons, they possessed unwavering loyalty, and their leader's spirit could only be appeased by the death of his killer.

Though Zhang Xiaolong wasn't afraid of them and could easily annihilate them, he had no reason to. They weren't part of any mission, and he would gain nothing from killing them. He effortlessly broke through their defenses, his destination unknown, with his Hellhounds trailing closely behind through the opening he had created.

The skeletons who had failed to kill the Hellhounds after pursuing them, slowly returned to the nest. The Skeleton Knight sat quietly, as if mourning for Han Wu. Its faith in him remained steadfast, even though it had served him for just a brief period of time. After all, no other Skeleton Lord would ever distribute resources like Bone Stones so freely to their subordinates.

As the skeletons were observing a moment of silence for their departed leader, Han Wu's bones rattled and slowly stitched themselves together after using the little skeleton's Reanimation Skill. As he reassembled his body, he reaffirmed his satisfaction with his initial decision to assume the form of a Skeleton Lord upon entering the Demonic Civilization.

The Skeleton Knight, still deep in mourning, was utterly frozen by the bizarre sight, its nonexistent eyes nearly falling out from shock.

Han Wu, now completely reassembled, shrugged. "Stop staring and rally our forces. We need to leave, right now."

Recognizing that he was too weak to defeat Zhang Xiaolong's Demonic Drake form straightaway, he resolved to go into hiding for a while in a location inaccessible to his killer, severing all forms of communication while quietly focusing on strengthening his

forces. When he had finally amassed enough, he would then find Zhang Xiaolong for revenge.

“Zhang Xiaolong, I will make sure our next meeting will be your last.”

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Having managed to shake the annoying skeletons off, Zhang Xiaolong found a quiet place to open the ranking board. Students who had perished or surrendered would have their names colored grey as an indicator. Upon checking the ranking list, he discovered that there were about ten students who had already either died or surrendered on the second day alone. This was mostly due to either having a weak core race or accidentally encountering a strong foe they could not defeat.

However, Zhang Xiaolong failed to spot Han Wu's name even after going through the list multiple times. He felt a sense of foreboding, he scrolled the ranking board and found Han Wu's name at the 163rd spot. Han Wu was still in the exam! But how?

Zhang Xiaolong realized he had been tricked. The reason Han Wu's real body didn't materialize was that his skeleton body wasn't dead!

*Shit! Was he pretending to be dead?*

Zhang Xiaolong hurriedly sped towards the nest, vowing to himself that he would wipe all the skeletons out this time if it meant Han Wu wouldn't survive. While it felt like a waste of time, it was an unavoidable necessity.

However, when he finally arrived at the nest, he found it devoid of a single skeleton. It was too late. There was nothing left, not even a piece of bone on the ground.

“Search this place! Do not let go of any skeletons you find in a 50 km radius!” Zhang Xiaolong roared. The Hellhounds followed his orders faithfully, but not a single skeleton could be found.

Understanding that Zhang Xiaolong would return when he realized he had been fooled, Han Wu had long since fled over 50 km away with his skeleton army by the time Zhang Xiaolong returned to the nest.

Nearly half his army of skeletons had been lost in the fight with Zhang Xiaolong. To help them recover, he begrudgingly brought out more Bone Stones from his divine realm.

Their injuries slowly healed after absorbing the energy from the Bone Stones, with many of the Common skeleton soldiers mutating into Iron Skeletons, and even one Iron Skeleton transforming into a Skeleton Knight.

With two Unique Skeleton Knights protecting him, Han Wu felt much safer. His army, however, was still too weak, and his present performance was inadequate to achieve a high enough score on the test to attract the Imperial College's attention.

"I need to find a way to expand my army of skeletons," Han Wu concluded.

## **Chapter 26 - A Huge Gamble**

Han Wu scrolled through the mission list, noticing that 60 out of the 500 missions were already greyed out. Those were exclusive missions, which meant they could only be cleared once.

He soon found a mission he could complete.

[Mission 64: Destroy the camp of the Abyss Demons. Reward: 80 points; Rank 2 Skill Gem, a Chain Fireball.]

The Abyss Demons, demonic beasts indigenous to the Demonic Civilization, were notorious for their cunning nature yet possessed only average physical strength. They were also known to be the eighth most abundant cannon fodder by the Divine Civilization.

*Why does eradicating the supposedly weak Abyss Demons offer so many points?* Han Wu thought confusedly.

After thoroughly reading through the mission description, however, he learned that it wasn't an error. The camp of the Abyss Demons was massive, and according to preliminary scouting, there were 1 million Abyss Demons in the camp.

They had established a complete Evolution Path for themselves, progressing from Common Abyss Demons to Elite Abyss Magic Knights and Wizards, and finally Unique Abyss Priests capable of reviving other Abyss Demons, one of which was present in the camp.

Though it would be difficult for others to clear the mission, Han Wu wasn't really worried. After all, all he needed was a lot of corpses in order to obtain a huge skeleton army.

With his objective clearly in mind, he headed back to the skeleton army base.

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As time wore on, the 80th day of the examination soon arrived.

Approximately 300 students—those that didn't have enough time and resources to establish their forces in the Demonic Civilization—had chosen to surrender and withdraw from the examination.

The homeroom teachers were carefully examining the data on their screens, with some once again betting on who would be ranked first.

“Huang Fei from my class has established an army of Demonic Gnomes. I think he has 100,000 of them or so. He’s also currently placed first with 3,200 points, so I’m definitely sure he’ll obtain the Divine Essence this time.”

“Liu Mo is also doing quite well too, being ranked second with 3,010 points. I heard that he successfully found an Evolution Path for his Demonic Goblins. With just a little more effort, he might just be able to win first place instead.”

“Tian Wen, you’re awfully quiet today. Is something the matter? Is your top student’s performance not living up to your expectations? I thought your class placed first, *haha*.”

Some of the homeroom teachers, secretly envious, couldn’t resist mocking Tian Wen, as his class had indeed placed first in the previous exam and earned substantial resources from the school.

Tian Wen shrugged. “Do we really need to discuss my class? Fine then. As it stands, Zhang Xiaolong currently has 2,890 points, Xu Sun follows with 2,870, and Qin Shuang trails with 2,830 points. They are all well within the top 10.”

“Who cares about the top 10? We want to know who will be placed first. The Divine Essence is the real reward here. Isn’t Han Wu, the one who was in first place, your student? Why isn’t he doing anything right now?”

“Hold on, let me check Han Wu’s position... He’s at the 140th position, the bottom of the rankings! *Hahaha!* Tian Wen, is this your so-called genius student?”

“I heard that he sold off the Divine Essence he received last time. Isn’t that a bit too shortsighted? How could he sell off such a rare resource?”

Liu Letian, thrilled to be presented a chance to humiliate his rival, Tian Wen, added, “That’s what I’ve been telling you guys. That boy used trickery to place first during the previous exam. He used to be dead last in my class, but it appears that someone foolishly thought Han Wu was a genius instead.”

“In the end, locusts are frail. It’s a miracle that Han Wu could even survive in the Demonic Civilization for this long.”

Liu Letian scoffed, “Hmph! Only the winner has the right to brag. The Divine Civilization cares only about the results, not the process. Your top student is dead last, and he most likely won’t have the chance to turn his situation around. It’s a waste of time for him to struggle in the Demonic Civilization. Maybe he’s trying his best to survive just so that he might have the chance to squeeze into the top 100 to get something at least.”

Tian Wen, not one to stay silent after hearing someone insulting his student so much, immediately warned, “Mr. Liu, watch your mouth! You are a teacher, so show some courtesy to the students, at least!”

“Mr. Tian, am I wrong? Let me tell you the truth—your precious student, Han Wu, is utterly hopeless, and that fact isn’t going to change no matter how many resources you give him.”

Liu Letian utterly despised Han Wu and would never let go of a chance to insult him. After all, the boy had made him lose so much.

Tian Wen growled in response. “Let’s have a bet then. I bet you that Han Wu will come out first again!”

Liu Letian smiled. “Han Wu? First? With his pathetic number of points? Tian Wen, are you kidding right now? Huang Fei has way more 0’s than him right now.”

Tian Wen, however, still had faith in Han Wu. “Do you really think so? Why don’t you take a gamble?”

Liu Letian had no reason to refuse. “Fine. I will wager 10 Divine Essence this time around. What about you?”

“Of course I will. However, I’m worried for you. Can you even take out 10 Divine Essence?” Tian Wen taunted.

Liu Letian paused momentarily. He didn’t have that many Divine Essence Cards after previously losing 5 Divine Essence. If he lost once more, he would have to take out his own Divine Essence. He only had 14 Divine Essence on him at the moment. If he took 10 of them out, he would fall from the rank of the Demigod. He didn’t want to risk it, and yet a good chance to humiliate Tian Wen was right before him! He didn’t want to give up yet.

“You’re right, I don’t have 10 Divine Essence. However, I will wager a Divine Aspect instead!”

At that declaration, all the other homeroom teachers turned to stare at Liu Letian in shock. That was borderline insane! It was just a bet. Was there any reason to risk so much? A Divine Aspect, the root of a Demigod, was even more precious than a Divine Essence, and even the lowest ranking Divine Aspect would be worth at least 2 Divine Essence. Of course, the higher ranking Divine Aspects were worth many times more than that.

“Don’t bother taking out a Rank 1 or 2 Divine Aspect to fool me. Only a Rank 3 Divine Aspect will be worth at least 10 Divine Essence,” Tian Wen sneered.

“Fine. I have the Rank 3 Healing Aspect. Does that work for you?”

Tian Wen nodded with satisfaction. “That’s good. So I take it that our wager is now official?”

“Yes, and I will make sure to win back what I’ve lost last time!” Liu Letian shot back.

Hearing that, Tian Wen laughed. “Mr. Liu, as a Demigod, don't allow yourself to be misled by the immediate situation. You should know that relying solely on present observations can be deceptive. I'll let you in on something interesting—my student is preparing to clear a mission worth 80 points, and I think he will be successful soon.”

The other homeroom teachers, knowing how the reward system worked, were astonished by his bold declaration. After all, the greater the points, the harder the mission would be.

A mission worth 80 points was usually classified as too difficult for a normal student to clear. Should Han Wu succeed in clearing such a mission, however, he would undoubtedly secure the attention of recruiters from prestigious colleges. Even if, in the end, he failed to get a good rank in the exam, he would still have made a significant impression on the top-ranking colleges.

Secretly envious, Liu Letian retorted, “So what? Clearing that mission isn’t the point. Our wager is on whether he'll manage to secure first place again or not!”

The narrow-minded teacher wished one of his students could also clear a mission worth 80 points. Even Liu Mo, one of his brightest students, had managed to complete a mission worth 60 points just once.

Smirking, Tian Wen continued, “Do you think other missions worth even less will be an obstacle to him if he manages to clear a mission worth 80 points?”

The other homeroom teachers realized that something interesting was about to happen and grew curious as to what Han Wu had been doing so far. To protect his student’s privacy, however, Tian Wen did not display Han Wu’s interface, only hinting for them to wait for the end of the examinations.

## **Chapter 27 - Dominating the Ranking Board**

Demonic Civilization, C-793826, Abyss Demon base.

A million Abyss Demons once lived here, but less than 100,000 of them now remained.

The skeleton army had completely surrounded them. After seeing the difference in strength between their armies, Han Wu ordered his skeleton army, now numbering around 900,000, to charge towards the Abyss Demon’s base to launch one final attack.

The surviving Abyss Demons heeded the orders of their Unique Abyss Priest and retaliated, but the Abyss Demons were engulfed by the sea of skeletons within seconds, with three Unique Skeleton Knights charging at the forefront to kill as many Abyss Demons as possible. Every Abyss Demon that fell resulted in the addition of a new skeleton to Han Wu's forces.

Though the Abyss Priest could resurrect dead Abyss Demons, it was significantly slower than the Skeleton Knights' Skeleton Summon. The Abyss Priest was quickly overwhelmed by the combined assault of the three Skeleton Knights. With that, Han Wu had finally completed the mission to eradicate the Abyss Demons' base.

After the battle, the three Skeleton Knights simultaneously used Skeleton Summon on the Abyss Priest's corpse and summoned a new mutated Unique skeleton: the Skeleton Reanimator.

Upon noticing the new Skeleton Reanimator, Han Wu carefully inspected its data.

[Name: Skeleton Reanimator.]

[Race: Skeleton.]

[Rank: Unique.]

[Talent: Tough Bone, Reanimate Skeleton.]

[Faith: Believer.]

[Faith Points: 500,000/day.]

Despite being a Unique life form just like the Skeleton Knights, the amount of Faith Points it generated indicated a superior ranking. After all, it had been only summoned due to their combined efforts.

Following a gesture of respect towards its leader, the Skeleton Reanimator pointed towards a pile of scattered bones, which rapidly reassembled and successfully revived the skeleton it once formed! Han Wu's spiritual flame blazed with excitement in his eye sockets as he recognized the Skeleton Reanimator's potential as a crucial component of his strategy.

With the death of the Abyss Priest, the remaining Abyss Demons were quickly wiped out. The Skeleton Knights searched the entirety of the base, handing everything valuable over to Han Wu. Han Wu ignored the cheap items and finally identified the three most valuable loot from the Abyss Demon's base.

[Rank 1 Sacred Object Fireball Staff. After equipping to one's Core, a part of the core race will master the Rank 1 Fireball skill. The fireball's power is proportional to the user's own strength. Can also be used as a Divine weapon.]

[Heroic Template piece. A quarter of a Heroic Template. After obtaining all four pieces and completing the Heroic Template, it can help a Unique life form ascend to become a Heroic life form.]

[Source of Abyss: Grants a race the power of the Abyss. Provides immunity to demonic energy and increases status resistance.]

Han Wu felt a surge of excitement, particularly as he read the details of the final item. It was an item that could complete an Evolution Path!

However, he first needed to experiment its effects on his locusts to determine if it was actually suitable for them. Having secured the items, he looked upon his vast skeleton army, numbering in the millions, and felt a profound sense of pride in his non-existent heart.

With an army this size, there was nothing for him to fear! Even a Demonic Drake would be nothing against the combined assault of a million skeletons.

No longer needing to hide, he submitted his mission and obtained 80 points and a rank 2 Skill Gem, the Chain Fireball, increasing his total points to 220.

Even though he was still at the end of the ranking board, the submission of his mission marked the beginning of his counterattack.

After selecting a new mission to eradicate a nearby camp of a local race, worth 70 points, Han Wu ordered his skeleton army to march onward. They obeyed, running towards the goal like a tsunami and destroying everything in their path.

The homeroom teachers were stunned speechless to see how fast the rankings were changing and proceeded to check the logs.

An hour ago, Han Wu had 220 points, moving up to 290 points after just thirty minutes. Two hours later, his score was 420 points, which then increased to 690 points after another two hours.

He didn't just stop there, and with each day, his points and ranking improved.

[1 day later: Han Wu: 1190 points. Rank 54.]

[2 days later: Han Wu: 2090 points. Rank 18.]

[3 days later: Han Wu: 2990 points. Rank 4.]

In just three days, Han Wu, who was last in the rankings, was now in 4th place!

Once again, the homeroom teachers were rendered speechless by Han Wu's astonishingly swift ascent on the ranking board.

Despite the events occurring right before his eyes, Liu Letian remained obstinate, stubbornly refusing to acknowledge that Han Wu might actually succeed. "Placing fourth is nothing. He's not yet in first place, so I'm still winning!"

However, just as he said that, Xu Mei, probably to spite him, announced various messages to the homeroom teachers present.

"Frenzied Combat College, a First Class institution, requests a meeting with Han Wu after the test."

"Hidden Dragon College, a First Class institution, requests a meeting with Han Wu after the test."

"Green Mountain College, a Second Class institution, courteously invites Han Wu to enroll without needing to take a test."

"Second Class College..."

The entire room went silent after hearing the announcement.

The test wasn't over yet, but Han Wu had already received so many invitations from top ranking colleges. He was practically destined to live a cosy life!

Liu Letian, displeased by the announcements, retorted, "Ms. Xu, I object! Why are you announcing the recruitment messages for just Han Wu? What about the other students?"

Xu Mei fell silent for a while before announcing, "There have been no invitations for the other students yet."

Liu Letian was in disbelief. "How can that be? Han Wu is only in 4th place—there are three students who have higher scores!"

Xu Mei scoffed in reply. "The colleges set two prerequisites for selecting students: achieving a score of at least 3,000 points and completing a mission valued at a minimum of 80 points, and so far, only Han Wu has met these qualifications."

Liu Letian couldn't object to that and fell silent. After all, everyone present knew how extremely difficult it was to clear a mission worth 80 points.

The room remained silent until Qin Shuang, who was ranked 8th, suddenly increased her points by 90 and reached the 3,000 point mark. Almost immediately, Xu Mei received an invitation addressed to Qin Shuang. "Frenzied Combat College, a First Class College..."

Qin Shuang was the first of many as the other geniuses began completing missions worth 80 or 90 points. With Xu Mei announcing the invitations one by one, Liu Letian grew more and more satisfied.

He furtively went through the mission list for Tian Wen's class and saw the exclusive missions being completed one by one over the next few days. Liu Letian was elated, because as long as the missions were completed by someone else, Han Wu would lose the chance to complete more missions and earn points to increase his ranking. As long as Han Wu wasn't placed first, he would be able to seize 10 Divine Essence from Tian Wen.

Hastily, Liu Letian sent an encrypted message to Zhang Xiaolong. "There are three missions left for your class to complete before the examination concludes. Xiaolong, get those remaining missions done fast, before Han Wu wins first place once more!"

Smirking, Zhang Xiaolong responded, "I understand. I'll focus on the 90-point mission now and complete it before Han Wu even gets here."

## **Chapter 28 - Stomped to Death**

There were three more missions that remained uncompleted on the list.

Han Wu's spiritual flames flickered in his eye sockets. He was currently placed third with 3,480 points. The student in first place had 3,610 points, so to win first place, he needed an extra 130 points.

However, only three missions remained, all of which were extremely difficult to clear: a 100-point mission to eliminate a Demigod Dark Frogman and two 90-point missions to eliminate Minotaurs and Evil Treants.

Han Wu wasn't worried though. After all, he had increased the number of his skeleton army to 20 million after so many days of eliminating other races. His current army had 2 Heroic life forms and 190 Unique life forms, which was equivalent to the strength of many Demigods.

"I should kill the Minotaurs first, since they are closest."

Han Wu made his decision and ordered his skeletons to march forward. The sea of skeletons marched orderly towards the Minotaurs' camp.

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A fierce battle was taking place in the Minotaur camp. As the strong Minotaurs repelled the invading Hellhounds and Lizardmen with the help of totems, a Heroic Minotaur simultaneously battled against Zhang Xiaolong's Demonic Drake and Xu Sun's Liger Beast.

Displaying incredible strength, the Heroic Minotaur wielded a massive totem and fought against the two Unique life forms single-handedly on equal footing.

The Demonic Drake and the Liger Beast were existences on par with weaker Heroic life forms, and their combined attacks would have dealt severe damage to normal Heroic life forms. The Heroic Minotaur, however, did not falter or lose ground.

Zhang Xiaolong grew increasingly panicked since it was taking much too long to take down the Minotaurs. Han Wu's rapid rise in the rankings scared him. If he once again won first place, he would amass so many resources that he could easily overpower all his mates.

Zhang Xiaolong knew there was nothing he could do by then.

So, in order to ensure that Han Wu wouldn't be able to secure the first position, Zhang Xiaolong contacted Xu Sun, who also had a grudge with Han Wu, proposing an alliance to complete the mission together and take Han Wu down. Xu Sun gladly agreed and led his Lizardmen to battle.

Despite combining their forces, they still couldn't beat the Minotaurs. They were too powerful—each adult Minotaur had the strength of an Elite unit. Their tough skin and strong muscles made it very difficult to kill them.

Though they had been fighting continuously for four hours, the situation remained unfavorable for the two students. Despite their injuries, the Minotaurs continued to fight valiantly. Zhang Xiaolong and Xu Sun's allied forces, on the other hand, were steadily losing strength. Should their current situation persist, their forces were sure to face total annihilation.

Having just experienced how strong the Minotaurs were, and concluding that Han Wu wouldn't be able to defeat them anyway if even their allied forces couldn't, the two decided to retreat for now.

However, it was solely upon issuing the command for their armies to withdraw that they perceived something was amiss. Neither of them had noticed a massive skeleton army which stretched all the way to the horizons encircling the Minotaur base.

At the sight, the two almost fell over from despair, thinking they had encountered an undead natural disaster. The skeletons launched an immediate assault, igniting a chaotic three way battle among skeletons, Minotaurs, Hellhounds, and Lizardmen.

The battle was fierce, with the other races easily smashing numerous skeletons like clay in the process. Seeing how weak they were, Zhang Xiaolong and Xu Sun attempted to break through the skeleton army's encirclement, but Han Wu didn't give them that chance, immediately instructing his Heroic Osteomancer to step up to the battlefield.

The Osteomancer waved its arm and gathered the numerous bone fragments scattered on the battlefield around its bony body, transforming into a 20 meter tall bone giant within seconds. Marching onto the battlefield, the bone giant demonstrated its immense power by causing significant devastation with a mere strike of its fist.

Elsewhere on the battlefield, the Skeleton Knights, using the Skeleton Summon skill, resurrected the dead units as skeletons and ordered them to join the battle. As the battle dragged on, more and more skeletons emerged, much to the dismay of Zhang Xiaolong and Xu Sun.

The two of them decided to abandon their respective armies and escape the encirclement alone. The bone giant, however, having already predicted their escape attempt, intercepted them just as they moved. The two, afraid and confused, instantly turned their heads towards the shoulder of the bone giant, recognizing a familiar voice.

Han Wu smirked. "Hello, Zhang Xiaolong and Xu Sun."

They were stunned to spot a dazzling jade-like skeleton perched on the bone giant's shoulder; upon closer inspection, they discerned Han Wu's indistinct features hovering above it.

"Han Wu!" Zhang Xiaolong's Demonic Drake furiously howled and clenched its teeth with such force that they nearly fractured.

Xu Sun's Liger Beast, on the other hand, was astonished. "Isn't your core race the locust? How did you become a Skeleton Lord?"

Han Wu didn't bother responding, instead issuing an order for the bone giant to trample Zhang Xiaolong's Demonic Drake into a bloody pulp. Without the capacity to mount any defense, the Demonic Drake instantly perished. It might have had the strength of a Heroic life form, but an Osteomancer's bone giant was way stronger, especially when surrounded by bone fragments. The gap between their respective strengths was astronomical.

"Goodbye, Zhang Xiaolong."

Han Wu had barely spoken to Zhang Xiaolong, yet had swiftly executed him on the spot. Just how bad was their relationship? Xu Sun, horrified by Han Wu's decisiveness, shuddered at that thought.

Han Wu waited for a while, but Zhang Xiaolong didn't appear with his physical body. Recognizing that Zhang Xiaolong had probably withdrawn from the exam, he checked the ranking board. Sure enough, Zhang Xiaolong's name had turned gray. It seemed Zhang Xiaolong understood that he wouldn't be able to win anyway, even if he continued the exam with his real body, so he withdrew.

Realizing this, Han Wu scoffed, turning to look at his classmate, Xu Sun, who once tried to scam him into selling his Divine Essence at a cheap price.

"Xu Sun," Han Wu said, the bone giant lifting its massive foot.

Xu Sun surrendered, pleading, "Han Wu, we don't have any major grudges between us. I apologize for the previous misunderstanding. However, I want to make it clear that my death will benefit you in no way."

The bone giant froze, its foot suspended in the air.

Han Wu replied, "But I will gain nothing from sparing you either."

Xu Sun, swallowing his pride, opted to trade some of his possessions for the chance to live. "You can have thirty percent of the treasures I've obtained from this exam as long as you let me go."

Han Wu sneered, "Thirty percent isn't enough to ensure the survival of your Liger Beast."

"W-wait! How about fifty? I'll give you fifty percent!"

After descending upon the Demonic Civilization, the Liger Beast had absorbed many treasures. As long as it could return alive, it would definitely ascend into a Heroic life form in the future. Xu Sun would willingly relinquish half his accumulated treasures if it meant securing a future Heroic life form.

Han Wu agreed in the end and chose to let him go. After all, unlike Zhang Xiaolong, who had shown hostile intent, Xu Sun hadn't actively tried to harm him.

Also, since Xu Sun had accumulated 3,020 points, Han Wu was certain he would gain a lot of good stuff, even if it was just half of Xu Sun's treasure.

Xu Sun sighed in relief when Han Wu agreed. While ensuring the survival of the Liger Beast was important, it was equally vital he survive until the test's conclusion, given that his performance would dictate potential recruitment by prestigious colleges. From the recruiters' perspective, surviving the test and deciding to withdraw prematurely represented entirely different scenarios.

Fearing that Han Wu might kill his Liger Beast when his guard was lowered, Xu Sun proposed, "Let's sign a contract so neither of us will go back on their words."

Han Wu didn't trust Xu Sun's contract, so he produced one from his landing pod instead.

After signing the contract, Han Wu allowed Xu Sun to leave with his army only after leaving half his possessions behind.

Xu Sun fled hurriedly. Han Wu, however, focused on eradicating the Minotaurs.

## **Chapter 29 - Final Mission**

It took Han Wu about five hours to eradicate eighty percent of the Minotaurs.

Thanks to the Skeleton Reanimator, which could endlessly revive fallen skeletons, the skeleton army remained as strong as ever.

Recognizing that their resistance was futile, the Minotaur tribe leader, the only Heroic life form of its race, surrendered without hesitation and pleaded with Han Wu to spare its kind, offering to lead them into his service in return.

After pondering for a while, he finally agreed. However, he still had to kill at least ninety percent of the Minotaurs for the mission to be completed. After discussing the issue with the Heroic Minotaur, it immediately brought the injured or crippled Minotaurs out to be slaughtered.

Thousands of Minotaurs were wiped out before Han Wu's mission was finally considered complete. Afterwards, he upheld his promise to cease the eradication of the Minotaurs, accept them as his units and to work for him in his divine realm in return.

After submitting his mission, his score finally reached 3,570 points, which meant that he still needed 40 more points to be placed first.

*Thank goodness. There are still two more missions for me to choose from.*

Just as he had that thought, however, the only other 90-point mission turned grey. Someone had completed it.

Han Wu checked who it was and noticed that it was Qin Shuang! She had completed the other mission worth 90 points, increasing her total points to 3,580. Now, only one mission was left in the list.

[Mission 500: Kill the Demigod Dark Frogman.]

Han Wu in a dilemma—the final mission was too hard. Even though he had 20 million skeletons under his command, he remained unwilling to confront a Demigod, especially one holding all the advantages of its home advantage.

However, he was even more tempted by the reward of being placed first. He had a lot of locusts to feed as well as regular races to take care of. Moreover, he was aiming to secure first place, hoping such a feat would draw the Imperial College's attention to his accomplishments.

He had to accept the final mission no matter what. He ordered his skeletons to march to the territory of the Demigod Dark Frogman.

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The homeroom teachers were finalizing the data of the exam.

A total of eleven classes had completed their exam, but none of them were able to complete the Demigod mission. It was a common sight even in the past exams. It was already difficult enough for a Divine Being to survive in another civilization with various restrictions. Challenging a local Demigod was suicidal, and only fools would attempt to do so.

None of the homeroom teachers assumed that their students would attempt the mission, since both the price and risk of failing were too high. One wrong move and everything they'd obtained during the exam would be lost.

“Mr. Tian, I think your class's examination is the only one still ongoing. It seems that three of your students are still in the exam.” One of the teachers checked the ranking board, noticing the golden names of the three students. “Qin Shuang is ranked second with 3,580 points, Han Wu is ranked third with 3,570 points, and Xu Sun is ranked seventh with 3,320 points. What's going on with them?”

Tian Wen thought for a moment before deciding to display the footage of his three students in the Demonic Civilization. The homeroom teachers were shocked to see what was going on.

“Are they insane? I can't believe they are attempting to kill a Demigod on their own!”

“With four Heroic Thunder Sparrows, Qin Shuang has the capability to confront it directly, so I understand her reasoning, but is Han Wu heading towards the same destination? Also, why is he commanding a skeleton army? Isn't his core race the locust?”

“Han Wu has three Heroic life forms, an Osteomancer, a Skeleton Reanimator, and a Minotaur!”

“What physical body did Han Wu descend with? Can someone check what rank it is?”

“What the fuck?” A teacher with an inspection-type skill cursed unexpectedly. “It’s a Skeleton Lord!”

“A Lord? How can that be? Oh shit, it really is one!”

The homeroom teachers erupted in shock, finally grasping why Tian Wen had so confidently bet 10 Divine Essence on Han Wu’s victory. If they knew Han Wu was inhabiting a Skeleton Lord and had a 20 million skeleton army, they would’ve definitely placed their bets on Han Wu too.

“Congratulations, Tian Wen. You are going to be rich after obtaining that Rank 3 Divine Aspect,” one teacher said.

Tian Wen couldn’t hide his smile.

“Han Wu just needs another 40 points to overtake Huang Fei. If he can complete the mission to kill the Demigod Dark Frog, he’ll actually be in first place!”

The other homeroom teachers quickly congratulated Tian Wen as if he had already won the bet.

Liu Letian, of course, was still in denial. “Don’t get cocky. Even if Han Wu has the Skeleton Lord as his physical body, his chances of obtaining first place aren’t that high to begin with. Don’t forget, he’s competing against Qin Shuang right now. Her family has a real God so she probably has a lot of trump cards too. Who do you really think will win this time?”

The other homeroom teachers fell into contemplation. They knew that Qin Shuang had to have had quite a number of tricks up her sleeve if she could be placed so high up on the ranking board. In fact, it was actually more likely for her to be placed first instead.

“Wait, Qin Shuang reached the Dark Frogman’s territory first!” One teacher spotted Qin Shuang’s current physical body, a Golden-Crown Thunder Sparrow, spiralling above the Dark Frogman’s territory.

Tens of thousands of Thunder Sparrows followed suit, forming a massive thunder cloud that illuminated the night with countless dazzling bolts of lightning, illuminating the night as if it was daytime.

Countless Dark Frogmen perished from the lightning blasts before the Demigod Dark Frogman realized what was happening. The Dark Frogman quickly responded, however. With its Divine Skill, it condensed the power of darkness and formed a massive barrier that encapsulated the entirety of its territory. The lightning couldn’t penetrate the barrier, crashing uselessly on its surface.

Enraged, the Demigod Dark Frogman roared at Qin Shuang, "How dare you kill my people and attack my territory? I will curse you to death!"

Immediately after it spoke, a black beam shot out from beneath the barrier and struck Qin Shuang's Golden-Crown Thunder Sparrow head-on. Qin Shuang was hit with a wave of nausea, her vision darkening; her wings faltered and she struggled to stay conscious before plummeting to the ground.

### **Chapter 30 - Collaboration**

The Demigod Dark Frogman cursed Qin Shuang successfully, her feeble body spiralling downwards from the sky. However, before she landed, her body flashed once with a golden light, dispelling her status ailments. This was one of the hidden trump cards her family had given her, the Divine Skill Cleanse.

Qin Shuang instantly regained her strength and flapped her wings, quickly flying upwards and aiming a massive ball of lightning towards the dark barrier. Her army of Thunder Sparrows followed suit, launching numerous lightning balls to break the barrier. With the barrier finally down, the Dark Frogmen were once again exposed to the skies.

Qin Shuang was determined to leverage her current advantage to gradually overwhelm the Dark Frogmen, but the Demigod Dark Frogman had another trick up its sleeve, immediately summoning a frog as massive as a mountain, the Mountain Eater. It lashed its kilometer long tongue out and caught her high in the air, swallowing her into its belly.

She unleashed a massive torrent of lightning within the Mountain Eater's belly, charring its stomach lining black, but it refused to spit her out. It was too massive, and the lightning she released was insufficient to deal any damage to it, quickly diffusing into the Mountain Eater's giant muscles.

In an attempt to eliminate Qin Shuang, the Mountain Eater began secreting its digestive juices. Letting out shrill cries, her Thunder Sparrows rained down numerous thunderbolts in a desperate attempt to rescue their god, yet their attacks couldn't get through the Mountain Eater's tough skin. At the same time, five Heroic Dark Frogmen eradicated hordes of Thunder Sparrows with their dark attribute skills.

The Thunder Sparrows had lost their initiative the moment Qin Shuang was captured. If the situation remained unchanged, every last Thunder Sparrow would inevitably be slaughtered by the Dark Frogmen.

Qin Shuang began to despair, trapped in the stomach of the Mountain Eater.

*Am I going to die here? Even though I still have so many trump cards left, they are all useless here. This is a frustrating place to die...*

Suddenly a call request from Han Wu popped up on her interface. However, she hesitated to pick it up. Based on the missions he had cleared and how fast he had risen through the rankings, she knew that Han Wu was strong, and it was likely that he was calling to collaborate.

Qin Shuang didn't reject that idea, but her stubborn pride kept her from revealing to Han Wu how desperate she was. Han Wu, however, didn't give up and kept calling. Qin Shuang finally accepted the call and was taken aback to see Han Wu as a small Skeleton Lord.

*Why is he so small and cute?* She thought to herself.

"Where are you?" Han Wu asked curiously. All he could see was a black and red muscular lining, so he couldn't tell where she was.

"None of your business."

Han Wu was used to her snobbish attitude and kept it short. "Would you like to collaborate with me or not?"

"Why should I?"

"If you don't, in a few minutes, all your Thunder Sparrows will be annihilated."

*And why should you care?* She almost blurted out, but she ultimately remained silent. She had painstakingly nurtured those tens of thousands of Thunder Sparrows, especially the three Heroic Iron Crown Thunder Sparrows. She would lose a lot if they all died here.

Qin Shuang reluctantly agreed. "Fine, but if we win, I want the body of the Demigod Dark Frogman. You can take everything else."

After all, besides the corpse of the Demigod Dark Frogman, she was rich enough to ignore most of the treasures.

"Fine, but quickly give your orders to your army to come and fetch me."

Han Wu then showed her a video revealing his current whereabouts, so she could send her army to get him.

The Dark Frogmen lived in the swamps, and though the Thunder Sparrows could fly unimpeded by the terrain, almost a million of Han Wu's skeletons were stuck in the swamp without much progress so he had no choice but to ask for a collaboration.

*Sure, become my slave and I will send my Thunder Sparrows to fetch you,* Qin Shuang almost said, but recognizing her situation, she kept her mouth shut, since she still

needed Han Wu to rescue her. She instructed her surviving Thunder Sparrows to retreat and fly towards the skeleton army.

Han Wu ordered a large group of Iron Skeletons to mount the Thunder Sparrows and jump down when they got directly above the Dark Frogmen. Many of the Iron Skeletons shattered to pieces in the process, but it was all part of his strategy. Since advancing his army through the swamp was impossible, he utilized the remains of the shattered Iron Skeletons to build the Osteomancer's bone giant.

Having realized that the skeleton army had joined the battle, the Demigod Dark Frogman gave an order, and millions of Dark Frogmen instantly rushed out from the swamp to attack them. Han Wu, however, currently seated on the back of an Iron Crown Thunder Sparrow and overlooking the battlefield, welcomed their actions.

Beneath him was a large field of bones several meters thick which had completely covered the entire surface of the swamp. It was time for his next move.

Han Wu commanded his Heroic Osteomancer to attack the Dark Frogmen. The Osteomancer swiftly gathered all of the surrounding bone fragments and merged with them, becoming a massive bone giant. Within seconds, the supposedly weak Heroic life form had transformed into one of the strongest Heroic life forms.

Noticing the bone giant, the Demigod Dark Frogman belatedly realized that the skeleton army had a Heroic Osteomancer within their ranks.

The five Heroic Dark Frogmen combined their strengths to use one of their skills to restrict the bone giant. However, none of them noticed two more Heroic life forms on the shoulders of the bone giant: the Heroic Skeleton Reanimator and the Heroic Minotaur, Sarman.

The two jumped down from the bone giant and immediately began wrecking havoc. Sarman, wielding his massive totem, effortlessly crushed a lot of the Dark Frogmen while the Skeleton Reanimator activated Reanimate Skeleton, a skill which was quite similar to Skeleton Summon, but also revived and reassembled defeated skeletons. With the help of the Skeleton Knights, many skeletons tore themselves out from the corpses of the Dark Frogmen.

These newly formed skeletons immediately joined the skeleton army, indiscriminately attacking the Dark Frogmen. The Thunder Sparrows continued to unleash bolts of lightning from the skies, assisting the skeleton army.

Slowly, the battle tilted in Han Wu's favor, but the Demigod Dark Frogman would not go down so easily. Realizing that its army was losing ground, it used its Divine Skill once more. "Dark Divine Skill: Nightfall."

A profound darkness instantly engulfed the entire battlefield, blinding the skeletons and the Thunder Sparrows. However, rather than being impaired by the darkness, the Dark Frogmen found themselves invigorated and enhanced by it. They immediately retaliated, crushing many skeletons, pushing even Sarman and the Skeleton Reanimator back by their assault.

If they didn't think of something quickly, both Han Wu and Qin Shuang would soon fail to complete the mission!