

The People's God: Sacrificing Trillions to Ascend

- Chapter 55 - Stumped by a Single Divine Essence

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[1,246 words]

Chapter 55 - Stumped by a Single Divine Essence

Upon his return to the Divine Civilization, Han Wu's interface reverted to its standard display.

[Name: Han Wu]

[Rank: Divine Being]

[Divine Talent: Chosen One (Exclusive), Defiance]

[Divine Powers: Increased Growth, Sacrifice (Exclusive)]

[Skills: Mighty Cleave, Enchant Darkness, Dragon Slash, Dark Dragonification, ...]

[Divine Essence: 3 (100 million Accumulated Personal Divine Points transformed into 1 Personal Divine Essence)]

[Divine Points: 200,000 (Personal) / 500,000 (Foreign)]

[Faith Points: 24.03 million]

[Core Level: 10 (Rank 3 Sacred Object, Law of Gluttony (Incomplete); Rank 2 Sacred Object, Revelation Stone; Rank 2 Sacred Object, Shadow Nail; Rank 1 Sacred Object, Poison Gland; Rank 1 Sacred Object, Earth Core; Rank 1 Sacred Object, Elf Shortbow)]

[Core Race: ...]

The data displayed on his interface had undergone only minor changes. After carefully examining the discrepancies, Han Wu concluded that his altered eyes were most likely a consequence of acquiring the new talent, Defiance.

When he attempted to tap on Defiance to examine its effects, the system informed him that he needed to be a Demigod to access that information. Consequently, Han Wu had to abandon his inquiry.

While the exact nature and effects of Han Wu's strange eyes remained a mystery to Tian Wen and the recruiter, they believed it was a positive development. However, the true extent of these effects would only be revealed once Han Wu became a Demigod.

"Han Wu, you have successfully passed the Imperial College test with exceptional results and earned a place on the reserved list. However, to fully enroll, you must still meet one additional requirement."

Han Wu was confused. "What condition?"

"The college's reserved list requires talent and the fulfillment of two of these four conditions: being born an Elite life form, having a Heroic life form, possessing four Divine Essence, or having a Saint unit. You have already fulfilled the Heroic life form condition, meaning you need to meet just one more to enroll."

"Isn't that way too difficult?"

Regarding the evaluation of his core race's potential, Han Wu's locusts, being Common life forms from birth, did not meet the requirement, despite his belief in their potential.

The third condition, measuring student wealth, while seemingly straightforward, proved challenging. Divine Essence, valued at 145 million Divine Points each, was highly sought after but scarce. Even Han Wu, under typical circumstances, found it impossible to accumulate any.

Among the four conditions, the Saint requirement was the most difficult. A Saint, the highest-ranking believer, was typically a god's most devoted subject. This condition demanded not only absolute faith but also exceptional intelligence. Despite having numerous Zealots, Han Wu had none who qualified as Saints.

The recruiter encouraged Han Wu, "Then it's best if you work hard for it, Han Wu. The doors to Imperial College will remain open for you." He then provided Han Wu with his contact information before departing.

With a frown, Han Wu turned to Tian Wen. "Sir, do you have any idea how I can acquire a Divine Essence as quickly as possible?"

After a moment of thought, Tian Wen stated, "The school will award a Divine Essence to the student who achieves first place in the upcoming test. However, the test is still 28 days away."

"Could you lend me one in the meantime?"

Tian Wen shrugged. "Unfortunately, it's too late. If you had asked me a day earlier, I would have been able to help, but I used it up yesterday. Han Wu, please stop giving me that suspicious look. I swear on my honor that I'm telling you the truth."

Han Wu sighed. "In that case, I will have to find a solution on my own."

He went back to his divine realm and started to examine his accumulated spoils.

The black dragon was the most significant treasure he had obtained. Even though the dragon was not yet a believer, Han Wu was confident it would become one in time, provided he kept it in his divine realm. In the meantime, his lack of Faith Point generation was a waste.

His second most valuable treasure was the stable gate that connected to Doron City. This gate provided him with a new location to gather resources and develop his units, making it a valuable long-term investment.

The third treasure he obtained was the mysterious Defiance talent. Although its effects remained unknown, he was confident that a title the black dragon held with such pride wouldn't be weak.

The fourth category of treasures consisted of the equipment and valuables looted from Doron City. Though valuable, they weren't exceptionally so. Han Wu ordered the Scorching Dwarves to choose the superior pieces, and then arranged for the rest to be sold on the online Divine Market.

He successfully earned 23 million Divine Points, which was a significant sum for a Divine Being. However, he was still far from acquiring a Divine Essence. Looking at his account balance, he began to feel a headache coming on.

Knowing the Imperial College possessed far superior resources than his present school, Han Wu realized how much even one day of early enrollment would help him. He would, at the very least, not be experiencing the current desperate lack of resources.

With a sigh, Han Wu shifted his focus to nurturing his core race. He employed the Increased Growth skill to accelerate the reproduction of his locusts, and after a realm year, the locust population reached 8 billion. He attempted Sacrificing 7 billion of them, hoping for a favorable result.

Three options appeared, but none included a Divine Essence, so he selected the blueprint for a Steel Demon Idol, which had the highest value. On the subsequent day, he tried once more, but Divine Essence was still not among the choices. Han Wu then chose the Rank 2 Sacred Object, Strong Poison Gland.

...

For several real-world days, Han Wu consistently used Sacrifice, yet he failed to obtain even one Divine Essence as a reward.

Han Wu felt a wave of frustration and regretted selling the Divine Essence to Qin Shuang for 150 million Divine Points. Given another chance, he would have undoubtedly kept it instead of selling it.

While Han Wu was lamenting his past choice, a message arrived from Yuan Zhong, who was inquiring about the daily delivery of the Source of Sacred Objects, which he needed for his God weapon's repair.

A sudden idea struck Han Wu: perhaps Yuan Zhong, being a God, wouldn't mind lending him a Divine Essence. If that wasn't possible, Han Wu would even settle for 120 million Divine Points. He messaged Yuan Zhong, only to receive a string of question marks in response. They had never met in person, and Yuan Zhong mistakenly assumed Han Wu was a God like himself.

Yuan Zhong assumed that Han Wu was, at the very least, an experienced Demigod, if not a God. He would have been willing to lend Han Wu a larger sum, such as five Divine Essence or a billion Divine Points, but he was concerned that Han Wu might not repay a smaller loan, like a single Divine Essence or 120 million Divine Points.

Although the sum was relatively minor to Yuan Zhong, he still valued it as his property and declined to give it without expecting something in return. Instead of lending money, he offered Han Wu a ticket.

Upon receiving the ticket, Han Wu read the inscription. "Divine River Ruins..."

His brow furrowed. He had no idea what it referred to.

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Chapter 56 - Divine River Ruins and Gene Stone

[1,249 words]

Chapter 56 - Divine River Ruins and Gene Stone

Han Wu conducted an online search for information about the Divine River Ruins and finally found out what it was.

The Divine River Ruins belonged to the Divine River civilization, a civilization of great power, which the Divine Civilization itself had to acknowledge. They conceded that the

Divine River Civilization was one of the mightiest civilizations they had ever come across.

The Divine River Ruins were an abandoned project left behind by the Divine River Civilization. The area had been the site of extensive experimentation, leading to the radioactive contamination of certain minerals.

The radiation had affected almost ninety percent of the local life forms, causing them to mutate into monsters with corrupted DNA. These monsters were compelled to consume radioactive minerals to enhance their strength through unpredictable mutations, a dangerous method of countering radiation with radiation.

When consumed, these radioactive minerals could potentially form a stone inside the mutated monsters, capable of inducing specific mutations in any life form. This stone was referred to as the Gene Stone.

The Gene Stone's effect was exceptionally unique and highly beneficial for nurturing units. Even the lowest quality Gene Stone was comparable to a Rank 3 Sacred Object, and could command a price of several million Divine Points. It was a highly sought-after item among Demigods and even Gods.

After learning about the Gene Stone, Han Wu understood Yuan Zhong's intention in giving him the ticket to the Divine River Ruins. Yuan Zhong was indirectly suggesting that Han Wu visit the ruins to gather Gene Stones, which could then be exchanged for Divine Points.

Han Wu felt a wave of helplessness, questioning his chances as a Divine Being against Demigods and Gods in the competition for Gene Stones. He was contemplating selling the ticket online for Divine Points when a certain piece of news caught his attention.

"A farm owned by a God King, initially intended for the artificial breeding of mutated beasts and valued at 700 billion Divine Points, has suffered bankruptcy after he acquired low-quality radioactive minerals..."

Han Wu had a sudden idea: he could replicate the bankrupt God King's approach by establishing a farm for the artificial breeding of mutated beasts, thereby bypassing the direct conflict for Gene Stones within the Divine River Ruins!

Han Wu was somewhat optimistic about this strategy because he possessed a key advantage that the God King lacked—the Refinery. With the Refinery, he could refine even the lowest-grade radioactive minerals into the highest purity, which in turn would result in significantly stronger Gene Stones from the mutated beasts. However, this was merely theoretical. He needed to conduct a field test to validate his hypothesis.

He contacted Tian Wen, requesting access to the school's teleportation device. Once permission was granted, Han Wu input the coordinates from the ticket and was

transported to a small town located within the Divine River Ruins. Although the town was filled with individuals from the Divine Civilization, they were all walking with a sense of urgency, their steps brisk and hurried.

Han Wu put on the mask that Tian Wen had provided to conceal his personal information. Being in an unfamiliar location, he prioritized his safety above all else.

He was abruptly approached by someone. “My esteemed guest, this must be your first time here, correct? I presume you’re looking for a trustworthy guide?”

The middle-aged man with tanned skin, seemed sincere, but Han Wu remained cautious.

He coughed, deliberately deepening his voice, and asked, “What makes you worth hiring?”

The guide nodded politely and replied, “I have knowledge of eighteen different gathering points for mutated beasts in the Divine River Ruins, each location hosting unique species. I also possess insider knowledge about the various shops in this town. I can distinguish between honest buyers, cunning ones, and those who consistently deceive their customers. I will guarantee you get good prices for your Gene Stones. Furthermore, I know...”

Han Wu stopped him mid-sentence, stating, “I’m only interested in knowing if anyone in this town sells radioactive minerals.”

With a puzzled expression, the guide asked, “Radioactive minerals? You want to buy those? Are you unaware that a God King recently purchased a shipment of low-quality radioactive minerals and fed them to the mutated beasts on his farm? The beasts died before they could grow stronger, leading to the loss of his farm, a venture worth hundreds of billions of Divine Points, in a single night.”

The guide cautioned Han Wu against buying the radioactive minerals, pointing out that even a God King had suffered significant losses from doing so. He doubted that Han Wu possessed greater wealth than a God King.

With a gruff tone, Han Wu said, “Just answer my question.”

His voice clearly expressed his annoyance.

The guide inwardly cursed Han Wu for being foolish but maintained a polite demeanor. “I apologize for speaking excessively. I can direct you to a seller if you’re still interested in purchasing radioactive minerals.”

The guide then made a rubbing gesture with his index finger and thumb, universally understood as a request for payment.

Han Wu sighed and asked, "How much?"

"Not much. It would only cost you 10,000 Divine Points."

Han Wu was on the verge of cursing. He couldn't believe that a mere piece of information would cost him 10,000 Divine Points. Was this not blatant daylight robbery?

"Esteemed guest, I'm going to introduce you to the boss of the most prominent mining company here in the Divine River Ruins. I can assure you that all his goods are of superior quality," the guide urged, noticing Han Wu's reluctance.

Ultimately, Han Wu relented and paid the 10,000 Divine Points.

"Esteemed guest, please follow me," the guide instructed. He then led the way, with Han Wu closely following behind. They navigated through a maze of alleys and eventually arrived at a small shop.

The guide introduced the shop owner to Han Wu. "Esteemed guest, this is Mr. Black, the boss of the largest mining company in the Divine River Ruins. Mr. Black, my customer is interested in purchasing some radioactive minerals."

Mr. Black carefully scrutinized Han Wu, attempting to discern the type of customer he was dealing with. Being only a Demigod, Mr. Black couldn't penetrate the mask's information-blocking properties, but he could tell Han Wu was young from his demeanor.

"Young man," Mr. Black began, "I'm not one to brag, but I'm the biggest supplier of radioactive minerals in the entire Divine River Ruins. My company is responsible for mining almost seventy percent of the radioactive minerals in this region."

With a frown, Han Wu asked, "Does that mean the God King who went bankrupt bought those poor-quality radioactive minerals that ruined his farm from you as well?"

Mr. Black waved his hands dismissively, denying the accusation. "Hold on, let's not get ahead of ourselves. I pride myself on fair business practices and would never deceive my customers. Those inferior quality radioactive minerals came from smaller companies who mix them into their stock for extra profit. And frankly, the God King was a cheapskate. That's why his farm failed. Rest assured, my shop only carries high-quality radioactive minerals."

Han Wu was naturally skeptical of Mr. Black's claims, and decided to test the minerals himself before trusting him.

"I'd like to take some samples back to my divine realm for testing," he said. "Can you give me radioactive minerals of all the qualities you sell? I'll buy 10,000 Divine Points worth of each grade."

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Chapter 57 - Dangers with Radiation and Careful Mutation

[1,130 words]

Chapter 57 - Dangers with Radiation and Careful Mutation

Upon receiving 40,000 Divine Points, Mr. Black handed Han Wu four cards. Each of these cards contained radioactive minerals of a uniform quality.

Subsequently, Han Wu located a hotel that offered rooms equipped with landing pods. Given his status as a Divine Being, he required a landing pod to access his divine realm under typical conditions.

Upon returning to his divine realm, he proceeded to check the number and quality of the radioactive minerals he had obtained.

Eighty minerals with 10% purity, 40 with 15% purity, 20 with 20% purity, and 10 with 25% purity. It seems that the price doubles with every 5% increase in purity. However, that's not the primary concern. The crucial factor is the conversion rate after they're processed through the Refinery and the cost and profit ratio for that, Han Wu thought.

He asked his units to give him some room, then proceeded to place the minerals into the Refinery, organizing them by quality. After processing each batch from lowest to highest purity, he obtained eight, six, four, and three translucent Radiation Stones, respectively.

The results showed that purchasing the minerals with the lowest purity was the most profitable. He subsequently sealed the 21 Radiation Stones into a card and exited his divine realm. Before departing the town, he purchased a map of the Divine River Ruins from the hotel for 1,000 Divine Points.

Han Wu had hardly ventured far from the town when he encountered a mutated beast. Upon using Inspect Eye, he discovered the mutated beast in front of him was a frequently seen Rank 1 monster.

It was supposed to be a Common wolf, but its mutated DNA had caused its two upper canines to grow twenty centimeters long, resembling sabers. Its fur also bristled on its

body like the quills of a porcupine. However, its mutated DNA also resulted in a lifespan of only twenty days.

To prolong its life, it was forced to consume radioactive minerals to gain strength. It needed to evolve into a Rank 2 mutated beast to extend its lifespan. It was engaged in a constant struggle against death, as it would perish if it didn't grow stronger within twenty days.

Han Wu cautiously removed a Radiation Stone and gently tossed it to the mutated beast. The beast immediately picked up the scent of the stone and began searching the area for it. Its eyes widened with excitement upon discovering the fist-sized, pure Radiation Stone. It eagerly licked the stone, and surprisingly, its power instantly surged.

The energy from the Radiation Stone caused its body to undergo further mutation. Its fangs grew even longer, and its fur developed a metallic coating. With just one lick, the mutated beast had successfully reached Rank 2.

Despite remaining a Common life form, it had become strong enough to contend with some weaker Unique life forms. Aware of the alterations in its physique, the mutated beast became enamored with the Radiation Stone and opened its jaws wide, swallowing the stone in a single gulp.

The intense radiation caused it to mutate even further. Its two canine teeth continued to lengthen, its fur grew thicker and stronger, and a third eye sprouted on its forehead.

A tiny green gem began to develop below its third eye, initially the size of a grain. As the mutated beast absorbed more radiation, the green gem on its forehead grew larger, ultimately becoming the size of a peanut.

Han Wu's breath quickened as he witnessed the events unfolding. He was certain that the green gem on the mutated beast's forehead was a Gene Stone, though he remained uncertain about its specific effects.

As the Gene Stone continued to grow, the mutated beast also ascended to Rank 3. It had achieved a power level comparable to some of the more formidable Unique life forms. Remarkably, it had taken the Rank 1 mutated beast only ten minutes to reach Rank 3, and it was now hundreds of times more powerful than its initial state.

Han Wu was taken aback by the sheer speed and extent of the mutated beast's power surge. He realized the Radiation Stone was far more potent than he had initially imagined, capable of triggering such rapid and dramatic mutations.

Just as Han Wu was contemplating conducting further experiments in his divine realm, he was startled by a deafening explosion. The mutated beast had suddenly exploded, scattering its flesh in all directions. The newly formed Gene Stone and the Radiation Stone landed nearby, still coated in the beast's blood and flesh.

Stunned by the explosion, Han Wu immediately discarded any ideas of experimenting in his divine realm. The radiation proved to be far too risky, and he realized he had to be extremely cautious about what he was mutating.

He didn't want to suffer the same fate as the mutated beast, exploding without experiencing the benefits of the mutation. It would be a tragedy to die like that. Thankfully, he was able to recoup his losses with the Gene Stone. He picked it up, rinsed it with clean water, and then used Inspect Eye to examine it.

[Gene Stone (Sharp Teeth): Equivalent to a Rank 3 Sacred Object. Effects: Induces fixed mutation on core race's teeth to become longer and stronger. Side Effect: Lifespan of affected race reduced by 3 years.]

Han Wu's expression turned sour when he learned that he couldn't use the Gene Stone as he intended. It was not only extremely specific in its application but also came with significant side effects.

Given that his locusts had inherently short lives, they would have died immediately if he had used the Gene Stone. It was clearly a flawed Gene Stone. Nevertheless, Han Wu had managed to gather valuable data from the experiment.

He was still pleased that he had managed to obtain a Gene Stone, considering he had used only a tiny portion of the Radiation Stone. As he was about to put away the Radiation Stone and the Gene Stone, he heard a familiar voice coming from behind him.

"Runt, hand over the Gene Stone and that green stone you're holding if you value your life," a familiar voice threatened. Han Wu turned around and saw Demigod Zhang Gang[1], perched on a Raid Wolf!

He was surprised to find Zhang Gang here in the Divine River Ruins. However, he was relieved that his mask prevented Zhang Gang from recognizing him.

"And if I choose not to?"

"Then die."

With a wave of his arm, Zhang Gang opened a portal to his divine realm, unleashing thousands of Wolf Riders that charged towards Han Wu.

1. Zhang Gang is Zhang Bin's father. He first appeared in Chapter 5, and was the first Demigod Han Wu ever faced. 📖

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Chapter 58 - Getting Lost in the Divine River Ruins

[1,497 words]

Chapter 58 - Getting Lost in the Divine River Ruins

Han Wu's initial instinct was to summon his units to engage in the fight. His core race had significantly improved, giving him confidence in overcoming Zhang Gang's Wolf Rider army.

However, as he tried to summon them, he recalled that as a Divine Being, he still needed a landing pod to establish a connection with his divine realm. The ability to directly summon units from one's divine realm was exclusive to Demigods and those of higher rank.

With the Wolf Riders rapidly approaching, Han Wu realized he had no option but to fight on his own. Fortunately, his new Class had provided him with a considerable power boost, making him far more powerful than before.

Activate Dark Dragonification!

Instantly, his body was enveloped in black scales, and a pair of dragon wings unfurled from his back, the powerful aura of a Great Dragon emanating from him upon his transformation. The Raid Wolves were simple beasts driven by instinct, and they instinctively recoiled in fear and kept a considerable distance.

Han Wu wasted no time, charging directly into the Wolf Riders and forcefully battering them aside. In his humanoid black dragon form, he wielded strength that rivaled the might of the more formidable Heroic beings.

Zhang Gang urgently commanded his Wolf Riders to attack Han Wu, even using his Divine Skill, Berserk, on them. The Wolf Riders' eyes became a fierce, bloodthirsty red. Their fear vanished, and they abandoned all caution and charged forward, not caring if they were injured in the process. Their sole objective was to diminish Han Wu's strength. This was a typical strategy employed by weaker beings when facing a Heroic life form.

Han Wu, having anticipated Zhang Gang's strategy, quickly took to the skies after eliminating hundreds of Wolf Riders. The remaining Wolf Riders crashed into one another, looking up in stunned confusion. While they were formidable on land, they were utterly helpless against an airborne opponent.

With a mocking chuckle, Han Wu jeered, "You absolute idiot. I can fly, you know!"

Zhang Gang snarled and activated Anti Flight, another of his Divine Skills. Han Wu felt an immediate heaviness in his body and frantically flapped his wings. To his dismay, he could no longer maintain altitude and plummeted towards the ground. Fortunately, he managed a graceful landing on his feet, avoiding a crash.

The Wolf Riders charged towards him again, moving with incredible speed. Han Wu ran off, effortlessly leaving them behind thanks to the greatly improved stamina he had gained from his Third Class advancement. Reluctant to relinquish his pursuit of the Gene and Radiation Stones, Zhang Gang instructed his Wolf Riders to give chase.

For a considerable duration, the Wolf Riders relentlessly pursued Han Wu through countless deserted regions of the Divine River Ruins. In his effort to evade Zhang Gang, Han Wu traversed many regions that were not even marked on his map.

While running, he spotted a conspicuous "Do Not Enter" sign ahead, situated at the edge of a thick and unsettling forest. Overwhelmed by the number of Wolf Riders chasing him, Han Wu had no choice but to ignore the warning and run past it. Zhang Gang wavered, but the allure of riches convinced him to force his Wolf Riders into the danger zone.

It was evident that the danger zone harbored a significantly higher number of mutated beasts compared to the outside. Han Wu continued running, keeping a watchful eye on his surroundings. He spotted a monkey with a dog's head, a six-legged rabbit, a four-headed crow, and numerous other bizarre mutated creatures.

There were even mutated beasts that were a disturbing mix of various animal parts, rendering their origins completely obscure. To make matters worse, these mutated beasts displayed intense hostility towards any outsiders, attacking Han Wu indiscriminately as soon as they detected him.

The Great Dragon aura had no effect on these mutated beasts. Fortunately, Han Wu's dragon scales offered strong defense, allowing him to easily withstand their attacks. Realizing they couldn't harm him, the mutated beasts shifted their aggression towards the Wolf Riders pursuing him instead.

Even though the Wolf Rider unit, a potent blend of Elite Orcs and Elite Raid Wolves, was undeniably powerful, they found it challenging to contend with the overwhelming number of Rank 2 mutated beasts. Zhang Gang was forced to intervene, personally scaring off the mutated beasts to protect his Wolf Riders. Ultimately, thanks to the mutated beasts' intervention, Han Wu was able to evade their pursuit.

Cursing his misfortune, Zhang Gang ordered his Wolf Riders to return, his frustration palpable. After traveling for an extended period, they noticed the return route was unfamiliar. Zhang Gang immediately sensed something was wrong.

...

Han Wu arrived at a small river, finally free from pursuit. He sighed, looking back to confirm that he was no longer being followed. Feeling extremely thirsty after his prolonged run, he knelt by the river's edge to drink some water.

At that moment, a small fish appeared, causing him to jump in surprise. Han Wu was taken aback, as he had seen countless fish in his life, but never one that possessed legs and swam using the breaststroke.

He pondered the amount of radioactive minerals the fish must have ingested to mutate so severely.

Could the river be some form of wastewater from a radiation mine?

The thought sent shivers down his spine, and he decided to avoid the river entirely. He preferred risking dehydration to consuming even a sip of the suspicious river water.

With his supplies running low, Han Wu urgently tried to pinpoint his location on the map, hoping to return to the town swiftly. He scrutinized the map for a considerable time but found no trace of the river. It was as if the river had materialized from thin air.

Han Wu attempted to retrace his steps, but after walking for half a day, he found himself back at the same location. After several more unsuccessful attempts, he reluctantly concluded that he was lost.

Waiting for rescue in the Divine River Ruins was not an option, as he would either encounter opportunistic Demigods and Gods who would strip him of everything, or terrifying mutated beasts that would devour him.

Determined to find his way out, Han Wu decided to walk in no particular direction, hoping to stumble upon an exit. He chose a random path and started walking. He would take cover behind anything he could find when encountering groups of mutated beasts, but when he saw a lone mutated beast, he would throw a Radiation Stone for it to consume.

Despite their ferocious appearance, the mutated beasts were all simple-minded creatures. They eagerly consumed the Radiation Stone, but each one ultimately exploded.

After repeating this strategy several times, Han Wu accumulated three Rank 3 Gene Stones and one Rank 4 Gene Stone. He calculated that he could earn ten million Divine Points or more by selling them, but this was still insufficient to create a Divine Essence on his own.

With the approach of night, more mutated beasts began to emerge. Han Wu desperately searched for a suitable hiding place.

As he was about to break several trees to construct a makeshift shelter, he suddenly caught sight of the silhouette of a building on the opposite bank of the river. Suspecting a hallucination or mirage, he rubbed his eyes repeatedly. To his astonishment, the building became even more visible under the moonlight.

The Divine River Ruins were an abandoned project of the Divine River Civilization. Perhaps the building was constructed by the people of that civilization.

Han Wu preferred the safety of a structured building over the dangers of the wilderness. Transforming into a humanoid dark dragon, he quickly flew towards the building, soon hovering above it.

As he had anticipated, it was a complex of buildings abandoned by the Divine River Civilization. The walls were covered in various glyphs and symbols characteristic of that civilization.

Han Wu landed in a spacious courtyard, finding it unusually silent. Despite the apparent safety, he remained vigilant. He couldn't dismiss the possibility that the abandoned complex had become a nesting site for a mutated beast.

Han Wu cautiously entered one of the buildings bordering the courtyard. Inside, he found the place in disarray, with papers scattered across the floor. He picked up one of the papers and noticed complex equations inscribed on it. After searching the building and finding no signs of mutated beasts, he began to relax.

This place is safe enough. I'm staying here tonight.

Just as the idea of a secure night's rest settled in his mind, the delicate sound of footsteps echoed from beyond the room. He swiftly concealed himself within a cupboard, cautiously peering through a narrow opening in the cupboard door.

He saw a group of people, all wearing black cloaks, descend into the courtyard and commence preparations for some kind of ritual.

What kind of situation have I stumbled upon? Han Wu wondered.

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[1,339 words]

Chapter 59 - Origin of Mutation

By straining his ears, Han Wu was able to overhear the conversation of the cloaked individuals.

One of the individuals, presumably the leader, addressed the group, stating, "The God King's reputation is in jeopardy, as he is being labeled a failed investor. He has recklessly spent hundreds of billions of Divine Points to make this ceremony possible. We absolutely must succeed, regardless of the obstacles!"

The group responded in unison, "We understand."

One individual revealed, "I've placed warning signs at the perimeter of the ruins to prevent people from entering. Anyone with common sense would steer clear."

Another reported, "I've also cast a wide-ranging illusion spell that will remain active for three days. Even Demigods will become disoriented within the illusion. Only those with God-level power or higher will be unaffected."

A third added, "I've secured all the hotels in the vicinity, ensuring this location won't be recorded on any of their maps. No one will be able to locate this place."

The rest of the group proceeded with their reports, and the leader responded with a nod of approval. "Excellent work, everyone! Let's retrieve the prize and receive the God King's generous reward!"

A member of the group announced to the leader, "It's almost time. We should begin the ceremony."

The leader nodded in agreement and produced a large quantity of Gene Stones. They then meticulously arranged the Gene Stones on the courtyard ground, as these priceless items were essential for initiating the ceremony.

As midnight arrived, a strange energy started to emanate from the courtyard, and the neatly arranged Gene Stones intensified this energy. Suddenly, the concentrated energy transformed into a dark green beam of light, shooting directly into the night sky.

The pillar of light pierced through the clouds, revealing a massive array that encompassed the entire area. The six cloaked individuals were visibly excited, as they had uncovered a peculiar seal left behind in the Divine River Ruins.

While it was a fact that the Divine River Ruins were an abandoned project of the Divine River Civilization, the genuine reason was concealed from the general populace. The project was discontinued due to the perilous nature of the research being carried out, which ultimately led to its abandonment and subsequent sealing.

The leaders of the Divine River Civilization intended to reactivate the project in the future when they could manage the inherent risks, but a certain God King had somehow acquired this confidential information. Using the mutated beast farm as a cover, the God King secretly researched about and investigated the method to break the seal, and after investing hundreds of billions of Divine Points—an amount most could not even imagine—the God King ultimately discovered how to unlock the seal.

Had it been possible, the God King would have come in person to unseal the area, but unfortunately, there was an additional special seal in place that restricted entry to life forms with at most 10 Divine Essence.

The array began to slowly rotate, its seal gradually weakening. Without warning, a cold, robotic voice, devoid of emotion, resonated within the consciousness of every life form in the surrounding area.

[Unsealing Project Divine River Origin of Mutation]

The cloaked figures were elated, having successfully unsealed the site. They had meticulously prepared for this moment. Just as they thought everything was proceeding perfectly, a loud alarm suddenly blared, unexpectedly shattering the moment.

[Warning! Warning! The entity unsealing the Project is not a designated Super Soldier from the Divine River Ruins. Assigning status as invaders and aborting unsealing protocols.]

[Initiating security protocols. Releasing Rank 6 mutated beast Gemora...]

[Warning! Security protocols are being disrupted. Origin of Mutation has broken free. Currently attempting suppression...]

[%^\$%\$^#@(E%@]

Boom!

A deafening explosion echoed in the minds of everyone nearby. The cloaked figures clutched their heads in agony, blood seeping from their orifices. The blaring warnings created a sense of overwhelming disorientation, until a taunting voice addressed them.

“Well, hello there, you adorable little things from the Divine Civilization.”

“Who said that? Who’s there? Show yourself at once!” the cloaked individuals cried out anxiously, their eyes frantically darting around the courtyard, yet they saw no one.

“I am the Origin of Mutation. Thank you for weakening my seal, which has allowed me to escape. To express my gratitude, I will offer you a chance to become my vessel.

However, only one of you can hold this honor. I wonder which one it will be. Let's play a little game, shall we?"

The environment abruptly changed, plunging them into a completely pitch-black space. In front of them, a green, humanoid silhouette materialized. Its body, sticky and fluid, constantly shifted like a viscous liquid. The figure pinched the liquid around its face, forming a grotesquely exaggerated smile. Its mouth sputtered as it began to speak.

"The rules of this contest are simple: you will breed and train a mutated beast to battle and defeat the Rank 6 mutated beast, Gemora. You will each be given 10,000 high-purity Radiation Stones for experimentation. The one who emerges victorious in this challenge will be granted the honor of becoming my vessel!"

One of the cloaked figures shouted, "I have no intention of becoming your vessel! If you do not release us immediately, I will unleash all of my units and obliterate this place!"

However, the individual abruptly discovered that he could not access his divine realm, as if it were completely isolated by an impenetrable barrier.

With a chilling chuckle, the Origin of Mutation declared, "And so, the first loser has revealed himself."

In an instant, a horrifying mutated creature, resembling a T-rex, appeared and devoured the unsuspecting cloaked person who had dared to threaten the Origin of Mutation. This mutated beast was none other than the Rank 6 mutated beast Gemora.

The cloaked individuals, despite being Demigods, were rendered utterly powerless in this space and unable to retaliate against the Origin of Mutation. They trembled at the realization of their helplessness. Without access to their divine realms, they were utterly weak. They knew, without a doubt, that Gemora was an insurmountable opponent, even if they combined their strength.

Inadvertently caught in this predicament, Han Wu softly murmured, "Regarding that... I'm unable to connect to my divine realm and summon my units."

The other five cloaked people were taken aback to find someone else there, having been completely unaware of Han Wu's presence until he spoke up.

"Rest assured, little guy. I won't leave you out," the Origin of Mutation chuckled, snapping its liquid fingers. A small, singular-direction gate opened near Han Wu, granting him the ability to summon his units, but not to send them back. The Origin of Mutation had completely eliminated Han Wu's option of escaping into his Divine Realm.

The five remaining cloaked individuals covertly attempted to establish a connection with their divine realms, but found their efforts futile. They were compelled to comply with the

Origin of Mutation's demands. They were forced to send the Radiation Stones back to their divine realms and command their units to consume them.

While the Radiation Stones caused intense agony for the units that consumed them, they also triggered mutations within their bodies. However, these mutations were unpredictable and often resulted in adverse effects.

After feeding the Radiation Stones to their units, they found that 40% of their units suffered immediate fatalities, 30% were rendered immobile, and 20% were severely weakened. The remaining 10% showed no adverse effects from the stones. Only a small fraction of their units exhibited noticeable strength gains after the mutations.

However, even with the gain in strength, the improvement was not limitless. It was evident that the mutated units were still significantly weaker than the Rank 6 mutated beast Gemora.

The five cloaked individuals frowned, realizing the futility of their situation. They understood that they could not create a mutated beast capable of defeating Gemora, even if they were to sacrifice every single one of their units.

In contrast, Han Wu was experiencing significantly less difficulty than the five cloaked individuals.

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Chapter 60 - Mutated Locust's Short Life

[1,295 words]

Chapter 60 - Mutated Locust's Short Life

Without hesitation, Han Wu placed all 10,000 high-purity Radiation Stones into the Refinery to enhance their purity. The Refinery took some time to complete the process, ultimately producing 6,000 Radiation Stones that were almost entirely pure.

The higher the purity of the Radiation Stones, the greater their radiation content, and the more readily they induced mutations in organisms that ingested them. Despite this, the mutations were still completely random.

Aiming to increase the odds of achieving positive mutations, Han Wu brought forth 100 million Unique locusts to serve as test subjects. Thankfully, the area they were in was separated from his divine realm, ensuring the radiation would not harm his other units.

Han Wu initiated the experiment by distributing 2,000 of his refined Radiation Stones into 100 million portions for his locusts. Due to their small size and high sensitivity to radiation, all the locusts exhibited the effects of ingesting the pure Radiation Stones within a single hour.

Unfortunately, 42 million locusts succumbed to severe radiation poisoning, 30 million were rendered crippled by uncontrolled DNA mutations, and 18 million suffered DNA deletions, causing them to regress to the Elite rank and drastically shorten their lifespans.

Of the initial 100 million, only 10 million locusts successfully mutated into Rank 1 mutated beasts, but 7 million of those showed no discernible increase in strength. The remaining 3 million locusts were the fortunate few that experienced enhanced strength due to their beneficial mutations.

He then distributed 1,000 pure Radiation Stones among the 10 million Rank 1 mutated beasts that had survived, in an effort to boost their power. After three hours, the results showed that only 2 million of the Rank 1 mutated beasts had advanced to Rank 2, with only 400,000 of them displaying a notable increase in strength.

Han Wu provided the 2 million mutated beasts with regular food before proceeding to feed them the pure Radiation Stones. He then used 1,000 Radiation Stones, successfully transforming 50,000 of the 2 million mutated beasts into Rank 3 mutated beasts.

The Rank 3 mutated beasts developed the ability to generate Gene Stones from their bodies. However, only 1,000 of the 50,000 Rank 3 mutated beasts experienced beneficial mutations that boosted their strength to the level of a Heroic life form.

He picked up each of the mutated locusts and meticulously inspected their mutations, eventually finding one particularly remarkable mutation. One of the locusts had experienced a transformation that granted it an incredibly rapid recovery speed.

The locust possessed the ability to regenerate any part of its body, even its head, provided it had sufficient energy. Han Wu at last perceived a slender thread of hope for that specific locust to endure the game.

Han Wu isolated the locust from the rest and meticulously cut a thousandth of a single pure Radiation Stone, which he then fed to it. The Law of Gluttony ensured that the locust could consume anything it was given without issue, including the highly dangerous Radiation Stone.

The locust eagerly consumed the sliver of Radiation Stone and immediately began to mutate once more. The radiation proceeded to destroy its cells, causing its flesh to gradually peel away. However, due to its extraordinary regenerative capability, it was able to rebuild the lost muscle and survive the ordeal.

The locust endured until the energy from the Radiation Stone was completely depleted. By the end of this process, it had surprisingly become stronger, with its recovery speed significantly increased. Satisfied with the outcome, Han Wu fed the mutated locust some standard food and subsequently gave it an even larger quantity of Radiation Stones.

The locust sustained itself by relying on its exceptional recovery speed to regenerate the tissues damaged by the radiation. It managed to survive each bout of radiation poisoning, gradually becoming stronger. The locust also increased in size with each mutation, finally measuring two meters long upon reaching Rank 4, a size unmatched even by the Heroic Locustman.

With its increasing size, the locust became capable of handling greater amounts of radiation. By this point, it could consume half a Radiation Stone in less than half an hour. Han Wu steadily increased the amount of Radiation Stone it was fed, progressing from one stone to two, then to five, and finally to ten stones at a time.

He achieved an astonishing level of control over the feeding amount, precisely balancing it so that the damage from the intense radiation was nearly equal to the locust's rapid recovery rate.

For three long months, all six of them worked tirelessly within the isolated space, striving to increase their units' power. The five cloaked people, however, ended up sacrificing all of their units throughout the experiment, resulting in only one surviving Rank 4 mutated beast, which had originally been a Heroic ape.

After undergoing multiple mutations, the ape reached a height of ten meters and acquired two extra front limbs. It had the potential to unleash widespread destruction when it entered a berserk state. By this stage, it had significantly surpassed the strength of ordinary Heroic life forms. However, even with its enhanced strength, it only managed to withstand Gemora's assault for three minutes. Ultimately, Gemora consumed it as if it were a mere snack.

The five cloaked people witnessed their mutated ape being torn apart and consumed piece by piece. They were overcome with a profound sense of grief, as if they had lost their own children. The mutated ape had represented their last glimmer of hope. However, the Origin of Mutation remained merciless, instructing Gemora to consume the five cloaked figures.

The Origin of Mutation then turned its attention to Han Wu, observing the colossal 20 meter long, eight meter high locust. The locust had now reached Rank 6, the same level as Gemora.

To significantly enhance the locust's strength, Han Wu used all the Gene Stones he had acquired from the rest of his mutated locusts and implanted them into it. Due to the Gene Stones, the locust's body underwent localized mutations of varying forms, ultimately surpassing the power of a Heroic life form.

However, there was a significant drawback to recklessly enhancing its strength. The uncontrolled mutations had drastically shortened the locust's lifespan, reducing it to a single day. It was destined to perish tonight, whether it faced Gemora or not.

"Go, prove to me the significance of your short life!" Han Wu exclaimed, cheering on his locust prior to the battle. The locust nodded as understanding what was said and then soared into the air.

The intense wind buffeted Gemora, forcing it to lower its head. Nevertheless, as a Rank 6 mutated beast, Gemora quickly regained its composure and attacked, biting down on the locust. Its massive jaws ripped away sizable chunks of the locust's flesh with every bite.

Refusing to yield, the locust regrew its damaged flesh with every injury it received. At the same time, it devoured Gemora's flesh to replenish as much energy as possible, supporting its ongoing regeneration.

The battle was so brutal and bloody that even Han Wu couldn't bear to watch. The Origin of Mutation, however, was deeply engrossed in the fight. After being sealed away for so long, it craved the thrill of an intense battle.

After a relentless eighteen-hour struggle, the locust triumphed, devouring Gemora's brain at the very end of its life. The locust succumbed to death immediately after defeating Gemora. The only remaining evidence of its survival was the Rank 6 Gene Stone it left behind.

"That was quite a spectacle, wouldn't you agree, my new vessel?" the Origin of Mutation commented, as it rushed towards Han Wu, its viscous form wrapping around him. Han Wu was then subjected to the agonizing pain of suffocation for the first time.

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Chapter 61 - Origin of Mutation and Han Wu

[1,103 words]

Chapter 61 - Origin of Mutation and Han Wu

Han Wu came to, with no sense of how long he had been out. He moved his limbs, but felt no discernible difference physically, so he swiftly examined his data to understand what had changed.

[Name: Han Wu-Origin of Mutation]

[Rank: Divine Being / Rank 1 Supergene Soldier]

[Divine Talent: Chosen One (Exclusive), Defiance]

[Divine Powers: Sacrifice (Exclusive), Controlled Mutation]

[Skills: Mighty Cleave, Enchant Darkness, Dragon Slash, Dark Dragonification, ...]

[Divine Essence: 4 (Origin of Mutation Gene Parasitization. Divine Essence +1)]

[Divine Points: 29.7 million (Personal) / 22.5 million (Foreign)]

[Faith Points: 67.03 million]

[Core Level: Level 10 (Rank 3 Sacred Object, Law of Gluttony (Incomplete); Rank 2 Sacred Object, Revelation Stone; Rank 2 Sacred Object, Shadow Nail; Rank 1 Sacred Object, Poison Gland; Rank 1 Sacred Object, Earth Core; Rank 1 Sacred Object, Elf Shortbow)]

[Core Race: ...]

Although the changes in his data were minimal, Han Wu was certain that something was wrong. He murmured under his breath, a troubled expression on his face, "Am I still Han Wu, or am I becoming the Origin of Mutation?"

A mocking voice responded to his internal question, "So, you're finally awake, my dear vessel."

"Who...?! You're the Origin of Mutation!"

"Indeed! I am responsible for your current state as a Supergene Soldier, and you should be thanking me. By making you my host, I have bestowed upon you power that dwarfs

even the Divine Civilization. Furthermore, I have replaced your Increased Growth with Controlled Mutation. While Increased Growth has its advantages, Controlled Mutation will prove to be significantly more effective in the long run.”

Han Wu couldn't help but gasp, unable to contain his shock. As a mere Divine Being, he lacked the ability to rewrite his genetic code, yet the Origin of Mutation had accomplished it so effortlessly.

“Don't worry, my dear vessel, your safety is now tied to mine. We are essentially one—if you die, I die; if you live, I live. From this point on, our survival is mutually dependent. Wouldn't you agree?”

Silence hung in the air as Han Wu made no comment. He realized that he was powerless to change things for now and had to accept his new reality.

“Relax,” the voice continued. “You are not losing anything in this arrangement. I am a supergene, possessing power strong enough to be classified within the first series of the entire Divine River Civilization. You should be grateful to be my host. Do you follow?”

Han Wu, having endured the Origin of Mutation's monologue, finally spoke, his voice edged with frustration. “Can you stop your pointless rambling and just tell me how I can get out of this place?”

His only thought was to flee this godforsaken space and find a method to inspect his body in the real world.

“I now have total command over the seal. The only obstacle left was the Rank 6 mutated beast Gemora, but you killed it! We are now free to depart whenever we wish,” the Origin of Mutation said.

With a snap of Han Wu's fingers, manipulated by the Origin of Mutation, he was teleported back to the courtyard. As this happened, the intricate array in the sky started to fade away gradually, its disappearance this time permanent.

The Origin of Mutation suddenly cautioned Han Wu, “Oh, I almost forgot to tell you something crucial. The individuals in those cloaks made a considerable commotion while breaking the seal on this place. I suspect that there are numerous Demigods and Gods currently isolated outside the ruins, and they will likely surge into this area as soon as the seal completely dissipates.”

Inwardly, Han Wu raged at the Origin of Mutation for failing to mention this critical detail sooner. He knew that if the Demigods and Gods stormed the ruins only to discover no hidden treasures, they wouldn't believe him when he said he hadn't obtained anything. Being only a Divine Being, he was entirely at the mercy of their overwhelming strength.

More significantly, Han Wu firmly believed he had already obtained the most precious treasure within the ruins: the Origin of Mutation, now bound to his very genes. He had no intention of relinquishing it. He was certain that if the Demigods and Gods managed to capture him, they would, in all probability, kill him to take possession of the Origin of Mutation.

Realizing that flight was his only option for survival, Han Wu was relieved to remember he had a way out—the Permanent Coordinates of the Blood Coliseum.

Without hesitation, Han Wu poured 1 million Divine Points into the mark on his hand, triggering its activation. A teleportation array immediately appeared beneath his feet, teleporting him away just before the seal completely disintegrated.

Hordes of Demigods and Gods surged into the now deserted ruins, their search becoming increasingly chaotic as they upended everything. They stumbled upon the peculiar sealed space where Han Wu had been confined, only to find it completely empty.

Demigod Zhang Gang was part of the treasure-hunting group, but like the others, he found nothing except the corpses of a few locusts. The sight of the dead locusts stirred unpleasant memories, making him suspicious. Although he couldn't confirm his doubts, he decided to keep some of the locust remains as potential evidence.

News of the commotion and occurrences at the Divine River Ruins reached a distant palace, where a God King seethed with uncontrollable anger. The seal surrounding the ruins had been permanently broken, and the treasure within had inexplicably disappeared. Adding to his fury, the mercenaries he had sent to retrieve the treasure had likely all been killed, given the complete absence of any reports from them.

The God King felt like a complete idiot for sinking hundreds of billions of Divine Points into a venture that resulted in nothing.

“Damn it! Those worthless bastards! How dare they let someone steal my treasure?” The financially ruined God King bellowed in fury as he dispatched numerous signals in an attempt to locate his mercenaries. His efforts were not completely wasted, as he managed to get a very weak response from a faraway place.

Before dispatching the mercenaries, the God King had implanted a Tracer Seed within each of their divine realms, specifically designed to monitor their location. Nevertheless, the signal returned was so faint that he couldn't determine their exact whereabouts, most probably because their crumbling divine realms were interfering with the transmission.

The frustrated God King, determined to find the source, instructed his units to relentlessly broadcast the tracking signals until they successfully identified the location of the weak feedback.

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Chapter 62 - Controlled Mutation and Reduced Lifespan

[1,569 words]

Chapter 62 - Controlled Mutation and Reduced Lifespan

Han Wu arrived at the Blood Coliseum without encountering any difficulties. While relieved to have escaped his predicament, he couldn't help but feel a sense of loss at having used 1 million Divine Points for a single teleportation.

As Han Wu prepared to activate the teleporter at the Blood Coliseum to go back to school, a challenge notification unexpectedly popped up.

[Dear candidate, a challenge has been issued to you by a fellow candidate, a Divine Being known as Wicked Dragon. Do you accept this challenge? (Note that your candidacy will be revoked if you decline three challenges or if you are defeated in a challenge)]

A frown creased Han Wu's brow. He had no desire to linger, yet another candidate was seeking a duel.

"In that case, I will accept it," he stated, a touch of annoyance in his tone. He was still simmering with frustration over the events in the Divine River Ruins and saw this as an opportunity to release some of his pent-up anger.

The administrators of the Blood Coliseum treated challenges between candidates with utmost seriousness. They provided the two combatants with the arena designated for Demigods, spanning 10,000 sq km. This offered more than sufficient space for two Divine Beings to engage in a full-fledged battle.

The spectators were filled with excitement and eagerly anticipated the upcoming match..

"Locust Plague! Locust Plague!"

"Locust Plague, send out your Osteomancer and let the Wicked Dragon learn just how terrifying it is to face an Osteomancer!"

“Locust Plague, display your true power and annihilate the Wicked Dragon!”

Though numerous individuals voiced their support for Han Wu, a fair number of others were cheering on the Wicked Dragon.

“Wicked Dragon, use your half-dragons to destroy his locusts!”

“The Locust Plague’s core race is the locust, and they are incredibly fragile, so you absolutely must win this!”

“Wicked Dragon, I’ve wagered 500,000 Divine Points on your victory, so don’t you dare lose!”

Despite the roaring encouragement from the spectators, the two combatants within the arena remained unmoved, their attention solely fixed on one another.

Both combatants wore masks that concealed their data, but Wicked Dragon’s mask was clearly made from superior materials. Covering the upper half of his face, it was shaped like a dragon, exuding both regality and coolness to such an extent that Han Wu felt he had already been outdone in terms of visual appeal.

Despite facing an opponent of equal rank, the Wicked Dragon remained arrogant.

“Locust Plague, your name precedes you. I know your core race is the locust, yet you resort to using skeletons and trickery to win your matches. Sadly for you, your luck has run out, as you have the misfortune of facing me today!”

Han Wu, quickly growing tired of Wicked Dragon's taunts, retorted, “Stop your blabbering and let's just get this over with.”

A smirk spread across the Wicked Dragon's face as he replied, “Very well, in that case, I shall send you to your doom without further delay.”

Both combatants established a connection to their respective divine realms and proceeded to summon their forces. Han Wu unleashed a vast number of locusts and Locustmen, whereas the Wicked Dragon materialized a massive army of half-dragons.

Half-dragons were inherently Elite life forms from the moment of their birth, possessing not only formidable physical bodies but also a natural talent for magic. Upon reaching maturity, a half-dragon would unlock a random magical ability, which could originate from any race.

Wicked Dragon had unleashed a formidable army consisting of 300,000 Elite half-dragons, 40,000 Unique Half-Dragon Warriors, and two Heroic half-dragons. Even Han Wu had to acknowledge that this was a force capable of challenging even more experienced Demigods. This revelation shed light on how the Wicked Dragon had been

able to defeat a Demigod in the Blood Coliseum, thus securing his position as a candidate.

“Are you looking down on me?” Wicked Dragon questioned, his voice laced with disdain. He was clearly unimpressed by his opponent's summons, having heard that skeletons were his trump card. He interpreted Han Wu's choice as a sign of disrespect.

Ignoring Wicked Dragon's taunts, Han Wu countered, “You should first demonstrate your ability to overcome my locusts before you continue speaking.”

Han Wu unleashed his locust army upon the half-dragons. The battle began immediately, and his forces were bombarded by exceptionally strong magical attacks. The half-dragon army employed fire, frost, lightning, wind, and other elemental spells, swiftly eliminating a large portion of the advancing locusts.

However, undaunted by the heavy losses, the locust army refused to yield. The Heavenly Demon Insects, with their prominent horns, charged headfirst into the fray, while the Abyss Bugs formed living barriers, absorbing much of the incoming magic. The Dark Cursed Bugs fired volleys of Shadow Nails, slowing the half-dragons' movements and stealthily eliminating isolated targets, and finally, the Locustmen drew their shortbows and unleashed a relentless barrage of arrows on the enemy forces.

The sight of their brethren being cut down by the locusts was unbearable for the Heroic half-dragons, fueling their continued attack. One, a Half-Dragon Archmage, commanded potent fire magic, while the other, a Half-Dragon Marksman, was skilled in long-range attacks. With ease, they evaded the swarming locusts and unleashed devastating ranged attacks that decimated the ranks of the Locustmen.

Wicked Dragon's defiant laughter echoed through the arena as he taunted, “Cease your futile resistance! If you don't reveal your trump card soon, your pathetic locusts will all be annihilated!”

Han Wu internally agreed, recognizing that his locusts were dying in vain. Just as he was about to summon his Heroic units, the Origin of Mutation's mocking voice echoed in his mind. “I can hardly believe you are going to endure such humiliation. I am beginning to seriously doubt my decision to choose you as my vessel.”

“What do you mean?”

“We are going to use your locusts to teach those foolish half-dragons a harsh lesson.”

Perplexed, Han Wu expressed his doubt. “But the locusts stand no chance against the half-dragons.”

He had heard countless times from others about how weak his locusts were, ever since he had gained control over his body, to the point that even Han Wu himself had begun to doubt their strength.

“Weak locusts, you say? Surely you recall that one of your supposedly useless locusts devoured the Rank 6 mutated beast Gemora! In my opinion, the concept of a weak race is nonexistent, only those who have resigned themselves to defeat. With me here, you can’t lose! Now, unleash the Controlled Mutation that I have bestowed upon you to obliterate those arrogant half-dragons.”

Though he disliked the Origin of Mutation’s condescending tone, Han Wu decided to put its claim to the test. He summoned an Abyss Bug and pressed his palm against it, activating Controlled Mutation. In an instant, a wide array of choices presented themselves to him, detailing the various mutations he could induce within the Abyss Bug.

Amused by his host’s surprised reaction, the Origin of Mutation chuckled before proceeding to instruct him. “First of all,” it began, “have you given any thought to the specific evolutionary path you wish to take for your units?”

Han Wu had a clear idea of what he wanted. “To begin with, the Abyss Bug needs increased damage resistance so they can function better as meat shields. Their primary function is to protect their comrades.”

The Origin of Mutation quickly sorted through the list and presented Han Wu with three options.

[1: Exoskeleton Mutation: Increases density and thickness of Abyss Bug. Increases physical resistance by 10 times. Reduces lifespan of Abyss Bug by 50 days.]

[2: Gland Mutation: Mutates glands of Abyss Bug to produce copious amounts of sticky mucus. Increases elemental resistance. Reduces lifespan of Abyss Bug by 90 days.]

[3: Overall Mutation. Increases size of Abyss Bug. Increases all stats. Reduces lifespan of Abyss Bug to 24 hours.]

The half-dragons’ relentless attacks were rapidly decimating the locusts. Despite this, Han Wu selected the third option, which was described as the most potent yet also the most disadvantageous, to mutate his Abyss Bugs. He channeled Faith Points to initiate the transformation, and the chosen Abyss Bug began to grow at an astonishing rate, increasing in length from 40 cm to a massive 2 meters.

Once the transformation was complete, the mutated Abyss Bug was filled with an unprecedented surge of strength. Spreading its newly enhanced wings, it launched itself towards a half-dragon that was in the process of casting a spell.

The half-dragon, caught off guard, swiftly redirected its attack, unleashing the magic at point-blank range. The spell detonated directly on the Abyss Bug, yet it remained completely unharmed as it forcefully rammed the half-dragon's jaw with a sideways blow.

Witnessing the immense strength of the mutated Abyss Bug, Han Wu adapted his tactics. He mutated a significant number of Abyss Bugs, focusing on maximizing their defensive strength even at the cost of reducing their lifespan to a mere single day. However, this limitation mattered little as the incredibly resilient Abyss Bugs charged headfirst into the half-dragon army, intent on unleashing maximum chaos and destruction.

Han Wu didn't stop with the Abyss Bugs; he also initiated the Controlled Mutation process on his Heavenly Demon Insects and Dark Cursed Bugs. These two breeds of locusts, specifically created for warfare, displayed remarkable courage and strength after undergoing their respective mutations.

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[1,202 words]

Chapter 63 - A Real Surprise

Utilizing the Controlled Mutation, Han Wu evolved the Heavenly Demon Insects to a towering two meters in height. Furthermore, their horns elongated into meter-long lances, weapons sharp and powerful enough to pierce through any obstacle in their way.

In contrast, Han Wu mutated the Dark Cursed Bugs until they were a mere 10 centimeters in size, but the energy concentrated within their small bodies had been amplified to dangerously high levels. Consequently, every Shadow Nail they expelled could immobilize a Common half-dragon for a full three seconds—a duration that could prove fatal in the intense chaos of battle.

The unexpected resilience and strength of the locusts caused Wicked Dragon to stare in disbelief as the locusts began to overpower his army, driving them backward.

What in the world is going on? How did these locusts suddenly become ten times stronger? Did they consume some kind of drug while I wasn't looking?

The inexplicable surge in the locusts' power left everyone bewildered. However, Wicked Dragon was unaware that Han Wu's true force was yet to be revealed. Han Wu had secretly completed the mutation of 100 Locustmen, each standing at an imposing 5

meters in height and radiating a powerful aura. Armed with colossal bows, they rained down massive arrows on the unsuspecting half-dragons.

The powerful arrows effortlessly pierced through multiple half-dragons with each shot. Even the resilient Unique half-dragons found it difficult to defend against the sheer force of the attacks. Only the two Heroic half-dragons possessed the durability to withstand the incoming arrows, but the sheer number of Locustmen proved overwhelming. There were a hundred of them, and each one wielded power comparable to that of weak Heroic beings.

The reality of the battle was that each Heroic half-dragon was in a position where they had to fight against the equivalent of 50 weaker beings of Heroic caliber at once. This sheer numerical disadvantage rendered any chance of victory nonexistent. Recognizing the substantial gap in power and the hopelessness of his situation, Wicked Dragon was forced to concede defeat when half of his summoned forces had been killed.

The situation was utterly hopeless. Wicked Dragon would have undoubtedly persevered if even the faintest glimmer of victory remained, but Han Wu's mutated locusts had become overwhelmingly powerful. There was no conceivable way to turn the tables.

The crowd, for the most part, had foreseen Han Wu's triumph. Realizing that continuing to fight against such an overwhelming force was an act of foolish pride, they did not condemn Wicked Dragon for his decision to surrender.

Once the battle had ended, Han Wu and Wicked Dragon each sent their remaining units back to their divine realms. The fallen corpses that littered the arena floor were then enveloped by the unique array specific to the Blood Coliseum, which converted them into Core Fragments.

The arrogant demeanor Wicked Dragon had previously displayed was now completely absent, yet his confidence remained unshaken. He approached Han Wu and said, "Locust Plague, this battle may have ended in my defeat, but I assure you that I will be victorious next time!"

"If there'll be a next time," Han Wu responded simply, his thoughts drifting to the immense power he had just witnessed from the Origin of Mutation. Its power was on an entirely different level!

Sensing Han Wu's awe, the Origin of Mutation chuckled derisively. "Calm yourself, vessel. This is just basic stuff."

In a surprising turn, Wicked Dragon unexpectedly revealed his real name to Han Wu. "You are remarkably strong. Out of curiosity, which college are you affiliated with? My name is Long Xiang, and I am a first-year student at the prestigious Warfare College, a First Class institution. I look forward to a rematch or friendly spar between us sometime."

Han Wu's eyebrows shot up in surprise. *The difference in power between students from First Class Colleges and Top Colleges seems immense. Xiang Meng of Imperial College, despite being a first-year student like Long Xiang, had already reached the Demigod realm, while Long Xiang is still a Divine Being.*

Han Wu was certain that Xiang Meng possessed the edge over Long Xiang due to his Divine Skill, regardless of their armies' power. He responded to Long Xiang's proposal with a polite refusal, "I highly doubt our paths will cross again. I haven't even taken the entrance examinations for any college yet."

A look of astonishment spread across Wicked Dragon's face. "Seriously? You're still in high school? That's unbelievable! Someone as strong as you has to be on a reserve list for some college. The reserve students I've seen at my college are nowhere near your level. It looks like I'll have to give my future juniors a heads-up about you."

Paying no attention to Long Xiang, Han Wu received his Core Fragment rewards and made his way to the teleporter. Just as he arrived, Long Xiang's Permanent Coordinates for the Blood Coliseum suddenly broke free and transformed into a beam of red light, which then shot directly into Han Wu's own Permanent Coordinates.

Han Wu tried to detect if his body had undergone any transformations, but everything felt the same. The significance and power of that red beam of light only became evident to him once he was safely back within his divine realm.

His divine realm housed a special building called the Blood Coliseum. It served as a training ground for his units, with the victor holding a slim possibility of ascending to the next rank. Furthermore, there was an exceedingly rare chance that his Unique life forms could even evolve into Heroic life forms without the usual requirement of a Heroic template.

However, that minuscule chance had now improved to a minor one. The exact probability had increased significantly from 1 in 10,000 to 1 in 3,000. While the likelihood of this event occurring was still relatively low, this improvement was still quite beneficial for the locusts' potential evolution.

Han Wu had a strong feeling that the Blood Coliseum would be instrumental in producing a significant number of Heroic locusts for his future needs. After thoroughly inspecting the building, he instinctively made his way towards his Core, a routine he had developed within his divine space.

A significant mountain of resources awaited him at his Core, including a substantial quantity of radioactive minerals, hundreds of valuable Gene Stones, several fragments of divine realms, a large accumulation of Core Fragments, the remains of six Demigod corpses, and even the partially consumed bodies of the Rank 6 mutated beast Gemora and his super regenerative locust.

Now, this was a truly unexpected surprise!

The Origin of Mutation let out a soft, mocking laugh. “*Oh ho~* Vessel, do you really find this small amount so captivating? In comparison to the boundless wealth at my disposal, these resources are but a tiny fraction, no more than the tip of an enormous iceberg.”

Han Wu dismissed the Origin of Mutation’s comment with a wave of his hand. “Yes, yes, yes. You are absolutely right. You’re the seasoned veteran, and I’m just a rookie in comparison.”

The sight of the massive accumulation of resources ignited a strong desire in Han Wu to improve his units as swiftly as possible.

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Chapter 64 - It’s Good To Be Rich

[1,673 words]

Chapter 64 - It’s Good To Be Rich

By placing the radioactive minerals into the Refinery, Han Wu successfully extracted 36,000 high-purity Radiation Stones. Estimating that this would be sufficient to produce six to eight more hyper-regenerative locusts if he managed their usage economically, he nonetheless decided to store them within a card for the time being, as he had no immediate need for them.

Han Wu followed the same procedure with the Gene Stones, sealing them into cards. He saw no immediate benefit in using them, especially considering their tendency to significantly shorten the operational lifespan of his units.

Considering the already brief lifespans of his locusts, using Gene Stones would be counterproductive and ultimately detrimental. Therefore, Han Wu resolved to wait until the activity surrounding the Divine River Ruins subsided before selling the Gene Stones, anticipating a potential return of no less than 100 million Divine Points.

While the divine realm fragments and Core Fragments were valuable and scarce resources, Han Wu was unable to utilize them in his current state. He would have to wait until he underwent the ascension to become a Demigod in the future before he could access their benefits.

Next, Han Wu focused his attention on the most valuable items present before him: the six Demigod corpses, the Rank 6 mutated beast Gemora, and the Rank 6 mutated locust with hyper-regeneration. A perfect utilization strategy immediately came to mind.

The body of a Demigod was a unique combination of Divine Essence and physical flesh. Han Wu realized he could extract the potent Divine Essence from these remains and utilize the flesh itself to directly increase his units' ranks, effectively circumventing the standard limitation of needing a template.

The reason Qin Shuang sought the Demigod Dark Frogman's corpse during their test in the Demonic Civilization was now clear to him. She had meticulously removed the flesh from the Dark Frogman's corpse to reconstruct a new physical body for her Heroic Golden-Crown Thunder Sparrow, thereby facilitating its ascension to a Lord life form.

A question lingered in Han Wu's mind regarding Qin Shuang's achievement, as, after all, he was going to do something similar. However, the extraction and refinement of a Demigod's flesh was an arduous process, demanding unwavering dedication. Only after six relentless realm months, devoid of rest, were the Divine Essence extracted and the corpses completely refined.

He successfully acquired eighteen portions of Divine Essence and four concentrated spheres of Divine Flesh Energy. Notably, these four balls of Flesh Energy could later function as Lord Templates which would facilitate the ascension of his Heroic life forms to become Lord life forms.

Once his thoughts had settled, Han Wu issued a summons for his Heroic life forms to appear before him. A full realm day elapsed before they all convened in his presence: Steely, Divine Hammer, Sarman, the Skeleton Lord, the Osteomancer, the Skeleton Reanimator, the three Blood Skeletons, and the five Locustmen.

The black dragon Alpheus was also present, observing the unfolding events. Due to the influence of the Divine Civilization's system, Alpheus himself was also recognized as a Heroic life form.

It suddenly dawned on Han Wu that his military strength had surged to impressive levels. He now commanded a collection of Heroic life forms that surpassed those of regular Demigods in both quantity and quality, and even seasoned Demigods might struggle to defeat him. However, he possessed just four Divine Flesh Energy. How was he to distribute them?

Han Wu gazed upon the Heroic life forms who had stood by him through countless battles and trials. His eyes lingered on Steely, his very first Heroic life form, who had proven invaluable time and again; it was clear that Steely was deserving of one.

Han Wu's thoughts turned to Divine Hammer, the first Heroic life form he had painstakingly nurtured on his own. Despite the limitations imposed by Hellforge, which

had relegated Divine Hammer to the level of an average Heroic life form, his devotion was absolute, his faith even surpassing that of the ever-devoted locusts. As a gesture of gratitude for this steadfastness, Han Wu bestowed upon him a Divine Flesh Energy.

As he pondered the allocation of the third Divine Flesh Energy, Han Wu's gaze fell upon the assembled skeletons. A note of doubt entered his thoughts, as he wasn't sure if the skeletal race possessed the capacity to absorb and utilize this energy. Furthermore, he was conflicted over which individual should receive it, given that the Osteomancer, rather than the Skeleton Lord, had consistently demonstrated a more significant contribution.

It was the Osteomancer who had consistently taken down the strongest enemies in those major battles. However, the Skeleton Lord would undoubtedly prevent the Osteomancer's progression to a Lord life form. Despite its diminutive stature, the Skeleton Lord harbored a fierce protectiveness of its superior position, unwilling to permit its subordinates to pose any threat to its authority.

Upon inquiring with the Skeleton Lord, Han Wu discovered that the skeletal race lacked the ability to absorb Divine Flesh Energy, thus resolving one of his concerns. His attention now turned to the remaining candidates—the minotaurs and the Locustmen. Given that the locusts were his core race, he resolved that one Divine Flesh Energy should undoubtedly be theirs.

Han Wu deliberated on whether to allocate the final Divine Flesh Energy to the minotaurs. Their performance in past conflicts had been consistently average, and their level of faith was not particularly noteworthy. However, to prevent any sense of ostracism and to maintain a level of fairness among his various races, Han Wu resolved to grant the final Divine Flesh Energy to Sarman.

Han Wu had distributed all four of the Divine Flesh Energy to Steely, Divine Hammer, Sarman, and the most powerful Locustman, a Third Class Dark Corrosion Archer whom he had named Dark Locust. This Dark Locust would become the first Lord life form among the locusts.

Demonstrating his commitment to impartiality, Han Wu, now aware of the skeletons' inability to absorb Divine Flesh Energy, chose to compensate them with Divine Essence instead. The Osteomancer and the Skeleton Reanimator each received two portions of Divine Essence, while the Skeleton Lord was granted three.

The newly created Blood Skeletons, having not yet distinguished themselves through significant achievements, did not receive any. Instead, Han Wu provided them with appropriate equipment.

Alpheus, who had initially planned only to observe, inquired if he had anything to offer it as well. In truth, it harbored a secret envy towards the other Heroic life forms who had

received gifts. Perceiving Alpheus's underlying sentiment, Han Wu offered it a Divine Essence as a token of appreciation.

Overwhelmed with excitement, Alpheus took to the skies of the divine realm, circling with an almost comical joy, like a ridiculously huge kid. The value of the gift was secondary to the simple act of receiving it. Alpheus was more concerned with its reputation, hence its desire for a present akin to those given to the others.

Having received their rewards, the Heroic life forms dispersed to their respective places. Those who had received Divine Flesh Energy required time for its assimilation and the subsequent reconstruction of their physical forms, while those with Divine Essence sought secluded cultivation to absorb its energy.

Han Wu was certain that they would emerge significantly enhanced following their absorption and cultivation. His attention then turned to the ten remaining units of Divine Essence held in his hands, a sense of satisfaction warming him as he thought, *It definitely feels good to be rich.*

The Origin of Mutation's voice cut through the silence with a mocking edge. "Dear vessel, you need to look at the bigger picture, formulate more long-term strategies, and elevate your understanding. Otherwise, you risk causing me considerable embarrassment should we encounter a Supergene Soldier from the Divine River Civilization in the future."

Han Wu responded with an equally mocking tone, "Anything you say, boss."

The Origin of Mutation continued, "I need eight Divine Essence; they are necessary for our genetic advancement. You may keep the remaining two units and refine them at your leisure."

A look of disapproval crossed Han Wu's face. "That is rather shameless of you," he retorted. "I'm treating you like my boss, and you're treating me like some walking ATM! I only have ten left, and you want eight? Seriously? Should I be grateful for the two measly Divine Essence you're letting me keep?"

The Origin of Mutation asserted, "Oh, vessel, you just don't get it—your worldview is so limited! We're one now! So, when I upgrade, it's like your body gets upgraded too, right?" Han Wu, however, stood firm, unwilling to succumb to this manipulation.

Seeking a compromise, the Origin of Mutation presented its offer. "Okay, how about this? Give me those eight Divine Essence, and I'll make sure your locusts undergo a massive mutation. They won't even be Common—they'll hatch as powerful Elite locusts right off the bat! What do you say?"

Han Wu found himself drawn to the offer. His locusts had constantly been scorned and belittled, and the fact that they were invariably born as the lowest tier, Common life forms, had always been a source of quiet frustration.

Even when elevated to the Unique rank, his locusts' overall statistics remained relatively weak. But what if they were born as Elite life forms? Their combat strength would skyrocket to a whole new level! Eight Divine Essence was a tiny price to pay for that kind of power.

With a fierce tone, Han Wu warned, "You better not try to trick me. Even I am terrified of what I'm capable of when I lose it!"

The Origin of Mutation responded with an amused chuckle. "Oh, vessel, you need to trust me more. We're in the same body, remember? I'm you, and you're me!"

Just like that, the Origin of Mutation snatched eight Divine Essence, leaving Han Wu with just two. Clinging to these final two units, Han Wu immediately consumed one. He was eager to begin the refining process as quickly as possible.

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

[1,015 words]

Chapter 65 - Ten Cockroaches

A notable difference existed between the Divine Essence obtained from the fallen Demigods and that contained within the cards provided by the school as rewards. The Essence provided by the school could be instantly absorbed, while the Essence extracted from deceased Demigods demanded a slow and meticulous process of refinement using one's own willpower.

The underlying reason for this difference lay in the residual will of the deceased Demigod that lingered within the Divine Essence. Consequently, any person wishing to utilize this Essence was compelled to gradually erode the Demigod's lingering will using their own willpower.

Despite the significant effort required for refinement, Han Wu discovered its rewarding aspects. As he refined the Divine Essence, he was able to glimpse fragments of the deceased Demigods' memories, including vivid recollections of their past battles and secret information only Demigods knew. Furthermore, the act of eroding the residual will served as an exercise in strengthening his own willpower.

Han Wu expected that it would take ten realm years for him to completely absorb the two Divine Essence, which was about ten whole days in real time. Being a student, he couldn't afford to be absent for so many days. He'd even expected the absorption to take way longer. Luckily for him, there was no real hurry to get it done.

By 11:40 pm, Han Wu had successfully refined ten percent of one Divine Essence. While resting for a bit, he noticed that his locusts had multiplied like crazy, and their population had once again swelled to 10 billion. So, to get some breathing room with his resources, he used the Sacrifice skill once again.

With the activation of Sacrifice, the collective life force of Han Wu's locusts surged upwards and converged into the massive array that loomed overhead, and just as before, three distinct options popped up in front of him.

[Option 1: Rank 4 Sacred Object, Hurricane Chainmail: After equipping it to the Core, the core race will obtain the ability to summon the Hurricane Chainmail.]

[Option 2: Rank 3 Building, Observatory: Can be built in the divine realm to detect anything within a 10,000 km radius.]

[Option 3: Flesh Golem Manual. Uses the corpses of powerful life forms to make Flesh Golems. The Flesh Golems will inherit part of the abilities of their previous lives. Strength and abilities of Flesh Golems are permanently fixed upon completion.]

Without a moment's hesitation, Han Wu selected the third option, as the first two presented no practical benefit to him. His current status as a Divine Being restricted his ability to equip Rank 4 Sacred Equipments, rendering the first option irrelevant.

Also, Han Wu's divine realm wasn't some huge, sprawling place—it was just 1,000 sq km, about 32 km across. He could just hop on a hill and see the whole thing. So, building an Observatory was totally pointless and unnecessary.

Given his current circumstances, the third option, the Flesh Golem Manual, proved to be the most suitable.

I even have the perfect set of materials ready to go—that high-level Rank 6 Gemora and the incredibly resilient Rank 6 locust with hyper-regeneration that killed it!

Following the manual step-by-step, Han Wu slowly worked on those two corpses. He carefully refined their flesh, extracted every bit of their energy, and then added all sorts of amazing stuff—black dragon blood, rare metals, tons of Energy Stones, crystal bone shards, and other high-quality ingredients.

Finally, he poured in a massive 10 million Divine Points to solidify their form. It was after ten long realm-months that his project was completed.

From the two corpses, Han Wu successfully constructed a total of ten imposing Flesh Golems. Each Golem towered at a height of two meters, their bodies protected by a layer of dense black dragon scales, and bore a pair of translucent locust wings on their backs.

Their mouths were massive with these terrifying rotating teeth, and they possessed four powerful, segmented limbs. Furthermore, they exhibited both considerable physical prowess and high magic resistance. Han Wu put them to the test in a spar and was absolutely thrilled with how they performed.

The strength of each Flesh Golem matched that of a Heroic life form, but their capacity to endure and withstand damage was considerably beyond those limits. This remarkable endurance inspired Han Wu to give them the descriptive nickname *Cockroach*

, highlighting their near-indestructibility.

[Name: Cockroach]

[Race: Flesh Golem]

[Rank: Heroic]

[Talent: Hyper-regeneration, Gluttony, Big Mouth, Sharp Teeth, Crystal Bones, Dragon Scales]

The thought of seeing his ten Cockroaches in action, and thoroughly irritating his enemies, filled Han Wu with excitement.

With all his tasks finally finished, Han Wu promptly reached out to the Imperial College recruiter using the contact information he possessed.

Following Han Wu's report on his current status, the recruiter concluded that his enrollment into Imperial College could proceed without delay. He advised Han Wu to get to the College immediately to register, and they'd take care of everything with his current school to get him transferred.

No sooner had he spoken with Han Wu than the recruiter called the high school to announce his enrollment. The higher management at Han Wu's high school were absolutely overjoyed and utterly delighted with how things had turned out.

Tian Wen personally organized a farewell gathering to honor Han Wu's departure. He extended invitations to the school's management, Xu Mei, and all the other homeroom teachers. Every invited guest was in attendance... well, except for Liu Letian; it was totally obvious why he didn't come.

During the farewell party, the school leaders made sure to give Han Wu lots of encouragement. Also, Xu Mei, standing in for the principal, gave him a special Divine Essence as a parting gift, with the sincere hope that he would achieve stellar success and bring immense honor to their school.

A big smile spread across Han Wu's face as he accepted the gift. He made a silent promise, *Grandpa, I've finally taken my first steps into Imperial College. Don't worry; I will find my parents, even if I have to search every corner of the Chaotic Starfield!*

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

[1,441 words]

Chapter 66 - Attending Classes

Two days after the farewell party, Han Wu organized his luggage and activated the school's teleporter, arriving at Imperial College. The moment he stepped off the teleportation platform, he was immediately struck by the sight of numerous aerial vehicles gracefully soaring through the skies, weaving in and out of gigantic buildings.

Han Wu was astounded to realize that the streets were largely populated by individuals exuding the unmistakable aura of Demigods. Shortly thereafter, a Demigod dressed in elegant black formal wear approached him.

"Excuse me, might you be Han Wu, a student listed on Imperial College's reserve admission list?"

"I am."

"Good day, Han Wu," the Demigod said with a polite nod and a welcoming smile. "I am here on behalf of Imperial College to provide you with a personal escort. Kindly step aboard this aircraft, and I will take you directly to the College to finalize your hostel registration."

Han Wu responded with a nod and boarded the aircraft. The Demigod then piloted the flying vehicle for approximately half an hour before making a smooth landing within a serene and verdant garden.

"Allow me to escort you to your hostel."

After disembarking, the Demigod led Han Wu to a grand mansion. Upon entering the building, he expected to encounter a bustling environment filled with fellow students.

However, much to his astonishment, the mansion had been prepared exclusively for him.

Given the scarcity of land within the Divine Civilization's capital, residing alone in a mansion was undeniably considered a significant luxury. It was a privilege that only an institution as affluent and influential as Imperial College could readily afford to provide.

"Finally!" the Origin of Mutation declared enthusiastically. "A location that befits my unparalleled greatness!"

Han Wu internally rolled his eyes, yet couldn't help but look around in utter amazement.

After the Demigod had left him to settle in, Han Wu placed his belongings down. Using the landing pod, he proceeded to retrieve the remainder of his possessions from his divine realm and got busy decorating his new living space.

After getting everything just right, Han Wu sent a message to the recruiter saying he was all settled. The recruiter immediately sent him his classroom location and told him he could start classes first thing the next day. After thanking the recruiter for his help, Han Wu didn't waste a second and went back into his divine realm to keep refining the Divine Essence.

The morning after his arrival, Han Wu finally found his designated classroom. Upon arriving at the door, he could overhear the murmur of voices from within, and he soon realized that he was the focus of their discussion.

"Hey, have you heard? We're getting a transfer student today!"

"A transfer student? *Ugh*, they totally got in through connections, didn't they? What a spoiled brat! Their family definitely pulled some strings to get them in here!"

"Yeah, that figures. The students with real talent were already recruited through the normal process."

"*Ugh!* I loathe students who use their connections to get into Imperial College! They always make us students on the reserve list look bad! I'm gonna teach them a lesson the second they show their face!"

Han Wu's brow furrowed in displeasure as he overheard their conversation.

Looks like my first day's gonna be fun, he thought sarcastically. *Who the heck said transfer students can't get in based on their own skills?*

Just then, a beautiful lady, her figure accentuated by a tight violet work dress, appeared behind Han Wu without making a sound. Her voice, as she addressed him, possessed a soft and undeniable allure. "You're the new transfer student, Han Wu, aren't you?"

Han Wu jumped out of his skin—he had no idea anyone was behind him.

“Y-yes! I’m Han Wu!” he exclaimed, a little flustered.

The lady smiled amusedly.

“I am Lina,” she said, “the teacher responsible for the class of students admitted from the reserve list. Please, come into the classroom with me.”

Lina opened the classroom doors and entered, with Han Wu following closely behind. The moment Qin Shuang, who had apparently chosen to be on Imperial College’s reserve list, caught sight of him, she abruptly stood up and exclaimed, “Han Wu?!”

Her sudden outburst immediately captured the attention of each and every student within the classroom. They were still newbies at Imperial College, but after a major class and three minor ones, they already had a rough grasp on each other’s strengths.

Qin Shuang’s overall strength ranked her within the top five students, thanks to her powerful core race and her possession of a Lord life form. Furthermore, her striking beauty had earned her the informal title of the class’s goddess.

The students were at least smart enough to know that Qin Shuang recognized the new student since she had mentioned his name, which led to a surge of resentment among the male members of the class toward the transfer student.

A subtle smile played on Lina’s lips. She’d already read their profiles and knew Qin Shuang and Han Wu went to the same high school. However, what really surprised her was that they’d actually teamed up to defeat a native Demigod in some other civilization.

Addressing the assembled students, Lina formally introduced Han Wu. “May I have your attention, everyone? This is Han Wu, our new transfer student. Interestingly, he comes from the same high school that Qin Shuang attended.”

The moment they heard Han Wu and Qin Shuang were from the same high school, the male students felt a massive, unprecedented threat.

Han Wu and Qin Shuang were once studying in the same high school, so they’ve definitely known each other for a long time. And now they’re in the same class? They might become romantically involved!

The students who revered Qin Shuang as their class’s goddess all shared the same apprehension and were intent on preventing any romantic connection with the newcomer.

One of Qin Shuang's most fanatical admirers rose to his feet and indignantly shouted, "Ms. Lina, I insist on knowing if his qualifications even meet the standards required for entry into our class!"

Lina frowned, and her gentle look vanished. Despite her seemingly soft-spoken and gentle demeanor, she was in fact a powerful God who specialized as an Invader. There was no way she was going to let some mere Divine Being student question her authority.

"Xu Tie," she said, "the methods employed by your former school are irrelevant here. Here, in my class, you must first raise your arm if you want to ask questions or ask anything, for that matter. And if that's somehow beyond your understanding, I can certainly schedule some individualized tutoring for you!"

Her voice was gentle as ever, but underneath it was a bone-chilling, deadly killing intent. A palpable sense of coldness spread through the classroom, and the students felt an unsettling shiver run along their backs.

Realizing he had crossed a line, Xu Tie hurriedly apologized, "I understand I was completely out of line asking my question that way. Please, I beg your forgiveness!"

Lina's expression relaxed ever so slightly. "Okay, Xu Tie, because you seem sincere, I'll let it slide this time. However, about why Han Wu is transferring into our class so late, that's something you should ask him directly."

Xu Tie challenged Han Wu, his voice laced with arrogance. "Han Wu, I have no idea what strings you pulled to transfer into our class, but for the sake of our honor, I am formally challenging you, right here, right now! You're going to have to prove you're good enough to be here!"

Seeking clarification from Lina, Han Wu asked, "Ms. Lina, can I just refuse this whole thing?"

"Absolutely."

Han Wu then turned to Xu Tie, shrugged, and said, "Okay, well then, I'm refusing your challenge. Honestly, I came to Imperial College to study, not to prove myself in some kind of duel."

"You absolute trash! Are you even a man if you won't accept my challenge, you coward?"

The other students instantly chimed in, calling Han Wu a coward and a spineless weakling. He just ignored them, but someone else in the room had had enough.

Qin Shuang was absolutely furious! She erupted at the other students.

“Enough!” she exclaimed, her voice filled with indignation. “Han Wu has never done a single thing to any of you! You haven’t even met him before! What in the world gives you the right to insult him?”

No one dared to voice any opposition to their goddess’s furious outburst. The classroom went silent instantly, yet the students’ eyes continued to bore into Han Wu, radiating palpable hostility.

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

[1,624 words]

Chapter 67 - Challenge

Class soon started. It was a minor class on the fundamentals of Mystic Arts. Subsequently, Lina transported the students to a different civilization, where they would learn from an old and highly experienced instructor in the field of Mystic Arts for half a year.

The objective of the class was for the students to grasp the fundamental workings of a Mystic Art and potentially master two Basic Mystic Arts. Han Wu was surprised by the concept of Mystic Arts, as he had initially assumed it was synonymous with magic. He quickly learned, however, that Mystic Arts operated on fundamentally different principles from magic.

A helpful analogy would be that of a gun. Learning magic would be akin to mastering the operation of the gun and focusing on various handling techniques to inflict the maximum possible damage. On the other hand, the study of Mystic Arts would be about understanding the gun’s construction and energy flow, and upgrading it so it had insane firepower.

The class proved to be highly educational for Han Wu. He not only gained an understanding of the fundamental principles of Mystic Arts but also successfully learned two Basic Mystic Arts: Illuminate and Ignite.

Even though these Basic Mystic Arts, Illuminate and Ignite, were kind of weak, about as strong as a lightbulb and a lighter, respectively, their real advantage was that they could be used anywhere as long as there was elemental energy around.

Mastering two Basic Mystic Arts in just six months while in that civilization was considered a significant achievement, so in recognition of Han Wu’s performance, Lina presented him with a reward—a Rank 1 Mystic Arrow Tower. This unique tower could

draw upon the elemental energy present in the surrounding air to materialize arrows of different elemental properties. Due to its versatility, it was a fairly expensive building.

However, that gift from Lina just made the other students' envy skyrocket, and after returning to Imperial College, as soon as class ended, they swarmed Han Wu in his seat and wouldn't let him leave. Qin Shuang, however, wasn't having it—she stepped forward and stood in front of him, like a fierce hen protecting her chick.

Refusing to allow their intimidation of Han Wu, Qin Shuang reprimanded the surrounding students, her tone unwavering, "What do you think you are doing? You better not even think about bullying him!"

His frustration reaching a boiling point, Xu Tie almost yelled at his beloved goddess, his voice rising with resentment and envy. "Goddess Qin Shuang! This is none of your business. Just stay out of this!"

"Yeah, Goddess Qin Shuang! This has nothing to do with you. Our focus is solely on Han Wu."

"Oj, Han Wu! Stop being such a wimp and hiding behind a girl! Face us like a man!"

With a deep frown, Han Wu stood up from his seat. He couldn't believe the audacity of these people, discriminating against him on his first day[1]! He knew he had to settle this once and for all to avoid future headaches.

"So, what exactly do you want me to do?" he asked.

Xu Tie's face darkened with a scowl as he retorted, "*Hmph!* You are just a transfer student who obviously used underhanded tactics to get into this class. You have no right to be here with us! I want you out of this classroom, now!"

"And if I refuse?"

"Then we're going to beat you black and blue until you beg to leave!"

Xu Tie's threat was immediately supported by the chorus of voices from the other students. Han Wu just looked at these so-called geniuses, his eyes narrowed.

These guys are on the reserve list for a reason—they've got to be strong. Perfect! I can finally test out the strength of my ten Cockroaches in a real fight! I'm not letting this chance slip away.

Han Wu nodded. "Alright, fine by me! But you all need to understand this: if I win, you will not come near me again. Got it?"

Han Wu wanted to deal with this once and for all, so it would never happen again.

Xu Tie sneered. “Fine by me. But you’re dreaming if you think you’ll win! So, the moment you lose—which you will—you must quit this class! That’s the deal!”

With a confident nod, Han Wu turned his gaze towards the students. “So, do you want to fight me one-on-one or one-against-many?”

Xu Tie was itching for a fight with Han Wu, wanting nothing more than to demonstrate his power. “Do you really think you are strong enough to take all of us on? I can crush you with just my core race!”

Qin Shuang pulled on Han Wu’s arm, her voice filled with alarm. “Listen to me, Han Wu, you really shouldn’t fight Xu Tie. His core race is the incredibly rare Elite Iron Skin—even my Thunder Sparrows might not be able to win against them!”

“Iron Skins!” Han Wu exclaimed, a spark of intrigue lighting his eyes. He had approached the impending fight with the expectation of an easy win, but suddenly, this core race made things a lot more interesting.

The peculiar Iron Skins were known to be a rare race. Han Wu had never encountered them before, although Tian Wen had mentioned them once during a lecture. He was totally surprised he was actually meeting someone with Iron Skins as their core race.

“Listen up, transfer!” Xu Tie said with a super smug grin. “You’ve still got a chance to give up. But don’t come whining to me when I utterly crush your pathetic units!”

He was practically bursting with pride that his goddess had seemingly recognized his strength.

“Give up? You’re seriously underestimating me. But fine, I’ll play along—I actually *do* want to see how strong these Iron Skins are supposed to be,” Han Wu said with a sneer.

Qin Shuang stomped her foot in frustration and silently cursed Han Wu for being such a stubborn oaf. *I told him not to be rash, yet he still wants to fight! Does he seriously think his skeletons are invincible?*

“Alright, let’s go to the school’s arena then,” Xu Tie said, strutting ahead.

Han Wu followed, and all the other students piled in behind, ready to watch the show. Qin Shuang trailed after them, her thoughts a whirlwind of plans to make sure the stubborn oaf didn’t get kicked out of class.

Neatly arranged along the edge of the arena were two rows of specialized landing pods, set up specifically for student sparring sessions. Han Wu and Xu Tie each entered their designated landing pod before settling on the format of their impending battle.

Han Wu carefully checked out the formats listed in front of him: Heroic units, Unique units, Elite units, all-out army battles, 5v5 team fights, and even 10v10 melees. Xu Tie, being totally confident in his own power, just let Han Wu pick whatever he wanted, because Xu Tie was absolutely sure he was going to win no matter what.

Han Wu went with a massive 10v10 on random terrain. Immediately after his choice, the match commenced, and both students' visages appeared above a vast, empty field spanning approximately 10 sq km.

The next step involved each student carefully choosing the ten units they intended to pit against their opponent. Immediately after their respective choices were made, the ten selected units materialized beneath them.

"I don't know if you're just plain stupid or unbelievably arrogant to pick 10v10 instead of a real army battle!" Xu Tie scoffed. "Do you honestly believe your units are strong enough—"

Xu Tie froze mid-sentence as his eyes landed on the ten Cockroaches that Han Wu had summoned. He was so stunned by what he saw that he nearly slapped himself in disbelief—these were ten Heroic life forms radiating a bizarre aura, and upon closer inspection, they even seemed to possess draconic bloodlines!

Despite his confusion over the apparent lack of vitality in Han Wu's summoned units, Xu Tie's confidence in his own ten Heroic Iron Skins remained unshaken. His forces comprised nine Heroic Iron Skin Strongmen and a unique subspecies, the Steel Skin Strongman. Together, they were a force to be reckoned with, capable of even contending against a Lord life form for a short period of time.

Upon entering spectator mode, the rest of the students were equally puzzled by the sight of Han Wu's ten Cockroaches. These units were entirely unfamiliar to all of them. Qin Shuang, too, was visibly confused, as she had no memory of Han Wu possessing these particular units.

One of the students possessing an Inspection-type ability successfully analyzed the data of the Cockroaches and exclaimed, "Those are Heroic Flesh Golems!"

"Wait, Heroic Flesh Golems? Is Han Wu seriously using them against the Iron Skins? What a terrible waste of such powerful units! I swear, if my Heroic Flesh Golems were destroyed by those Iron Skins, I'd be in tears!"

"*Whoa!* He must definitely be from some super-rich family to just throw out ten Heroic Flesh Golems right away! I remember they cost about three million Divine Points each! That's like thirty million in total! Maybe that's how he managed to secure a place on the reserve list!"

Since Qin Shuang was the only one who knew Han Wu's real financial struggles, she was totally baffled by how he suddenly got so rich. She made a mental note to ask him about it the second the battle ended. In the meantime, she just sat there, patiently waiting for the match to start.

With the eyes of their classmates fixed upon them, the two combatants commenced their duel.

1. Though six months had passed in that civilization, the day hadn't yet ended in the Divine Civilization ☞

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Chapter 68 - Ten Cockroaches' First Battle

[1,468 words]

Chapter 68 - Ten Cockroaches' First Battle

With a fierce command, Xu Tie sent his Heroic Iron Skins barreling towards Han Wu's units. Their fists, the size of sandbags, shot out and smashed into the Cockroaches.

Xu Tie grinned, the image of the Cockroaches being pulverized into a fleshy paste vivid in his mind. Yet, the persistent sounds of metal colliding with flesh caused his smile to stiffen and then vanish entirely. He stared in shock as the Iron Skins' powerful blows had absolutely no effect on the Cockroaches. Even the strongest of them, the Steel Skin Strongman, had barely left a mark.

"What's going on? What kind of trick did you pull?" Xu Tie yelled accusingly, convinced Han Wu had cheated somehow. Han Wu simply smiled enigmatically and shook his head.

The Cockroaches then launched their counter-attack. They eerily mirrored the movements of the Iron Skins, lifting their razor-sharp insectoid claws and delivering swift, powerful punches.

Clang!

The sound was deafening, and the Iron Skins went flying backwards like ragdolls. When they finally got their feet under them, distinct fist-shaped imprints were visible on their

iron hides. Only the Steel Skin Strongman had been quick enough to deflect its opponent's fist.

Those Flesh Golems are terrifying!

The unexpected display of strength from the Cockroaches left Xu Tie and the other students in utter astonishment. They had never imagined that these units could surpass the durability and power of the Iron Skins! It was as if the Cockroaches had been specifically created for the sole purpose of destroying Iron Skins.

Han Wu innocently asked, "Do you still wish to continue?"

After all, within the span of a single clash, the Cockroaches had demonstrated their superior strength against the Iron Skin units.

Xu Tie was furious, not accepting for a second that his amazing Iron Skins were weaker than those Cockroaches. He still had one more trick up his sleeve.

"Don't get all smug just because you got lucky in the first round! You have yet to witness the true strength of my Iron Skins!"

Xu Tie then ordered his Iron Skins to merge. They all swarmed the Steel Skin Strongman and started intertwining their arms and legs, creating this enormous, unbelievable being made entirely of Iron Skins.

The sight of ten heavily muscled Iron Skins intertwining their limbs in such a manner was rather unsettling, verging on indecent. Nevertheless, the power they amassed through this combination was massive. Their individual powers converged, elevating them to a level just shy of being categorized as a Lord life form.

The merged Iron Skins lunged forward with immense speed and delivered a powerful punch to the ten Cockroaches. The destructive energy of their blow had been amplified dramatically, appearing to be ten times greater than before.

The force of the combined Iron Skins' attack proved too great, and the Cockroaches' resilient dragon scales shattered upon impact. They were sent flying a full hundred meters away from the impact.

Xu Tie laughed, shaking his head. "You honestly think that little display is enough to get you into Imperial College? Well, let me show you what a real genius on the reserve list can actually do!"

Seeing his Cockroaches get blasted away like that, Han Wu had to admit the merged Iron Skins had considerable strength. *Its power level is likely on par with an Osteomancer's bone giant form. But even so, isn't he looking down on the ten Cockroaches too much?*

Xu Tie was totally shocked to see those ten Cockroaches get back on their feet. Their injuries healed at an astonishing rate, and the shattered black dragon scales reformed themselves in the blink of an eye. Having fully regenerated, they spread their wings and flew directly towards the Iron Skin giant.

With a clumsy swipe, the Iron Skin managed to knock away one of the incoming Cockroaches, but the other nine successfully landed on it. They then opened their large maws, revealing sharp, rapidly rotating teeth, and bit down forcefully on the giant's metallic exterior.

Their sharp teeth rotated with incredible speed, tearing apart the Iron Skin's flesh with the efficiency of a meat mincer. Even the remarkably durable, iron-like flesh of the Iron Skins was ground into small fragments and consumed by the Cockroaches as a source of energy.

In a last-ditch effort to survive, the Iron Skin began to seize the Cockroaches individually, trying to kill them through brute force. It threw them forcefully onto the ground, attempted to crush them underfoot, and even managed to rip some apart. However, the Cockroaches' remarkable Hyper-regeneration rendered these efforts futile. They rapidly regenerated and relentlessly attacked the combined Iron Skins, intent on devouring it.

The combined Iron Skins held out for no longer than three minutes before one of them was eaten alive by the Cockroaches and died. The lifeless Iron Skin detached and fell away. With the loss of one member, the merged entity's overall strength noticeably diminished.

The moment the Iron Skin fell, the Cockroaches swarmed over it and consumed it within mere seconds, leaving behind no remnants whatsoever. A powerful Heroic Iron Skin had been eliminated with remarkable ease.

Xu Tie and the other students were utterly stunned by the unexpected outcome of the battle. The others started thinking about how they'd even try to fight Han Wu's Flesh Golems and quickly realized that they would be completely helpless! There was nothing they could do!

The chilling realization of their weakness compared to Han Wu caused them to break out in a cold sweat. As elite students from their respective high schools, they had carried a certain arrogance when they were chosen for the Imperial College reserve list. However, they now understood that they were utterly incapable of contending with Han Wu's ten Cockroaches.

Xu Tie visibly crumbled under the pressure of seeing one of his cherished Iron Skin Strongmen perish. He had painstakingly cared for each of them, pouring a significant amount of time, effort, and resources into their development. He refused to let them die such a meaningless death, so he swiftly surrendered.

Han Wu instructed his Cockroaches to cease their attacks and return to the divine realm. When he emerged from the landing pod, the previously haughty students were now humbled; not one of them dared to label him a dubious transfer student or demand his departure from the class.

Han Wu's power was unmistakably greater than that of most of his classmates. Qin Shuang, however, was even more astounded by his display, knowing that he had been deliberately holding back, and that he had even more powerful Heroic life forms he had chosen not to reveal.

Qin Shuang was just about to ask Han Wu what had happened to him when another individual entered the arena. The newcomer was a huge, muscular man wearing the unmistakable uniform of a full-fledged Imperial College student. He approached Han Wu and embraced him warmly.

His face beaming with delight, the newcomer, Xiang Meng, exclaimed, "Locust Plague, it truly is you! It seems my recommendation for you to enroll in Imperial College was indeed correct. You really managed to pass the entrance examination!"

"Brother Meng! You can just call me Han Wu," Han Wu gasped, trying to pry himself out of Xiang Meng's crushing hug.

The other students were taken aback by Xiang Meng's statement. Despite witnessing Han Wu's victory over Xu Tie, they had still thought he had just used connections to get in, never considering that he might have enrolled through one of the official and legitimate channels.

They felt a pang of shame and guilt as they realized they'd been unnecessarily awful to someone innocent.

"I'm really sorry for jumping to conclusions about you."

"Yeah, Han Wu... I'm really sorry."

The first apologies came from two students, prompting the rest of the group to follow suit. Han Wu wasn't the kind of guy to hold a grudge, so he just forgave them, since they hadn't really done anything that bad in the first place.

Xiang Meng, understanding the situation from their apologetic demeanor, gave Han Wu's shoulder a squeeze.

"Alright, listen," he announced, "I'm Xiang Meng, a first-year here at Imperial College. Han Wu is under my protection now. If you even breathe in his direction with bad intentions, you're picking a fight with me. Got it?"

The students nodded their heads, each silently swearing not to bother Han Wu again. Xiang Meng, appearing satisfied with their remorse, nodded in acknowledgment.

“Alright, come on,” he said to Han Wu, “follow me. I want you to meet two awesome friends of mine!”

Just like that, Xiang Meng grabbed Han Wu’s arm and dragged him along without even waiting for an answer. Han Wu quickly realized he was no match for Xiang Meng’s strength, so he just had to go along with it.

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

[1,610 words]

Chapter 69 - Senior’s Request

The two of them walked until they arrived at a gazebo. Inside, Han Wu noticed a man and a woman conversing in a casual manner.

Xiang Meng approached them with enthusiasm and announced, “Xia Tian! Ye Ling! Look who I brought. This is the junior I was telling you about.”

The two individuals turned their attention to Han Wu, meeting his gaze as they introduced themselves.

The man spoke first, saying with a friendly tone, “Hey, I’m Xia Tian, a first-year here at Imperial College. Nice to meet you, junior.”

Casting a skeptical gaze upon Han Wu, the woman introduced herself in a doubtful tone. “And I am Ye Ling. Is it actually true that you defeated Xiang Meng in the Blood Coliseum?”

“Good day to you, Seniors Xia Tian and Ye Ling,” Han Wu replied respectfully. “I am Han Wu, the new student placed on the reserve list. And about beating Brother Meng? Honestly, it was all just trickery on my part.”

“Well, that’s still a strength in its own way,” Ye Ling said, nodding slightly. “It’s actually pretty impressive that you got the skeleton race to listen to you. But seriously, take it from someone who’s been around longer—it’s best to focus more on your core race. The resources you put into your regular races are permanently lost if those races are ever entirely eradicated. Do you understand my point?”

Han Wu nodded.

Finding Han Wu's attitude agreeable, Xia Tian spoke candidly. "Actually, there's another reason we got Xiang Meng to drag you over here. Yeah, we wanted to meet the legendary junior who took down Xiang Meng's mammoth army, but we also kind of need your help with something."

Han Wu was confused. His seniors were all Demigods, leading him to wonder what possible help he could offer.

Xia Tian reassured him calmly, "Hey, don't worry about it. Let me explain why we're asking for your help. The decision to assist us will, of course, be yours. See, once you're on the reserve list, Imperial College gives you special training. And we just got some intel about the next major class for the students on the reserve list.

"You will be entering a particularly valuable Basic Secret Realm called Zombie Town. It's like a survival training ground for if you ever end up in some strange foreign civilization at some point in the future.

"Within this Basic Secret Realm exists an exceptionally rare resource known as the Wisdom Fruit. This fruit has the unique effect of improving the intelligence of non-humanoid life forms. And we were really hoping you'd be able to grab at least one of those for us."

Xia Tian paused, and then said, "Oh, of course we wouldn't ask you to do it for free. We'll pay you one Divine Essence for every single fruit you bring back. You can check the Imperial College portal online, and you'll find that it's a reasonable price."

After providing the necessary details, Xia Tian looked at Han Wu and asked, "Alright, Junior Han Wu, is there anything at all you want to ask us right now?"

Han Wu cleared his throat, a curious look on his face. "Alright, I've got just one question. Why don't the three of you just go into this Secret Realm and grab the fruits yourselves?"

Ye Ling clarified, "Han Wu, you probably don't know this, but Zombie Town is a Basic Secret Realm that Imperial College really keeps an eye on. It's not a big deal for someone in their first year to clear, so it's really just for training the students on the reserve list."

Xiang Meng nodded enthusiastically.

"That's right," he said. "If Zombie Town was used for our classes, we would've cleared it hundreds of times by now! I would've gone in there and just crushed the whole place by myself."

Han Wu rolled his eyes a little but nodded anyway. "Alright, I understand. I'll help you guys out."

Clearly overjoyed, Xiang Meng exclaimed, "Yes! This is perfect! I knew you were the right junior for this! You're the best!"

Xia Tian grinned. "Well then, I'm really hoping you'll come in first in your very first major class."

Ye Ling then produced a bag of seeds from her divine realm and handed it to Han Wu. "Here you go, junior," she said. "These should be helpful to you."

Han Wu took the bag of seeds and hung out with his seniors for a bit before finally heading back to his hostel. Once he was back in his hostel, he wasted no time in checking the college's official portal to find out all about Zombie Town and those Wisdom Fruits.

Xia Tian's information proved accurate; the market value of a single Wisdom Fruit was roughly equivalent to one Divine Essence. Han Wu was really glad his seniors were being honest, so he went back into his divine realm. He took the opportunity to thoroughly inspect his realm and assess the current condition of his units.

Steely and the others were still reconstructing their physical forms. Meanwhile, the Skeleton Lord, the Osteomancer, and the Skeleton Reanimators were still working on refining their Divine Essence.

Han Wu decided to concentrate his efforts on improving his core race. He suddenly remembered that the Origin of Mutation had promised to fundamentally transform his locusts from innate Common life forms to the more powerful Elite life forms.

Upon summoning it, Han Wu received a somewhat impatient reply from the Origin of Mutation. It then directed him on the process, instructing him to apply Controlled Mutation by himself in order to fundamentally transform his locusts into Elite life forms.

Han Wu felt somewhat deceived upon discovering the method, as it struck him as remarkably uncomplicated. All that was required was to utilize Controlled Mutation and carefully select beneficial mutations that would not significantly diminish his locusts' natural lifespan.

Through the process of natural selection across multiple generations, the beneficial mutations would become the dominant characteristics of the locusts. He would just need to continue this procedure, and within a few generations, his locusts would inherently be Elite life forms from birth.

With a sigh, Han Wu began the repetitive process of enhancing his locusts. The entire process took him about half a month in real time. He'd go to his classes during the day and then spend all night mutating his locusts. It wasn't exciting, but it was simple and satisfying.

Thanks to his diligent research, Han Wu's locusts were now born as Elite life forms. This transformation also bestowed upon them a default talent known as Swift, which increased their flying speed. Quite frankly, it was totally useless.

Han Wu had also successfully completed the refinement of two units of Divine Essence during this period and subsequently merged them with his body.

There was, however, a slight complication. Han Wu had started with five units of Divine Essence after absorbing the last one from his high school. Based on his calculations, he should now possess seven units, but he noted that his current total was only six.

There was no way he was going to let that slide. A single Divine Essence was worth 145 million Divine Points! Han Wu quickly turned to Lina with his question, and she provided a clear explanation in response.

Upon accumulating six units of Divine Essence, a Divine Being became eligible to commence the Demigod ascension ritual. However, ascending at this stage would lead to becoming the weakest tier of Demigod, restricted to absorbing only the most basic Rank 1 Divine Aspect. As a result, the students of Imperial College typically continued to gather more Divine Essence to avoid limiting their future potential.

However, once the initial six Divine Essence were collected, acquiring additional units to increase the total required absorbing even more. For example, to have seven Divine Essence integrated into their body, one extra unit needed to be absorbed, meaning a total of eight Divine Essence needed to be gathered. The benefit of this extra accumulation was that, upon Demigod ascension, they could accommodate Rank 2 Divine Aspects.

To possess eight Divine Essence in his body, Han Wu would need to absorb an overall total of eleven. For nine Divine Essence, the total absorbed would need to be fifteen. Finally, to reach the maximum potential for a Divine Being, he would need to absorb a total of twenty Divine Essence to have ten integrated into his body.[1]

Divine Beings who possessed ten Divine Essence would ascend to become the most powerful Demigods, capable of absorbing the highest-ranked Rank 5 Divine Aspects. Divine Aspects served as the fundamental basis for a Demigod to transcend to become a God. Furthermore, the rank of these Divine Aspects directly determined their strength and power as a God.

Having heard Lina's explanation, Han Wu made up his mind. He decided that he would accumulate ten Divine Essence before ascending to become a Demigod, driven by his curiosity to experience the capabilities of Rank 5 Divine Aspects.

Nevertheless, Han Wu knew that he still needed to obtain a substantial amount of Divine Essence. That next major class was definitely going to be his best shot.

1. Basically, from Rank 1 to Rank 6, one Divine Essence is assimilated per rank, so, at Rank 6, a total of 6 Divine Essence would be absorbed. This, however, changes from Rank 7 onward:

Rank 7 = 2 Divine Essence

Rank 8 = 3 Divine Essence

Rank 9 = 4 Divine Essence

Rank 10 = 5 Divine Essence

The total number per rank is all the Divine Essence up to that Rank combined. 📄

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Chapter 70 - Major Class and Surviving in a Foreign Civilization

[1,557 words]

Chapter 70 - Major Class and Surviving in a Foreign Civilization

One morning, Han Wu gathered his personal belongings and teleported directly to his classroom. Today held particular significance, as it marked his first day of participation in a major class. As he prepared himself mentally for the event, his arrival in the classroom immediately drew the attention of his fellow classmates.

A student named Sun Qingnian came up to him and began, “Hey, Han Wu, have you heard that this time our major class will involve attempting to survive within a foreign civilization? I’ve heard rumors that we will be going to the college’s much-desired Basic Secret Realm, Zombie Town.”

Han Wu confirmed with a nod. “Yeah, I’ve heard about it.”

Sun Qingnian leaned in and whispered, “I even overheard that some of the seniors are listing very high prices for certain resources that can be obtained in Zombie Town. I think a few of our classmates were summoned by them to discuss this.”

While making that statement, Sun Qingnian cast a brief glance in Xu Tie’s direction. It was obvious that Xu Tie had also been roped into something by some of the seniors.

With confident strides, Xu Tie came up to Han Wu and Sun Qingnian.

“Hey, Han Wu,” he asked, a smirk on his face, “how about a little bet between us for this major class?”

“What do you have in mind?”

“We’ll bet on who does better. If I beat you, you will stay away from Qin Shuang. If you beat me, I’ll leave her alone.”

Han Wu frowned. “Are you out of your mind? This bet is unfair to me. Qin Shuang and I have known each other for ages! I will not cheapen our relationship by using it as a bet. And more importantly, she hates your guts! She’d never go for you anyway, so who wins or loses doesn’t even matter.”

Xu Tie was visibly angered by Han Wu’s words, but he couldn’t refute them as they were undeniably true.

“I just want you to stay the hell away from her. That’s all that matters to me!”

Han Wu scoffed dismissively and paid no further attention to Xu Tie. Qin Shuang, however, having overheard their conversation, walked over.

“Xu Tie,” she said, her voice unusually sharp, “you did say you’d leave me alone if Han Wu ranks higher than you, right?”

Overjoyed that his beloved goddess was speaking to him, Xu Tie declared, “Qin Shuang, my feelings for you are genuine! Why do you keep rejecting me?”

Qin Shuang regarded him with a look of revulsion. “Just answer my question, would you?”

“Yes, that’s right. I won’t even think about you again if he ranks higher than me!”

Qin Shuang nodded and then tugged on Han Wu’s sleeve. “Han Wu, please agree to this! You have to help me out!”

Han Wu was puzzled, wondering why Qin Shuang was so insistent.

“Hey,” he said, looking around, “everyone here is some kind of genius. This is my very first major class, so I honestly don’t know if I’m up for this. What happens to you if I mess up and lose?”

“I have complete faith in you. I know you can do it.”

Seeing how determined she was, Han Wu finally agreed to the bet. She then pulled him to the side and slipped a card into his hand.

“A special seed is sealed within this card. It should prove to be beneficial during this major class,” she explained.

Han Wu shook his head. “You need it as well, don’t you? I actually got some from my seniors already.”

“It’s always better to have more, right? You have to help me get rid of Xu Tie! Think of these seeds as your payment to help me out.” Qin Shuang was being really serious about this.

“Alright, fine, I’ll take it.”

He had a strong feeling that there was something else behind this whole exchange than Qin Shuang was letting on, but since she wasn’t talking, he didn’t want to pry.

Han Wu accepted the seeds, and at that precise moment, Lina entered the classroom. The students, aware that she would be providing details about the major class, promptly settled into their seats.

Lina explained, “I presume that all of you have already heard some details about the upcoming major class. Yes, the central theme of this major class will be your ability to survive in a foreign civilization. Here, power dictates everything, and therefore, the level of difficulty you will encounter will be considerably higher than that of your typical minor classes.

“Still, I have faith in everyone’s abilities. If no one has any questions, we shall now begin the class. It is my sincere hope that everyone will achieve satisfactory results.”

The students were then instantaneously transported into the Basic Secret Realm. Han Wu opened his eyes to find himself standing on a hill overlooking a small town, his classmates gathered around him.

Suddenly, a system message appeared in their minds.

[Emulating Survival Course within a foreign civilization. To prevent detection by the Will of the Civilization, all connections to your divine realms have been severed.]

[As Divine Beings affected by the system of the foreign civilization, all base stats are reduced to those of regular humans.]

[Creating Scoreboard...]

[Context: Zombie Town is an idyllic little town where the resident zombies cheerfully gouge out the brains of visitors. Do not be alarmed by this behavior, as it is simply their way of saying hello. Moreover, every night, they march out from the darkness for a parade...]

The students received no further information beyond that. They were all left in a state of bewilderment, as none of the details seemed particularly helpful or informative.

Even those students who had taken the initiative to read up on Zombie Town were left without a clear understanding of what to expect. The college had only released limited and unclear information regarding the town itself and the kinds of resources one might encounter. There had been no mention of the missions they needed to undertake or how they would accumulate points.

As the students stood around, hoping for additional details, the unmistakable sound of a hungry stomach emanated from within the group.

The student in question blushed slightly. "Uh, yeah, I haven't had breakfast yet."

Several of the students reacted with surprise to this revelation. They were Divine Beings who could go months without eating and not even feel a twinge of hunger! Was this what the system meant when it said they had been reduced to regular humans?

"No way!" one student exclaimed, their voice full of panic. "I can't even open my God equipment Spatial Ring! I've stashed a lot of food in there!"

The students rapidly inspected their own God equipment, discovering that none of them could be accessed or used.

Han Wu suddenly remembered that he had stored the bag of seeds within his divine realm, not on his person. He quickly checked his pockets and was surprised to find the seeds already there.

"Hold on," another student interjected. "I'm still able to access my Divine Powers. I can still inspect things using them."

"Seriously? Let me try. Hey, you're right! I can too, but it's only working for my core race, though..."

Upon inspecting his Divine Powers, Han Wu noted that he still had access to both Sacrifice and Controlled Mutation. The Origin of Mutation, however, was preoccupied with absorbing the Divine Essence and paid no heed to Han Wu's mental call, remaining unresponsive.

Han Wu cautiously attempted to use some of his skills and was relieved to find that they were still functional. Even though he was now just a regular human, he could still use his skills and showcase extraordinary strength.

After concluding his personal inspection, Han Wu shifted his focus to the town nearby. He was certain that he would be able to uncover more details about the major class once they reached it.

Turning to Qin Shuang, he said, "Come on, let's go check out the town."

Qin Shuang nodded and placed both hands on the ground. Right away, a glowing array appeared, and from its center, a gigantic eagle was summoned. After the summoning, however, she appeared visibly drained, indicating that it had been a very taxing endeavor for her.

"I can send you over," Qin Shuang suggested.

Han Wu declined with a shake of his head and employed his Dark Dragonification skill. A pair of miniature dragon wings unfurled from his back, and he swiftly took flight, Qin Shuang flying close beside him.

Witnessing their departure, the remaining students employed their own unique methods to make their way towards the small town. Some students, like Qin Shuang, summoned beasts of transport like tigers and leopards, while others, like Han Wu, underwent transformations into creatures like werewolves or werebats for quicker travel.

In a curious display, one student picked up a stick, fastened some straw to its tip, and uttered a few unintelligible words. Then, in an apparent act of defying gravity, they floated upwards towards the western sky while astride this makeshift broom.

A small number of unfortunate students who lacked any alternative methods of long-distance travel were left with no choice but to rely on their own legs to run towards the distant town.

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

[1,386 words]

Chapter 71 - Useful Seeds

While flying over the vicinity of the town, Han Wu and Qin Shuang encountered a powerful pressure pushing them downwards. They were forced to lower themselves until they were only about fifty meters above the ground.

From their vantage point, they had an excellent bird's eye view of the town, and Han Wu noted its meticulous planning. The roads were perfectly aligned, and the buildings were spaced at regular intervals. Additionally, various signboards were visible on the buildings, identifying them as shops, supermarkets, restaurants, and cafes.

Suddenly, Qin Shuang's stomach rumbled audibly, causing her to blush with embarrassment. She clutched her stomach and pouted—summoning the eagle had consumed a considerable amount of her energy.

Han Wu suggested, "How about we go down to that restaurant and check it out?"

Qin Shuang nodded eagerly in response, and the pair landed gracefully in front of the restaurant and proceeded to enter. As they did so, a large man with a thick beard glared intently at them from his spot at the bar.

Upon reviewing the menu, Han Wu observed that a single steak cost one silver coin, and fried rice cost five copper coins. It appeared that Zombie Town used such coins as their currency.

Given that this major class was designed to train their survival capabilities within a foreign civilization, Han Wu decided to conceal their identities.

"Excuse me," he began politely, "we are travelers from another town, and unfortunately, we have used up all of our money..."

He barely managed to finish his sentence when the large bearded man behind the bar erupted in a curse. "Get out of my restaurant, you poor bum! You think you can just come in here like those zombies that come out at night? This isn't some place where you can just do whatever you want!"

The bearded man punctuated his outburst by even pointing a hunting rifle directly at Han Wu as a clear warning. Qin Shuang was livid and wanted to give him a piece of her mind! She had never been treated so rudely in her life.

Han Wu hastily pulled her away, whispering, "Don't be stupid! We're just regular humans now! Do you think we can just shrug off a gunshot? Besides, I had wanted to gather more information from him, but it's clear now that he only cares about money."

The immediate issue they faced was their lack of any local currency. It was then that Han Wu remembered the bag of seeds and what Senior Ye Ling had told him.

The seeds she gave me should be really valuable here, he thought.

He delicately retrieved a seed from his pouch and showed it to the man. Precisely as he had expected, the man's attitude shifted noticeably upon sight of the seed.

“Esteemed guests,” the bearded man said, his previous hostility completely gone, “I didn’t know you possessed such a rare seed. Please, would you be willing to sell it to me? I will gladly pay you ten gold coins for it!”

So the seeds really are useful!

Han Wu, however, was not in any hurry to sell. He just said, “How about you get us some food first, and then we can talk business?”

With a clear eagerness to obtain the seed, the bearded man served them food without delay. After they had eaten, Han Wu inquired about the specifics of Zombie Town. The man’s greed for the seed compelled him to answer their questions truthfully. This exchange allowed both Han Wu and Qin Shuang to learn about the rules governing the town.

The town presented a strange dichotomy, a place where humans and zombies coexisted in a freaky and unsettling balance. Humans would kill zombies to obtain resources, while zombies in turn would consume human brains in order to grow stronger. Every night, a massive wave of zombies would flood the streets, relentlessly pursuing any living beings they encountered and even forcibly entering houses in their insatiable quest for more brains.

Humans within the town had developed several different ways to defend themselves against the zombie threat. Although conventional weapons like knives and guns were still commonly used, they also employed a more unique strategy involving special types of plants.

Some of the vegetation in the town had been inexplicably altered, exhibiting a degree of intelligence and the ability to attack other living beings. Notably, these plants exclusively targeted zombies, seemingly possessing a unique ability to sense the aura of death that surrounded the undead. This characteristic was precisely why the townsfolk greatly favored using these special plants in their defense against the nightly zombie hordes.

It turned out that the seed Han Wu had taken out was a Rank 3 seed, which was considered to be a rare and valuable resource within the town. This scarcity explained the bearded man’s strong desire to purchase it for ten gold coins.

Following the bearded man, Han Wu and Qin Shuang went to his backyard and saw the special plants he was growing. Han Wu took a closer look at the plants, gaining a general understanding of their nature and properties.

Plants of Rank 1 were considered equivalent to the Common rank in terms of power. Plants of Rank 2 corresponded to the Elite rank. This meant that the Rank 3 seed in Han Wu’s possession had the potential to grow into a Rank 3 plant, an organism on par with a Unique life form.

There were two main methods for acquiring more seeds within the town. The first option was to purchase them from the town's local shop, and the second involved killing the zombies that roamed the area.

The town shop offered a convenient way to buy a large quantity of seeds, provided one had sufficient money, but it primarily sold only regular varieties. Rarer and higher-ranked seeds could be obtained from zombies, but these creatures were difficult to defeat, and the chance of them dropping such valuable seeds was quite minimal.

Han Wu and Qin Shuang took their time to really process everything they'd heard and then carefully organized it all.

Given that the major class was designed to develop their survival abilities, their ultimate goal was to both survive and flourish within this unfamiliar environment. Unfortunately, their lack of any money upon arrival significantly complicated matters. Forget about thriving—right now, they just needed to figure out how to survive.

Even with their newfound knowledge, survival in such a place would be far from easy. While moving around during the day was relatively safe, the town would become overrun with zombies once night fell. Venturing outside during the night would be a suicidal act. Therefore, the two needed to secure a place to stay for the night as quickly as possible.

The bearded man gave them a couple of options. First, they could find the mayor and buy a property, which would make them official residents of Zombie Town. Second, they could stay in a hotel, where it was strictly forbidden for guests to go outside after dark.

Han Wu and Qin Shuang preferred buying a property, as they had something the other students didn't. They had those special seeds, and they could use them to buy a place.

Having left the restaurant, the pair proceeded in the direction indicated by the bearded man towards the mayor's residence to discuss the possibility of buying a property.

As they made their way to the mayor's residence, they witnessed another student trying to intrude upon someone else's property. The homeowner responded immediately, shooting off the student's arm before she could even state her intentions. The injured student then fled the scene in a disheveled and unsightly manner.

Moments later, the distinct sound of sirens reached their ears. Han Wu and Qin Shuang then checked the class scoreboard and noted that the student who had attempted to break into the house now had a score of -500 points.

The two were very relieved that they went to the restaurant first and paid with the seeds. Otherwise, they might have ended up in the same terrible mess as that student, being wanted by the town's law enforcement.

Wasting no time, Han Wu and Qin Shuang quickly proceeded towards the mayor's residence with the intention of purchasing a house and becoming recognized residents of Zombie Town.

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Chapter 72 - Zombies' Arrival and Retaliation of Mutated Plants

[1,737 words]

Chapter 72 - Zombies' Arrival and Retaliation of Mutated Plants

Following the directions they had received, Han Wu and Qin Shuang finally located the mayor's residence. The mayor, whose name was Weissenegger, greeted them warmly upon learning of their intention to purchase a house.

The mayor assisted them in determining how much their seeds were worth in the local currency. The calculation revealed that Han Wu's seeds were worth 1,320 gold coins, and Qin Shuang's seeds were valued at 1,160. With this established, the mayor presented the two students with several housing options to choose from.

Surprisingly, even the cheapest house was priced at 1,200 gold coins. Qin Shuang discovered that she did not have enough gold to buy one, but Han Wu didn't mind lending her some money. At that point, however, a particularly interesting option in the housing list captured his attention.

Among the listings, he noticed that the mayor was offering one of the most impressive houses in the town. This particular house was described as being twice as large as a standard house, featuring three floors, a front garden, and a backyard.

Furthermore, the house was located with direct access to major roads both in the front and the rear. Han Wu recognized this as a strategically advantageous location for a residence. Nevertheless, the property was quite expensive, priced at 2,350 gold coins.

Han Wu realized he could not afford such a house on his own, but if he and Qin Shuang put their money together, they would be able to afford the place.

After a brief exchange, Han Wu and Qin Shuang agreed that it was a sensible plan. They further decided that one of them would guard the front of the property while the other would watch the rear, allowing both of them to earn points simultaneously.

However, during the paperwork for the house, a minor yet awkward complication arose. Weissenegger explained that he was unable to put two names on the property's deed. The only recognized way for two individuals to reside in the same house within Zombie Town was for them to be legally married as husband and wife.

Qin Shuang's face flushed crimson upon hearing this unexpected condition, but with nightfall swiftly approaching and no time to deliberate, she gave a quick nod of acceptance to Weissenegger's suggestion. Thankfully, the mayor was efficient; after the two of them signed the necessary documents, he quickly stamped them, and they officially became residents of the town.

Upon acquiring their house deed, a notification from the system resonated in their minds.

[Obtained house deed and became official town residents. +1,000 Points]

Their names rapidly ascended the class scoreboard, and they were now tied for first place. Below their names, the remaining students were listed, with the majority at 0 points and a few unlucky ones displaying negative scores.

Qin Shuang was pleased with their progress, but her old habit resurfaced.

"Just so you know," she insisted, "we were forced into this situation! This marriage is purely in name only, so don't you dare even think for a single second that it's actually real!"

Han Wu chuckled softly, amusement evident in his tone. "Alright, alright. Fine, we're not a real couple."

He then turned and walked swiftly towards their house, his movements betraying his eagerness to settle in.

Qin Shuang stomped her foot in frustration. Ugh! Are you some kind of simpleton? I told you to not think of us as a couple, and you just accepted it like it was nothing?

As Han Wu and Qin Shuang exited the mayor's residence, Xu Tie arrived, harboring the same intention to purchase a house. He swiftly completed the necessary paperwork and, as a result, received 1,500 points, placing him in first place on the scoreboard, with the "married couple" now sharing the second position.

Shortly thereafter, a number of other students successfully acquired houses, earning points ranging from 600 to 1,300. This caused the point gap between them and Han Wu and Qin Shuang to shrink noticeably, but the two remained unconcerned. They were more concerned about reinforcing their house against potential zombie attacks.

With 130 gold coins remaining after their house purchase, Han Wu and Qin Shuang decided to visit the town shop. The shopkeeper recommended what she considered to be the most efficient seed they could currently afford, which was the Rank 1 Bean Pelter plant. As each Bean Pelter seed cost one gold coin, they purchased a total of 130 of them.

The shopkeeper quickly realized they were new residents, and she gave them a free bonus of fifty Rank 1 Bronze Coinflower seeds.

The Bronze Coinflower plant possessed no offensive capabilities whatsoever. Instead, it had the unique ability to absorb the death aura radiating from zombies, which it then converted into bronze coins. It was considered one of the weakest plants overall, but given that it was offered to them for free, both Han Wu and Qin Shuang accepted it with gratitude.

Upon returning to their new home, Han Wu and Qin Shuang promptly began setting up their defenses. Han Wu took charge of the larger front garden and positioned 80 Bean Pelters along with 30 Bronze Coinflowers. Qin Shuang focused on the backyard, which was smaller due to a swimming pool, and planted 50 Bean Pelters and 20 Bronze Coinflowers.

The special plants exhibited an exceptionally rapid growth rate, budding within a mere three hours and reaching full maturity after five hours.

Han Wu curiously inspected the Bean Pelter.

[Name: Bean Pelter]

[Rank: Rank 1]

[Ability: Bean Pelting. Shoots one bean per second to attack undead.]

[Lifespan: 1 year]

With a nod of satisfaction, Han Wu then turned his attention to one of the Bronze Coinflower plants, inspecting it with interest.

[Name: Bronze Coinflower]

[Rank: Rank 1]

[Ability: Coin Growth. Absorbs a unit of death aura to generate one bronze coin (10 bronze coins = 1 silver coin, 10 silver coins = 1 gold coin, 1,000 gold coins = 1 diamond).]

[Lifespan: 1 year]

These plants had quite simple and straightforward abilities. As the plants were finished growing, the daylight slowly faded, and the skies grew dark.

Perched atop the walls, Han Wu could discern the unsettling sounds of low wailing carried on the night air. With focused concentration, he drew a series of ancient runes in the air using his fingertips.

“Illuminate.”

Instantly, a glowing orb materialized at the tip of his fingers, casting light upon everything within a five-meter radius.

He cast the ball of light towards the source of the mournful sounds and discovered a multitude of zombies aimlessly shuffling through the streets of the town.

The zombies relentlessly attempted to break into every house they encountered along their path. However, the residents of the town had already taken precautions by planting special defensive plants around their homes. The death aura emanating from the zombies served as a catalyst, awakening the plants and causing them to unleash a fierce wave of attacks.

The conspicuous glow of Han Wu’s Illuminate Mystic Art drew the attention of several zombies, causing them to veer towards their residence.

“Perfect,” he said, a hint of anticipation in his voice. “Let’s see just how strong you guys are!”

He was really looking forward to witnessing the capabilities of both the approaching zombies and his defensive plants.

The instant the zombies entered Han Wu’s property, the Bean Pelter plants were triggered into action. Immediately detecting the characteristic death aura emanating from the undead creatures, the plants began their assault, rapidly discharging a barrage of beans.

Han Wu observed that while the beans did strike the zombies, they only caused minimal injury. He estimated that at least ten beans would be required to take down an average zombie.

These plants are too weak, he silently concluded.

He then activated his Enchant Darkness skill, targeting the Bean Pelter plants situated at the front of their defenses to enhance their power. The enchantment dramatically enhanced the plants’ attacks, enabling them to take down a regular zombie with just three to five beans, an improvement of at least fifty percent in their efficiency.

Upon their demise, the zombies swiftly disintegrated into a cloud of dark, vaporous gas that dissipated into the air. The Bronze Coinflower plants efficiently absorbed this dark gas, rapidly converting it into bronze coins. Meanwhile, Han Wu continuously received system messages as his plant defenses successfully took down the approaching zombies.

[Killed Rank 1 regular zombie, +1 points]

[Killed Rank 1 Banner Zombie, obtained banner fragment, +1 points]

[Killed Rank 1 Worker Zombie, +1 points]

Despite his points gradually increasing with each zombie defeated, Han Wu was not particularly satisfied. The rate of increase was too slow for his liking. He knew he needed to gain a considerable number of additional points to swiftly put himself far above Xu Tie and Qin Shuang.

He turned his gaze to one of the Bean Pelter plants, and a daring thought sparked in his mind. *Plants are living organisms, so they undoubtedly possess genes I can manipulate through mutation!*

Activating his Controlled Mutation skill, Han Wu targeted a Bean Pelter plant, and several evolutionary pathways appeared before him. He was somewhat taken aback by the reappearance of the familiar interface. He quickly filtered out the mutations with clear and undesirable defects, until only four possibilities remained.

[Option 1: Range mutation. Increases attack range of Bean Pelter. Reduces lifespan by 1 month for every increase in range. Maximum attack range: 13 times, but reduces lifespan to 12 hours]

[Option 2: Attack speed mutation. Increases attack speed of Bean Pelter. Reduces lifespan by 2 months for every increase in attack speed. Maximum attack speed: 7 times, but reduces lifespan to 12 hours]

[Option 3: Multihead mutation. Increases the head of Bean Pelter to launch more beans per attack. Reduces life span by 3 months for every increase. Maximum heads: 5, but reduces lifespan to 12 hours]

[Option 4: Stem mutation. Increases stem diameter to increase bean size. Reduces lifespan by 6 months per increase. Maximum diameter: 3 times, but reduces life span to 12 hours]

“Alright, these are some good choices,” Han Wu said with a grin. “Let’s just mutate them all and see what happens!”

With a wave of his arms, he used his Controlled Mutation skill on all 80 of his Bean Pelter plants. Almost instantly, the Bean Pelters underwent rapid mutations, resulting in a significant increase in their firepower.

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Chapter 73 - A Daring Approach to Place First

[1,359 words]

Chapter 73 - A Daring Approach to Place First

[Killed Rank 1 Office Zombie, +1 points]

[Killed Rank 1 Stylish Zombie, +1 hair dye, +1 points]

[Killed Rank 2 Regular Zombie, +2 points]

The waves of zombies were efficiently eliminated by the increased firepower of the mutated Bean Pelter plants. Their enhanced attacks were so powerful that they successfully created a clear, empty stretch of road directly in front of Han Wu's residence.

Noticing that Han Wu's house was too heavily defended, the Rank 1 zombies began to retreat, making way for the more powerful Rank 2 zombies to take up the attack.

The Rank 2 zombies proved to be significantly tougher and stronger. As one of the Rank 2 Banner Zombies advanced onto Han Wu's property, it hurled its banner like a javelin. Despite its powerful throw, however, its rigid limbs prevented it from landing a single hit on the defensive plants. The Banner Zombie then suffered a swift and thorough defeat as it was pummeled by an overwhelming number of beans.

As Han Wu claimed the banner as a spoil of their brief battle, he raised an eyebrow in surprise after examining it. The pole of the banner was crafted from remarkably high-quality steel. He estimated that the metal was likely sufficient to create three decent swords. He found it rather perplexing that the zombies had utilized such excellent metal to fashion mere poles for their banners.

With a sigh, Han Wu set aside the steel pole before turning his attention to the Bronze Coinflower plants.

Hmm, if I could successfully mutate the Bean Pelters, it's quite likely that I can apply the same process to these as well...

He then activated his Controlled Mutation skill, carefully filtering out the undesirable options until only two favorable options remained.

[Option 1: Increase harvest mutation. Increases the number of bronze coins generated. Every increase reduces lifespan by one month. Maximum possible increase is thirteen times the base harvest, which reduces lifespan to twelve hours.]

[Option 2: Increase absorption range mutation. Increases range of absorbing death aura. Every increase reduces lifespan by two months. Maximum possible increase is seven times the base range, which reduces lifespan to twelve hours.]

Han Wu found both of the remaining mutations appealing and decided to apply both of them to a single Bronze Coinflower plant.

He first utilized the increased absorption range mutation on a Bronze Coinflower, applying it three times to extend its reach to four times its original range. He then proceeded to use the increased harvest mutation on the same plant, only to realize that the harvest mutation unexpectedly reduced the plant's lifespan by two months!

Han Wu halted the increased harvest mutation after applying it twice. Although the plant now only had two months of lifespan remaining, its coin generation had increased tenfold, and bronze coins were visibly sliding off the flower at a remarkable rate!

Pleased with the result, Han Wu replicated the mutation process on his other Bronze Coinflower plants. As he continued to eliminate numerous zombies, bronze coins rapidly accumulated in front of his garden, and his score on the scoreboard climbed rapidly. Within just two hours, he had ascended to first place, with the point difference between him and Xu Tie growing larger with each passing second.

Xu Tie, who had been diligently monitoring the scoreboard, felt a surge of panic upon witnessing Han Wu's sudden rise to first place.

"Han Wu!" he yelled, his voice full of desperation. "Don't you dare think you can win against me!"

Xu Tie reached into his pocket and revealed a remarkable fiery-red seed adorned with markings resembling dragon scales. This unique seed was his carefully guarded trump card, the Rank 4 plant known as Fire Dragon Grass. He had even declined Mayor Weissenegger's offer of 500 gold coins for it when he was acquiring his house.

Alright, now's the time! Xu Tie thought, carefully planting the seed and observing its progress with anxiety. The seed sprouted within an hour and reached full maturity within two.

The fully grown plant stood tall at three meters, its top blossoming into a flower that strikingly resembled the head of a fire dragon. Its stem was both flexible and remarkably strong. The resemblance was so uncanny that Xu Tie mused he would have undoubtedly mistaken it for a genuine fire dragon had he not personally planted the seed.

Upon detecting the death aura emanating from the approaching zombies, the Fire Dragon Grass sprang into action, unleashing a torrent of fire. The plant's fiery breath instantly reduced large swathes of the undead to ashes, leading to a significant surge in Xu Tie's points and a subsequent flood of system notifications in his mind.

In just thirty minutes, Xu Tie's powerful plant had earned him enough points to move into first place, surpassing Han Wu. He let out a self-satisfied chuckle.

He sneered, and said in a smug tone, "Han Wu, I've already looked into your pathetic life—you're just some orphan! You seriously think you can win against me, a descendant of a God? I will crush you!"

The other students who had successfully obtained houses were also fighting intensely. Several of them had received sponsorships from seniors, so they had been able to purchase houses fairly quickly. Capitalizing on their natural talent and inherent strength, many of these individuals were able to gain substantial advantages and rewards during the initial stages of the competition.

However, a significant number of students who had received no assistance for the class found themselves in a dire situation. They were left penniless and had to rely on scavenging for random weapons to defend themselves against the nocturnal zombie threat on their own. Sadly, some of these unfortunate individuals perished at the hands of the zombies due to their own carelessness and lack of resources.

Despite their desperate struggle, they barely obtained anything of value from the defeated zombies. This marked the first time this group of geniuses had been confronted with such an overwhelming challenge, causing many of them to despair and contemplate giving up entirely.

However, despite the overwhelming challenge, these were elite students who had earned a place on Imperial College's reserve list. They steadfastly refused to surrender in the face of a single obstacle and persevered. They held their ground against the relentless zombie attacks until the first light of dawn appeared on the horizon. Mysteriously, the zombies dissipated into nothingness upon contact with the sun's rays.

Having battled through the entire night, the group of genius students had managed to survive the relentless zombie onslaught. A wave of relief washed over them, quickly followed by the pressing concern of how they would manage to survive the dangers that the next few days would undoubtedly bring.

Their inherent stubbornness and inflated egos prevented any of them from seeking an alliance with those who possessed houses. Bound by their pride, they would sooner face death from starvation or the relentless zombie attacks than humble themselves by asking for help.

Nevertheless, not all the genius students adhered to this rigid pride. Sun Qingnian sighed in disappointment after reviewing the rewards he had earned after a full night of fighting zombies in the streets. He recognized the stark reality that his current earnings were insufficient. At his current rate, he wouldn't amass enough money to purchase a house even if he fought tirelessly for a hundred days.

More importantly, this was a major class designed to simulate survival in unfamiliar civilizations, so he needed to accrue points as quickly as possible. His inability to even purchase a house meant that obtaining any points at the present moment was entirely out of reach.

He sighed, pausing to admire his handsome reflection in the mirror before a daring idea sparked in his mind.

I'm going to marry into a life of wealth! Wait, no, that doesn't sound quite right. Okay, I'm going to mooch off a woman! Hmm, still not quite right either.

I need to find a sweet, elderly lady, eighty or older, no kids, and some kind of sickness that could take her out any minute, you know? Bingo! That's the plan!

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Chapter 74 - Another Youngster Giving Up on Working Hard

[2,072 words]

Chapter 74 - Another Youngster Giving Up on Working Hard

[Survived Day 1, +1,000 points]

As the first ray of sunlight graced the small town, the zombies vanished without a trace. The sudden silence and emptiness felt surreal, akin to waking from a vivid dream, but the undeniable evidence of the night's battle and the tangible spoils scattered across Han Wu's front garden served as undeniable proof that the night's events had been very real.

Han Wu gathered all the rewards from the night's battle and began to sort them meticulously. He first separated the coins, placing them on one side. He noted a significant quantity of bronze coins, a moderate number of silver coins, and only a handful of gold coins. Next, he gathered the various seeds he had acquired and placed them neatly into a small bag.

Mixed in with the coins and seeds were a few miscellaneous items, including small banners, some hair dye, a lighter, and a couple of pails. Although these items were not particularly useful to him, he considered the possibility of selling them at the local shop to earn some extra gold coins.

Han Wu was still occupied with organizing his accumulated rewards when Qin Shuang approached him from the backyard. Her eyes widened in shock as she took in the sight of the spoils, which were stacked up into a towering pile roughly two meters high.

Considering that they were living in the same house and had been given the same types of plants, she was completely baffled as to how Han Wu had managed to earn ten times the quantity of spoils that she had.

Upon checking the scoreboard, Qin Shuang discovered that she was currently in fifth place with a score of 23,000 points. To her surprise, Han Wu was ranked second with a substantial 128,000 points, while Xu Tie maintained a comfortable lead in first place with 201,000 points.

Having toiled relentlessly throughout the night, including two hours of personal engagement with the zombie threat, Qin Shuang was dismayed to find herself only in fifth place. Her placement left her feeling deeply frustrated.

Seriously? Are we even fighting on the same property? Why is the score difference so ridiculously huge?

"Han Wu, how did you do that?" Qin Shuang asked, her eyes wide with disbelief.

Han Wu didn't mind telling her, and he readily explained his Controlled Mutation ability, detailing its functions and effects.

Qin Shuang gasped, recognizing the ability's apparent suitability for their survival class. Still, she warned him seriously, "That's an amazing ability, but you can't just rely on it! You still need to work hard. Xu Tie's way ahead of you on the scoreboard!"

"Don't worry," Han Wu replied confidently. "This is only the beginning."

His current progress was like a snowball rolling down a hill, steadily increasing in size. He was confident that with continued effort, his future rewards would be even greater.

After they had finished clearing and organizing their rewards, Han Wu and Qin Shuang went to the town shop. Their first priority was to have the shopkeeper evaluate the seeds they had collected. After careful examination, the shopkeeper informed them that they possessed a single Rank 3 Sunflower seed and two Rank 2 Broccoli seeds[1].

Han Wu sold his remaining Rank 1 seeds at the shop, receiving a total of 147 gold coins, 6 silver coins, and 5 bronze coins in return. Meanwhile, Qin Shuang's earnings from selling her equivalent Rank 1 seeds were considerably less, totaling only 21 gold coins, 4 silver coins, and 5 bronze coins.

Once their business at the shop was concluded, the two acquired some more seeds and food items before the overwhelming sensation of fatigue began to set in. Having been reduced to the physical capabilities of regular humans, it was only natural that they would feel extremely exhausted after working tirelessly throughout all night.

After returning to their shared home, they ate a simple meal and then went to sleep in their respective rooms. Their intention was to get more rest, but Han Wu was soon roused from his slumber by someone yelling just outside his house. He stretched his tired muscles and peered out the window to see what was happening.

He observed his classmate Sun Qingnian standing at the front gate of their neighbor's house, shouting loudly, "Madam Haul, are you in there?"

Moments later, Han Wu's neighbor, Madam Haul, appeared from her doorway. She was an elderly woman, well past her seventies, with deeply wrinkled skin and a noticeably saggy body.

Observing their interaction, Han Wu was surprised to see Madam Haul place her hands first on Sun Qingnian's shoulder and then move them to his chest as they walked together into her residence. His shock intensified even further when he witnessed Madam Haul lean in and kiss Sun Qingnian as they stepped inside.

Han Wu glanced at the scoreboard and noticed that Sun Qingnian had suddenly acquired 1,000 points.

Are you kidding me? Can you even do that? I never thought anyone would just give up and start getting cozy with the rich townsfolk instead!

Later that evening, Han Wu set about the task of mutating all the Pea Pelter plants he had recently bought and strategically placed the Rank 3 Sunflower in the very center of his garden.

[Name: Sunflower]

[Rank: Rank 3]

[Ability: Sun Halo. Effect 1: Enchants the attacks of all plants within its effective radius and imbues them with both light and fire attributes. Effect 2: Increases the overall vitality of all plants located within the same radius.]

[Lifespan: 1 year]

Han Wu activated his Controlled Mutation, focusing on the Sun Halo ability of his Sunflower, and increased its radius twelvefold. This made the aura reach every corner of his front garden, but as a consequence, the Sunflower's remaining lifespan was reduced to a single month.

Han Wu also made sure to plant the two Rank 2 Broccalis directly in front of his gate.

[Name: Broccali]

[Rank: Rank 2]

[Ability: Heavy Punch, Rapid Punch]

[Lifespan: 1 year]

Han Wu proceeded to apply his Controlled Mutation skill to the two Broccali plants. He mutated one to gain an extreme increase in attack speed, its Rapid Punch evolving into an Ultra Rapid Punch, while the other Broccali was mutated to grow considerably larger and stronger, upgrading its Heavy Punch to an Ultra Heavy Punch. However, both plants experienced a drastic reduction in lifespan to a mere twelve hours.

Having fortified his garden with the newly mutated plants, Han Wu felt secure about surviving the night and eagerly anticipated earning even more points. As he waited for the sun to set, a sound from Madam Haul's house caught his attention.

Han Wu glanced over the fence and saw Sun Qingnian walking out of Madam Haul's house. Sun Qingnian's footsteps seemed somewhat staggered, but his face was alight with happiness.

He had evidently achieved his goal of sleeping with Madam Haul after six hours of persistent effort, and as a result, had obtained the right to control her plants for the duration of the night. As a long-standing member of the town, Madam Haul had acquired a significant collection of high-quality plants, many of which were unique and could not be found in the town store.

As Han Wu surveyed her garden, his attention was drawn to a prominent three-meter-high wooden pole. He recognized it as the Divine Oakshot, a Rank 4 plant celebrated for its remarkable destructive capabilities, making his Bean Pelters seem as insignificant as toy guns in comparison.

Besides the impressive Divine Oakshot, Madam Haul also possessed ten other Rank 3 plants, a collection of several Rank 2 plants, and only a handful of Rank 1 plants which she strategically placed to fill in the gaps in her garden.

Sun Qingnian was visibly excited as he inspected the impressive strength of his new sugar mama's plants. He was absolutely certain that he would be able to amass a considerable number of points during the zombies' nightly onslaught!

With the arrival of nightfall, the relentless hordes of zombies began to emerge. It was once again time for the survivors to defend themselves. The unique plants, attuned to the presence of death aura, detected the approaching threat and began their assault.

With coordinated precision, all 140 of Han Wu's Bean Pelters opened fire. The light and fire attributes bestowed by the Sun Halo significantly enhanced their offensive capabilities, allowing them to inflict twice the normal damage dealt to the advancing zombie horde.

The weaker Rank 1 zombies could barely withstand two direct hits from Han Wu's enchanted Bean Pelters. The more resilient Rank 2 zombies attempted to breach Han Wu's defenses by charging directly into his garden, but the two mutated Broccoli plants effortlessly intercepted them. Their Ultra Heavy Punch and Ultra Rapid Punch attacks made quick work of the Rank 2 zombies, reducing them to mincemeat.

Han Wu's point total surged rapidly, accompanied by a constant stream of system notifications in his mind, but his gaze remained fixed on the intense battle occurring in his neighbor's garden. The exceptional strength of her plants made her defense against the zombies a much more compelling spectacle. The weaker Rank 1 zombies didn't even attempt to enter the garden, while the Rank 2 zombies served merely as cannon fodder for the more powerful Rank 3 zombies.

Perched on the fence, Han Wu, observed as a Rank 3 Pole Jumper Zombie attempted to leap over the towering Rank 4 Divine Oakshot, only to be instantly riddled with holes. It took a considerable number of Rank 3 Knight Zombies to endure the onslaught of projectiles from the Divine Oakshot, and despite their efforts, just a few of the lower-tier plants were destroyed.

All of a sudden, a menacing Rank 4 Boogie Zombie entered the fray. It promptly began summoning wave after wave of Rank 2 Dancer Zombies to act as a protective shield as it attempted to move out of the effective range of the Divine Oakshot.

It was on the verge of success until it unfortunately stepped onto one of Madam Haul's carefully prepared traps, a Rank 2 Jumping Beanpad. The Rank 4 Boogie Zombie was violently propelled from Madam Haul's garden and landed with a thud in Han Wu's garden.

Han Wu was utterly stunned by the unexpected turn of events. The appearance of a Rank 4 Boogie Zombie in Madam Haul's garden was concerning enough, but its sudden arrival in his own garden felt like an imminent death threat! He realized with a jolt that the Rank 4 Boogie Zombie would be the ultimate challenge he would face tonight.

Reacting swiftly, Han Wu commanded all his Bean Pelter plants to concentrate their attacks on the Rank 4 Boogie Zombie. The zombie was instantly engulfed in a relentless torrent of beans. However, although the projectiles, imbued with the light and fire attributes, had exploded upon impact, it did not prevent the Boogie Zombie from activating its special skill.

It summoned several Rank 2 Dancer Zombies, which promptly set about destroying Han Wu's plants. Understanding the gravity of the situation, Han Wu knew that he must personally combat the Boogie Zombie or risk losing his entire garden.

He activated his Dark Dragonification ability and launched an attack on the Rank 4 Boogie Zombie, but his fist, now covered in hard scales, inflicted barely any noticeable damage. Undeterred, Han Wu persisted, delivering thousands upon thousands of blows until he finally succeeded in grinding it into dust.

[Killed a Rank 4 Boogie Zombie. Obtained a Rank 4 seed, a pair of crocodile skin shoes, a tap dance notation, and 500 points.]

Han Wu was so drained by the battle that he nearly succumbed to exhaustion. The relentless punching had left his arms completely weary, and he had only earned a disappointing 500 points. Thankfully, however, the items dropped by the defeated Boogie Zombie proved to be quite useful.

Han Wu decided to postpone the evaluation of the Rank 4 seed until the following day. The crocodile skin shoes, however, were identified to be Faith level equipment, making them immediately useful; he put them on without hesitation.

The tap dance notation appeared to be unremarkable, so Han Wu made the decision to sell it the next day. He placed it to one side for the time being, as the arrival of dawn was still a considerable time off.

1. Broccoli+Muhammad Ali 📧

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Chapter 75 - The Wager between the Seniors

[1,896 words]

Chapter 75 - The Wager between the Seniors

Xiang Meng and his two friends had concluded their classes for the day and were now relaxing together over cups of tea. Xiang Meng's brow was furrowed with worry.

"Xia Tian," he began, "do you think Han Wu can actually get us those Wisdom Fruits?"

Having personally experienced the dangers of Zombie Town, Xiang Meng was well aware of the arduous nature of their request.

Xia Tian remained composed. "That depends on how much he actually explored Zombie Town," he said calmly. "There's a pretty big chance he won't get those Wisdom Fruits if he just thinks it's a place to grow plants and kill zombies for points."

"I'm really wondering how he's doing right now," Xiang Meng said, a bit worried.

Ye Ling jumped in, "Yeah, but there's no point just sitting here talking about it. Why don't we go find Ms. Lina and see if we can watch the live video of the class? That'd be way more interesting!"

The mere mention of Lina's name caused Xiang Meng to shudder involuntarily as unpleasant memories from his past resurfaced.

He then asked, his voice tinged with doubt, "Do you honestly believe that Ms. Lina will grant us permission?"

Ye Ling rolled her eyes. "Seriously? Have you already forgotten? I used to be her absolute favorite student back then, so she'll absolutely be willing to help us out."

Xia Tian nodded in agreement. "Alright, let's try that then. If Ms. Lina is hesitant at first, we can always persuade Ms. Lina with a bit of... physical encouragement directed at Xiang Meng."

"You traitor!" Xiang Meng cried out, the unpleasant memories flooding back as he shook his head in dismay.

After their conversation, the trio located Ms. Lina. A smile graced Ms. Lina's lips when she learned that they were sponsoring Han Wu; however, instead of being pleased, the three students were gripped by a profound and immobilizing fear.

As former reserve students who had been taught by Ms. Lina, they possessed firsthand knowledge of her intimidating demeanor, and they knew that her unusually gentle smile often preceded something particularly frightening.

“I will do you a favor and allow you to watch, then,” Ms. Lina said, her smile unwavering.

With a gentle gesture, Ms. Lina raised her hands, and a luminous screen materialized in the air before them. The image on the screen revealed the intense struggle that Han Wu was currently engaged in.

Han Wu found himself in a one-on-one confrontation with a Rank 3 Knight Zombie. With the aid of Dark Dragonification, he withstood the zombie’s attack, his scales offering significant defense. He then skillfully tore through the Knight Zombie’s armor, creating an opening for his Bean Pelter plants to attack its weak point.

The three senior students watching the live footage were visibly awestruck by the intensity of the combat. They were especially surprised by the formidable strength of Han Wu’s Bean Pelter plants, whose offensive capabilities appeared to be on par with Rank 2 plants.

However, they had anticipated a more cautious start from Han Wu, and were therefore confused to see him already engaged in a direct confrontation with a Rank 3 zombie so early on, especially considering the relatively low rank of his plant defenses.

Without warning, a menacing Rank 3 Butcher Zombie plummeted from the sky and landed directly in Han Wu’s garden, right before the astonished eyes of the watching seniors. Faced with this immediate threat, Han Wu was left with no choice but to engage the powerful zombie single-handedly.

Turning their gaze towards Han Wu’s neighbor’s property, the three seniors were taken aback by the sheer strength of Madam Haul’s plants. The plants she had cultivated were of extraordinary quality!

Her ingenious strategy of positioning the seemingly harmless Rank 2 Jumping Beanpad behind the formidable Rank 4 Divine Oakshot was truly brilliant. The seemingly simple Jumping Beanpad possessed the ability to launch objects weighing several hundred kilograms, making it an ideal trap to surprise any zombies that managed to get past the initial defense of the Divine Oakshot.

They further noticed, to their astonishment, that the individual in control of the impressive garden was none other than a student!

Xiang Meng voiced his alarm, exclaiming, “Wait a minute! Who on earth is sponsoring this student? And how did he get his hands on so many ridiculously strong plants?”

Ye Ling turned to Ms. Lina questioningly, who offered an explanation. “The student’s name is Sun Qingnian. He has no sponsors at all.”

Xia Tian, visibly surprised by this revelation, exclaimed, “What? That’s impossible! How could he have all those strong plants if nobody was backing him?”

Having received permission from Ms. Lina, Ye Ling manipulated the screen to focus on Madam Haul's window. The image revealed an old lady in deep slumber. Her attire was unkempt, and a peculiar blush tinted her cheeks.

Despite her young age, Ye Ling possessed enough understanding to grasp the situation.

"How sickening!" she exclaimed, her voice dripping with disgust. "To think there are such disgusting students this year who would do anything, just for some stupid points!"

However, Xia Tian and Xiang Meng exchanged amused chuckles upon observing Madam Haul on the screen. Despite their disapproval of Sun Qingnian's approach, they couldn't help but be impressed by his resourcefulness and the outcome of his actions.

Those whose sole pursuit was glory tended to disregard the moral aspects of their methods. They admired the intense desire Sun Qingnian displayed to achieve success, even to the point of self-sacrifice.

"Hold on a moment," Xiang Meng said, his attention drawn to the scoreboard. "Who is currently at the top of the scoreboard? And who is this Xu Tie guy?"

Noticing the name, Xiang Meng quickly panned the video over to where Xu Tie was.

Their attention was captured by the sight of the majestic Fire Dragon Grass burning zombies to a crisp with ease. The scoreboard revealed that Xu Tie was currently in the lead with an impressive 314,000 points, followed by Sun Qingnian with 213,000 points. Meanwhile, Han Wu, despite his furious and desperate efforts in battle, had only managed to accumulate 198,000 points.

A loud cry of recognition escaped Xiang Meng's lips. "It's the Fire Dragon Grass! Our number one rival has to be the one backing Xu Tie!"

He knew how unbelievably strong that plant was, and he was certain that Huang Shengjun, the valedictorian of their freshman class and their long-standing rival, was the sole owner within Imperial College.

Xia Tian's expression grew serious, his brow creased in thought.

"Huang Shengjun completely overturned Zombie Town during the last event and obtained numerous valuable rewards," he recalled. "I bet he's trying to use this whole thing to make even more from the other students now!"

Ms. Lina nodded. "Your deduction is correct; Xu Tie and Huang Shengjun have privately established a contract. As part of this arrangement, in return for the sponsorship, Xu Tie is obligated to give Huang Shengjun seventy percent of his total earnings from Zombie Town."

Ye Ling's eyes widened in surprise. "Wait a minute! Isn't that way too much? Ms. Lina, why aren't you doing anything about this? That's practically cheating!"

A soft smile played on Ms. Lina's lips, sending a shiver down the spines of the three students.

"And how is that fundamentally different from the three of you sponsoring Han Wu?" she calmly asked. "The only distinction lies in the greater proportion of rewards they have agreed upon. As their teacher, I'm not going to interfere as long as they're not breaking any rules, even if they're sleeping around, downing poison to stay alive, or burning all their bridges to get ahead. It's their decision, and I respect that."

Just as Ye Ling was preparing to voice her objections, an unexpected knock came from the door. "Pardon me, but is Ms. Lina here?"

The person who then entered the room was none other than their rival, Huang Shengjun.

Huang Shengjun offered a smug smirk upon seeing the three students before turning his attention to Ms. Lina.

"Ms. Lina," he asked sweetly, "would it be alright if I joined you in watching the class? There's a certain student whose progress I'm quite interested in."

Ms. Lina permitted him to examine the video footage. Huang Shengjun's face lit up with satisfaction as he saw Xu Tie firmly in first place leading with 100,000 points.

A smug smile played on his lips as he turned to his rivals. "It seems that you three are also supporting a student. How about we make things interesting with a little bet on who comes out on top?"

Xiang Meng looked perplexed.

"Are you stupid or something?" he asked incredulously. "We already know you're sponsoring Xu Tie."

Huang Shengjun scoffed dismissively. "So, you don't even have the guts to put money on this? What a bunch of losers."

"You little...!" Xiang Meng roared, his fist already flying, but Xia Tian and Ye Ling *jumped* on him, holding him back with all their might.

"Stop! Don't fall for it!" Xia Tian yelled. "Can't you see he's just trying to rile you up?"

Huang Shengjun's voice dripped with disdain. "Rile you up? Please. You're not even worth my time. You're at the best college in the whole Divine Civilization, and you still

have to huddle together and form some pathetic little clown club just to survive? You guys are a joke.”

Those insulting words proved too much for Xiang Meng to bear.

“You vile bastard!” he yelled, his face contorted with rage. “I’m going to murder you, you hear me?!”

Xia Tian and Ye Ling were desperately trying to hold him back, but he was furious.

After pacifying the enraged Xiang Meng, Xia Tian addressed Huang Shengjun with a sharp yet firm tone. “We established this club to gather and allocate resources for the less fortunate students. This has nothing to do with you, so why don’t you take your arrogant attitude and just shove it? You want a bet? Alright then! Let’s bet and see who wins, your precious junior or ours!”

Huang Shengjun’s eyes narrowed. “Excellent. We will bet 10 Divine Essence. Do we have a deal?”

“Fine!” Xia Tian shot back, not even flinching.

“Alright then, Ms. Lina can be our witness. And don’t even think about trying to weasel your way out of this when you lose, buddy.” Huang Shengjun let out a little chuckle and then left the room.

With Huang Shengjun gone, Xiang Meng turned to Xia Tian, his expression reflecting his worry.

“Xia Tian,” he asked hesitantly, “are you absolutely sure about this bet? That Xu Tie guy looks seriously strong.”

Xia Tian checked out what Han Wu was doing.

“But hey, Han Wu’s pretty tough too, you know,” he replied. “There’s still plenty of time left before this whole thing ends. The longer this drags on, the more interesting things will get!”

Ye Ling closed her eyes and prayed hard for Han Wu. “Oh, please, Junior Han Wu. I hope you quickly figure out what Zombie Town is really about! Just using plants to farm those zombies for points is taking forever...”

Ms. Lina watched the unfolding events with an amused smile. In her eyes, their current situation resembled nothing more than a childish squabble, so she didn’t see any reason to intervene.

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Chapter 76 - The Unusual Mayor Weissenegger

[1,237 words]

Chapter 76 - The Unusual Mayor Weissenegger

[Survived Day 2, +2,000 points]

As the first ray of sunlight touched the town once more, the horde of zombies vanished as suddenly as it had appeared. Han Wu, utterly exhausted from the night's relentless battles, collapsed onto the ground. He was panting heavily, his breath coming in ragged gasps, and he possessed barely enough strength to twitch his fingers.

The night had proven to be exceedingly challenging for him. His neighbor had catapulted three Rank 4 and twelve Rank 3 zombies directly into his garden. He had been compelled to fight on the frontlines himself to defend against them. Thankfully, he had managed to endure until the arrival of daylight.

Upon checking the rankings, Han Wu saw that he was in third place with a score of 302,000. Sun Qingnian was ranked second with 356,000 points, and Xu Tie held the top spot with an impressive 535,000 points.

In the span of a single night, Xu Tie had managed to accumulate a staggering 330,000 points, his powerful plants allowing him to gain a significant advantage very quickly during the class.

Nevertheless, despite the significant point difference, Han Wu refused to be discouraged. He had managed to obtain a number of high-quality plant seeds during the night. He was certain that his points would increase rapidly once he planted and mutated them.

Having rested for a short while, he gingerly propped himself up. He still needed to organize and examine the various rewards he had obtained the night before.

While organizing his own rewards, Sun Qingnian overheard a noise emanating from Han Wu's garden. He ceased his task and peeked his head over the top of the fence separating their gardens to offer a greeting.

“Hey, Han Wu, I’m so incredibly sorry about last night,” he said. “I saw several high-ranking zombies being launched into your garden, but there was nothing at all I could do to help you out.”

Han Wu sensed the genuine sincerity in Sun Qingnian’s words and understood that his apology was heartfelt. He was convinced that Sun Qingnian would have adjusted the placement of the plants in his garden had he possessed the authority to do so. Unfortunately, Sun Qingnian was merely a representative; the true ownership and authority over the house rested with Madam Haul.

Han Wu replied, attempting to ease Sun Qingnian’s concern, “Don’t trouble yourself. I will personally address this matter with Madam Haul.”

Sun Qingnian offered a weak smile, his helplessness evident, and could do nothing but wait. He was basically Madam Haul’s plaything, not a true companion or equal, after all.

Han Wu carefully sorted the rewards he had gathered and then loaded them into a large truck. The shopkeeper appraised the goods and offered him a reasonable sum for them.

She then selected two items from the pile and returned them to him, explaining, “These two items are practically useless to me, but they might hold significant value in the eyes of the other town residents.”

The two items that were returned to him consisted of the tap dance notation, a reward from the Rank 4 Boogie Zombie, and a large cleaver, which he had obtained from the Rank 3 Butcher Zombie. Han Wu carefully kept these two items along with the 244 gold coins he had received.

Furthermore, he asked the shopkeeper to appraise the two Rank 4 seeds and the three Rank 3 seeds in his possession. After her evaluation, he discovered that the Rank 4 seeds were a Rank 4 Succushroom[1] and a Rank 4 Corntar[2].

The Rank 4 Succushroom was capable of firing bullets composed of hypnotic gas. These projectiles had a certain probability of controlling zombies, turning them against their own kind. Additionally, any zombie that ingested the Succushroom would undergo permanent brainwashing. Han Wu intended to locate a powerful zombie and feed it the Succushroom so that he could command the creature as a subordinate to assist him in his battles.

The Rank 4 Corntar was also exceptionally strong. It could project an ear of corn that would explode with a force capable of instantly eliminating a Rank 3 zombie. However, this destructive power came with the disadvantage of causing significant damage to the surrounding terrain. These two seeds represented Han Wu’s most significant rewards from the night and would undoubtedly prove to be valuable assets in the future.

Upon evaluation, the three Rank 3 seeds were confirmed to be Rank 3 Gold Coinflowers. This type of plant possessed the valuable ability to generate gold coins after absorbing the death aura emitted by zombies.

After considering the challenges he had faced the previous night, Han Wu resolved to obtain a greatsword. Such a weapon would significantly aid him in combat, particularly when used in conjunction with his Class abilities and skills like Mighty Cleave and Dragon Slash.

However, the shopkeeper informed him that she did not have any greatswords in stock.

“If you are truly in need of such a weapon,” she suggested, “your best course of action might be to approach the mayor.”

The shopkeeper went on to explain that Mayor Weissenegger was an avid collector and had accumulated a large number of weapons for his own collection. She added that the mayor might be willing to exchange a weapon with Han Wu if he could manage to gain his trust.

After expressing his gratitude to the shopkeeper for her helpful advice, Han Wu purchased some Rank 2 Dandyrang seeds before making his way towards the mayor’s residence.

In an effort to establish trust between himself and the mayor, Han Wu presented the cleaver first for Weissenegger to evaluate. Given the mayor’s passion for collecting weapons, he did not hesitate to examine it.

After a brief examination, Weissenegger responded that the cleaver was indeed a fine weapon and expressed his pleasure in adding it to his collection. He then presented Han Wu with two alternatives: either accept 400 gold coins as payment or receive a single, rare Rank 3 seed in exchange for the cleaver.

Han Wu was taken aback by the mayor’s offer, as he couldn’t understand why Weissenegger would value the cleaver so highly when even the shopkeeper had been unwilling to accept it. He took the cleaver back and examined it closely, noticing that the weapon’s data had somehow been altered after the mayor had evaluated it.

It was no longer a mere cleaver; it had transformed into a named weapon known as the Afterlife Cleaver, a blade that had been steeped in the blood of a thousand livestock.

This is a Divine weapon, capable of inflicting damage directly upon the soul of any enemy it strikes. This is the cleaver’s true, hidden nature!

A sudden realization dawned upon Han Wu; Mayor Weissenegger was clearly not as straightforward as he had initially appeared.

“So, what will it be?” the mayor inquired. “Will you choose the 400 gold coins or the rare Rank 3 seed?”

Weissenegger urged Han Wu to make his choice, his strong desire for the cleaver clearly showing.

Han Wu decided to push his luck a little.

“If it is possible,” he inquired cautiously, “could I perhaps exchange this cleaver for a different weapon from your collection?”

The mayor hesitated, his eyes lingering on the cleaver for a few seconds before he finally nodded.

“Alright. What kind of weapon are you looking for?”

1. Succubus Mushroom 🍄

2. Corn Mortar 🍷

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

[1,532 words]

Chapter 77 - Important Discovery

Upon the mayor’s agreement to his proposition, Han Wu internally exclaimed, *Bingo!* His heart pounded with excitement as he told the mayor, “If it’s not too much trouble, I would prefer a greatsword.”

Weissenegger pondered his request for a brief moment and then nodded in acknowledgment. “Follow me.”

The mayor guided Han Wu to his private collection room, where a magnificent assortment of weapons was showcased. Although Han Wu was unable to access the detailed data of most of the items, he could clearly perceive the powerful aura emanating from within them. It was clear that every single weapon within the collection room was a Divine weapon!

Weissenegger led Han Wu to a section showcasing eight distinct greatswords. Han Wu carefully examined each one until his gaze fell upon a greatsword that was pitch black in color. The accompanying description indicated that this greatsword was crafted from dense dragon bones

Intrigued by this straightforward description, Han Wu reached out and touched the greatsword. Upon contact, the greatsword emitted a powerful roar, akin to that of a dragon, and a strange but powerful resonance coursed through Han Wu's body.

Weissenegger was also visibly surprised by the display, having never encountered such a thing before. The evident resonance between Han Wu and the weapon suggested a deep compatibility, as if they were meant to be together. At the very least, the mayor found comfort in the thought that Han Wu was unlikely to damage or disrespect such a remarkable blade.

"I want this one," Han Wu declared, deciding on the black greatsword, even though he could see others that looked way stronger. He knew that to exchange for a truly superior weapon, he would likely need to offer a God-tier weapon or artifact.

Since he was going to be staying in Zombie Town for a while, Han Wu concluded that establishing amicable relations with Weissenegger was a wise decision. Furthermore, the greatsword resonated deeply with his blood, indicating that it would enhance his physical power when wielded during combat. All in all, Han Wu understood that he had made a worthwhile transaction.

The mayor nodded in acknowledgement. "Alright. However, the cleaver on its own is not an equal trade for this weapon. You'll need to add something else."

Han Wu nodded in understanding and offered up three Rank 3 Gold Coinflowers and the tap dance notation. He consciously chose not to reveal his Rank 4 seeds, as he had plans for them.

Weissenegger glanced past the tap dance notation and focused on the Gold Coinflower seeds. "You may have the black greatsword in exchange for the cleaver and two of these Gold Coinflower seeds. Do you agree to these terms?"

Han Wu nodded with genuine happiness. He would have readily agreed to the exchange even if the mayor had requested all three of his Gold Coinflower seeds along with the tap dance notation.

The mayor accepted the seeds and expressed his satisfaction with the exchange, even offering Han Wu a piece of advice.

"Regarding this notation..." he commented, gesturing to the tap dance document, "perhaps your neighbor, Madam Haul, might find it interesting. If my memory serves me correctly, she was the renowned dancing queen of our town in her youth."

"Is that so? Thank you very much for the information," Han Wu replied, appreciating the mayor's insight.

The notation itself was of no practical use to him, but he understood that it could be of immense worth to another individual. As it turned out, he had already been planning to speak with Madam Haul regarding the events of the previous night.

After departing from the mayor's house, Han Wu quickly made his way back home. As he passed Xu Tie's property, he noticed the Fire Dragon Grass coiling above the house, resembling an actual dragon. As fate would have it, Xu Tie was just leaving his house, likely on his way to sell his accumulated spoils. Although the two rivals were not openly hostile enough to engage in immediate combat upon encountering each other, they did cast unfriendly scowls in each other's direction.

Xu Tie gestured proudly towards his thriving garden, displaying it for Han Wu to see.

"Look at this, Han Wu!" he remarked with a smug tone. "The gap in our scores is steadily widening. Look at how far ahead I'm getting, while you're still just dragging along in third place. You should just throw in the towel now, and maybe, if I'm feeling generous, I'll let you stay in the same classroom as Qin Shuang."

Han Wu responded with a cold smile, his eyes unwavering.

"Oh, how very... considerate of you," he said, his tone laced with sarcasm, "but hey, it's still quite early in the competition. After all, it's only the third day. The ultimate victor has yet to be determined."

Xu Tie's expression hardened, and he growled, "In that case, I will personally deliver a victory so overwhelming it'll shut you up for good!"

Han Wu chose to ignore Xu Tie's taunts and simply walked away. Upon reaching his own house, he did not enter but instead veered towards Madam Haul's and rang her doorbell.

"Madam Haul?" he called. "Are you home?"

With Sun Qingnian's assistance, Madam Haul slowly emerged from her house. Though she was seventy-years-old and her face was etched with wrinkles, her elegance was still evident. She moved with a confident gait, unlike the typical shuffle of an elderly woman.

Han Wu thought with a smirk, *So she's the one Sun Qingnian's getting cozy with, huh?*

"Ah, so you must be the new neighbor," Madam Haul said. "My pookie has already informed me of everything that transpired last night. If you've come seeking compensation, you may as well leave now. I, Sannah Haul, have no intention of paying for your evident incompetence!"

Her voice was harsh and inflexible, making it clear that she would not negotiate. A frown creased Sun Qingnian's face, but he was powerless to object, his survival currently dependent on her goodwill.

Adopting a more deferential tone, Han Wu spoke respectfully. "Madam Haul, there seems to be a misunderstanding. I am not here to ask for any compensation whatsoever. Rather, I came to witness the grace I have heard so much about. Mayor Weissenegger mentioned your former title as the Dancing Queen of this town, and I can now understand that his praise was well-deserved."

Though her expression eased slightly, she still remained guarded. "Don't you dare think for a second that I'm going to change my garden just because of your compliment."

Han Wu offered a bitter smile, simultaneously impressed and intrigued as to how Sun Qingnian had managed to sweet-talk his rich, grumpy neighbor. Sensing that the negotiation was heading towards failure, he decided to play his final card.

He carefully retrieved the tap dance notation from his pocket and presented it to her.

"Madam Haul," he said respectfully, "I recently stumbled upon this tap dance notation and thought you might want to take a look."

Madam Haul, the former dancing queen, caught sight of the notation, and her gaze immediately sharpened with interest. She eagerly took the manuscript and became instantly absorbed in its contents after reading just a few pages.

"This... this is the long-lost Boogie Dance!" she exclaimed, her voice shaking. "Name any price—I'll pay you anything, no matter the cost!"

Madam Haul was beside herself with excitement when she saw that notation. Years of fruitless searching had led her to believe she would never find it. She had come to terms with the idea that it would be her only lingering regret in life, never daring to hope she would witness it with her own eyes in her remaining years.

She decided right then and there she'd pay anything for that notation, even if it meant handing over her whole house! To her, that tap dance notation was worth more than all the money in the world.

Observing Madam Haul's intense desire for the tap dance notation, Han Wu saw his chance. However, he wasn't interested in just a one-time deal. Instead, he aimed to establish a lasting friendship with her, believing that this would lead to more favorable rewards over time.

"Madam Haul," Han Wu said sincerely, "you are far too kind. Please consider this notation a gift from me. Should I happen to come across any more of these dance notations in the future, I will certainly bring them to you as well."

A look of profound surprise spread across Madam Haul's face, and the way she regarded Han Wu softened considerably. In that instant, she began to view him as if he were her own grandson.

"Little Han," Madam Haul said, her voice now warm, "thank you for your wonderful generosity, and please forgive my earlier rudeness. From this moment on, you have to call me Sannah! I promise to be the best neighbor you could ever ask for!"

At that precise moment, a system notification chimed within Han Wu's mind.

[Became friends with Dancing Queen Sannah Haul. Unlocking Sannah Haul's personal shop. +30,000 points]

Han Wu's eyes widened in astonishment. He had just stumbled upon a discovery of significant importance!

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

Chapter 78 - Joining the Defender Squad

[1,505 words]

Chapter 78 - Joining the Defender Squad

Han Wu had barely stepped back into his house when Qin Shuang approached him, her expression one of surprise.

"What in the world did you do this time?" she asked, her voice filled with astonishment. "I just got a message saying I'm now friends with the Dance Queen Sannah Haul. It also says I can access her personal shop and have been awarded 10,000 points!"

"Really?" Han Wu mused, pausing for a moment in thought before the realization dawned on him. They were technically married, even if it was just on paper, so the townsfolk viewed them as husband and wife. Therefore, it was only natural that Madam Haul would extend her newfound friendship to Qin Shuang as well.

They *wasted no time* in checking out Madam Haul's personal shop to see what was on offer. Qin Shuang, who had 60 Friend Points with Madam Haul, found that she could exchange them for one of three items: a Rank 3 Triclover seed, a session in a dancing class, or a set of dancing attire that was also classified as Divine equipment.

However, claiming any of the available items would consume Qin Shuang's accumulated Friend Points, and the personal shop would become inaccessible once her balance dropped below 60 points. Unlike Qin Shuang, Han Wu possessed a higher total of Friend Points, granting him access to more items. With a balance of 99 Friend Points in Madam Haul's shop, he was eligible to exchange them for seven different items.

The Wisdom Fruit in Madam Haul's shop quickly caught Han Wu's eye, but it was offered at a cost of 90 Friend Points. He realized that choosing to buy it would likely bring his budding friendship with Madam Haul to an end.

Han Wu mumbled to himself, his eyes narrowed in thought, "Okay, I need to be very careful with my choices here. I absolutely cannot screw up the new friendship I have with Madam Haul right now. I think the smartest thing to do is to wait it out and try to get the Wisdom Fruit from her right before the class is going to end."

After making their plans, the two were completely exhausted. They grabbed a quick bite and then collapsed in their own rooms until it was almost nighttime. They woke up just in time to get their defenses ready. The relentless zombie horde continued its aimless, persistent march down the street, attacking any living creature they could find in the town.

Han Wu surveyed his garden, pleased by its significant growth in power. The Rank 4 Succushroom and Rank 4 Corntar were strategically positioned at the far rear, and he had already mutated them to a terrifying degree.

The mutated Rank 4 Succushroom now possessed a very high chance of confusing zombies, with even Rank 3 zombies facing a 20% chance of disorientation. Moreover, its brainwashing capabilities had been significantly boosted to such an extent that it could now completely control the mind of a Rank 5 zombie.

The mutations to the Rank 4 Corntar had enhanced both its attack range and attack speed. It was now capable of launching attacks from any location within the garden and was capable of firing two shots in rapid succession.

Han Wu's garden also contained a Rank 3 Gold Coinflower, a Rank 3 Sunflower, forty mutated Dandyrangs, and ten surviving Bronze Coinflowers. Despite having fewer plants compared to the previous day, the overall firepower of his garden had increased exponentially to a terrifying degree.

Upon sensing the distinct aura of death emanating from the approaching zombies, Han Wu's plants sprang to life and erupted in a furious assault. The sheer overwhelming firepower of his mutated plants completely decimated the undead horde, ensuring that not a single zombie managed to breach the perimeter of his house.

Finding himself with nothing to do, Han Wu climbed his fence to see what was happening in Madam Haul's garden. His attention was immediately drawn to the area

behind the Rank 4 Divine Oakshot, where he noticed that the Rank 2 Jumping Beanpad had been replaced with a Rank 3 Man-Eater.

With no more high ranking zombies being launched into his garden and his plants efficiently repelling the remaining horde, Han Wu felt a growing sense of monotony. Not even the slightest effort was required of him, so he began considering doing something incredibly daring.

Hmm, what if I just went out and checked out the town right now? Yeah, there are probably tons of zombies, but I can fly, so getting away shouldn't be a problem. I mean, the chances of flying zombies are pretty nonexistent, right?

Prompted by this idea, Han Wu transformed using Dark Dragonification and ascended into the air, flying out over the streets. Below him, the zombie horde stretched out endlessly, with a significant number of Rank 3 and even Rank 4 zombies moving within the horde.

Recognizing an opportunity to accumulate additional points, Han Wu resolved to begin systematically eliminating the higher-ranking zombies. He drew his black greatsword, fixed his sights on a nearby Rank 4 zombie, and then descended rapidly to deliver the killing blow.

“Enchant Darkness and Dragon Slash!”

The sheer power of his unbreakable greatsword, coupled with the force of his Dragon Slash, killed the Rank 4 zombie with a single, decisive blow. He swiftly collected the dropped items before scanning the horde below for his next target. In this manner, Han Wu managed to amass a considerable amount of loot within a single night.

By the end of his hunt, Han Wu had successfully eliminated 14 Rank 4 zombies and 23 Rank 3 zombies, boosting his total points to 723,000. While he still held third place in the rankings, the point gap between himself and the leading competitors was steadily shrinking. Sun Qingnian occupied the second position with 757,000 points, and Xu Tie continued to hold the top spot with 831,000 points.

Han Wu also noted that several of the students who had initially been at the bottom of the leaderboard were now quickly gaining points, having seemingly adapted to their surroundings over the past two days. Every student now had a score exceeding 100,000 points.

Han Wu mused to himself, a thoughtful expression on his face. *Could it be that they have found a way to rapidly obtain a large number of points? Well, in that case, I need to work even harder!*

With renewed determination, Han Wu continued his hunt until the first rays of sunlight illuminated the town, causing the zombie horde to dissipate into thin air.

[Survived Day 3, +3,000 points]

Exhausted, Han Wu dragged his weary body back towards his house, only to notice a figure waiting for him near the entrance.

As he drew closer, the person approached and offered a greeting. "Hello. I am a resident of this town. My name is Rick Dirt, and I am the captain of the town's Defender Squad."

Although he was somewhat perplexed by the unexpected encounter, Han Wu returned the greeting with courtesy. "Hello, Captain Dirt."

"There is a specific reason why I sought you out," Captain Dirt explained. "I observed your impressive combat skills against the zombies last night through my telescope, and I was so impressed that I wanted to personally recruit you to become a member of the Defender Squad."

Intrigued by the proposition, Han Wu asked, "What exactly does the Defender Squad do?"

"Our primary function is the defense of this town," Captain Dirt replied matter-of-factly. "We diligently guard each and every entry point to prevent any Rank 5 zombies and stronger from breaking through. If it weren't for our constant vigilance, the town would have been overrun by the zombie horde ages ago."

"Rank 5 zombies!" Han Wu exclaimed, genuinely surprised by the revelation that zombies of that rank existed.

Captain Dirt must have used a special observation technique that allowed him to recognize my strength in combating the zombies, and that's why he's inviting me to join them. If I accept his offer, I bet the rewards I'd get would be insanely better than the typical loot I would normally obtain from the regular zombies roaming the town!

With the promise of greater rewards dancing in his head, Han Wu happily accepted Rick's offer. "Captain Dirt, count me in! I would be honored to join your team."

"Excellent! The Defender Squad needs young people like you. Welcome to my team."

Captain Dirt gave Han Wu an approving pat on the shoulder, and almost immediately, a system message appeared in his mind.

[Befriended Captain of the town's Defender Squad, Rick Dirt. Unlocking Rick Dirt's shop. +60,000 points]

[Joined Defender Squad. Opening Defender Squad's Points Shop. +50,000 points]

Han Wu's total points instantly surged by 110,000, This pushed him up the rankings to second place, now surpassing Sun Qingnian by a margin of 2,000 points.

Han Wu, though, didn't even glance at the scoreboard, his thoughts already consumed by the possible resources available for exchange in the two newly unlocked shops.

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Chapter 79 - Members of the Defender Squad

[1,469 words]

Chapter 79 - Members of the Defender Squad

Han Wu assured Captain Dirt that he would report for duty later that night, but first, he needed to return home to gather the spoils he had accumulated throughout the night. After collecting and selling the loot, he received a total of 450 gold coins, in addition to three Rank 4 seeds and five Rank 3 seeds.

With the seeds now planted in his garden, Han Wu turned his attention to the newly accessible shops. The first one he opened was Captain Dirt's personal shop, which currently offered a limited selection of three items: a Divine hunting rifle, a Divine leather jacket, and a Rank 4 Snipe Pea seed.

With only 60 Friend Points accumulated with Captain Dirt, Han Wu realized that making any purchase would make the shop unavailable, just like Madam Haul's. As such, he decided to proceed with the utmost care in his selection of items.

The Defender Squad's Point Shop, however, was different. It boasted a multitude of high-ranking resources, including seeds ranging from Rank 4 to Rank 6. Moreover, it offered an extensive collection of Divine-level equipment, as well as several God-level items.

More importantly, Han Wu's attention was drawn to the fact that the Wisdom Fruit was also stocked in this shop. Alongside it were several rare ingredients that could enhance various aspects of his physical capabilities, such as the Night Vision Fruit, which could drastically improve his eyesight and provide him with the power of night vision, and the Mighty Flower, which could imbue him with superhuman strength and vitality.

Unfortunately, Han Wu did not possess enough points to obtain any of those items. He surmised that eliminating zombies during the night would be the key to earning more points, but he wasn't exactly sure of the specifics.

I guess I'll just have to wait until night to figure it all out!

By unlocking the Defender Squad's Point Shop, Han Wu gained an advantage in obtaining rare ingredients, putting him way ahead of all the other students. But even so, he knew he couldn't just abandon his own house just because he joined the Defender Squad.

As a result of his new obligations, Han Wu detailed his current situation to Qin Shuang and asked for her assistance in managing the front garden. In return for her help, he offered to share half of the points generated by the front garden's defenses, an offer which she gladly accepted.

As Qin Shuang did not possess Controlled Mutation, her advancement relied entirely on her own inherent strength, leading to a slower accumulation of points. Thankfully, the early advantage she had managed to secure was now proving its worth. She currently had 250,000 points, placing her sixth on the scoreboard, and she was certain she would ascend to fifth place by the end of the night.

With all external matters attended to, Han Wu retired to bed and, to his surprise, slept soundly until the evening. Upon waking, he ate a quick meal and then hurried outside the town to the designated meeting place he had arranged with Captain Dirt.

The other members of the Defender Squad were already waiting. Besides Captain Dirt, the team consisted of three more members: Gunslinger Jessica, Megahammer Johnson, and Knight Hank.

Among the group, Jessica was particularly striking due to her beauty, with her blonde hair and a well-toned physique. However, those who might mistakenly perceive her as weak would be in for a rude awakening. Jessica's exceptional gunslinging abilities were the foundation of her strength and the reason she had survived within the squad since her recruitment.

She wielded the two revolvers in her hands with remarkable dexterity, moving them as gracefully as fluttering butterflies while simultaneously unleashing a continuous rain of bullets upon her enemies. Furthermore, there were rumors that she was also highly skilled in close-quarter combat.

Jessica welcomed Han Wu with cheerful enthusiasm. "Oh my! To think our newest member is such a handsome young man! Looks like it's my lucky day!"

The big, muscular Megahammer Johnson coughed awkwardly and said, "Jessica, just so you know, Han Wu has a wife, and he's very much in love with her."

Jessica dismissed Johnson's remark with a scoff. "So what if he has a wife? I can always be his lover."

Han Wu was quite stunned by Jessica's remarkably open-minded and unconventional attitude.

In contrast to Jessica's forwardness, Knight Hank maintained a more composed demeanor. Adorned in heavy armor and carrying a lance, complemented by a sword at his hip, he truly embodied the image of a traditional knight.

He turned to Han Wu and asked, "Mr. Han, what's your usual method of combat?"

In response to the question, Han Wu decided to display his power by using Dark Dragonification and soaring into the air. Jessica was visibly captivated by his transformation; her eyes seemed to sparkle with admiration, almost forming the shape of hearts.

"That's so incredibly cool!" she exclaimed. "You are absolutely my type!"

Johnson watched Han Wu's display with interest. "That reminds me of the werewolves in stories. So, I guess Han Wu is like a were-dragon then?"

Knight Hank had his eyes fixed on Han Wu with admiration. With a reverent tone, he said, "Mr. Han must surely be an angel sent down by the gods themselves to protect us."

Han Wu overheard the comment and was quite puzzled by the comparison. *Aren't angels supposed to be radiant, usually white in appearance? My scales and wings are pitch-black—I'm about as far from that as you can get!*

Captain Dirt gave Han Wu a satisfied nod. His initial judgment had proven accurate.

"Han Wu," he said, "since you've only just joined us, you don't have to fight tonight. For now, just stand back and watch how we take care of these zombies."

Captain Dirt intended for Han Wu to familiarize himself with their combat strategy and observe their combat, but Han Wu shook his head. He had joined the Defender Squad to actively kill zombies and earn points. He was unwilling to simply stand by as an observer—he needed money!

"Captain Dirt," Han Wu requested earnestly, "please allow me to participate in your battle tonight. I believe I have demonstrated my strength to you, and I am confident that I am not inferior in strength to anyone on this team. If you have any concerns, you could assign me as an assistant to one of the other members for tonight's mission."

Jessica offered a playful wink and purred seductively. "Oh, Captain, please let me guide him. I just love working with such handsome guys."

Captain Dirt rolled his eyes and sighed. "Alright, Jessica. Han Wu is your responsibility tonight."

As night descended upon the town, Jessica gently pulled Han Wu to the side. "Alright, handsome. These zombies are dangerous, so you have to be completely focused, okay?"

Han Wu just patted his chest with a confident grin.

"Don't worry about me," he reassured her. "I've got plenty of experience when it comes to fighting."

Jessica smiled and swiftly drew her guns. Simultaneously, two glowing magic arrays materialized beside her, each one as large as her own body. From these arrays, two mutated Rank 5 Bean Pelters were summoned: the Blazing Bean Pelter and the Frost Bean Pelter.

Once summoned, the two plants swiftly transformed into brilliant rays of light and merged directly into Jessica's body. Simultaneously, trails of red and blue vines appeared across her body, resembling intricate tattoos, and the heads of the Blazing and Frost Bean Pelters seamlessly melded onto the barrels of her revolvers.

After the transformation, one of her revolvers pulsed with a fiery red energy, while the other shimmered with a frosty chill. Han Wu was astonished by the evident increase in the revolvers' power. Meanwhile, he observed that the other three members of the Defender Squad were undergoing a similar process, their bodies fusing with the plants they had summoned.

Megahammer Johnson fused with the Rank 5 Wallmond. As a result, his already muscular physique expanded further, and his imposing warhammer transformed, becoming a brilliant golden color, as if forged from an extremely durable gold-like metal.

Knight Hank then summoned two Rank 5 plants, the Swordchid and the Sentipine. In a swift display, the Swordchid merged seamlessly with his sword, while the Sentipine fused with his lance.

Captain Dirt's summoned plant appeared to be the most unassuming of the group; however, it was the formidable Rank 6 Azureflare Star Anise, a plant that contained a power level exceeding the combined strength of all the other plants summoned by his three teammates.

Once the merging process was complete, Captain Dirt was completely enveloped in vibrant azure flames, looking every bit a human torch.

He stared intently into the approaching darkness and bellowed, "The zombies are coming!"

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

[1,498 words]

Chapter 80 - Gene Lock

Han Wu stared at Jessica and the other members of the Defender Squad, his expression a mixture of awe and disbelief. He had absolutely no clue that one could just fuse with high-ranking plants like that!

Jessica and Captain Dirt initiated the attack, unleashing a barrage of bullets imbued with fire and frost into the encroaching darkness. The impact of their attacks caused the earth to tremble with explosions, but the sheer number of zombies remained overwhelming. Charging out from the shadows and the remnants of the blasts came a horrifying realization: every single zombie in the advancing wave was a terrifying Rank 5!

"We'll handle this!" Johnson roared, charging forward with his massive warhammer and bringing it down with tremendous force, cracking open the head of a Rank 5 zombie. Despite the seemingly fatal injury, the zombie remained standing and, with terrifying speed, shot out a long, barbed tentacle from its neck, aiming to end Johnson.

Jessica responded instantly, firing a hail of bullets that swiftly shredded the barbed tentacle. Taking advantage of this opening, Johnson brought his warhammer down once more, smashing the zombie into countless pieces as he let out a ferocious roar. "Next!"

Simultaneously, over on the other side, Hank and Captain Dirt were also battling against a Rank 5 zombie. Their teamwork proved effective, and with a final barrage of Captain Dirt's azure fire bullets, the zombie was reduced to ashes.

Seeing an opening in the chaos, Han Wu seized the opportunity to attack a nearby Rank 5 zombie. He executed his signature combo of Dark Dragonification, Enchant Darkness, and Dragon Slash, but to his astonishment, the attack seemed to have little to no impact on the higher-ranked undead.

Despite his best efforts, Han Wu only succeeded in creating a large wound on the Rank 5 zombie. It took a considerable barrage of fire and frost bullets from Jessica to finally eradicate the creature completely. As a result of his participation, Han Wu received

credit for an assist, earning him 3,000 points, which was enough to acquire a single Rank 4 seed from the Defender Squad Point Shop.

Overjoyed, Han Wu eagerly sought out another powerful zombie to battle. However, despite his attempts, he was again unable to secure the kill and received another assist.

For a continuous three hours, they engaged in fierce combat. The high-intensity fighting began to wear down Han Wu, while the other members of the Defender Squad continued to fight with unwavering vigor without any apparent decrease in their stamina.

Upon closer inspection, Han Wu discerned that the Defender Squad members had not only inherited the destructive power of their fused plants but also their incredible endurance. In their current state, they seemed less like humans and more like mobile, high-ranking plants capable of relentless combat.

As a result of the Defender Squad's efforts, not a single Rank 5 or Rank 6 zombie managed to breach the town's defenses. However, the sheer number of Rank 4 zombies and those of lower ranks proved too overwhelming to completely halt, and they managed to enter the town. Fortunately, the town residents were capable enough to handle Rank 4 zombies on their own.

It dawned on Han Wu just how crucial the Defender Squad was for the town's survival. They served as an incredibly powerful filter, effectively preventing any Rank 5 zombies and those of higher ranks from infiltrating the town.

Spotting Han Wu's fatigue, Jessica winked at him and playfully teased, "Little handsome boy, has the battle already worn you out? With stamina like that, you'll never be able to handle me as your lover."

Even as she spoke, she continued her relentless assault on the zombies, her bullets striking their targets with deadly accuracy without her even needing to look.

A bitter smile touched Han Wu's lips as he couldn't find a suitable retort. He knew that if he still possessed his attributes as a Divine Being, he wouldn't have experienced any exhaustion and could have fought tirelessly until dawn. But now, as just a regular human, it was already a remarkable achievement that he had endured such an intense three-hour battle.

Suddenly, a mocking, sneering voice reverberated in Han Wu's mind. "Vessel, care to guess who's speaking?"

Recognizing the voice, Han Wu scoffed internally. "Origin of Mutation? Well, look at that! You've finally decided to grace me with your time, haven't you?"

The Origin of Mutation had been rather talkative prior to him giving it the Divine Essence. However, ever since it had taken the Essence, it had completely disregarded him, not uttering a single word or thought to him.

“Ugh, I think I smell a hint of a bitch.” The Origin of Mutation’s voice echoed in Han Wu’s mind, tinged with irritation. “Did someone just have the nerve to call my chosen vessel weak? I will not stand for such disrespect. I’m going to give you a chance to demonstrate your manliness in front of that little girl.”

Han Wu’s curiosity was piqued. “What exactly are you planning to do?”

“I am going to unlock something within you called the Gene Lock. It’s incredibly powerful. Are you willing to give it a try?”

“Of course!”

Having already expended a considerable sum of eight Divine Essence on the Origin of Mutation, how could Han Wu possibly decline such an enticing offer? This new offer was a chance to see a return on that investment.

“Alright, hang on tight! Let’s get this show on the road!” The Origin of Mutation cackled.

Suddenly, Han Wu’s body was filled with a multitude of clicking sounds, as if numerous complex locks were being undone in unison.

An intense sensation coursed through his body as his very cells seemed to awaken, behaving almost like independent, sentient entities. They began to greedily draw in the surrounding air in an uncontrolled, gasping manner. Suddenly, his body was brimming with renewed vigor and a seemingly inexhaustible supply of energy.

The Origin of Mutation chuckled with amusement. “And there you have it—the Gene Lock has been unlocked. You now possess the ability to harness the cells of any powerful living organism to trigger a temporary mutation in your own body!”

Han Wu’s brow furrowed in confusion; he couldn’t immediately think of any cells from strong living organisms he had access to. Then, a realization dawned upon him, and he recalled the points he had earned in the battle.

Han Wu quickly navigated to the Defender Squad Point Shop and exchanged his 3,000 points for a Rank 4 Blazing Sunflower seed. He immediately put the seed in his mouth, and it began to dissolve rapidly as his cells eagerly broke down and devoured its genetic material.

In an instant, Han Wu felt an intense heat surge through his body, as if every single cell had transformed into a miniature, blazing sun, each radiating an immeasurable amount of heat and light energy. This extreme sensation lasted only briefly before Han Wu’s

body began to glow with an extraordinary brilliance, much like a human-shaped lightbulb, casting a brilliant light that illuminated everything within a five-kilometer radius.

The sudden, intense light instantly exposed the zombies lurking in the darkness, which swiftly began to burn their rotting flesh. Numerous lower-ranking zombies were instantly incinerated into dust, while the more powerful Rank 5 zombies suffered severe damage, their combat effectiveness reduced to half of what it was before.

Although they were unsure of the cause of Han Wu's radiant display, the Defender Squad recognized the immediate advantage it presented. They immediately pressed their attack, with Jessica's firearms unleashing a torrent of bullets and Johnson's warhammer, Hank's lance and sword each cutting down a vulnerable zombie.

The zombies, who under normal circumstances would have posed a significant threat, were quickly overwhelmed and decimated. Only a single, massive Rank 6 Giant Zombie managed to withstand the intense burning light. Though it was clearly in pain, its massive body remained unscathed. With a deafening roar, it lunged towards Han Wu, apparently intent on extinguishing the source of the damaging light.

"Protect Han Wu!" Captain Dirt yelled out in alarm.

Immediately, Johnson and Hank moved to intercept the charging Rank 6 Giant Zombie, attempting to halt its advance using their powerful physiques.

However, they were effortlessly knocked aside by the creature's enormous arms. The Rank 6 Giant Zombie was a truly massive behemoth, its sheer size and power making it seem almost unstoppable.

Even with their combined firepower, Captain Dirt and Jessica's bullets only managed to graze the Giant Zombie's thick skin, doing nothing to slow it down. At the very last moment, Han Wu moved on his own. However, instead of trying to get away, he spread his arms wide open and charged directly towards the Giant Zombie.

The instant they made contact, the light surrounding Han Wu flared with incredible intensity, and a miniature sun materialized into existence. Everything within the confines of this minuscule, blazing star was instantaneously turned to dust.

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

Chapter 81 - Upgraded Version of Plant Fusion

[1,631 words]

Chapter 81 - Upgraded Version of Plant Fusion

As the intense heat in Han Wu's body gradually subsided, his mind was flooded with a multitude of system messages.

[Befriended Defender Squad's Gunslinger Jessica Smith. Unlocking Jessica's shop. +50,000 points]

[Befriended Defender Squad's Megahammer Johnson. Unlocking Johnson's shop. +50,000 points]

[Befriended Defender Squad's Knight Hank. Unlocking Hank's shop. +50,000 points]

The three system messages that Han Wu received indicated that his display of power had left a significant impression on the Defender Squad, and as a result, he had earned their friendship.

Also, Han Wu noticed that he had received a substantial reward of 23,000 points for defeating the Rank 6 Giant Zombie. This was a considerable gain for him, particularly when considering that a Rank 4 seed in the Points Shop was just 3,000 points!

The Origin of Mutation chuckled again, its voice laced with amusement. "So, Vessel, how does it feel now that the Gene Lock is unlocked?"

"Hell yeah, it's absolutely amazing!"

Activating the Gene Lock and using a Rank 4 Blazing Sunflower seed had given him the temporary might to defeat even a Rank 6 Giant Zombie. What if he used a Rank 5 or even a Rank 6 seed?

"Alright there, Vessel, don't get ahead of yourself," the Origin of Mutation cautioned, dousing Han Wu's excitement with a bucket of cold water. "While the Gene Lock possesses significant power, your physical body is still too weak to handle its rapid, successive use."

Han Wu nodded in understanding. It seemed logical that a powerful technique like the Gene Lock would come with certain limitations. His own skill, Sacrifice, was incredibly powerful, but could only be used once per day. If not for that restriction, with his extraordinary luck, Han Wu would've been incredibly wealthy by now.

"With your body's current capabilities, you can activate the Gene Lock only once every ten days," the Origin of Mutation stated matter-of-factly.

Han Wu's eyebrows shot up.

“Wait a minute,” he asked, “what happens if I try to use it more than once within those ten days?”

“Oh, your genes’ll just undergo permanent mutation, and whatever temporary mutation you trigger will become a permanent part of you. What’s the matter? Feeling a bit adventurous?”

The Origin of Mutation chuckled with amusement, but Han Wu shook his head firmly. His life was too important to throw away on some reckless experiment. The fact that he could use the Gene Lock once every ten days was already a massive increase in his strength!

Just as Han Wu was about to press the Origin of Mutation for more details about the newly unlocked Gene Lock, the members of the Defender Squad gathered around him, their expressions a mixture of concern and curiosity.

His voice laced with worry, Captain Dirt asked, “Han Wu, are you alright? We witnessed that intense light radiating from your body!”

Jessica chuckled, her eyes sparkling with newfound interest.

“Handsome young man,” she said, her voice laced with playful seduction, “your display of power just now has completely won me over! You certainly have what it takes to be my lover. So, how about we spend a wonderful night together?”

Still gripping his lance firmly, Knight Hank said kindly, “Listen, if you’re feeling completely drained, don’t hesitate to go back and rest tonight. We’ve pretty much cleared out the zombies. We can take care of whatever Rank 5s are left.”

“Hank, don’t try to hog all the points. I’m perfectly capable of fighting alongside you tonight,” Johnson grumbled, not wanting to be left out.

Han Wu felt a surge of warmth at the Defender Squad’s concern for him. However, their words rang true. The sheer exhaustion from unleashing the Gene Lock had finally overwhelmed him, and he knew he could no longer continue fighting.

Rather than heading back to town to rest immediately, Han Wu decided to sit back and watch as the Defender Squad dealt with the remaining zombies. He figured he could use the time to observe their fighting styles and simultaneously browse through the new shops that he had recently unlocked.

Noticing his Friend Points gradually increasing, Han Wu decided to make some purchases. He had 80 points with Captain Dirt, which allowed him to select from six unique items in his shop. After carefully weighing his options, Han Wu decided to buy the Rank 5 Death Lily seed, which cost him 65 Friend Points.

With Jessica, having 75 Friend Points and five available items, Han Wu purchased the Instant Kick for 70 Friend Points. For Johnson, with 70 Friend Points and four options, he chose an excellent warhammer that was also a Divine weapon, costing 65 Friend Points.

And with Knight Hank, Han Wu also had 70 Friend Points and four items to choose from. His attention was immediately drawn to the Plant Fusion Technique, the very skill he had witnessed the Defender Squad using in combat earlier. Without any further thought, he purchased it for 70 Friend Points.

Having depleted the majority of his accumulated Friend Points, the personal shops of Captain Dirt, Jessica, Johnson, and Hank had temporarily become inaccessible to him. Furthermore, their interactions with him were not as openly friendly as they had been previously.

Han Wu, however, was not bothered by this development. He was confident that by continuing to perform well in his duties with the Defender Squad, he would quickly earn back the 60 Friend Points necessary to regain access to the personal shops. Once they were unlocked, he was confident he could gather enough points to purchase many more items.

Han Wu was really interested in the Plant Fusion Technique he just bought and immediately started going through the manual. As he studied the contents, he came to understand the underlying principles and fundamental workings of the technique. Just as he was about to delve deeper into his research, the Origin of Mutation interrupted his thoughts.

"I must admit, I initially thought this would be some extraordinary technique," the Origin of Mutation said, its voice laced with disappointment, "but it's nothing more than a crude method for one life form to graft itself onto another. Wait a minute... this is completely worthless! The strongest plant you can even graft onto yourself is only Rank 5!"

Han Wu frowned, a wave of annoyance washing over him. He had just spent 70 hard-earned Friend Points on this technique, only to be immediately berated by the Origin of Mutation for buying what it considered utter trash.

The Origin of Mutation's tone shifted to one of smug confidence. "Well, well, are we perhaps a little upset? Do you think I'm trying to mislead you? Well, what if I told you I could enhance this technique?"

Han Wu, however, remained unconvinced.

"Fine," he replied with a shrug, "go ahead and try if you think you can manage it."

With a sly tone, the Origin of Mutation finally revealed its true intention. “Fine, have it your way. However, if I succeed in enhancing this technique, you will have to give me one Divine Essence.”

It had been plotting to get its hands on a Divine Essence all this time!

The Origin of Mutation had previously extracted eight precious units of Divine Essence from him by revealing a deceptively easy way to improve his core race from the Common rank to the Elite rank on the fundamental level. Feeling that he had been ripped off, Han Wu was determined not to fall for any more of its schemes. The Origin of Mutation now had to come up with a new approach to swindle Han Wu out of his Divine Essence.

Han Wu considered the offer. He realized that if the Origin of Mutation could indeed enhance the Plant Fusion Technique, he too would ultimately benefit from the improved skill. Additionally, he reasoned that if the Origin of Mutation used the Divine Essence to enhance itself, those improvements would likely extend to him as well, given their symbiotic relationship. Either way, it was a win-win for him.

Han Wu agreed, but he told the Origin of Mutation straight up that he'd only pay the Divine Essence *after* it actually improved the technique. The Origin of Mutation just laughed to itself when it sensed what Han Wu was thinking.

Does this simpleton really think he can outsmart me?

After their deal was struck, the Origin of Mutation went silent, presumably to focus on altering the technique. However, its silence only lasted for a brief five minutes before its mocking voice echoed in Han Wu's mind once more.

“Vessel,” it taunted, “just a friendly reminder that you now owe me one Divine Essence!”

It then transmitted the details of the modified technique directly into Han Wu's mind. Han Wu immediately checked the data and was taken aback to realize that the Origin of Mutation had actually been telling the truth.

Examining the details of the modified technique, Han Wu discovered that he could now fuse with three different plants simultaneously. More significantly, the rank limit had been raised, allowing him to fuse with a Rank 6 plant! The enhanced Plant Fusion Technique was not simply three times stronger; its power had increased exponentially. The possibility of a fusion involving one Rank 6 plant and two Rank 5 plants was something virtually unheard of.

Filled with anticipation, Han Wu was eager to find three suitable plants to test out his newly enhanced Plant Fusion Technique.

Given that darkness is the attribute most aligned with my abilities, the Rank 5 Death Lily should be the most compatible choice. It's definitely going to be the first plant I merge with!

Han Wu spent the remainder of the night engrossed in studying the process of fusing with the Rank 5 Death Lily using the modified Plant Fusion Technique.

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

[1,374 words]

Chapter 82 - Eclipse

The night was soon over, and a system message played in Han Wu's mind.

[Survived Day 4. +4,000 points]

Just as before, the seemingly endless wave of zombies dissipated into nothingness upon encountering the sun's light, leaving no trace as if their presence had been nothing more than a fleeting illusion.

After bidding farewell to the Defender Squad, Han Wu made his way back home. Along the journey, he accessed the scoreboard and was pleased to see that he was in first place with an impressive 1.4 million points. Sun Qingnian, occupying second place, was a significant 200,000 points behind him.

Xu Tie's score hadn't even reached the million mark, placing him far behind Han Wu. Qin Shuang, on the other hand, held fourth place with a respectable 736,000 points. Based on her steady accumulation of points, Han Wu predicted that Qin Shuang would likely overtake Xu Tie within the next couple of days.

Arriving back home, Han Wu found Qin Shuang carefully organizing their shared rewards from the garden, having already divided them in half.

However, Han Wu shook his head gently. "It's alright, Qin Shuang. I don't really need these anymore. The rewards I'm earning with the Defender Squad are significantly better than these now."

Despite his offer, however, Qin Shuang wouldn't budge.

"We made a deal to divide these rewards equally, so this half belongs to you," she insisted. "I don't want to feel like I'm taking advantage of your generosity, and I certainly don't want your pity."

Han Wu smiled bitterly as he accepted the rewards. After selling them, he got a decent amount of 360 gold coins—more than enough to purchase several regular Rank 4 seeds. However, since he already possessed a more powerful Rank 5 seed, he decided to save the gold coins for any unforeseen emergencies that might arise.

Later that evening, Han Wu kept working on fusing with the Death Lily seed, concentrating on getting it to sprout and take root within him. Meanwhile, Qin Shuang made her way to Madam Haul's house to attend her dance lessons.

Having learned how to interact effectively with the townspeople and successfully opening their personal shops, Qin Shuang became highly engaged and proactive in making friends among them. As her husband in name, Han Wu indirectly benefited from her efforts, allowing him to exchange the earned Friend Points for various rare and valuable resources.

Nine peaceful days passed without incident. On the tenth day, as planned, Han Wu cheerfully exited the town gates and found the other four members of the Defender Squad already waiting for him. However, their faces were etched with frowns, and they seemed to be facing some kind of difficulty.

“What’s wrong?” Han Wu asked, his worry palpable.

Her usual lightheartedness absent, Jessica answered, “Handsome boy, you might not be aware of this, but there will be a lunar eclipse tonight. It’s a monthly event, and on the night of the eclipse, the zombies become exceptionally powerful. The last time this happened, just one month ago, we lost one of our team members, Sister Lily, and she never came back.”

Captain Dirt smiled sadly, a shadow of grief in his eyes.

“Lily’s death... I take full responsibility,” he confessed, his voice filled with determination. “But I swear to you all, as long as I’m alive, none of you will die tonight!”

“Captain Dirt!” Hank and Johnson responded, deeply moved by their leader’s unwavering resolve.

Han Wu could sense the heavy atmosphere and knew that tonight’s battle would be exceptionally dangerous. As the newest and arguably weakest member of the group, he was at the highest risk and would likely be the first to fall if things went south. This thought spurred him to do everything within his power to prepare for the dangerous night ahead.

Despite having already made several purchases using his individual Friend Points, he realized he had yet to check the Defender Squad’s Point Shops. He quickly accessed it and was surprised to discover that he had already amassed 95,000 points, a truly significant amount.

Recognizing the imminent danger and the need to prioritize his survival against the exceptionally powerful enemies expected that night, Han Wu resolved to spend all of his available points. His immediate priority was defense, so he purchased a set of Divine-level armor for 12,000 points. He then decided to enhance his physical capabilities by purchasing items such as the Night Vision Fruit, Mighty Flower, and Vitality Grass, among others.

With little time to spare, he quickly consumed the various fruits and grasses he had just purchased. He burped contentedly and checked his point balance, seeing that he still had 12,000 points remaining. His attention was then drawn to a Rank 5 Gold Dragon Grass seed that was listed in the shop.

Han Wu noticed that the Rank 5 Gold Dragon Grass and Xu Tie's Rank 4 Fire Dragon Grass, despite possessing different attributes, were actually of the same species, the primary distinction being that Xu Tie's plant had the fire attribute while the Gold Dragon Grass possessed the metal attribute and also contained traces of Great Dragon genes.

He selected the Rank 5 Gold Dragon Grass seed primarily due to the presence of the Great Dragon genes, believing it would be highly compatible with his unique constitution. He spent his final 12,000 points on the seed and immediately began the process of fusing it with his body. Gradually, the Gold Dragon Grass started growing inside him.

Several golden vines extended and spread across Han Wu's body as the fusion progressed. When these vines encountered the black dragon blood coursing through his veins, they visibly reacted, almost as if they were drawn to it, and began to absorb it. As they absorbed the blood, the golden vines started to transform, taking on a mysterious golden black color. The Gold Dragon Grass was integrating with his body at an unexpectedly rapid pace.

As dusk settled, the moon ascended into the sky, initially a brilliant white orb. However, its light was soon consumed by encroaching darkness, confirming the predicted lunar eclipse[1]. Under the shadow of the eclipse, the death aura emanating from the zombies surged with surprising intensity, and many of them displayed noticeable enhancements in their abilities.

The onset of the lunar eclipse triggered a terrifying chain reaction among the undead. Under the eerie light of the eclipse, the Rank 1 zombies roared in unison and mutated into Rank 2 zombies. Furthermore, a horrifying 70% of the Rank 2 zombies then mutated into Rank 3 zombies.

Following this, at least 30% of the Rank 3 zombies evolved into Rank 4 zombies, and a significant 10% of the Rank 4 zombies further mutated into Rank 5 zombies. The Rank 5 zombies were the primary targets that the Defender Squad had to intercept before they could reach the town, as their entry would spell absolute catastrophe.

“Those damned undead bastards are here!” Captain Dirt yelled, his voice ringing with alarm. “Everyone, fuse with your plants and prepare for battle!”

Without hesitation, the members of the Defender Squad began their transformations. Moments later, each stood fully transformed and ready for combat. Han Wu’s transformation, though the slowest to complete, was visibly the smoothest and most seamless, a clear benefit of the Origin of Mutation’s modifications to his technique.

Once the fusion was complete, the Death Lily appeared on his chest, resembling an intricate tattoo. Remarkably, it emitted a subtle death aura that seemed to confuse the surrounding zombies, providing him with a level of camouflage and diminishing the intensity of their aggression towards him.

Although the Gold Dragon Grass hadn’t yet reached its full maturity, it had already successfully fused to Han Wu’s back. As a result, his dragon wings now possessed a distinctive black and gold appearance. Furthermore, the fusion had also enhanced their strength.

The surge of power he felt after the dual fusion ignited a strong desire within Han Wu to test his newfound strength in battle. He had a feeling that despite the danger, tonight would be fun.

1. During a lunar eclipse, the moon is still visible and just changes color, usually to red. We’re just presenting it as it was in the raws 📺

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Chapter 83 - Special Plant Mourning Deathcap

[1,619 words]

Chapter 83 - Special Plant Mourning Deathcap

The lunar eclipse had reached its full intensity, casting an eerie darkness over the landscape. Fortunately, each member of the Defender Squad had taken the precaution of eating a Night Vision Fruit beforehand, allowing them to see everything unimpaired.

They could see an immense horde of zombies relentlessly advancing towards the town. However, what truly shook them to their core was the sight of hundreds of formidable Rank 5 zombies leading the charge.

“Block them all!” Captain Dirt commanded, initiating the attack by firing a volley of azure fire bullets towards the approaching zombies. Though the flames seemed mild in appearance, the bullets were burning at an incredibly high temperature, and even the powerful Rank 5 zombies sustained noticeable, fist-sized burn injuries when struck.

Jessica expertly cocked her gun and unleashed a torrent of bullets imbued with both fire and frost upon the advancing Rank 5 zombies. Meanwhile, Knight Hank and Johnson took on the role of tanks, effectively blocking the path of the remaining zombies and preventing them from reaching the backline[1].

Han Wu spread his wings and soared high above the battlefield. His newly enhanced physical abilities, coupled with the devastating combination of Enchant Darkness and Dragon Slash, proved to be immensely powerful, allowing him to defeat Rank 5 zombies with a single blow.

Han Wu had also diligently maintained his close combat training. Even when multiple zombies managed to surround him, he could easily deliver forceful kicks to knock them away, allowing him to break free from their grasp and escape unharmed.

The five members of the Defender Squad coordinated their efforts effectively, successfully preventing numerous Rank 5 zombies from reaching the town. However, as the night wore on and the eclipse reached its peak, the zombies grew in strength, their death aura intensifying. Consequently, the Defender Squad, despite their initial success, gradually found themselves being forced into a retreat.

“Jessica, get to Mayor Weissenegger as fast as you can and request backup!” Captain Dirt shouted, his voice strained with urgency.

Jessica nodded quickly and swiftly retreated towards the town to inform the mayor of their dire situation. Unfortunately, with one less member on the front lines, the remaining members of the Defender Squad found it even more challenging to hold back the zombie horde.

In the chaos of battle, Hank momentarily faltered, and a powerful zombie managed to break through his defenses and damage his Divine armor, which made it considerably harder for him to effectively block incoming attacks.

Meanwhile, Johnson was covered in numerous scratch marks from the relentless zombie claws. Although he was still fighting valiantly, he was certain he would eventually be overwhelmed if the situation continued to deteriorate.

Captain Dirt’s Divine hunting rifle had been firing continuously for so long that its muzzle was glowing a fiery red. He had no choice but to stop firing periodically to allow the weapon to cool down, which as a result hindered his ability to provide constant support. Observing the worsening situation, he was deeply concerned that backup wouldn’t arrive before they were all overwhelmed by the overwhelming intensity of the battle.

Seeing an opportune moment to turn the tide of battle, Han Wu decided to unleash his trump card, the Gene Lock, now that the ten-day cooldown had finally ended.

He shouted, "Captain Dirt, I'll hold them off for a bit!"

Not waiting for Captain Dirt to reply, Han Wu swiftly used his recently earned points to buy a Rank 5 Illumivine. This unique plant possessed the light attribute, which was particularly effective in neutralizing the death aura emanating from the zombies.

Right after consuming the seed, he activated Gene Lock. His cells began to rapidly absorb the genetic material of the seed, triggering a temporary mutation that caused his entire body to emit a brilliant light.

Almost immediately, hundreds of glowing vines erupted from his body, and he lashed them out at the advancing zombie horde. The glowing tendrils danced wildly through the air, slicing through the undead as effortlessly as a lawnmower trimming grass.

However, the Rank 5 zombies had grown in strength to the point where they could now withstand at least one of Han Wu's initial strikes, so he had to quickly deliver a second blow to ensure they were destroyed. Despite their increased resistance, hundreds of Rank 5 zombies were swiftly cut down, their bodies pulverized into clouds of dust.

With only a single Rank 6 zombie remaining, Han Wu furiously lashed out with several glowing vines, making its defeat inevitable. Taking a brief pause, he glanced at his point total in the Defender Squad's Points Shop and was surprised to find that he had already earned 350,000 points, which he could exchange for even more incredible items.

The effects of Gene Lock had finally worn off, but not before the zombie horde had sustained considerable damage. Exhausted from the intense burst of energy, Han Wu retreated to the rear to recuperate. He had done his utmost to provide Captain Dirt and the others with as much precious time as possible.

Just then, Jessica finally located the mayor and quickly relayed the dire situation unfolding at the town's entrance. Upon hearing the news, the mayor immediately gathered dozens of guards and rushed to the frontlines. Their combined efforts allowed them to temporarily halt the zombie horde's progress toward the town. Unfortunately, the lunar eclipse was still in full effect, and the remaining zombies kept getting stronger.

Feeling his stamina returning, Han Wu promptly requested to return to the frontlines to aid his comrades. Just as he was going to meet up with Captain Dirt, his eyes caught sight of the horizon from where the zombie horde was emerging, and he noticed a large, ominous cloud of mist gradually making its way towards the town.

Captain Dirt, also noticing the strange mist, quickly turned to the mayor. "Mayor Weissenegger. There's a large cloud of mist heading directly towards us. We can see

perfectly well in the dark thanks to the Night Vision Fruit, but this mist is impenetrable. Do you have a suitable plant to deal with it?"

The mayor's eyes were fixed on the eerie mist, a deep frown creasing his forehead. "That mist... it's definitely not normal."

Acting quickly to counter the approaching mist, the mayor took out a Rank 4 Cloves Wind seed and a porcelain pot. He planted the seed, and within a mere minute, it blossomed into a fully mature Clovewind plant. The plant then began to generate a strong wind that managed to push the mysterious mist back slightly.

Han Wu was utterly astonished, as he had never witnessed a plant grow with such incredible speed. He knew that even the quickest-maturing plants needed around an hour to fully develop, but this Rank 4 Clovewind had sprouted and reached full maturity in a single minute after being placed in the pot!

Curious about the rapid growth, Han Wu closely inspected the porcelain pot and read the data it displayed:

[Porcelain Pot: Used to plant seeds. Increases seed growth rate by 100 times.]

His voice filled with amazement, he exclaimed, "This pot is absolutely amazing for growing special plants!"

The mayor, hearing Han Wu's exclamation of amazement, turned to him with a kind smile.

"If you like the pot so much, I'd be happy to give you one once we get back to town," he promised. "Captain Dirt has been praising your excellent work, especially your efforts tonight. After the eclipse is over, I will personally thank you on behalf of the entire town."

As the mayor spoke, the familiar chime of the system message echoed in Han Wu's mind.

[Befriended Mayor Arnold Weissenegger. Unlocking Weissenegger's shop. +100,000 points]

Han Wu was pleasantly surprised by the sudden influx of points, feeling as though a treasure chest had unexpectedly fallen into his lap. He quickly checked out Mayor Weissenegger's shop, but since he only had 60 Friendship Points, he could only see the first fifteen items. However, he was optimistic that as he continued to earn more Friendship Points, the shop's inventory would likely expand, offering him even more options.

Han Wu scanned the list of available items in Mayor Weissenegger's shop and spotted a special plant called the Mourning Deathcap. Its description indicated that it attacked by releasing spores, and it was capable of releasing millions of them in a single burst.

These spores would absorb the death aura from the zombies, allowing them to quickly mature and grow into new Mourning Deathcap plants. These new plants would then release their own millions of spores, infecting the surrounding zombies and repeating the cycle. Its infection speed was much faster than any virus.

Although the Mourning Deathcap possessed unusual abilities, the actual damage it dealt was insignificant, so the mayor had only ever considered it as little more than a regular collectible item. However, it was lucky to have caught Han Wu's attention tonight.

Han Wu saw an opportunity to develop a new attack strategy centered around the Mourning Deathcap's unique abilities. He realized that if he could pull it off, it could even level up his core race, the locusts.

Without hesitation, Han Wu spent 5 Friendship Points to exchange for the Mourning Deathcap. He then carefully positioned the plant in front of the Clovewind, intending for the wind generated by the Clovewind to carry the Mourning Deathcap's spores towards the approaching zombie horde.

1. The backline refers to the group of units positioned behind the frontline. Their main role is to support, attack from a distance, or provide specialized functions rather than directly engaging in close combat, which in this case refers to Jessica and Captain Dirt.

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[1,281 words]

Chapter 84 - Golden Pot

Despite the obscuring mist, Han Wu could still tell that the Mourning Deathcaps were successfully blooming on the zombies. However, the not quite formidable Deathcaps weren't able to absorb much of the zombies' death aura, so they weren't inflicting as much damage as he had hoped. Nevertheless, he wasn't worried, and he continued to watch as the Mourning Deathcaps rapidly spread throughout the zombie horde.

Ascending into the sky, Han Wu looked down upon the zombie horde. He could see that the Mourning Deathcaps had thoroughly engulfed them and were continuing to spread

rapidly. The infection was spreading exponentially—one zombie would infect ten, those ten would infect a hundred, and so on.

An hour later, Han Wu observed with satisfaction that the Mourning Deathcaps had spread to every single zombie, regardless of its rank from 1 to 5. It was time to put his plan into action.

Victory or defeat will be decided in this single moment!

Han Wu then activated his exclusive skill, Sacrifice. This special ability granted him the power to sacrifice any life forms under his control, which in this case included the millions of Mourning Deathcaps.

He felt the array rapidly enlarging, quickly spreading to cover the entire town and the surrounding outskirts. This confirmed that the array had recognized the Mourning Deathcaps as life forms under his control.

Han Wu was thrilled that his risky plan had worked. He could feel the life energy of the numerous Mourning Deathcaps being drawn into the array. Although the life energy of a single Mourning Deathcap was only about a tenth of that of a Common locust, their sheer volume made up for the difference.

Once again, Han Wu was presented with three new options, although this time the options had been specifically designed with the context of Zombie Town in mind.

[Option 1: Rank 9 Wisdom Tree Seed. Can be planted in the divine realm to maintain stability. Increases races' lifespan. Produces Wisdom Fruits upon maturation (Wisdom Tree maturation time: 1,000 years. Lifespan: 100,000 years)]

[Option 2: Golden Pot. Grants Immortality to any special plant planted within it, making them immune to aging or death.]

[Option 3: Rank 4 Building: Botanical Museum. Can be built in the divine realm. Produces a seed of a special plant every 24 hours, with the rank of the seed varying in rarity (Rank 1 seed: 50%, Rank 2 seed: 40%, Rank 3 seed: 9%, Rank 4 seed: 0.9%... Rank 9 seed: 0.00009%)]

Han Wu's mouth practically watered as he looked at the three available options—they were all excellent rewards! The first option, the Rank 9 Wisdom Tree seed, was particularly enticing as it could both stabilize his divine realm and grant his races a significantly longer lifespan.

As a Divine Being, Han Wu understood that longer lifespans for his races meant a greater accumulation of Faith Points. In essence, lifespan was equivalent to money. Additionally, the potential of the Wisdom Tree to yield Wisdom Fruits, each worth a Divine Essence upon maturation, made this first option particularly alluring.

The second option, the golden pot, appeared to have a relatively modest effect—granting immortality to any special plants placed within it. However, in Han Wu's eyes, this seemingly ordinary pot might actually be even more valuable than the Wisdom Tree seed.

The side effects of his Controlled Mutation always involved a reduction in the target's lifespan, but with the immortality granted by the golden pot, he could potentially use Controlled Mutation without any limitations on any special plant planted within it, even if it seemed utterly useless. This choice held immense potential.

The third option, the Botanic Museum, could produce a special plant seed every day, but the odds of getting a higher-ranking seed were very slim. But what if he had enough time? To a Divine Being, a 0.00009% chance of obtaining a Rank 9 seed with each passing day wasn't considered a negligible possibility. After all, Divine Beings had extremely long lifespans, and time flowed faster in divine realms than in the real world.

Unfortunately, Han Wu could only select one. He carefully considered each option before ultimately making his choice. He decided on the golden pot. Moreover, he had already decided which special plant he intended to plant within it.

He gazed at the Rank 1 special plant, the Mourning Deathcap, cradled in his hands. Although it was currently weak, he was confident in his ability to mutate it to a terrifying degree. He eagerly anticipated the incredible strength the Mourning Deathcap would possess after undergoing multiple mutations.

Han Wu carefully planted the Rank 1 Mourning Deathcap into the golden pot. Almost immediately, the Deathcap's mycelia began to extend and grow deep within the pot's soil, creating an inseparable connection between the two.

Han Wu closely inspected the Mourning Deathcap and observed that it now possessed a vibrant life force that seemed utterly inextinguishable. He then proceeded to use his Controlled Mutation skill on the plant. After filtering out any mutations that required special ingredients, a significant amount of Divine Points, or those that would have detrimental effects, he was finally left with three distinct mutation options.

The three available mutations would affect the number of spores produced, their survival rate, and how quickly they would grow. Han Wu decided to apply all three mutations to the Mourning Deathcap, maximizing the effect of each. As a result, the plant could now release several hundred billion spores with a 50% survival rate, and those spores would grow ten times faster than before.

Han Wu decided to test the newly mutated Mourning Deathcaps on the remaining zombies once more. This time, the Deathcaps grew with incredible speed, rapidly engulfing the undead. Moreover, the mutated Deathcaps were now dealing a much greater amount of damage to the zombies.

Furthermore, any zombie that became infected by the Mourning Deathcaps had its overall strength reduced by a tenth, which was excellent news for the defenders of the town. Han Wu's actions caught the mayor's attention, and he received even more Friendship Points from the mayor.

The intense battle raged on, and finally, the eclipse was nearing its end. However, in a final surge of energy, the zombies were reinforced one last time, and their death aura doubled in strength yet again, making it exceedingly difficult for the already struggling Defender Squad and the guards brought by the mayor to push the relentless zombies back.

The Defender Squad and the mayor's guards were forced to retreat towards the town's entrance. The narrow corridor that linked the town's perimeter to the inner town offered a strategic advantage, as it would effectively reduce the number of zombies able to attack them simultaneously.

Flying around the battlefield, Han Wu specifically targeted the Rank 5 zombies in order to earn more points. His concentration was so fixed on eliminating the undead that he became oblivious to his surroundings and let his guard down. Suddenly, a green tongue shot out from the eerie mist, coiled around his right arm, and violently dragged him into the seething zombie horde.

By the time Captain Dirt and the others realized what had happened and wanted to come to his aid, it was already too late. However, the town gate was completely obstructed by powerful Rank 5 zombies, requiring time and effort to defeat. All they could do was watch in horror as Han Wu was dragged helplessly by the green tongue into the depths of the overwhelming zombie horde.

"Han Wu, hold on! We're coming to get you!" Captain Dirt shouted, blasting away at the zombies in desperation, but Han Wu was already being pulled deeper into the mist and couldn't hear a thing.

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

[1,603 words]

Chapter 85 - Wisdom Tree's Reward

With a swift motion, Han Wu sliced off the green tongue and used his powerful dragon wings to steady himself in the air. He looked around to find himself completely enveloped by the strange, thick white mist. Beneath him, the seemingly endless horde of zombies continued its relentless march.

“I should fly back the way I came and head straight for town,” he decided.

Han Wu turned around and flew in the opposite direction, trying to retrace his steps back towards the town. However, after flying consistently for three solid minutes, he was bewildered to find that he was still trapped within the strange white mist. Below him, the zombies continued their aimless march.

“Wait, did I perhaps fly in the wrong direction?” he wondered, completely confused.

He altered his flight path right away, but he was still stuck in the same weird mist. He then flew around in various random directions for a full thirty minutes and still couldn't escape. Han Wu realized with a sinking feeling that he was totally lost.

“Ha! Vessel, haven't you figured it out yet? You're trapped!” the Origin of Mutation said with a sneer in his mind.

Remembering he had no access to his divine realm, Han Wu felt utterly stumped.

“Do you have a way to escape this place?” he asked, his voice laced with frustration.

The Origin of Mutation let out a condescending chuckle. “Oh, please! Vessel, as the Divine River Civilization's first series Supergene soldier, this is nothing to me. Just give me one Divine Essence, and I'll make absolutely sure you escape without any problems!”

Han Wu's brow furrowed in displeasure. Ever since it had upgraded, the Origin of Mutation had become incredibly greedy, constantly demanding Divine Essence without any hesitation.

Divine Essence are precious and rare resources! It's not like I have them growing in my backyard.

Han Wu's face hardened into a scowl. “I don't have any! You want to risk both our lives just for that?”

“*Hehe*, then you're on your own, buddy. But as your Supergene, I'll give you one tip for free. Don't try to wait for daylight. Time froze the moment you entered this mist.”

Han Wu's frown deepened. If the Origin of Mutation's words were true, then the only way to escape this place was to give it the Divine Essence. He paused for a few moments, weighing his options, before ultimately relenting.

“Alright,” he said reluctantly. “But you'll have to wait until I get my hands on a Divine Essence next time. Now, just tell me the way out of here!”

“Good choice, my vessel. The way out is quite simple. Just fly straight up.”

Han Wu sighed in exasperation but followed the instruction, flying directly upwards. After only a minute of ascent, he reached the end of the mysterious mist. He approached the border, but his path was immediately obstructed by an invisible barrier. He swiftly drew his sword and executed the powerful combo he typically used to easily defeat Rank 5 zombies, aiming to shatter the invisible barrier. Yet, despite the power of his attack, he only succeeded in creating a minor crack in its surface.

Undeterred, Han Wu continued his assault on the invisible barrier. Thanks to the Death Lily and Golden Dragon Grass integrated into his body, his stamina had increased significantly. He struck the barrier ten more times with all his might until it finally cracked completely and shattered into pieces.

Suddenly, the world around Han Wu shifted dramatically. The thick white mist and the relentless zombies were gone. Standing before him was a single, gigantic tree. The massive, ancient-looking tree had thick green vines that grew from its branches, swaying gently as if dancing in the breeze.

Han Wu was completely stunned, his mind struggling to comprehend what he was seeing. Just as he began to consider how to find his way out, a slow, wizened voice echoed around him.

“Outlander, I welcome you into my world.”

Han Wu instinctively knew that the ancient tree was talking to him and that it had somehow recognized that he was not a native of this civilization.

He felt a sudden wave of anxiety wash over him. This major class was designed to simulate a foreign civilization for the students to hone their survival abilities. Being exposed as an outsider would undoubtedly lead to execution by the natives.

Han Wu was well aware that not every civilization was benevolent or welcoming. In fact, the first and most crucial rule of surviving in a foreign civilization was to never, under any circumstances, trust its inhabitants.

“Outlander, be not afraid. I assure you, I have no intention of harming you,” the ancient tree’s voice echoed calmly.

“Then why did you drag me here?”

“That’s because I need your help to save this world.”

Han Wu was even more bewildered. “You want me to help you fight the zombies?”

The tree corrected him. “No, Outlander. What I need you to do is to chase away those despicable town residents.”

Realizing he was about to learn something important about Zombie Town, Han Wu sat down. "Please elaborate."

With a sorrowful sigh, the tree began to recount the events that had transpired. It explained that it was a Wisdom Tree and had served as the protector of this Secret Realm for ten thousand long years.

The tree explained that special plants were unique beings that gained intelligence after being tutored by its Wisdom Fruit. They had lived harmoniously for thousands of years until another outlander found his way into the Secret Realm and seized it for himself.

The outlander had sent their own race into the Secret Realm to gather the seeds of the special plants to be sold for profit. The Wisdom Tree was forced to watch as its descendants were caught and sold off by the outlander, and it vowed to do everything within its power to stop this injustice.

However, the Wisdom Tree knew it lacked the power to defeat the outlander on its own, so it sought out and made a desperate plea to the God of Death. It offered its eternal worship in exchange for the power to avenge its descendants. The God of Death accepted this bargain and granted the Wisdom Tree the terrifying ability to turn corpses into zombies.

That pact marked the beginning of the war between the zombies and the humans. For millennia, the humans had relentlessly been pursued and slaughtered by relentless zombie hordes, eventually forcing the survivors to retreat into the last remaining stronghold.

Believing victory was in its grasp, the Wisdom Tree launched a full-scale assault thirty years ago. The war was brutal and intense, and the humans suffered severe losses.

At the most critical moment in the war, an extremely powerful human suddenly appeared. This individual had somehow managed to cultivate a large amount of Rank 4 Fire Dragon Grass. Wielding its incredible power, the human fought valiantly and gave the town a chance to temporarily recuperate.

After many years had passed, the Wisdom Tree came to the conclusion that the powerful human was most likely an outlander, as they possessed a power entirely foreign to the native residents of this world.

Today, the Wisdom Tree launched yet another massive attack on the town and happened to notice Han Wu lurking nearby. When he unleashed his Sacrifice skill, it easily infiltrated the Wisdom Tree's domain, immediately revealing that this was the power of an outlander. Realizing this, the Wisdom Tree found a way to pull Han Wu into its domain, which explained the strange turn of events.

Han Wu scratched the back of his neck. “So, you want me to turn against the town and side with you instead?”

“Outlander, if you help me, I’ll reward you with rare resources!”

“And what exactly do you mean by rare resources?” he asked, then made a daring guess, considering the tree’s identity. “Are we talking about something along the lines of ten tonnes of Wisdom Fruits?”

He made such a guess because he knew the Wisdom Fruit was unique to the Wisdom Tree—nothing else could produce it.

The Wisdom Tree shook its massive branches. “I don’t have many Wisdom Fruits right now. However, if you can drive away those wretched townspeople, I’d be willing to give you ten of them.”

Han Wu maintained a calm expression, but inwardly, he was ecstatic. Ten Wisdom Fruits were equivalent to ten Divine Essence! That was a massive amount of money in his book.

“I can also give you three corpses. They appear to be of divine origin. They perished thousands of years ago, yet their physical bodies somehow remain perfectly preserved.”

Han Wu rubbed his hands greedily, his mind already deeply enticed by the potential rewards he might receive.

However, Han Wu wasn’t about to agree so readily. Even if he could somehow drive away the town residents, a major worry lingered in his mind: what if his actions drew the ire of the God who had first found this place?

The Basic Secret Realm Zombie Town belonged to Imperial College, and the God responsible for overseeing it was most likely part of the higher echelons of the College. Han Wu certainly didn’t want to antagonize such a colossal superpower for such a relatively small reward.

“I’m really sorry, but I don’t think...” Han Wu began, preparing to turn down the offer. However, before he could finish, the Wisdom Tree said, “If you help me, I’ll personally recommend you to the glorious Death God Palace!”

At these words, Han Wu’s eyes gleamed with newfound interest.

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Chapter 86 - Summoning the Core Race

[1,505 words]

Chapter 86 - Summoning the Core Race

The Rank 5 Death Aspect was immensely powerful and as such, difficult to obtain. However, those who possessed it were revered as Gods among Gods.

Despite not yet reaching the Demigod level, Han Wu had still dreamed of obtaining this Divine Aspect many times. Never in his wildest dreams did he imagine that he would be given the chance to secure it right now.

The Wisdom Tree had offered him an irresistible reward and he would be a fool to pass up this opportunity.

“Alright, I will do my best.” Han Wu finally agreed.

The short answer had the Wisdom Tree overjoyed, its vines swaying and dancing in the air while its leaves shook in perfect harmony.

Han Wu coughed. “But I have a request.”

The Wisdom Tree looked at him in confusion. What more could he possibly want?

“What do you need?” it asked. “Tell me, and I will do my best to accommodate you.”

The Wisdom Tree had tolerated the town’s residents for thousands of years, eagerly awaiting the moment it could finally rid itself of them, even if it was a second sooner. It was willing to pay any price as long as it could expedite the process of driving the residents away.

“It’s a simple request. I want to connect to my divine realm and summon my core race. I hope you won’t mind,” Han Wu said with a smile.

As a Divine Being of the Divine Civilization, Han Wu’s personal strength was just an added bonus since his true power lay in his units. Even the strongest Gods could not stand alone against an entire army.

The Wisdom Tree fell silent, contemplating Han Wu’s intentions, worried that he might be deceiving it just as the previous outlander had done all those years ago. Would he also take over the Secret Realm with the aid of his summoned units?

After much deliberation, the Wisdom Tree came to a decision.

It regarded Han Wu seriously and said, "Then you must swear an oath with the Death God Palace that you will use your units to help me and cause me no harm. Only then will I feel reassured. If you break your oath, your units will suffer the curse of death and perish. Once the oath is sworn, I will help you connect to your divine realm."

Realizing the Wisdom Tree's cunning, Han Wu couldn't help but curse inwardly. Still, he had only intended to summon his units for the chance of obtaining the Rank 5 Death Aspect. As such, he absolutely didn't mind swearing that oath.

Han Wu readily agreed to the Wisdom Tree's condition.

Placing his hand on his chest, he solemnly vowed from the depths of his heart to cause no harm to the Wisdom Tree and use his units to aid it in driving away the town's residents. He vowed to not go back on his words, and in response, a mark flashed on the back of his hand. Though he only caught a brief glimpse, he was certain that it was the mark of death, the very curse that would kill his units in his divine realm should he break his oath.

Pleased with Han Wu's sincerity, the Wisdom Tree personally built the gate connecting to his divine realm. As the Secret Realm's protector, it encountered no difficulties in the process, and the gate was swiftly completed.

Han Wu summoned his Locustmen, and to his relief, suffered no repercussions. Instead, his body was nourished by the energy of his divine realm, rapidly restoring his strength. Before this, his personal strength and skills were only comparable to a Heroic life form, but now, he had gotten as strong as a Lord life form.

Han Wu burst into laughter as he felt his strength surge. A Rank 6 zombie? That wouldn't be a problem at all—killing it would be easy.

The Wisdom Tree also sensed Han Wu's increased strength but paid no attention. Instead, it urged him to quickly fulfill his end of the deal and drive out the town's residents without delay.

Han Wu was then unceremoniously kicked out of the Wisdom Tree's territory. When he opened his eyes again, he found himself back in the white mist. The horde of zombies was still beneath him, but something had changed.

He could sense his army of locusts waiting for his orders in the white mist. They would execute his command without any hesitation even if it cost them their lives—such was their loyalty toward their god.

Han Wu exhaled, his mind racing. "What's the best way to drive the residents away with the least repercussions? Looks like I'll have to play the villain this time."

Han Wu exited the white fog and flew back to the town. The Defender Squad and the guards stared at him in shock when they saw him returning safely. Han Wu also noticed their Friend Points increasing steadily as they caught sight of him. The mayor even promised to honor him with the Model Townsfolk Award along with several other rewards.

Han Wu smiled even as he secretly commanded his locusts to move. Finally, after some time, the first ray of sunlight touched Zombie Town, and like before, the zombie horde disappeared into thin air.

The residents emerged from their homes, cheering loudly as they celebrated surviving the toughest night of the month. Yet, unbeknownst to them, an even greater calamity was soon approaching.

Once Han Wu returned home, he checked the scoreboard to find that he was placed first with 12.03 million points. Qin Shuang was in second place with 8.72 million points while Sun Qingnian was placed third with 7.92 million points.

Xu Tie was now in fourth place with 7.89 million points. While he could still catch up to Sun Qingnian with enough hard work, overtaking Han Wu was just impossible. Despite having the upper hand early in the major class, Han Wu's advantages had surpassed his and had placed him firmly at the top of the class.

Yet, even with the massive points gap between them, Xu Tie refused to believe he was weaker than Han Wu. All was fair in love and war—and this was both. If he couldn't beat Han Wu openly, then he would have to play dirty.

The students in Zombie Town had their divine realms sealed, their parameters reduced to those of regular humans. Without their units protecting them, they were vulnerable prey, easy assassination targets.

Xu Tie had spent the past few days socializing with the town's residents, and as luck would have it, he had befriended a skilled assassin. Wasting no time, he sought out his assassin friend first thing in the day. Without hesitation, he spent all of his Friend Points along with 8,000 gold coins on a single assassination target: Han Wu.

The assassin agreed. They had been very cautious and careful during their conversation, ensuring no prying ears overheard their plans, but they still made the mistake of overlooking a minute detail: the locust sitting on the window sill.

Han Wu immediately received a message from the locust and scoffed. *He can't win against me in the open, so he wants to play dirty and kill me in the dark? Fine, if that's how you want to play it. But don't blame me for killing you instead.*

As the day passed, many locusts flew toward the town. However the guards ignored them since they were small and weak.

The locusts easily infiltrated the gardens of the residents and started eating their prized plants. None of the special plants attacked the locusts as they didn't have any death aura. By the time someone realized what was going on, it was already too late. Nearly one third of the town's special plants had been destroyed.

The locusts also multiplied and spread from their continuous feasting of the special plants.

When Qin Shuang heard the news, she immediately turned to Han Wu without a second thought. He didn't attempt to conceal the truth and simply nodded, confirming his involvement. This piqued her curiosity about how Han Wu had managed to summon his units in Zombie Town.

Under normal circumstances, once their identity as someone from the Divine Civilization was exposed, they would be driven away or killed by the Will of the Civilization. And yet, Han Wu was perfectly fine even though he had summoned his locusts.

He didn't explain anything and just asked Qin Shuang to keep watching the drama unfold.

Many of the other students, especially Xu Tie, also recognized Han Wu's locusts. Enraged, he stormed into Han Wu's house, holding a bag of dead locusts, demanding an explanation. Han Wu however feigned innocence and ignored the shouting Xu Tie.

Xu Tie seethed with frustration, but without proof, there was nothing he could do. If he couldn't expose Han Wu, he could still eliminate him. Fuming, he returned home and notified the assassin to attack that very night.

He swore to kill Han Wu before dawn!

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- Chapter 87 - Migration to Another World

Chapter 87 - Migration to Another World

[1,405 words]

Chapter 87 - Migration to Another World

As the number of locusts grew, the town initiated a movement to eliminate the pests. The only individual who was happy about this situation was the shopkeeper, as her insecticide was practically flying off the shelf.

The town's residents managed to deter most of the locusts, but they were horrified to discover that most of their plants had been destroyed. According to unofficial reports, nearly half of the town's special plants had been lost, and they could no longer fight against the zombies. Without the plants' aid, they were certain that they wouldn't survive the night against the zombie horde with their disorganized formation.

The mayor had no choice but to activate the town's emergency plan. He opened the church as a shelter for the town's residents to survive the night. Han Wu secretly seized this opportunity and commanded his locusts to attack the remaining special plants while the town's residents were away.

Han Wu was certain that the town's residents were powerless against the zombies once their special plants had all disappeared. At that point, they had no choice but to move away.

Soon, night fell, and the thousands of residents were huddled together inside the church. For their safety, some residents even offered their prized special plant seeds and planted them in pots outside the church as a last line of defense. With the strong special plants providing protection from the outside, the church would be safe for the night.

Han Wu, on the other hand, followed the Defender Squad to the outskirts of the town. Their mission remained the same: defeat the zombies, Rank 5 and above.

While battling the zombies, Han Wu received an urgent message from one of his locusts, informing him that Xu Tie and the assassin were on their way. Han Wu couldn't help but chuckle at Xu Tie's impatience, certain that Xu Tie still hadn't realized that Han Wu had recovered his strength as a Divine being. He planned to give Xu Tie a surprise, and everything was unfolding perfectly according to his plan.

Soon, Xu Tie and the assassin reached the entrance of the town. They concealed themselves in a corner, watching Han Wu's movements as they waited for an opportunity to strike. Han Wu was aware of their intentions and intentionally provided them with an opening. He slowly drew away from his squad, and feigned running farther from the town to draw Xu Tie and the assassin closer.

As expected, they fell for his ruse. Han Wu was already sitting on a boulder waiting for them when they showed up.

"I've been waiting for you two," he remarked with a smile.

Xu Tie turned to the assassin, suspicion flashing in his eyes. "You told him?"

The assassin's expression darkened. "You can doubt my personality, but never my professionalism!"

Xu Tie narrowed his eyes in confusion. If the assassin hadn't betrayed him, how had Han Wu learned of their plan?

"Never mind, what's more important is that we take Han Wu's life here today," Xu Tie told the assassin.

He then turned to Han Wu and said, "Han Wu, you will die here tonight!"

Han Wu raised an eyebrow. "Are you sure you want to kill me? This is a major class, and the college is recording everything. How will you explain yourself?"

Xu Tie had already prepared an excuse. "The one killing you is the assassin from Zombie Town. What does it have to do with me?"

The assassin was already restless. He snapped, "Why are you talking so much with a dead man? I will kill him now."

He summoned a Rank 6 Spectre Vine and fused with it. After fusing, the assassin's body melted into the shadows.

Spectral Dash!

He activated the skill he acquired after fusing with the Spectre Vine and instantly closed the gap between himself and Han Wu. The assassin aimed a sharp dagger at Han Wu's neck, already imagining Han Wu's head rolling off his shoulders.

Just when he thought everything was over, he was shocked to find that his dagger couldn't even pierce Han Wu's skin.

"How can this be?" The assassin leaped back, eyes locked on Han Wu's neck. Something was off.

Then he saw it; black-gold scales gleamed in the dim light, forming an impenetrable barrier over Han Wu's skin. That's how he had blocked the attack.

Han Wu clapped as if praising the effort. "Nice try. Now, it's my turn."

Ten shadows burst forth from the darkness and appeared to stand in front of Han Wu. They were his ten Flesh Golems, the Cockroaches!

"Kill them!" Han Wu ordered, and the Cockroaches charged at the assassin as one.

Xu Tie saw them and remembered how easily his units were defeated by these ten golems.

Still reeling from the unexpected shock, he asked, "You... You really can summon your units here?"

Han Wu grabbed his black greatsword and slowly approached Xu Tie, cold determination in his eyes. Xu Tie sensed the killing intent emanating from Han Wu, and shuddered.

He threatened the approaching Han Wu. "You can't kill me. The college is recording everything. There's nothing you can say to convince them later on."

Han Wu copied Xu Tie's excuse. "That's true. I won't kill you. I will just cripple you and toss you into the zombie horde. It's none of my concern if they kill you or not later."

"Don't... Don't get close to me!"

Xu Tie attempted to run toward the town, knowing well that Han Wu couldn't kill him in front of the others. However, he had underestimated Han Wu's speed. He had barely turned around when Han Wu jumped and cut off one of his arms.

Xu Tie howled in pain. "No! How can you be this strong?"

"You already know that I can summon my units." Han Wu chuckled, amused. "Naturally, I've regained my strength as a Divine Being."

Without waiting for a reply, he severed Xu Tie's remaining limbs. By now, Xu Tie's fear had been replaced by intense hatred.

He cursed at Han Wu with eyes full of malice. "Just you wait, bastard. My family will never let you go when they learn what you did to me. My family's God will kill you!"

Han Wu ignored his shouts and tossed him into a nearby zombie horde. The battle on the other side had also ended. The assassin had been devoured by the ten Cockroaches until even his bones were gone.

Han Wu inspected the area where the assassin had died and found a Divine dagger and a Rank 6 Spectre Vine seed. He stored them in his pouch and returned to the entrance of the town to continue killing the zombies as if nothing had happened.

The night passed, and the town residents were shocked to find that their special plants had been completely consumed by the locusts when they returned home. An air of heavy despair enveloped the town. They couldn't do anything against the zombies without their plants.

The mayor learned what had happened and immediately called the representatives of the town for a meeting. Han Wu was also invited. The main agenda of the meeting was to discuss what they could do to survive.

The representatives shared their opinions, but none of them could solve the issue permanently.

Han Wu took the chance and spoke up. “Have you guys considered living in another world?”

Interested in the idea, the town residents started discussing that possibility. One of them recalled reading an ancient document that stated the existence of a transfer gate built a thousand years ago in the town, which could be used to transport them to another world. However, the transfer gate had been destroyed by the zombies in the past, and their connection to the other world was lost.

Han Wu patted his chest, his voice steady with certainty. “I have a method to reconstruct the gate and reconnect to the other worlds.”

A wave of relief and excitement rippled through the representatives. If they could restore the connection, survival was no longer a distant hope—it was a real possibility.

The mayor wasted no time. “We will follow your method, Han Wu. You will have every material necessary to repair the transfer gate.”

After the meeting, Han Wu immediately reached out to the Wisdom Tree for the repair of the transfer gate. The destination?

His own divine realm.

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

[1,529 words]

Chapter 88 - Huang Shengjun's Threat

The Wisdom Tree was overcome with elation upon hearing that the town residents were finally going to leave. It had longed for this moment for the past millennium. Without hesitation, it quickly followed Han Wu's instructions and reopened the transfer gate that connected to his divine realm.

However, Han Wu opted not to harbor the town residents in his divine realm. He was certain that they would curse him to death if they ever learned that the locusts were his.

Therefore, his divine realm would function merely as a temporary transfer station, with the final destination being Doron City in the Level Civilization. Fortunately, he had previously established a transfer gate connecting his divine realm directly to Doron City.

Han Wu quickly urged the town residents to enter his divine realm and use the transfer gate to travel to Doron City. The town residents displayed a surprisingly impressive adaptability to their new environment. By the second day, they had settled in with surprising ease and had already managed to learn the fundamental rules of the Level Civilization.

In the Secret Realm, the major class came to an unexpectedly early end since the town residents had all relocated. With no remaining inhabitants in the town, there was simply no point in continuing the simulation.

Lina sent out the message for the students to return, and one by one, they began to leave the Secret Realm. Han Wu observed the returning students and noticed that two of them had not made it back. This meant that those two unfortunate students had perished within the Basic Secret Realm Zombie Town and would never return.

He was rather surprised to note that Xu Tie was not among the students who had perished. Despite his earlier injuries, Xu Tie was alive and well, his severed limbs having been successfully reattached. Upon seeing Han Wu, Xu Tie fixed him with an angry glare filled with undisguised loathing.

"I will now announce the results of this major class. In first place, with an impressive 16 million points, is Han Wu. Second place goes to Qin Shuang with a score of 12.03 million points. And coming in third place, with 10 million points, is Sun Qingnian..."

Lina continued to list the results in a monotonous, robotic tone when, all of a sudden, Xu Tie stood up and yelled, "Professor, I'm reporting Han Wu for cheating!"

"Do you have proof?" Lina asked, her voice steady.

Xu Tie swore under his breath and then yelled, "We all saw Han Wu's bizarre locusts in Zombie Town, and I've personally seen him summoning his Flesh Golems!"

Several other students nodded in agreement, verifying the truth of Xu Tie's claims. They confirmed that they had indeed witnessed Han Wu's locusts appearing within Zombie Town.

Lina smiled. "This major class, as you all know, was designed to emulate a foreign civilization and test your survival skills. The rules did not explicitly forbid the summoning of your units within the Secret Realm. Han Wu's ability to bring his summons into the Secret Realm was mostly down to his own ability and some good luck."

Enraged, Xu Tie exclaimed, "Professor! You're clearly taking Han Wu's side; I'll report this to the higher-ups!"

Lina's smile widened. "Xu Tie, you certainly have the right to report your concerns to the higher-ups, and I will not stop you. Nevertheless, as your professor, I also have the responsibility to address insubordination. For your disrespectful outburst, I am assigning you to a year of labor in the Black Prison as a form of repentance."

As soon as Lina uttered those words, Xu Tie disappeared in an instant, unable to voice any opposition. Lina's wide smile remained fixed as she slowly swept her gaze across the remaining students. "Now then, is there anyone else who feels like questioning my decision?"

The other students shook their heads vigorously. Only complete morons would try to question her after what happened to Xu Tie. Lina nodded, seeing that no one else was going to cause trouble.

"Then, let's get to the rewards for the major class. Han Wu, your reward is a jade pot. Qin Shuang..."

Once the rewards were given out and the students returned to their dorms, Han Wu quickly contacted Xiang Meng and brought over the twelve Wisdom Fruits he had obtained. He'd received ten as a reward from the Wisdom Tree and two from the personal stores of the town residents. He decided to exchange nine of the Fruits with his seniors.

Xiang Meng and the other two seniors stared in disbelief as Han Wu took out nine Wisdom Fruits. They had never seen so many before! They remembered that even Huang Shengjun, during their time, had only managed to obtain five after defending the entire Zombie Town all by himself!

Xia Tian asked somewhat tentatively, "So, Han Wu, who actually got first place this time?" He already had a good idea, especially since a super pissed Huang Shengjun had come to settle their earlier bet, but he just wanted to hear Han Wu say it to be sure.

"Senior Xia, I was fortunate enough to secure first place this time."

Upon hearing this, the three seniors exchanged glances and then broke into delighted laughter. Xiang Meng reached out and gave Han Wu a warm pat on the shoulder. "Han Wu, you really are my lucky star!"

Ye Ling, however, expressed her worry. "Han Wu, you should watch out for a person called Huang Shengjun. He was forced to give us ten Divine Essence because of a bet we made with him about you, and I've got a bad feeling he might try to make things difficult for you."

“Understood. I’ll be careful,” Han Wu replied with a nod. He then quickly made his way back to his dorm after receiving the nine Divine Essence from his seniors, eager to sort through all the rewards he had obtained this time.

Han Wu’s rewards included the three remaining Wisdom Fruits, three God corpses that had lost most of their Divine Essence, and a recommendation pendant. Additionally, from his time in Zombie Town, he had acquired the golden pot fused with the Mourning Deathcap, three God weapons, several Divine weapons, and a number of high-ranking seeds.

There was also the jade pot that Lina had rewarded him with. He swiftly retrieved the jade pot and began to inspect it carefully.

[Jade Pot: Can be used to bind with the seed of a special plant. Generates a seed of the bound plant after a certain amount of time. (Time needed is proportional to seed’s rank. Higher ranking seeds require more time.)]

After careful consideration, Han Wu selected the Rank 6 Spectre Vine from his collection of seeds. Fusing with its seed would grant him the Spectral Dash skill, making it incredibly worthwhile to cultivate. He then proceeded to bind the Spectre Vine seed with the jade pot, anticipating the day when he could harvest its seeds indefinitely.

With the jade pot dealt with, Han Wu moved on to refining the three God corpses. However, because these beings had been deceased for such an immense amount of time, their bodies had lost most of their Divine Essence. As a result, he only managed to extract two Divine Flesh Energy and three Divine Essence—a rather disappointing harvest.

Han Wu planned to use the two Divine Flesh Energy to produce two more Lord Locustmen. He would then feed all three of his Lord Locustmen the remaining Wisdom Fruits to further enhance their overall strength.

Lost in his thoughts of a bright future, Han Wu was interrupted by an incoming call from an unknown number. He hesitated for a moment before deciding to answer.

A sharp voice on the other end demanded, “Are you Han Wu? This is Huang Shengjun! You’re the reason I lost ten Divine Essence. So, how exactly are you planning to compensate me?”

Han Wu was left utterly dumbfounded by Huang Shengjun’s blatant rudeness and completely unreasonable request. *Is this guy out of his mind? I’m not the one who forced him to make that ridiculous bet in the first place, so why on earth does he think I’m responsible for his loss?*

Han Wu, finding the conversation pointless and infuriating, promptly ended the call. It was Huang Shengjun, his voice sounding even more furious. “Did you just dare to hang up on me, Huang Shengjun? Aren’t you being way too arrogant for your own good?”

Han Wu, growing increasingly irritated, ended the call once more. Unbelievably, Huang Shengjun called back yet again, his voice now dripping with pure malice. “Han Wu, you listen to me and you listen good. You better start showing me some respect, because your next major class is going to be a battle against all of us seniors. I can personally make it a living hell for you!”

Han Wu just hung up on him again to show that he wasn’t intimidated, but secretly, Huang Shengjun’s threat had him feeling a bit of pressure. He had no choice but to quickly strengthen his units so he could defeat Huang Shengjun in their next encounter.

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

[1,616 words]

Chapter 89 - Unavoidable Calamity

Demigod Zhang Gang[1] was escorted to a very luxurious-looking palace. However, his astonishment quickly turned to shock and unease as he realized that all the attendants within the palace were also Demigods. This discovery intensified his anxiety regarding the information he possessed, and he grew increasingly fearful of the consequences should his host deem the information he brought false or inaccurate.

Sadly, escape was no longer an option as he was already deep within the God King’s palace. He could only endure the anxious wait for his audience with the God King. Time seemed to stretch endlessly until a God assistant finally approached and gestured for him to follow.

Zhang Gang followed the God assistant and soon found himself in a vast hall. At the far end of the hall stood a massive throne, and seated upon it was the bankrupt God King. The aura and sheer weight of his authority radiated like an intensely blazing sun, and Zhang Gang instinctively bowed his head in submission.

The God assistant announced respectfully, “My Lord, I have brought the individual you requested.”

The God King’s gaze fell upon Zhang Gang, its intensity felt like a burning ray, making Zhang Gang feel as though his very being was on fire.

“Demigod, are you the one who claimed to possess news regarding what happened in the Divine River Ruins?”

Though his mind was still reeling from the sheer presence and voice of the God King, Zhang Gang managed to stammer out a quick reply. “Y-yes, G-God King! I do have some clues about what might have happened.”

With trembling hands, he then presented several locust carcasses that he had collected from the Divine River Ruins.

The God assistant placed the locust carcasses on a platinum plate and presented it to the God King. The God King picked up one of the insect remains and frowned deeply.

Sensing the God King’s growing skepticism and displeasure, Zhang Gang quickly explained, “Esteemed God King, the locust carcass was discovered within the Divine River Ruins, and I believe it is related to the one who trespassed into the ruins.”

The God King nodded slowly, considering those words. He then asked, a hint of expectation in his voice, “If this is the case, does this mean you have apprehended the suspect?”

“I am not entirely sure...”

Zhang Gang barely managed to utter before the God King erupted in a furious howl. “Demigod! Who gave you the audacity to come into my presence and try to deceive me? Do you honestly expect my exalted self to personally search for someone with lowly locusts as their race?”

Zhang Gang quickly fell to his knees and answered hastily, his anxiety palpable. “Please forgive me, My Lord! I do in fact have a suspect. His name is Han Wu, and his core race is indeed the locust!”

“Han Wu? What exactly do you know about him?”

Still on his knees, Zhang Gang began to explain, his voice getting quieter and quieter. “He’s a highschooler... and an orphan. He’s currently a student on Imperial College’s reserve list... and... he is a Divine Being...”

The God King’s anger flared, his voice filled with disbelief. “Are you seriously suggesting that an insignificant Divine Being could have entered the Divine River Ruins and overpowered the six Demigods that I personally sent there?”

“Wait, please remain calm, God King! I myself didn’t initially believe that Han Wu had entered the Divine River Ruins, but I did some investigating and found some clues that suggest he was definitely there,” Zhang Gang said, gripped by the fear that the God

King would execute him on the spot if he didn't produce the evidence to support his claims quickly enough.

The God King's growl echoes through the hall. "Speak!"

Zhang Gang blurted out everything he had discovered in his investigation in one go. "I managed to capture an image of Han Wu and then showed it to the local town guides. One of them confirmed that he had seen someone who matched the photograph.

"Moreover, there is a merchant in the area who deals with radioactive minerals, and he confirmed that Han Wu had purchased a batch from him. This merchant, Mr. Black, was gracious enough to give me solid proof of their transaction.

"Even more importantly, I've managed to obtain a record from a landing pod in a nearby hotel, and it clearly shows that Han Wu had used it at least once.

"So you see, my Lord, this proves that Han Wu was truly present at the Divine River Ruins," Zhang Gang added quickly. "Moreover, if we examine the timestamps on these records, they precisely match the estimated time of the incident within the Ruins."

Having examined the information, the God King's fury subsided slightly. "Demigod, I sincerely hope for your sake that the information you have provided is accurate and truthful, because if it is not, you will never again see the light of day!"

With a dismissive wave of his hand, a magnificent treasure chest materialized in front of Zhang Gang; it was his payment for the information he had provided.

Zhang Gang quickly grabbed the chest, bowed profusely to express his gratitude to the God King, and hastily departed from the palace under the escort of the God assistant.

The God King called out for another God assistant. "Take this transponder and find that person called Han Wu. I need to know for certain if he has indeed stolen my treasure!"

The God assistant kneeled respectfully. "Yes, my Lord, I will not disappoint you," he vowed before disappearing without a trace.

At Imperial College, Major God Xu Hai had just emerged from a period of intense secluded training. Upon awakening, he was met with a barrage of news, but one piece seized his attention. The Basic Secret Realm known as Zombie Town, which he himself had generously donated to the college, was now lost forever, its spatial coordinates having been destroyed.

A sigh of mild regret escaped Xu Hai's lips. The Zombie Town Secret Realm was something he had stumbled upon randomly when he was still a God. It had been a significant source of resources for him back then. However, after the Wisdom Tree

within the realm decided to devote itself to the Death God, the number of units he had left within the Secret Realm had steadily decreased over time.

Xu Hai had been unwilling to risk angering the Death God, so he had refrained from sending any more of his units into the Zombie Town Secret Realm. He had known that the permanent destruction of the coordinates was simply a matter of time, and he had already resigned himself to this outcome.

While he was still lost in thought, a message suddenly appeared. He quickly read it, and a surge of anger washed over him as he discovered that his units hadn't been killed as he had assumed; they had been transported away!

With no one left to guard the place, the Wisdom Tree managed to breach the church and destroy the coordinates hidden within. This was the infuriating reason the Secret Realm of Zombie Town was now permanently lost.

“Can you believe the nerve of these students this year? To think they would be so bold as to transport my units away without even seeking my permission!”

He immediately contacted Lina, who explained the situation to him. Her explanation helped Xu Hai understand Han Wu's actions. Nevertheless, he still found it hard to accept that the student had destroyed something he had been operating for millennia.

Xu Hai suggested to Lina that he be granted the authority to punish Han Wu personally. His intention was to make Han Wu understand that his actions had been wrong, and therefore he needed to face the consequences.

For several hours, Lina tried her best to convince Xu Hai to change his mind. In the end, the only concession he made was that he would not take Han Wu's life. Left with no other choice, she could only deliver the message to Han Wu.

Han Wu was stunned by the message. He had been aware that his arrangement with the Wisdom Tree would likely lead to some form of trouble, but he hadn't expected the calamity to arrive so soon.

Caught in such a difficult situation, Han Wu decided to agree without delay. He reasoned that the sooner Xu Hai vented his anger, the sooner the pressure on him would go away.

The two agreed to spar within Imperial College's arena number 3. Lina would serve as their referee, although her real goal was to make sure Han Wu survived the sparring match. Han Wu, concerned Xu Hai might go back on his word, reached out for Xiang Meng and the other two seniors, asking them to spectate.

He was hoping that with the presence of a crowd of youngsters, Xu Hai, compelled to preserve his dignity, would be less likely to kill him. With everything settled, Han Wu

spent the entire night strengthening his locusts, knowing that even the slightest improvement in their strength represented a better chance of surviving the match.

It was soon daybreak. Han Wu and the others arrived at arena number 3 and saw Lina speaking with a middle-aged man. Han Wu had a strong feeling that the man was none other than Major God Xu Hai.

Xu Hai's gaze held a hint of curiosity as he observed Han Wu. He wanted to see just how strong the students this year were.

1. The guy who chased Han Wu throughout the Divine Ruins. His son was the first cabbage Han Wu defeated. 📖

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Chapter 90 - Divine Being vs Major God

[1,498 words]

Chapter 90 - Divine Being vs Major God

As Han Wu and Xu Hai entered the arena stage, Xiang Meng, Xia Tian, and Ye Ling settled onto the bleachers. They couldn't help but feel a sense of worry and sympathy for Han Wu, and they silently offered prayers for his well-being.

The three seniors knew that Han Wu might have had a fighting chance if his opponent had been a Demigod. However, his current opponent was a Major God, a being two realms above a Demigod. A Major God possessed the power to effortlessly kill any Divine Being with a mere flick of their finger.

Xu Hai stated plainly, "Han Wu, let me be clear that I have no intention of bullying you. I will not use any of my special abilities, skills, or Divine Skills. I will only send out a million of my units to fight against you. Regardless of the outcome, I will consider the loss of my Secret Realm settled. Do we have an agreement?"

Han Wu smiled bitterly. Despite Xu Hai's promise not to use his Divine Skills or abilities, a million units commanded by a Major God was more than enough to torment him, especially if those units had been enhanced by the Major God's Sacred Objects.

The Core Level of a Major God was capped at Level 40. Even a Common life form could fight against a Heroic life form if they were empowered by a Rank 40 Sacred Object or something of equal power.

Xu Hai frowned slightly. "Is there a problem? Do you not agree to my terms?"

This is already the most lenient punishment I can offer. Other Major Gods with worse tempers would've simply ended your life outright.

"Yes, I agree to your terms," Han Wu said quickly, hoping not to anger Xu Hai even more. "I will do my very best, and I promise not to disappoint you."

Lina gave the signal, and the sparring match began. The two participants selected the random terrain option, and the arena shifted to a hilly terrain.

Xu Hai opened his divine realm, and his summoned units materialized. Han Wu felt a wave of despair wash over him at the sight of a million well-equipped Epistians. Epistians were not human, but were a subhuman race, considered even rarer than Xu Tie's Iron Skins.

Epistians[1] were inherently Unique life forms, gifted with high intelligence and considerable potential. Once they reached maturity, they could effortlessly ascend to become Heroic life forms with a little hard work.

Although Xu Hai did not summon any Heroic Epistians to fight against Han Wu, the powerful aura radiating from them told Han Wu that they were just as powerful as Heroic life forms, especially when supported by Xu Hai's Level 40 Core. Even a pig could become a T-rex when bolstered by a Level 40 Core, let alone Epistians who were inherently born as Unique life forms.

Xu Hai was secretly pleased to observe Han Wu staring at his army in a daze. It felt pretty good to show off in front of the students.

"Han Wu, are you not going to summon your units?"

"Yes, I will summon them now!" Han Wu quickly replied. He opened his divine realm, and suddenly a huge swarm of locusts appeared, so dense that they almost completely blocked out the entire sky.

Even Xu Hai was startled by the sheer number of locusts Han Wu had summoned. *There are so many; there must be at least ten billion of them!*

Upon examining their data, he found that they were born as Elite life forms but had been elevated to Unique life forms after being enhanced by Han Wu's Core. Moreover, he could sense the presence of tens of Heroic Locustmen within the swarm.

Xu Hai's jaw dropped when he spotted a Lord Locustman leading the locust swarm—a genuine Lord life form! Most Demigods didn't even possess such a powerful unit! However, he was about to discover that his surprise had only just begun.

Following the massive swarm of locusts, Han Wu sent forth his remaining units. Xu Hai's eyes fell upon the dwarves, and a flicker of curiosity arose as he noted that the color of their skin seemed unusual.

Upon closer inspection, he learned that they belonged to a rare race called the Scorching Dwarves. Leading them was Divine Hammer, who was also now a Lord life form. His presence was even more powerful than that of the Lord Dark Locust.

The minotaurs soon made their entrance after the dwarves. To Xu Hai's utter astonishment, their leader, Sarman, was also a Lord! Xu Hai couldn't believe his eyes, as this was the first time he had ever encountered a Divine Being possessing three Lord life forms.

Xu Hai felt his brain go numb as Steely appeared. The Swordwind race was Unique from birth and possessed even greater potential than the Epistians. The Swordwind before him was a Lord.

This can't be right! Is this really the army of a Divine Being? Xu Hai thought in utter disbelief. Right at that moment, the skeletons materialized.

Right after Steely, the little skeleton and its underlings marched out of the gate. The little skeleton was seated on a throne carried by the Skeleton Knights, while the four other Heroic units—the Osteomancer, the Skeleton Reanimator, and the two Blood Skeletons—served as its attendants.

Wait a minute... just who is the real master of this divine realm? Han Wu thought as he observed the little skeleton's impressive procession.

After absorbing the two units of Divine Essence given by Han Wu, the little skeleton had successfully removed two of the negative statuses. Despite still being affected by one more, its combat capabilities had already been restored to the level of a Lord life form.

Xu Hai's mind went blank. Han Wu had five Lord life forms under his command, along with the most powerful Heroic unit, the Osteomancer! Even Demigods rarely possessed an army of such scale, and yet this Divine Being did!

Xu Hai began to suspect that Han Wu might be a direct descendant of a God King. Xiang Meng and the other two seniors were equally stunned at the sight of Han Wu's army.

Ye Ling muttered in amazement, "With an army like that, I don't think any of the other first-year students can stand a chance against him..."

Xia Tian replied to Ye Ling, “Come on, be more confident—none of the first-year students can compare to him! Xiang Meng, it makes perfect sense that you lost to him in the Blood Coliseum!”

Xiang Meng, still surprised, added, “I didn’t use my full strength in that fight, but after seeing this, I seriously doubt I would’ve won even if I did...”

Xia Tian stated with certainty, “If he manages to officially enroll in Imperial College, he will undoubtedly rise to unprecedented new heights!”

Inside the arena, the sparring match between Han Wu and Xu Hai finally began. Han Wu sent his locust swarm towards the Epistian forces. The Heavenly Demon Insects at the forefront raised their horns, preparing to pierce through the enemy ranks. However, before the Heavenly Demon Insects could reach their targets, the Epistians swiftly employed their military-class magic to erect a massive protective barrier.

The invisible barrier completely enveloped the entire Epistian army, effectively blocking all the locusts’ incoming attacks. Immediately after, the Epistians launched their magical attacks which passed through their own barrier to strike the advancing swarm.

The Epistians’ magical assault was devastatingly strong, as they were casting military-class magic spells. All one million Epistians focused their power together and launched a massive fireball, as large as a mountain, that instantly turned one billion locusts into ashes.

A wave of panic washed over Han Wu. *They’re using a one-way barrier!* he realized in alarm.

He desperately tried to come up with a plan to shatter the Epistian’s defensive formation. Sensing Han Wu’s growing panic, Divine Hammer charged forward, enduring the scorching heat of the dissipating fireball as he arrived before the barrier.

Divine Hammer raised his weapon, Hellforge, and with all his might, brought it crashing down upon the invisible barrier. Hellforge’s intense flames contorted and transformed into a Nine-headed Hellsnake, which then tore through the outer layer of the barrier. The barrier, despite its strength, could only withstand the impact for a brief instant before cracking and shattering.

The barrier erected by a million Epistians proved to be no match for Divine Hammer’s strike. Seeing their opportunity, the massive swarm of locusts immediately surged forward into the disrupted Epistian formation, engaging in a fierce, chaotic and barbaric melee. Leading the ferocious charge and commanding the battlefield was the Lord Dark Locust.

In the midst of the chaotic battle, the little skeleton, however, darted stealthily around the edges of the battlefield, patiently biding its time while the attention of both sides was completely consumed by the intense clash.

1. Named after Episteme, which is greek for knowledge 📖

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Chapter 91 - The Full Might of Han Wu's Army

[1,488 words]

Chapter 91 - The Full Might of Han Wu's Army

Xu Hai remained unfazed, showing no reaction despite the massive barrier having been utterly destroyed by Divine Hammer's Hellforge. The outcome was entirely natural, as the Epistians had prioritized covering a vast area with their barrier, rather than focusing on its durability. As soon as the inflicted damage exceeded its threshold, the barrier was bound to shatter into fragments.

Though Xu Hai had noticed the little skeleton discreetly moving around the battlefield, he made no move to warn his units or stop it himself. He simply stood, calmly overlooking the battlefield with an air of confidence, as if victory was already within his grasp.

The locust swarm, led by the Dark Locust, fiercely attacked the Epistians. Their numbers were so staggering that each Epistian had to face 10,000 locusts by themselves. However, even with the numerical advantage, Han Wu was still worried that his locusts were too weak. He had raised them himself and turned them into inherent Elite units, but their individual strength still felt insufficient.

His fears came true, and after the first wave of attacks, he lost 500 million of his locusts, while a mere 1,000 Epistians had perished. The Epistians' magic proved immensely powerful, but they were equally proficient in close-quarters combat. Equipped with top-notch gear, facing 10,000 locusts each was not too difficult for them.

Han Wu refused to let his locusts perish without cause, and he swiftly ordered them to retreat skyward to evade the incoming attacks. Then, recalling a portion of the locusts, he decided to use Controlled Mutation; it was the only method available to rapidly enhance the locusts' strength.

Just as he was about to use Controlled Mutation, the Origin of Mutation sighed, showing a rare and surprising sign of defeat.

“Vessel, your opponent is several levels higher than you right now. I must conceal myself to avoid his detection. I’m afraid this means you cannot use Controlled Mutation or Gene Lock right now. We will meet again when it is safe.”

With those words, the Origin of Mutation went silent, and no matter how many times Han Wu called for it, it did not respond. Without the ability to use Control Mutation, Han Wu was left with no choice but to place his trust entirely in his skeletons to secure a win.

The little skeleton silently approached one of the fallen corpses and placed its small bone claws upon the body to summon a Skeleton Knight. Instantly, the Epistian’s flesh rapidly shriveled away, revealing its white bones beneath.

Just as a new Skeleton Knight formed, dense red runes suddenly and unexpectedly appeared on its white bones and violently detonated, turning both the skeleton and its gear into fine powder! Little Skeleton couldn’t even save a single finger bone.

Xu Hai chuckled and explained, “Han Wu, the undead race possesses many advantages, and their terrifying ability to increase their numbers as they fought and killed was the nightmare of several civilizations tens of thousands of years ago. However, those times belong to ancient history now.

“Nowadays, after extensive research conducted by the Divine Civilization, we have successfully developed many methods to counter the undead. Almost every God has some form of technique or method that prevents the undead race from using the corpses of their fallen units. I’m afraid you’re going to have a rather rough time in the future if you intend to rely on the skeletons’ ability to summon Skeleton Soldiers as your trump card.”

Xu Hai wasn’t gloating; he was actually educating Han Wu. At this point, seeing the sheer power of the kid’s army, Xu Hai had completely abandoned any intention of punishing him. Instead, he resolved to use the match as a teaching moment, believing it was better for Han Wu to experience defeat now than to risk facing death at someone else’s hands in the outside world.

Han Wu’s expression darkened as he recognized the severity of his situation. The locusts were simply too weak to be used for anything but distraction. Furthermore, since the skeletons were now unable to summon new units, both the little skeleton and the Osteomancer were rendered essentially useless. His remaining forces were limited to just 3,000 minotaurs and 1,000 Scorching Dwarves—nowhere near enough to fend off the Epistian army.

Han Wu suddenly felt like conceding, but he knew Lina wouldn't stop the match unless Xu Hai was satisfied. Cornered, he had no choice but to continue the fight while trying to formulate another strategy.

While Han Wu was deep in thought, Steely and Sarman charged into the chaotic fray, immediately attacking with reckless abandon. The two Lords displayed their raw might, annihilating hundreds of Epistians with each blow. None within the Epistian army proved capable of stopping their rampage.

However, it wasn't long before Han Wu noticed that the Epistian army had cunningly established a formation that effectively cut off the escape route for both Steely and Sarman. The enemy had chosen to wear down and eliminate the two Lords through attrition, a tactic that, to his dismay, seemed very likely to succeed.

Both the little skeleton and Divine Hammer faced the same fate. Among Han Wu's Lords, only the Dark Locustman retained the ability to move freely around the battlefield. Desperate to rescue its trapped companions, it immediately summoned the Divine Longbow that Han Wu had previously gifted to it.

The Dark Locust then condensed the power of darkness into a single arrow, which it swiftly fired into the sky. The arrow transformed into a massive magic array, from which numerous black arrows rained down like a relentless, heavy downpour.

This was the Dark Locust's strongest skill: Spectral Barrage. The arrows, made from condensed dark energy, were immensely corrosive, and their shadow aspect simultaneously immobilized any enemy they struck. Epistians hit by these projectiles either suffered rapid corrosion or found their movements completely frozen, buying time for the other Lords to breathe.

However, the Epistians quickly recovered and, not long after, managed to encircle the four Lords once more. This marked the first time Han Wu had encountered such a prickly opponent. He found himself utterly at a loss for a solution when, suddenly, something truly enormous passed through the gate connecting to his divine realm.

Alpheus soared through the skies with its massive wings. Han Wu had had no intention of involving it in the battle, since Alpheus was his contract partner and not one of his units. However, to his surprise, he could now discern a faint, yet undeniable, trace of Faith emanating from the majestic creature.

Alpheus, in this moment of crisis, had converted its faith and become Han Wu's believer! It had also brought out the ten Cockroaches to aid Han Wu in the battle.

"My reliable partner, the great black dragon Alpheus is here to help you!"

Xiang Meng and the other two chattered excitedly. Ye Ling gripped Xia Tian's arm and shook him vigorously. "Xia Tian, look! That's a pure blood Great Dragon! It's an actual black dragon! How did Han Wu obtain such a trump card?"

Xia Tian couldn't believe his eyes either. Black dragons were one of the pure blood Great Dragons and were Heroic life forms from birth. They could effortlessly become Lord life forms with minimal effort, and with more dedicated work, they even possessed the potential to reach the High Lord rank. Xia Tian was slightly envious of Han Wu for possessing a Great Dragon.

Xiang Meng, on the other hand, was by this point completely numb. He realized once again the vast difference between their strengths. He was absolutely incapable of defeating Han Wu, even if he used all of his strength. Had he known about the sheer number of treasures his junior possessed, he would never have bothered coming to watch this match. It was genuinely frustrating to witness someone even luckier than him.

Xu Hai's eyes lit up with surprise and joy the moment he saw the Great Dragon. Han Wu, a mere student on the reserve list, already commanded five Lord life forms and a juvenile pureblooded black dragon. Seeing his unlimited potential, Xu Hai didn't want other teachers to claim him; he had to have Han Wu!

"Han Wu..." Xu Hai began, but his words caught in his throat as his attention snapped to the unfolding battle.

The ten Cockroaches were unleashing havoc, easily killing thousands of Epistians in mere moments with their barbaric and ruthless attacks. Their astonishing regeneration capabilities also vastly exceeded what any other life forms in their rank could possibly achieve. Clearly, these ten Cockroaches were proving to be even more troublesome than a Lord life form.

Xu Hai knew his army was doomed to be annihilated by those ten Cockroaches if the battle dragged on, further cementing his approval of Han Wu's strength. With his decision made, he then said, "Han Wu, let's end this match here."

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[1,182 words]

Chapter 92 - Reserved

"*Huh?*" Han Wu froze at Xu Hai's unexpected request to stop the battle.

What do you mean, stop the match? I've already used all of my trump cards, and now you want to back out?

Alpheus, too, bristled at Xu Hai's request. It had converted its faith solely to fight for Han Wu, making a monumental sacrifice, and now, with barely any effort expended, Xu Hai wanted a ceasefire.

Alpheus was the first to protest, letting out a furious roar. "Do you take me for a fool?"

Xu Hai raised a calming hand and tried to reason with them. "Han Wu, I'm no longer angry. I have forgiven you. Continuing this battle would only lead to unnecessary loss. Besides, I've decided to offer you the remaining Epistians on the field."

At the mention of the surviving Epistian army, Han Wu quickly restrained Alpheus with both hands. "What? Are you sure?"

Xu Hai nodded. "Yes. The surviving Epistians are yours."

Han Wu then issued the order for his units to retreat. There was no point in fighting anymore—the Epistians belonged to him now. Alpheus grumbled, but Han Wu ignored it for now. He couldn't afford to waste any time. His priority was to bring the Epistians into his divine realm as soon as possible.

Xu Hai continued, "I will hand over the Epistians to you, but on one condition."

Han Wu frowned, suspicion creeping in. Nothing in this world came free, and he had doubted that Xu Hai would hand over the Epistians without a price. Still, Han Wu didn't dare refuse. What if Xu Hai grew angry and killed him on the spot?

Han Wu said politely. "Professor Xu, please tell me what I need to do."

"You must become my student once you officially enroll into Imperial College," he replied.

Han Wu paused, unsure how to respond. He didn't fully understand Xu Hai's standing within the college.

Noticing his skeptical look, Lina quickly stepped in. "Professor Xu Hai is one of the three most renowned lecturers in Imperial College. He's not only powerful but also an exceptional teacher. Every year, so many students vie for his tutelage that the queue stretches 500 meters."

Han Wu grumbled, "Only 500 meters? At two people per meter, that's just 1,000 students."

Lina smiled knowingly. “Yes, and Imperial College only accepts 2,500 students per year.”

Han Wu’s eyes widened in disbelief. After all, nearly two-fifths of the new admissions wanted to study under Xu Hai. He had never imagined Xu Hai to be such a remarkable lecturer! This was an opportunity he couldn’t afford to miss—he had to become his student to gain access to even greater resources!

“Professor Xu, I want to become your student,” he said firmly. “If you’re willing, I can perform the ceremony now.”

As an orphan, Han Wu needed a powerful patron in society. He wasn’t about to let this opportunity slip away!

Xu Hai was pleased. “Very well, I will take that as your agreement to my condition. Now, take the remaining 820,000 Epistians into your divine realm. Consider it as a small investment from me.”

To Xu Hai, a million Epistians was nothing more than pocket change.

“However, before you can undergo the ceremony to officially become my student,” he continued, his voice sharp with expectation, “you must first enroll in the college. I don’t care what the others do, but my students must uphold the highest standard. I want you to become a perfect Demigod even before your enrollment. Is that clear?”

Han Wu gave a firm nod. “Understood. To become a perfect Demigod, I must first absorb and assimilate 10 Divine Essence, which means I need to collect 20 Divine Essence overall.”

Xu Hai nodded approvingly. “In addition, you need to find some sort of clue about acquiring the Death Aspect. Ideally, you should hear it from the Death God himself. Consider it as your trial as well.”

Han Wu scratched his head, surprised. He hadn’t expected Xu Hai to know about his deal with the Wisdom Tree.

“As long as you fulfill these two conditions,” Xu Hai went on, “you will become my official student. If you succeed, I will present you with a grand gift during the ceremony.”

Han Wu vowed solemnly, “Professor Xu, I will do my utmost to meet your conditions.”

After sealing the deal, Xu Hai waved his arm and summoned the three seniors from the spectator area down to the arena. “As for you three, you must never reveal what you’ve witnessed today, especially not to your lecturer. Do you understand?”

The three seniors exchanged glances before Xia Tian stepped forward. “Professor Xu, you’re aware of our lecturer’s temper. I doubt that we can keep it a secret if he presses us.”

Xu Hai scoffed and tossed three cards toward the seniors, one for each. “Not a single word. Do you hear me?”

Xiang Meng chuckled. “We understand. We won’t tell anyone even if they beat us to death.”

Xu Hai left without another word. Lina then approached the trio, her eyes gleaming with amusement. “You three... I never expected you’d be bold enough to even blackmail a Major God like Xu Hai.”

Xia Tian and the other two chuckled. Lina then glanced at Han Wu approvingly. Without further ado, they left the arena and returned to their own living quarters.

Han Wu swiftly entered his divine realm to organize the living space for his 820,000 new Epistians. As he surveyed his divine realm, he was surprised to find that the Epistians had adapted and were already building a small town. He had assumed that they would struggle without his guidance in arranging their habitat.

The Epistians transformed into formidable soldiers when clad in their equipment, yet surprisingly, without it, they proved to be remarkably efficient civilians. The absence of a Level 40 Core may have significantly weakened them, but their intelligence and determination remained undiminished.

Using primitive tools, they plowed fields and skilfully shaped stones into steady foundations for houses. Their optimistic outlook on life was truly gratifying to behold.

Steely, Divine Hammer, Sarman, and even the little skeleton felt the first stirrings of civilization within Han Wu’s divine realm with the Epistians’ arrival. Only Alpheus was grumbling, musing darkly about flying over the small town to terrorize the Epistians when Han Wu wasn’t watching. Still, it quickly abandoned the thought after Han Wu’s stern warning.

To nurture their growth, Han Wu designated a portion of his divine realm as the Epistians’ territory and forbade any of his other units from encroaching on it for the next hundred years.

The Epistians were deeply moved by this decree, and many of them rose to the rank of Believer. Despite being only Believers, the Faith Points they generated daily surpassed the yield of a Zealot Locustman.

Recognizing their potential, Han Wu quickly appointed Steely, whose appearance most closely resembled theirs, as his priest and urged him to convert as many Epistians as

possible. He looked forward eagerly to the day he could replace Xu Hai as their main god.

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Chapter 93 - Qin Shuang's Familial Issues

[1,720 words]

Chapter 93 - Qin Shuang's Familial Issues

Although Xu Hai acknowledged Han Wu, Lina showed him no favoritism and treated him like every other student—no favors, no exceptions.

Han Wu spent his days learning and experimenting with various methods to strengthen his units. His routine was simple yet deeply fulfilling. One day, after finishing a minor class, he inspected his data.

[Name: Han Wu-Origin of Mutation]

[Rank: Divine Being / Rank 2 Supergene Soldier]

[Divine Talent: Chosen One (Exclusive), Defiance]

[Divine Power: Sacrifice (Exclusive), Controlled Mutation, Gene Lock]

[Skills: Mighty Cleave, Enchant Darkness, Dragon Slash, Black Dragonification, Dash Kick, Plant Fusion...]

[Divine Essence: 8 (7 remaining Divine Essence. Refining in progress)]

[Divine Points: 69.7 million (Personal) / 122.74 million (Foreign)]

[Faith Points: 42.93 million]

[Core Level: 10 (Rank 3 Sacred Object Law of Gluttony (Incomplete); Rank 2 Sacred Object Revelation Stone; Rank 2 Sacred Object Shadow Nail; Rank 1 Sacred Object Poison Gland; Rank 1 Sacred Object Earth Core; Rank 1 Sacred Object Elf Shortbow)]

He was still reviewing his data when Qin Shuang approached, her steps tentative and uncertain.

She asked softly, “Han Wu, can we talk for a bit?”

He closed his interface and looked up. “Is something wrong?”

He had noticed Qin Shuang’s abnormal behaviour since before the last major class. After they returned, Xu Tie had honored their bet and stopped interacting with her, but Han Wu sensed she was still troubled.

They stepped out of the classroom and strolled along the college’s garden path, where Qin Shuang quietly shared her problem.

“Han Wu, my family intends to arrange a marriage with Xu Tie’s family. Unfortunately, I am the sacrificial lamb.” She delivered the words with a calm detachment, as if she weren’t the one being offered up.

Han Wu stared at her, stunned. “There are still arranged marriages in this day and age? Did your parents agree to this?”

Qin Shuang shook her head. “My parents only just became Demigods. They don’t have the power to oppose my great-grandfather. He is the only God in our family, and his word is law.”

It was common for families to support their younger members while they were growing. However, just as natural was the expectation to obey those same elders without question. Even large families like Qin Shuang’s followed that tradition.

“Who exactly did they arrange for you to marry?” Han Wu asked. “Is it Xu Tie? He already lost and honored our bet. I doubt he’d dare come near you now.”

Qin Shuang let out a bitter smile. “It was supposed to be him. However, after his humiliating loss in the major class, the Xu family replaced him with his brother, Xu Gang.”

Han Wu frowned. “So the Xu family is determined to marry you into their family no matter what. What do you need me to do? If it’s within my power, I’ll help you—no question. You’re my best friend.”

Qin Shuang’s expression dimmed at the mention of *best friend*. Her voice held a faint edge of disappointment. “Only best friend?”

Han Wu coughed twice, pretending not to hear. He wasn’t blind to Qin Shuang’s feelings for him, but he refused to hold her back. Without resources or a strong background, he felt he couldn’t offer her more.

Qin Shuang was crestfallen. His response wasn't what she had hoped for. "I was hoping that you could accompany me to my house this weekend and help me reject their arrangement."

Han Wu nodded without hesitation. Afterward, they returned to their respective mansions and focused on boosting their units' strength.

The week passed quickly. By the weekend, they met up at Imperial College's teleporter and transported together to Qin Shuang's hometown, the Qin Village.

Despite its name, the Qin Village was no rural backwater. It was actually a thriving city of ten million people, including a few hundred thousand Divine Beings. Although it couldn't rival the grandeur of the Imperial Capital, it was still a place that had everything one could need.

Han Wu surveyed the bustling streets as they stepped out, just before a butler approached them. He said with a respectful bow, "Young Miss, the Master and Mistress have sent me to welcome you. They are already waiting for you at home."

"Sorry to trouble you, Uncle Zhong," she said politely.

"You are far too kind, Young Miss." The butler smiled warmly, then turned his attention to Han Wu. "And who is this gentleman beside you?"

Han Wu stepped forward and introduced himself. "I am Han Wu, a friend of Qin Shuang."

The butler nodded thoughtfully. "Oh, so you are a friend of our Young Miss. Then you must also be one of the geniuses on Imperial College's reserve list. Pardon my bluntness."

Han Wu shook hands with the butler but remained silent. Together, they boarded the floating car, and Uncle Zhong drove them back to Qin Shuang's house.

As they disembarked, Han Wu caught the sound of a heated argument, loud enough to carry even outside of the house.

"The family has never given us any dividends before, and now you want to throw my daughter to the wolves for the sake of the arranged marriage? I will not allow it. I don't care who marries whom, but I will never let my daughter be sacrificed like this!" a voice rang out, sharp and unyielding.

"Sixth Brother, you can't say that," another voice replied. "Shuang'er has benefited from the family's resources since she was young. She has grown strong because of them. Naturally, she should contribute back to the family."

“Third Brother, your children have enjoyed those same resources since they were young, yet I don’t see you or your children helping the family. I can overlook those who live far away, but what about your third daughter? We had to spend a fortune just to get her admitted to the reserve list of a Second Rate high school through the backdoor! She’s a worthy candidate and will even save us some resources if she gets married.”

“Watch your tongue, Sixth Brother!” the second voice said sharply. “Speak respectfully to me. I am your Third Brother...”

Han Wu listened from outside, piecing bits of information together from the quarrel. The sixth brother was most likely Qin Shuang’s father, fiercely opposed to his daughter’s arranged marriage. The others were trying to persuade him instead, turning the family dispute into a tangled mess of grievances and bargains.

Qin Shuang, overhearing the argument, flushed with anger. She stormed into the room and shouted, “I will not marry into that stupid Xu family.”

The third brother, Qin He, slammed his fist on the table. “Nonsense. This is a matter for us elders to decide. You do not have the right to interject. Someone, come and take the Young Miss back to her room to rest. She’s clearly exhausted.”

The fourth brother, Qin Hu, stepped forward with a warm smile that barely masked his avarice. “Shuang’er, you are also part of the family. You should help us. The Xu family also has a God, and they possess vast resources. They won’t hesitate to share if you marry into their family.”

Qin Hai, the sixth brother and Qin Shuang’s father, immediately stepped forward to protect her. “I’d like to see who dares lay a finger on her as long as I’m here!”

Qin He frowned and snapped, “Sixth Brother, you are coddling her. That kind of indulgence will ruin her.”

“I will keep coddling her because she is my daughter!” Qin Hai didn’t back down. “She is a student on Imperial College’s reserve list and has a real chance to become a God in the future. I will never allow you to ruin her future!”

The eldest brother, Qin Jiang, scolded sharply, “Sixth Brother, are you really trying to defy the family? Do you expect our grandfather to come and plead with you personally before you relent? Your daughter is talented, but she’s not even a Demigod yet. It could take centuries before she becomes a God.

“Meanwhile, the Qin family only has one God right now, and we must protect him at all costs. If we lose him, the family targeting us will descend like wolves. Sixth Brother, you know this better than anyone. This isn’t something that we can handle on our own!”

Qin Jiang's reasoning was solid and even Qin Hai was taken aback by that. He didn't want to sacrifice his daughter, but he also couldn't bear to lose the Qin family's only God. Unfortunately, the world rarely offered a path where both could be saved.

The room fell into heavy silence. Han Wu's curiosity grew; the matter involved the Qin family's only God, but he wasn't aware of the full details. Finally, he turned to Uncle Zhong. After a moment's thought, the latter decided to explain, mindful that Han Wu was Qin Shuang's friend.

Apparently, the Qin's family only God had ventured into another foreign civilization when an unexpected incident led to his capture. Now, he awaited trial and punishment. The foreign civilization was under the control of a powerful God, so Demigods couldn't save him.

Only a fellow God had the strength to challenge the ruling power and intervene on his behalf. Unable to escape alone, the Qin family's God managed to send word back home, pleading for someone to find another God capable of rescuing him.

The Qin family had reached out to numerous allies, but only the Xu family's God was willing to help. However, the Xu family set a condition—someone from the Qin family had to marry into theirs.

That someone was Qin Shuang. She was a student on the Imperial College's reserve list, a prodigy with limitless potential. She was destined to become a formidable Demigod, and very likely a God in the future. If she married into the Xu family, it would virtually guarantee them another God. It was a strategic move that would bolster their power and security.

The Qin family's God understood their motives, but he was in no position to refuse. He needed their help to escape. To survive, he could only accept their demand, sacrificing Qin Shuang's future to save himself.

Now that Han Wu learned the full story, a spark ignited in his mind. He did know a God who could help him right now.

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Chapter 94 - Han Wu Invites a God

[1,290 words]

Chapter 94 - Han Wu Invites a God

Although Han Wu's social circle was small, the individuals he knew were quite influential. He quickly scrolled through his short friend list and found the person he needed; it was Yuan Zhong, a bona fide God.

Yuan Zhong hadn't contacted Han Wu in a while, having finally accumulated enough Source of Sacred Objects to restore his God equipment. Nevertheless, Han Wu was certain Yuan Zhong would help him out of gratitude for repairing his God equipment.

He swiftly placed a call to Yuan Zhong, and the other person promptly answered.

"Do you need more Divine Essence?" Yuan Zhong asked.

"No," Han Wu replied unhesitatingly, "but I do need a favor."

"Sure, I'm willing to help, but not without compensation."

"There will be payment. I will make sure you will be handsomely rewarded."

Yuan Zhong's interest visibly sparked. "Tell me, what exactly do you need my help for?"

Han Wu proceeded to explain the entire situation. "It's not a particularly difficult task, but I need you to journey to a foreign civilization to rescue a God who is currently being imprisoned by a native God of that civilization. The exact location is..."

Hearing the details, Yuan Zhong raised a curious brow. "I've heard of that foreign civilization before, and I am familiar with that native God you mentioned. That God is indeed powerful, but I am definitely stronger."

Han Wu was taken aback by how surprisingly easy it seemed. "Does that mean you agree to help?"

"Hold on. First, tell me what you're willing to pay me. I won't offer my assistance if the compensation is too little."

Yuan Zhong didn't mind doing it as long as the money was good. Han Wu, however, hesitated, as this was his first time requesting aid from a God. While he had no idea of the standard fee, he knew it wouldn't be cheap. Nevertheless, he wasn't the one covering the cost; the Qin family would.

However, he soon found himself in another dilemma. The Qin family might simply be unable to afford the cost if the price was too high, while on the other hand, Yuan Zhong would likely refuse the job if the price was set too low.

While lost in thought, a brilliant idea suddenly struck Han Wu. He realized he could offer Sources of Sacred Objects, which only he possessed, as payment. This approach would ensure that the Qin family, Yuan Zhong and Han Wu himself would all benefit from the deal.

Han Wu quickly replied, "What if I offered Sources of Sacred Objects as payment? How many do you think you'll need to take on this request?"

Hearing the payment would be Sources of Sacred Objects, Yuan Zhong's interest spiked. He had used them before, so he knew how special and valuable they were. Unfortunately, their production was simply too expensive, otherwise Yuan Zhong would have undoubtedly bought more from Han Wu to keep in reserve.

"My God lance cost 30,000 Sources of Sacred Objects to repair. Let's make this payment the same."

Yuan Zhong, in fact, would have readily accepted the request even if the price had been lowered to 20,000. Han Wu, however, surprisingly believed Yuan Zhong was asking for too little.

The Refiner could produce one Source of Sacred Object for every Rank 1 Sacred Object supplied. Given that many of the less useful Rank 1 Sacred Objects weren't worth even a single Divine Point, generating 30,000 Sources of Sacred Objects would amount to a cost of just about 150 million Divine Points.

For a family with a God, this wasn't a large amount of money. In fact, as long as the price remained below 1 billion Divine Points, the family wouldn't even notice the loss.

Han Wu readily agreed. "Alright, let's set the payment for rescuing the other God at 30,000 Source of Sacred Objects."

He quickly sent the coordinates of the Qin residence, so Yuan Zhong could come over and sign the agreement.

With the agreement with Yuan Zhong secured, Han Wu felt quite relieved. He then confidently entered the room and appeared before the assembled Qin family.

"Brat, who exactly are you? And why are you even in our house? Guards, throw him out!" Qin He, still seething, grew even more furious at the sight of the stranger, Han Wu.

Qin Shuang quickly stepped forward and explained, "This is Han Wu, a close friend of mine. He's here to help."

Qin Hu, the fourth brother, scoffed. "Your friend? Here to help, you say? He's clearly just your little school sweetheart!"

At these words, the collective gaze of the others sharpened into glares directed squarely at Han Wu.

“No, fourth uncle, you... you’re mistaken!” Qin Shuang protested weakly. Everyone present was experienced enough to immediately discern what she was implying.

Her eldest uncle, Qin Jiang, naturally wouldn’t permit Han Wu to disrupt their plans. Qin Jiang turned to Qin Shuang and urged, “Shuang’er, as a descendant of a God, you should find a man of equal standing.”

Addressing Han Wu, he asked, “Young boy, is there any God in your family?”

Han Wu shook his head in reply. Being an orphan, he had no family members at all, much less one at the Demigod or God rank.

“How can you protect her when there isn’t even a God in your family? Shuang’er, marrying this man will only lead to pain and hardships for you in the future.”

Qin Jiang then handed Han Wu a card. “This card contains 500 million Divine Points. It’s enough money for you to live comfortably for the rest of your life. Take it and leave her.”

Han Wu’s eyes immediately lit up with genuine excitement. “Wow, 500 million Divine Points? Perfect! I’ll consider this as payment for summoning a God to rescue the Qin family’s God.”

Qin Jiang, not fully listening, scoffed as Han Wu pocketed the card. “Look, Shuang’er, 500 million Divine Points was all it took to reveal your so-called sweetheart’s true nature. Did you hear him? He’s going to use the money to call for a God to help us... *Huh?* He’s going to use that money to call a God to help us?!”

Qin He, the third brother, let out a derisive laugh. “You actually believe you can call a God to help us with just 500 million Divine Points? How laughable. Do you really think Gods are just found on the streets, or that they’ll appear simply because you call for them?”

The fourth brother, Qin Hu, seized the opportunity to humiliate Han Wu as well. “I think the boy is deliberately wasting precious time that we could otherwise be using to rescue our God.”

Qin Shuang’s father, staring at Han Wu as if he were an utter idiot, also found the boy’s words hard to believe. Only Qin Shuang believed him, and she spoke up in his defense. “Han Wu said that he could request help from a God with just 500 million Divine Points, and he will do it. I trust him.”

Qin Jiang, intent on exposing Han Wu's lie, challenged. "Boy, since you claim you can find a God to help us with merely 500 million Divine Points, you had better ask that God to show up right now. I want to personally witness how you intend to recruit the Xu family's God with just that amount."

Han Wu retorted, "Who said I'm recruiting the Xu family's God? I'm calling a different, more powerful God and he will be here very soon."

No sooner had he uttered those words than a profound Divine Authority manifested from outside the residence. The Qin family was deeply startled, as it was undeniably the presence of a true God!

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Chapter 95 - Failed Meet-up In Real Life

[1,529 words]

Chapter 95 - Failed Meet-up In Real Life

"That's... That's a God's Divine Authority!" the sixth brother, Qin Hai, cried out in astonishment. His head then snapped towards Han Wu, his eyes wide with utter disbelief.

The others in the Qin family were reluctant to believe that it was true.

"This has to be a coincidence! Perhaps a God happened to come here to help us while he was spouting nonsense."

"Yes, that must be the case. The Qin family has such a long history, so why would other Gods not come to our aid?"

"You little brat, just you wait. We will expose your lies the moment we see which God has actually come to help us."

Han Wu paid no mind to their taunts, instead focusing on guiding Yuan Zhong through Qin Village. He was, after all, doing this for his best friend, and not for the Qin family.

Yuan Zhong soon arrived, his overwhelming Divine Authority making it evident that his power far surpassed that of the Qin family's God. Every member of the Qin family immediately rose to their feet, stepping out to welcome the newly arrived God.

Qin Jiang, the eldest among them, was the first to speak. "Esteemed God, you must have heard that our ancestor is in trouble and graciously came here to offer your assistance, correct?"

Yuan Zhong scanned the crowd and frowned. He noticed that Qin Jiang was only a Demigod, and an imperfect one at that. He sneered in clear disdain and curtly asked, "Who is Han Wu?"

He and Han Wu were online friends, and since they had never even video-called before, Yuan Zhong had no idea what Han Wu looked like.

Hearing the question, Qin Hai was stunned. It had never occurred to him that a God would truly arrive on behalf of his daughter's friend. He couldn't even begin to imagine how powerful his daughter's friend must be to have summoned a God.

Han Wu, hearing Yuan Zhong's voice, bolted out of the house. "I'm here!"

This was a clear case where the real-life meet-up had failed. Yuan Zhong almost fainted in shock when he realized Han Wu was merely a young boy, still far from maturity. He had always assumed Han Wu was as old as he, a kind-hearted warrior dedicated to helping the weak. He never thought the real Han Wu would be such a deflated version of his assumption.

He quickly checked Han Wu's rank and almost fainted once more; the boy was just a Divine Being! A wave of heat rushed to his face, mortified that he had addressed such a young and immature Divine Being as his comrade. He desperately needed to salvage his dignity as a God somehow!

He desperately clung to the last strand of hope, asking tentatively, "Are you really the same Han Wu I regularly chat with?"

He secretly wished the answer would be a no, but fate was unkind. Han Wu quickly admitted that he was one and the same. "Yes, I am the Han Wu you've been chatting with. Here, this is an actual Source of Sacred Object as evidence."

With the Source of Sacred Object as undeniable proof, Yuan Zhong's last shred of hope was shattered. He had no choice but to finally admit that the young Divine Being before him was indeed the one who had helped him repair his God lance.

"I had no idea you were so... young!" he blurted out in astonishment.

"You look young too," Han Wu chuckled, responding quite casually even though Yuan Zhong was a God. This oddly comforted Yuan Zhong, and he relaxed a little as if continuing their normal, casual chats online.

His gaze sweeping over the Qin family, Yuan Zhong asked, "Are these your relatives?"

Han Wu shook his head. “No, they aren’t.”

Qin Jiang felt his face sting from those words. He hadn’t believed for a second that Han Wu could actually recruit a God, and now he was terrified that Han Wu would speak badly about their family. He couldn’t afford for their family to lose the God’s help.

Qin Jiang, unwilling to interrupt the ongoing conversation between Han Wu and Yuan Zhong, quickly pulled his sixth brother aside. “that brat—*erh*, I mean Han Wu—is the friend your daughter brought back, isn’t he? You absolutely have to ask her to persuade him to help our family!”

The third brother, Qin He, piped up. “Yeah, sixth brother, we are one family. We live and die together. You can’t pick up grudges right now and abandon us!”

The fourth brother, Qin Hu, then added, “Sixth brother, just consider this. If you can persuade him to help us, your daughter won’t have to marry into the Xu family anymore. Isn’t this exactly what you wanted?”

Despite his disdain for his brothers’ greed and lack of shame, Qin Hai knew they were right. Since he didn’t know Han Wu personally, he could only ask his daughter to help them.

“My little girl, I have to admit, your judgment in choosing a partner is exceptional. He’s much more reliable than everyone in this family combined. Seize this chance to rescue your great-grandfather and secure your position as the family’s greatest benefactor. That way, no one will ever be able to force you into an arranged marriage again.”

Her face flushed crimson, Qin Shuang whispered fiercely, “Father, what are you talking about? We are not in that kind of relationship!”

“It’s merely a matter of time, Shuang’er. Do you honestly believe I’m unaware of your nature? You would never have introduced him to us if you didn’t genuinely approve of him,” Qin Hai said, already treating Han Wu as if he were his future son-in-law.

Her blush deepened, yet Qin Shuang chose to stay silent. She recognized the truth in her father’s words, and she also knew that if Han Wu really did secure a God’s aid with just 500 million Divine Points, both she and her family would benefit the most. The crucial question, however, was how she was to convey this to Han Wu.

She hesitated for a moment, then swallowed her embarrassment and began to approach Han Wu. However, he saw her coming towards him and spoke first.

“Qin Shuang, perfect timing! He’s agreed to help your family’s God. Could you please ask your family to provide him with any piece of information or item related to your God? He plans to leave immediately.”

“Already?” Qin Shuang exclaimed, taken aback. “And what about the payment? Is it truly just 500 million Divine Points?”

Han Wu swiftly clasped his hand over her mouth, fearing that Yuan Zhong might hear about the cost of producing the Sources of Sacred Objects.

“Don’t worry about the reward! You just need to do what I say.”

Han Wu’s intention was to secure the payment without anyone else’s knowledge, but Qin Shuang mistakenly assumed that he was offering to personally make up the difference. She was deeply touched by his perceived act of generosity.

The Qin family, upon hearing that Yuan Zhong was indeed going to save their God, immediately handed over all relevant information and items related to their God.

Yuan Zhong carefully secured those things and then turned to Han Wu. “Don’t forget about the reward you promised.”

“Don’t worry, I won’t. Safe travels,” Han Wu replied, then bid Yuan Zhong goodbye.

Following this turn of events, the Qin family’s entire demeanor towards Han Wu changed drastically. They had previously looked down on his background, but now they treated him like an esteemed guest.

Han Wu naturally accepted their kindness. Meanwhile, he discreetly purchased a large quantity of Rank 1 Sacred Objects online, immediately feeding them into the Refinery. Ultimately, with the 500 million Divine Points, he managed to produce 103,000 Sources of Sacred Objects and a massive collection of various Power Stones.

He set aside 30,000 Sources of Sacred Objects for Yuan Zhong’s payment. Of the 73,000 that remained, he used 3,000 to enhance his Rank 3 Sacred Object Law of Gluttony (Incomplete).

The Law of Gluttony (Incomplete) successfully ranked up after fusing with the 3,000 Sources of Sacred Objects, becoming a Rank 4 Sacred Object. Its suffix also changed from (Incomplete) to (Sealed) as it unveiled its core. Even in this sealed state, the Law of Gluttony was still remarkably strong, surprising Han Wu.

[Rank 4 Sacred Object: Law of Gluttony (Sealed): Grants the Gluttony trait to the core race after equipping it to the Core. Common life forms can evolve into Elite after consuming food equivalent to 100 times their basal metabolic rate. Elite life forms can evolve into Unique after consuming food equivalent to 1,000 times their basal metabolic rate. Unique life forms have a 1% chance of evolving into Heroic life forms after consuming 10,000 times their basal metabolic rate. (Sacred Object is currently sealed. Can only be used on Common, Elite, and Unique life forms.)]

A 1% chance of evolving into a Heroic life form? I'll have an entire army of Heroic locusts soon enough!

Han Wu stared intently at the newly upgraded Law of Gluttony, eagerly looking forward to witnessing its powerful effects.

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Chapter 96 - Arrival of the Xu Family's God

[1,116 words]

Chapter 96 - Arrival of the Xu Family's God

Han Wu's Core was in crisis after upgrading the Law of Gluttony. With his Core capped at Level 10, he had no choice but to remove the Rank 1 Sacred Object: Earth's Core to make room for his Rank 4 Sacred Object: Law of Gluttony (Sealed). Even then, his Core cracked slightly from the strain.

He knew the damage came from forcefully equipping a Rank 4 Sacred Object. Had he tried to equip a Rank 5, his Core would have shattered instantly. This was the reason he hadn't pushed further with upgrading the Law of Gluttony, even though he possessed 70,000 Sources of Sacred Objects.

Meanwhile, back at Imperial College's classroom for students on the reserve list, Xu Tie noticed that Han Wu and Qin Shuang had been absent for two full days. He immediately suspected they had returned to the Qin family's residence. Without delay, he reported this to his own family.

Naturally, the Xu family's God erupted in fury! Qin Shuang was a remarkable young woman with immense potential, and her descendants would undoubtedly be outstanding. The Xu family's God had noticed that and arranged for her to marry into their family as payment to save the Qin family's God. Yet now, the promised granddaughter-in-law was spending time with another man.

Enraged by what he saw as blatant mockery, the Xu family's God gathered Xu Gang and Xu Tie and immediately teleported to the Qin Village, demanding answers. He intended to settle the marriage matter before it unraveled any further.

As they arrived, the Divine Authority of the Xu family's God swept over the city like a storm front. Panic rippled through the Qin family as they sensed the powerful presence. Their Demigods quickly gathered to strategize.

Qin Jiang took charge of the discussion. "It seems the Xu family has come to discuss the arranged marriage. After all, their God appeared here without any warning."

He was right on the mark.

Qin Hai responded firmly, "But our ancestor is being rescued by another God. The arranged marriage is off the table now."

Qin Jiang sighed, shaking his head. "No, you're misunderstanding. The Xu family's God is unpredictable. If he learns the truth, he'll destroy us all for deceiving him."

"Then we keep deceiving him until our ancestor returns," Qin Hai suggested stubbornly.

Qin He scoffed. "Easy for you to say. Do you really think he's a fool? If he's here, it means he already has some plan."

Qin Hu, the fourth brother, nodded in agreement. "We don't have a God protecting us now. If the Xu family truly intends to push the arranged marriage, we should agree. Otherwise, his wrath could wipe out everyone in this city."

"Bullshit! How am I supposed to explain this to my son-in-law if we accept their terms? Don't forget, it was my son-in-law who called his friend to save our ancestor. He's our family's benefactor," Qin Hai said, already regarding Han Wu as his son-in-law.

"We have no choice. Sixth Brother, do you really want our entire city destroyed just because of your daughter?" Qin He snapped, shoving the responsibility squarely onto Qin Shuang.

"Third Brother, I've had enough of your nonsense. What do you mean 'just because of my daughter'? Explain yourself!" Qin Hai's hatred for Qin He flared, his fists clenched, ready to fight.

"Both of you, stop it!" Qin Jiang barked, stepping between them. "You each have your own families now. Act like it."

Qin He scoffed. "Eldest Brother, what do you propose?"

Qin Jiang's tone was calm but firm. "We avoid provoking either side. Let's hold a match. Whoever wins earns the right to marry Qin Shuang. That way, they settle it with their own strength."

Qin Hu gave a slow nod. "That's a good idea. It keeps both parties from feeling slighted."

Qin Hai understood exactly what his eldest brother was aiming for, but a part of him still couldn't accept it.

"Sixth Brother, you can't keep hesitating. This is the only way to ensure our family's survival," Qin Jiang urged, his voice steady. Just as he spoke, the Divine Authority of the Xu family's God suddenly enveloped their house in an oppressive glow.

A booming voice thundered from outside. "Descendants of the Qin family, why have you not welcomed me?"

Everyone shuddered at the threat and hurried outside.

Qin Jiang stepped forward, trying to placate the imposing God. "We welcome the great ancestor of the Xu family. Your visit is an honor for—"

"Stop with the flattery," the Xu family's God interrupted sharply. "I have come to save your family's God, but first, you will arrange the wedding immediately. Call out that little girl, Qin Shuang, to marry my grandson."

Qin Jiang blinked in surprise at the blunt demand. He hesitated before carefully explaining, "About that..."

The Xu family's God didn't believe him and cut him off. "Five hundred million Divine Points to recruit another god? Do you take me for a fool? You won't find anyone willing to help you—not for five billion, let alone five hundred million. I'm offering my help because of our alliance. If not for that, I would've let your family rot."

The Qin family bowed their heads, ashamed like scolded children. "Yes, you're right. You are indeed right."

"Then stop wasting my time and call out that little girl, Qin Shuang," the God demanded. "I want the wedding over and done with so I can focus on saving your ancestor."

The family exchanged uneasy glances but no one dared act. No one wanted to die.

Finally, Qin Hai stepped forward, his voice steady but pleading. "Esteemed God, I have met that particular God myself. It is true. Please show us grace and mercy and let my daughter go."

"You are a mere Demigod, yet you dare challenge a God? Do you take me for a weakling?" the Xu family's God snarled, abandoning diplomacy as talks collapsed.

He unleashed his full Divine Authority, conjuring a roaring hurricane that whipped around him. The violent gust tore through the city, leveling buildings and claiming countless lives.

“Please stop! Please rescind your wrath!” the Qin family cried out. Although they were all Demigods, they stood helpless against a God’s power.

“Stop! Don’t destroy my home!” a young voice called from within the Qin family’s residence. Qin Shuang burst through the door, and Han Wu followed close behind.

Xu Tie’s eyes narrowed as he saw them together, fury boiling over. *They really were together! Doesn’t that mean they were deceiving us?*

“Big Brother, that’s him—Han Wu!” Xu Tie hissed and angrily pointed at Han Wu.

“Good. He won’t live past today,” Xu Gang growled.

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Chapter 97 - Locusts vs Steel Soldiers

[1,082 words]

Chapter 97 - Locusts vs Steel Soldiers

The Xu family’s God cast his gaze upon Qin Shuang, clearly pleased by her delicate beauty. He was convinced a girl like her would bear exceptional children for their lineage.

“Young lady,” he said, voice calm but firm, “if you want me to stop, you must marry my grandson. I swear we will treat you well.”

Qin Shuang shot back, “Who wants to marry your grandson? You must be dreaming.”

The Xu’s family God frowned, insulted that such a young girl would shame him so openly.

Qin Jiang quickly motioned for Qin Hai to pull Qin Shuang back and hastened to explain. “Esteemed God, please don’t take offense. She is young and untrained in proper manners. I will definitely educate her properly once our ancestor returns.”

The Xu's family God scoffed and turned to Han Wu. "So this is the benefactor the Qin family spoke of? Brat, after ruining the marriage between our families, don't think you can leave this place alive without an explanation."

In truth, the Xu family already knew a lot about Han Wu from Xu Tie. A lonely orphan was an easy target, but killing him posed a problem. Imperial College would likely demand answers, but since Han Wu was not yet a student there, the Xu family's God would only receive a reprimand at worst. He doubted Imperial College would bother him too much for killing an orphan.

Even though a God was questioning him, Han Wu stood his ground. "I'm here to help my friend. I don't owe you any explanation. Is there a law that forbids me from doing so?"

"Han Wu, how dare you be so disrespectful to my grandfather!" Xu Tie snapped, asserting authority.

Han Wu scoffed. "What? Is telling the truth to your grandfather disrespectful? Is your family really that petty?"

"You!" Xu Tie's fury sputtered, but he knew better than to say more and verify his words.

However, Xu Gang showed no such restraint. "Han Wu, I presume? It was a mistake for you to show up here today. Leave now, and we'll spare you. Stay, and I'll take it as a direct challenge to the Xu family."

He dismissed Han Wu outright, issuing a blunt ultimatum. If Han Wu stayed, it would be considered a direct affront to the Xu family.

Han Wu smiled, unfazed. He knew what it meant to be bullied—not just once, but many times over. Even if he left now, the Xu family wouldn't let it go.

Han Wu sensed that if he left now, Xu Gang would soon start picking fights with him again. To stand firm next time, he had to be resolute in the present. "I'm not leaving."

"You're incredibly impudent. Fine then! I'll kill you today!" He laughed darkly as he drew an Invasion Card. "I'm about your age, so no one can accuse me of bullying if I finish you off now."

The Qin family wanted to stop him, but the Xu family's God suppressed them. "My grandson initiated this fight to uphold the Xu family's honor. Are you sure you want to interfere?"

The Qin family fell silent, intimidated into inaction. Without hesitation, Xu Gang activated the card and pulled Han Wu forcefully into his divine realm.

Han Wu blinked, finding himself at the edge of that realm, a solitary door standing before him. The ground trembled as an army of armored enemies poured out from the gate. Han Wu quickly used Inspect Eye to discern their race.

[Race: Steel Soldier]

[Rank: Unique]

[Talent: Armored, Mighty]

[Skill: Steel Manipulation: Can manipulate the armor on the body freely]

Han Wu's breath quickened the moment he saw the data. The Unique Steel Soldiers were terrifyingly powerful. Born encased in heavy armor, they could reshape it at will to strike and defend simultaneously. They far outmatched Xu Tie's Iron Skins. They were essentially an enhanced, elite version of them.

Millions of Steel Soldiers surged into Han Wu's divine realm. Xu Gang's face materialized in the sky, his cold gaze sweeping over the terrain. He sneered at the sprawling wilderness below, but his eyes soon settled on the city Han Wu's Epistians had built.

"You have Epistians in your divine realm?" Xu Gang's voice held a note of surprise. Epistians were also Unique life forms, and Xu Gang was familiar with them. Nevertheless, relief washed over him when he realized Han Wu had no Heroic Epistians.

"You command Epistians, and yet there's not a single Heroic among them? Pathetic," Xu Gang spat.

Han Wu had no good answer. The Epistians had only recently arrived in his divine realm, so it was natural they hadn't produced a Heroic one yet. Still, he didn't bother explaining—he was going to fight Xu Gang either way.

With a wave of his hand, Han Wu commanded his army to drive out the invading Steel Soldiers. At his call, his locust swarm surged forward, darkening the sky and blotting out the sun.

Nonetheless, the sight didn't intimidate Xu Gang. He commanded, "Steel Soldiers, destroy everything you see!"

Millions of Steel Soldiers launched devastating assaults against the locusts, but the insects refused to yield. They used their overwhelming numbers to strike back. Han Wu deployed 10,000 locusts against every Steel Soldier.

Undeterred, Xu Gang summoned more of his units into the divine realm. Another 500,000 Steel Soldiers marched into the divine realm, joined by 30 Heroic Steel Majors and 2 Steel Soldier Lords that immediately took command of the battlefield.

With higher-ranking units directing them, the Steel Soldiers fought with ruthless precision. Han Wu responded by unleashing tens of thousands of Locustmen, along with his three Locustman Lords, led by the imposing Dark Locust. The three Locustman Lords quickly isolated one of the Steel Soldier Lords from the rest.

Xu Gang frowned, frustration darkening his features. The battle was slipping from his control. It was one thing to field a massive army; it was another for those troops to be genuinely strong. Not only did the weaker locusts hold their ground against his Steel Soldiers, but even the Heroic- and Lord-ranked locusts were capable of holding their ground too.

Xu Gang grudgingly admitted he had underestimated Han Wu, but he assumed this was the best his opponent could muster. Without hesitation, he unleashed his trump card, ordering his strongest unit to advance into Han Wu's divine realm.

A terrible presence descended on Han Wu's divine realm as Xu Gang's five-meter-tall Divine Steel Soldier joined the battle.

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[1,082 words]

Chapter 98 - Strength and Intelligence

The Divine Steel Soldier was a mutated variant of the standard Steel Soldier, and Xu Gang had given it a Divine Essence. It towered over its counterparts and was clad in armor that had been refined over a hundred times, forging an impenetrable shell that boosted both its defense and attack power. With Steel Manipulation, it shaped a massive divine sword from its own armor, delivering a single devastating strike that wounded a Locustman Lord.

Han Wu's heart skipped a beat as he watched one of his prized Lords being injured. That Locustman Lord was one he had painstakingly nurtured, investing significant resources into its growth. It had even consumed a rare Wisdom Fruit, promising great potential for the future.

Xu Gang scoffed. "They are all Lord life forms, yet they can't even withstand a single hit. The locusts are a weak race."

Han Wu bristled at the insult but couldn't deny the strength of the Steel Soldiers. Still, Xu Gang had no right to use his creations as a shield to demean the locusts.

"The locusts are weak?" Han Wu growled. "Fine. I'll show you true terror."

Dropping all restraint, he unleashed Controlled Mutation without hesitation. He targeted the 30 million locusts that were on the brink of death, forcing them to exhaust their remaining lifespan in a single surge. In return, they gained immense power for a limited time.

Xu Gang watched as the arm-length locusts swelled tenfold, growing to nearly two meters long. Their increased density and size sharpened their attacks. Even the defensive-oriented Steel Soldiers were forced to revert their weapons back into armor to absorb the blows.

However, this was only the beginning. If the Common Locusts had become so formidable after mutation, what of the Heroic ones? Han Wu handpicked 10 Heroic Locustmen and used Controlled Mutation again. Though it drained much of their lifespan, the mutation didn't increase their size but drastically boosted their speed and strength.

A Heroic Locustman with only twenty-four hours left to live unleashed raw power that rivaled a Heroic Steel Major. Before its mutation, it could barely leave a dent in a Heroic Steel Major's armor. Now, each punch left deep indentations.

Xu Gang's eyes widened in disbelief, and he questioned which one was the real Steel Soldier.

Anyway, Han Wu was far from finished. After completing the mutations on his Heroic Locustmen, he turned his attention to the wounded Locustman Lord and used Controlled Mutation on it too.

This time, he didn't sacrifice lifespan to mutate it. Instead, he poured resources into the process, expending 1,000 Poison Stones compatible with the Locustman Lord, successfully granting it the ability to secrete corrosive venom.

The Locustman Lord reentered the fray once more with its new ability. It spat torrents of highly corrosive venom at the Divine Steel Soldier, burning through its armor and leaving smoking holes.

Xu Gang's calm shattered. He had no idea what Han Wu had done. He only knew that if this continued, his army would be annihilated.

"Retreat! Fall back to my divine realm!" Xu Gang barked, recalling his troops while there was still time.

Unfortunately, Han Wu anticipated this move. The moment Xu Gang ordered the retreat, Han Wu commanded his forces to press the attack.

Suddenly, a massive army appeared on the horizon. Xu Gang's eyes widened as he saw skeletons, minotaurs, dwarves, and even the formidable Swordwind and Epistians joining the fray. The units that hadn't fought yet charged forward with wild fury, while the four Lords' auras enveloped the battlefield.

Sarman and Divine Hammer each crashed into Steel Soldier Lords with brutal force, while Steely engaged the strongest Divine Steel Soldier in a fierce duel. The skeletons, gleeful at the sight of fallen Steel Soldiers, swarmed the corpses.

The little skeleton wasted no time, summoning legions from the corpses. Meanwhile, the Epistians gathered their magic, hurling monstrous fireballs that decimated hundreds of Steel Soldiers with each shot.

Xu Gang stood frozen, stunned by the ferocity of Han Wu's counterattack. Could this really be the same opponent? If he hadn't been here in person, Xu Gang would have suspected Han Wu had called in a far stronger ally.

"No, I can't wait any longer," Xu Gang muttered, his voice tight with resolve. "If I hesitate, his units will overrun my divine realm."

He decided to abandon his units in Han Wu's divine realm. He would rather see them fall than allow Han Wu to invade his divine realm. He needed to sever the connection between their divine realms, but it was already too late.

During their battle, Han Wu had unleashed swarms of locusts into Xu Gang's divine realm, spreading them like a creeping plague. Though weak individually, the locusts had become a living bridge, linking the two realms together.

Xu Gang would have a hard time severing the connection while the locusts infested his divine realm. What awaited him now was the ruin of his forces and the destruction of his divine realm.

Xu Gang's face drained of all color. He never imagined those tiny pests could corner him so completely.

"Stop! Let's end this fight," he pleaded, his voice heavy with resignation. "Recall your units from my divine realm."

He sighed, admitting defeat. Though his pride plunged into a ravine, his reason told him this was the only way out.

"You invaded my divine realm," Han Wu said coldly. "It's only natural that I return the favor."

Xu Gang's eyes flared with fury. "Han Wu, I said I admit defeat! Withdraw your forces! Don't forget that my grandfather is outside. You may be powerful, but you're nothing compared to a God!"

Han Wu met the threat with calm indifference. "You're right. I can't beat him. But do you really think he'd let me live just because I showed you mercy? You're only trying to shut your divine realm to buy time for him to kill me. So no—I won't be pulling back. You're my hostage now. As long as I have you, your grandfather won't make a move."

At that, sweat beaded on Xu Gang's forehead. He had to accept the bitter truth: today, he was utterly defeated by someone his own age. "Release me, and I swear he won't kill you."

Han Wu ignored him and raised a finger to his lips in a sharp shushing gesture. "Shh... Don't speak. My locusts are tracking your Core... Ah, there it is. Your future rests in my hands now."

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Chapter 99 - The Qin Family's God Returned

[1,241 words]

Chapter 99 - The Qin Family's God Returned

The Xu family's God only realized something was wrong an hour later, when he noticed that Xu Gang hadn't returned. Alarmed, he activated spectator mode to check on Xu Gang and Han Wu.

The Qin family, equally curious, entered spectator mode as well. What they saw left both sides stunned.

Han Wu's locusts were decimating the Steel Soldiers. They were renowned for their formidable defensive prowess as Unique life forms, yet the locusts were slaughtering them like cattle.

Xu Gang's face hovered motionlessly in the air, watching helplessly as his core race was gradually being annihilated. He couldn't intervene. His Core was in Han Wu's grasp, and with a single command, the Locustman Lord embedded in Xu Gang's divine realm would destroy it without hesitation. He would lose everything and be branded as a useless Divine Being forever. It was a fate he couldn't bear.

The Xu's family God witnessed the chaos and seethed with fury. "Han Wu, release my grandson's Core!"

Unfazed, Han Wu only commanded his locusts to kill the Steel Soldiers faster. The casualties in the Steel Soldiers army mounted relentlessly. The Xu family's God threatened to kill Han Wu with his Divine Authority. Ultimately, he held back, worried that Han Wu might destroy Xu Gang's Core in his final moments.

Xu Gang was his family's most promising descendant. Losing his Core now would leave the family scrambling to find a worthy heir.

Suppressing his fury, the Xu family's God pleaded, "What do you want in exchange for sparing him?"

Han Wu remained composed under the scrutiny of a God. However, Qin Shuang's family regarded his composure as madness.

Han Wu scoffed. "You've got it all wrong. We should rather be discussing what I need to do for you to let me leave."

The Xu family's God was on the verge of exploding. Han Wu had already slaughtered countless Steel Soldiers, and now he demanded forgiveness? The moment Xu Gang was safe, the God would strike Han Wu down without hesitation. He didn't care if Han Wu was the Qin family's benefactor or a potential Imperial College student; he just wanted to crush anyone who crossed his bottom line.

Han Wu knew this well and kept tight control over Xu Gang's Core. If anything went wrong, he would cripple Xu Gang immediately. Should Han Wu fall, he would drag Xu Gang down with him. That was why both sides remained silent as the tense situation unfolded.

The Xu family's God burned with a fierce desire to kill Han Wu, yet the latter wandered casually through his grandson's divine realm, even bestowing a new name on the mutated Locustman Lord: Toxic Locust.

The stalemate stretched on for an entire day until two Divine Authorities descended upon the Qin Village. Han Wu's heart lifted the moment he sensed them—it was Yuan Zhong, accompanied by another God! Han Wu was certain this second figure was the Qin family's God, barring any surprises.

The Qin family erupted in celebration upon sensing their God's return. Their ancestor had come home, and with his presence, the Xu family's bullying would finally end.

Bolstered by renewed courage, Qin Jiang stepped forward and called out, "Esteemed God, today is a joyous day to celebrate the return of our ancestor. We will hold a grand feast. Would you care to join us?"

This was a deliberate insult to the Xu family's God, meant to drive him away. Naturally, he understood the implication. Anger flared within him, but he was powerless to act. He knew the strength of the Qin's family God and was confident in his own ability to win. Yet now, another God accompanied the Qin family's God.

The newcomer's Divine Authority carried an unsettlingly invasive force. Although he couldn't see this new God with his own eyes, the Xu family's God understood he stood no chance and chose caution.

"Han Wu, your God has returned. Release my grandchild's Core!" the Xu family's God demanded.

Han Wu shook his head calmly. "I'll wait until my friend stands beside me before letting go. You never know who might play dirty and use their Divine Authority to kill me if I lower my guard now."

The Xu family God's fury deepened. He had truly intended to kill Han Wu. After all, he was too strong and cunning. If allowed to grow unchecked, he would likely destroy the Xu family one day. Unfortunately, Han Wu had seen through his schemes.

Before long, the two Gods returned to the house, and the Qin family erupted in celebration. With Yuan Zhong now shielding him, Han Wu finally ordered his units to release Xu Gang's Core and retreat.

Xu Gang, surveying his empty divine realm after the locusts withdrew, clenched his fists in fury. Han Wu had dismantled nearly all of his buildings during the retreat!

"Han Wu," Xu Gang swore through gritted teeth, "I will remember this. Next time we meet, I will kill you."

Han Wu laughed, his voice ringing with confidence. "You should focus on rebuilding your army. Otherwise, you won't even get the chance to face me."

Xu Gang trembled with fury. He had spent years painstakingly cultivating his Steel Soldiers. From an army of 2 million, only 500,000 remained. And that was only because Han Wu had deliberately spared them, knowing Xu Gang would recklessly throw his life away in a desperate counterattack.

The Xu family's God severed the connection between their divine realms and departed immediately with his grandsons. He didn't even acknowledge the Qin family's God.

When the Qin family's God learned what had transpired, his anger flared. The Xu family had forced the marriage talks while he had been absent. Although he would have likely agreed to the union, it would only be on the condition that it would occur after the Xu family rescued him. Instead, they had pushed to finalize the marriage first, leaving rescue as an afterthought.

Furious at their betrayal, the Qin family's God ordered his kin never to engage with the Xu family again. After addressing this breach, he discovered that Han Wu was responsible for his rescue. To express his gratitude, he presented Han Wu with a gift even Gods would covet.

It was called the Primal Slate, and all races could use it to expand their Evolution Path. It allowed any life form to revert its bloodline to an ancestral form, unlocking their dormant potential. Han Wu accepted the gift with sincere gratitude. He immediately integrated it into his divine realm. Many locusts who had failed to evolve seized the opportunity to regress into their original form, the Primal Locust.

The Primal Locusts measured nearly a meter long. Though they retained their insectoid shape, their bodies were now armored with tough scales, and many limbs bore the savage traits of their ancestral form. This Evolution Path transformed the locusts' latent potential into raw physical power, focusing exclusively on brute strength.

Han Wu then proceeded to settle his debt with Yuan Zhong. Beyond the promised 30,000 Sources[1], Han Wu added an extra 5,000 as thanks for Yuan Zhong's swift return with the Qin family's God.

In the end, Yuan Zhong secured the Sources he sought, Han Wu gained the Primal Slate, and the Qin family celebrated the return of their God. All parties emerged from the crisis with their share of victory.

1. "Sources" here refers to Sources of Sacred Objects 📖

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Chapter 100 - Preparation Before Major Class

[1,131 words]

Chapter 100 - Preparation Before Major Class

Han Wu returned to Imperial College alone after the banquet at the Qin Village. He needed to seize every moment to strengthen his units before the next major class. At the same time, he had tasked Xiang Meng with gathering all available intel on Huang Shengjun ever since the recent threats emerged.

Xiang Meng, Xia Tian, and Ye Ling were old rivals of Huang Shengjun, so they already possessed much of the necessary information. They compiled their findings into a detailed report and handed it to Han Wu.

As he busied himself mutating his locusts, Han Wu scanned the report quickly. He sighed deeply, forced to admit that Huang Shengjun was a true genius.

Huang Shengjun's core race was the goblin, a species widely regarded as the quintessential cannon fodder. Goblins were Common life forms from birth, known for their cunning nature and rapid breeding.

Yet Huang Shengjun had somehow elevated his goblins to the strength of Unique life forms, as if exploiting a hidden loophole. According to the report, he commanded over 10 billion goblins, roughly 100,000 Heroic goblins, several hundred Lord goblins, and 3 High Lord goblins.

More strikingly, Huang Shengjun possessed hundreds of Evolution Paths specifically tailored to his goblins. With such a vast array, he could train his army into countless specialized species, adapting to any challenge thrown their way.

Huang Shengjun's talents weren't confined to his army's growth. As an individual, he was a formidable Demigod with three known Divine Aspects: Rank 5 War, Rank 5 Army, and Rank 4 Earth. These high-ranking aspects granted him 14 powerful Divine Skills in total.

Beyond that, Huang Shengjun maintained a custom armory filled with numerous sets of God equipment and a vault stocked with treasures he had likely won in previous major classes. Even though the treasures seemed more like a collection, Han Wu was certain that Huang Shengjun could deploy them expertly in critical moments. His specialized training facilities only added to his army's strength.

Han Wu let out another sigh as the weight of the report settled in his mind. The data made one thing clear—Huang Shengjun would be a formidable opponent.

Is this really the strength of the first year's valedictorian? Even an ordinary God might not be this strong. Still, he won't be able to go all out during the major class match. He'll look for every opportunity to bleed me dry. I don't mind losing the regular locusts, but I cannot afford to lose a single one of my Lord Locustmen!

He faced a critical problem now. What should he do to ensure the survival of his three Lord Locustmen in the upcoming battle?

Han Wu considered his options, his mind working through each possibility until one idea stood out. If he could use Controlled Mutation to grant them regenerative abilities, they could survive multiple lethal blows in combat.

Unfortunately, the Hyper Regeneration trait wasn't easy to acquire. He had managed to obtain it once before, but there was no guarantee he could do it again. Still, it was his best bet. He would have to leave it to luck and dive back into his Controlled Mutation research.

Over the next few days, Han Wu maintained a grueling schedule—attending classes during the day and conducting experiments deep into the night. His cache of Radiation Stones dwindled as he poured more and more of them into his tests. Fortunately, just as his supply neared its end, he finally uncovered a reliable method for inducing Hyper Regeneration.

Using the last of his Radiation Stones, Han Wu successfully conferred the trait onto all three Lord Locustmen. Now, Huang Shengjun would find it much harder to kill them.

Nevertheless, despite the breakthrough, Han Wu's confidence remained brittle. He knew that a single trump card wasn't enough to defeat someone of Huang Shengjun's caliber. Quickly, he scanned his resources and spotted the Mourning Deathcap thriving in its golden pot.

The Mourning Deathcap was a special plant that absorbed death aura to reproduce. After being transplanted into the golden pot, it had evolved dramatically, gaining the Immortality trait. Since it no longer had a lifespan, Han Wu could use Controlled Mutation on it without reservation now.

After returning from Zombie Town, Han Wu had subjected the Mourning Deathcap to countless mutations. The plant had transformed completely. It could now absorb not only death aura but also life energy, magic, and even Divine Points. Anyone infected by its spores would almost certainly be crippled unless they'd taken very specific precautions.

Han Wu pinned his hopes on the Mourning Deathcap, knowing Huang Shengjun's army thrived on sheer numbers. He pictured the spores spreading through all ten billion goblins—first one infected, then ten, then a hundred, until the infection surged uncontrollably.

The Mourning Deathcaps would absorb some of the goblins' life force and inflict status debuffs on them. It was an efficient way for Han Wu to tip the balance in his favor. If everything went according to plan, the Mourning Deathcap would be comparable to a Divine Skill.

Currently, the Mourning Deathcap could only absorb energy and posed little threat to its host. Determined to find a more lethal mutation, Han Wu turned his attention to the Mourning Deathcap's Controlled Mutation that required rare ingredients as catalysts. He sought a mutation powerful enough to wipe out at least half an army.

After painstaking observation and careful selection, Han Wu finally discovered a mutation that fit his criteria; it was the Explosive Mutation, and its catalyst was a rare gunpowder sourced from the Gunfire Civilization.

Han Wu swiftly scoured the online markets and purchased the precious ingredients at a steep price. For the next two realm years, he tirelessly applied Controlled Mutation to the Mourning Deathcap until he succeeded.

Two days later, the major class convened. Lina stepped into the classroom with her usual faint smile, her eyes calmly scanning each student as she entered.

“Everyone, this major class is designed to test your ability to fend off intruders. Your seniors from the first year will be your examiners. The strength and scale of their army will be limited to what they had a year ago.

“Those who successfully defend against your seniors will be rewarded. Those who fail will face punishment in the bleak Black Prison. Everyone, please make your preparations. The seniors will invade your divine realms soon.”

With her reminder, the students hurriedly used the landing pods and entered their divine realms. Inside, each saw a massive gate, beyond which their first-year seniors stood, grinning with eager anticipation.

As Han Wu had expected, the valedictorian Huang Shengjun awaited him.

Huang Shengjun’s arrogant visage hovered in the air. “I warned you, Han Wu. In this major class, I’ll show you what true hell feels like.”

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[1,327 words]