The People's God: Sacrificing Trillions to Ascend

Chapter 701 - Locust-V Gatling Gun

Qin Shuang turned her head toward the sound of Han Wu's voice, relief filling her as she spotted him. Since being captured, she had already decided to kill herself if things looked grim.

Her ten Divine Essence avatar was precious, and the results of the test were important to her, but she refused to tarnish her reputation and honor for it. Even so, before giving up, she wanted to at least make an effort, to show these monsters that they couldn't simply do as they pleased with her.

However, she immediately scrapped all those thoughts when she saw Han Wu. His presence was a guarantee of absolute protection. Even while tied to the wooden cross, she felt safe.

The monsters failed to notice her expressions. Instead, they were glaring at Han Wu.

"Are you opposed to this wedding?" Master Huang asked from his main seat, a sinister expression on his weasel face. If looks could kill, Han Wu would be flayed alive.

"Han Wu, be careful!" Qin Shuang warned. "He has a Divine Weapon that can sever the connection between us and our Divine Weapons!"

It was too late. Master Huang had already summoned his Divine Weapon, the Deceiver's Cord. As a God weapon, it was naturally far superior to the gifts he had received from the other monsters. It could restrain his foes and temporarily sever the connection between his target and their Divine Weapons. He had relied on it to defeat many of his past foes, including capturing Qin Shuang.

"It seems you two know each other! What relationship do you have with my bride? Once I capture you, I'll make sure you spill everything!" Master Huang tossed the Deceiver's Cord toward Han Wu.

Fortunately, Han Wu had cultivated the Black Mountain Scripture, meaning his clone's parameters were much higher than normal. He twisted his body and barely dodged the Deceiver's Cord, but the Divine Weapon was like a fly attracted to rotting flesh as it homed in on him. It wouldn't stop until it bound Han Wu.

Han Wu managed to dodge it a second time, but could feel himself approaching his limit as he did so. At the same time, he was racking his brains, trying to figure out a way to avoid being captured.

In the end, he decided his best bet was to use his three Small Locust Blades to stop it from getting close. Controlling his Small Locust Blades, he repeatedly intercepted the wily cord.

Even though the Small Locust Blades were technically only a Faith weapon, two grades below the Deceiver's Cord, the latter wasn't meant for direct attacks. This meant the durability of the Small Locust Blades actually held out better than Han Wu assumed.

The repeated blocking of the Deceiver's Cord had Master Huang frustrated. "What are you guys waiting for? Get him!"

The guests in the hall summoned their Divine Weapons. At the same time, Han Wu summoned his two remaining Divine Weapons to retaliate. He tossed the Explosive Locust Blade at the mob before exploding it.

Many of the monsters' Divine Weapons were blown backward, drastically reducing their durability. The blast even killed some of the weaker monsters, and they turned into essence for his Divine Weapon Atlas to absorb.

Still, most of the monsters were only temporarily halted before they charged forward with their Divine Weapons once more. Han Wu summoned his Locust Soul Orb and called out the two souls within it to fight for him.

Ah Da's blade struck the monsters while Ah Er shredded them with his fan. Neither had to aim. The sheer number of monsters meant each sweeping blow dealt significant damage.

The Locust Soul Orb then transformed into a tiger of ghostly fire. The tiger's ferocious presence alone sharply reduced the monsters' fighting spirit. With that, it spat flaming fireballs at the monsters.

This ghostly fire could suppress monsters, making them especially effective against the mob. The smaller monsters that were on fire ran around and torched the other monsters ablaze as well.

The entire place descended into chaos.

Master Huang's face paled. Han Wu had destroyed his grand wedding! His reputation would be in shambles after this!

"Outsider, I wanted to eat you last, but it seems that I cannot afford to let you live any longer!" Master Huang sneered, grabbing another Divine Weapon.

Surprisingly, he pulled out a cannon! A cannon clearly didn't fit the aesthetic of the Divine Weapon Civilization. It was likely he had obtained it from another outsider.

Master Huang fired the cannon, and a cannonball shot directly toward Han Wu. Han Wu knew he couldn't avoid it in time, but fortunately, he had detected it early enough that he could command Ah Er to intercept it with his whirlwind.

Ah Er obediently swung his fan, sending a wall of wind to block it.

The wind changed the trajectory of the cannonball and even destroyed its exterior. The cannonball then exploded with a force that rivaled the Explosive Locust Blade.

Han Wu was blasted out of the hall. Thankfully, his body was tough. His internal organs were slightly bruised, and some blood dripped out of his nose, but other than that, he was fine.

After standing up with some difficulty, he noticed that Ah Er's fan had been destroyed, effectively putting him out of the fight. Han Wu allowed him to return to the Locust Soul Orb to rest.

Ah Da was in a similar situation. He couldn't fight off all of the monsters on his own, and his blade had started to crack, so he was forced to return to the Locust Soul Orb as well.

The tiger could still endure, but its constant barrage of fireballs had drained its Spiritual Energy. It would dissipate in just a few seconds.

If Han Wu didn't have the Locust Soul Orb, he would've long been defeated and become their food. Despite the dire situation, he refused to give up. He continuously threw the Explosive Locust Blade as it reformed in his hand.

Every explosion killed some monsters, and his Divine Weapon Atlas would absorb their essence. The tiger was ultimately defeated, and Liu Baiyan shattered the Locust Soul Orb with his tail.

Han Wu was alone. There was nowhere to run.

At that moment, his Divine Weapon Atlas rippled. He had unlocked his fourth Divine Weapon! There was no time to hesitate. Han Wu immediately summoned it.

The Divine Weapon's information and effects were displayed for him.

[Locust-V Gatling Gun]

[Faith Equipment]

[Rank 1]

[Durability: 10/10]

[Capacity: 500 Bullets]

[Reload Speed: 100 seconds]

[Effects: None (Waiting to unlock)]

[Skills: Armor Piercing Rounds]

[Description: Formed from the Mechanical Locust. Contains the power of machines.]

[1: Infinite Firepower (God): Ignore capacity and reload speed. Can fire continuously until durability is exhausted.]

[2: Cannon Form (God): Can turn into a cannon, with bullet type changing accordingly.]

[3: Artificial Intelligence (God): Installs an artificial intelligence that responds to verbal commands.]

Han Wu had no time to inspect each effect. When he saw that the first one allowed him to fire infinitely, he chose it without much thought.

The Locust-V Gatling Gun appeared in his hands. Aiming the muzzle at the monsters, Han Wu squeezed the trigger.

Chapter 702 - Will You Be Part of My Family?

Bullets rained down on the monsters like a hail of molten lead. Liu Baiyan, leading the charge, was turned into Swiss cheese in an instant, leaving the other monsters in shock.

If even the powerful Liu Baiyan had been slain, then the rest of them stood no chance. They turned in a futile attempt to flee but couldn't outrun the bullets. The bullets tore through them, killing many of them on the spot.

Only some of the more powerful ones managed to escape. All the weaker ones were killed. When Master Huang realized Han Wu's strength, he also decided to run, regardless of the stain it would leave on his reputation.

He recalled the Deceiver's Cord and turned to flee when Han Wu attacked him with his Small Locust Blades. The already extremely fast blades were granted an additional burst of speed with Accelerate. The impact pinned Master Huang to the wall.

Master Huang shouted in pain and begged for mercy, threatening Han Wu with the fact that his mother was the infamous Lady Yellow Immortal. If Han Wu killed him, his mother would never forgive him.

Han Wu hated threats. Worse still, Master Huang had tried to harm Qin Shuang.

Pressing the muzzle of Locust-V to Master Huang's head, Han Wu said coldly, "I hope this memory haunts you in your next life too."

With that, he pulled the trigger. Master Huang's hide was thick, but even it couldn't withstand the strike of hundreds of bullets.

A noxious gas exploded from Master Huang's body.

Han Wu covered his nose and retreated away from the gas, trigger finger still squeezing down to unleash a barrage into the cloud. The crash of shattering items echoed continuously, but when the gas dissipated, only a hole-riddled robe of golden fox fur remained.

Master Huang was no longer there. He had used the robe given to him by Hu Shiliu to escape.

"Damn it, he got away." Han Wu scowled, picking up the robe to inspect it before tossing it back onto the ground.

Fortunately, Qin Shuang hadn't been injured in the fight.

A chilling realization dawned on Han Wu. If the monsters had been more cunning and hadn't panicked at Locust-V's destructive force, they could've used her as a hostage, forcing him to surrender. Luckily, the monsters were only loyal to themselves and chose to flee instead.

This haunting thought still in mind, Han Wu freed Qin Shuang from the chains binding her to the cross.

Qin Shuang immediately embraced him, heart pounding as she said, "I thought I wouldn't have the chance to fight by your side in this civilization anymore."

Han Wu comfortingly patted her back. In truth, that fear still lingered within him even now. If he had ridden faster today, he likely would've missed the wedding entirely and wouldn't have rescued her. He chalked this fortunate turn of events up to fate.

“It’s over now,” Han Wu repeated, holding her close.

As an experienced invader, it didn’t take Qin Shuang long to calm down from the fright. She then helped him clear the battlefield. Only a handful of powerful monsters had been invited to the wedding. Most of the other guests were weak. Still, they would have had one or two Divine Weapons.

Han Wu and Qin Shuang collected the strewn Divine Weapons and absorbed them with their own. With that, their Divine Weapons were upgraded.

Besides the Divine Weapons, they also obtained other treasures like the Ape Core that Liu Baiyan had gifted Master Huang. Inside the Ape Core was the leftover essence of the White Ape, as well as a technique called Freespirited Ape God that turned the cultivator’s body extra nimble and light.

Once mastered, the cultivator’s body would be nimble enough to steal the moon and capture abyssal fish. However, the user would have to maintain sufficient nutrients during the cultivation period. The higher the quality of food, the faster they could cultivate it.

Glancing around at the corpses of the animal-like monsters around them, he couldn’t help but think that food wouldn’t be a problem.

Finally, there was Gu Yuanwai’s treasure.

Han Wu wasn’t an alcoholic, but he was interested in the urn used to hold the alcohol. The tiny urn could hold 500 kilograms of wine, meaning there was an isolated space within it. Han Wu had yet to obtain any equipment that granted him a pocket dimension or spatial storage here, so he decided to make use of the urn for now.

After clearing the hall with Qin Shuang, they explored the estate. They eventually found a cellar full of captured villagers. Master Huang had hypnotized them, and the villagers were just quietly waiting in the cellar without so much as a restraint.

Han Wu had to snap them out of it before they even realized they had been in danger at all.

The villagers quickly tried to find their families, only to realize that the population of their village had been halved. Those missing had most likely been eaten by the monsters already. Han Wu wasn’t from here, so he didn’t feel their grief in the same way, but he still felt some pity.

At the same time, Qin Shuang found a pearl hidden in Master Huang’s bedroom. When she picked it up, the beautiful estate slowly faded to reveal an empty plot of land in the village.

The roasted corpses of villagers were scattered around them, faces seared beyond recognition. The surviving villagers wailed at the sight.

There wasn't much Han Wu could do to comfort them. He could only dig up a huge hole to bury the corpses within. The villagers thanked him and Qin Shuang after. As Qin Shuang had yet to obtain a recommendation, Han Wu requested one for her.

With that, Qin Shuang and Han Wu left the village on his horse and rode for the next city.

"Han Wu, why do you think they weren't already packing up to leave, even though something like that happened?" Qin Shuang suddenly asked.

Han Wu frowned as he pondered her question. "Maybe they couldn't bring themselves to leave the family that they buried here?"

Qin Shuang nodded consideringly. It seemed plausible. Then, leaning back into his embrace, she asked, "Han Wu, do you want to become part of my family?"

He patted her head. "I'm not just your family, but also your lover."

Beaming up at him, she adjusted her posture until it was comfortable enough to sleep. These past few days had been incredibly stressful, and her ten Divine Essence avatar could no longer endure the fatigue.

Han Wu held onto the reins with Qin Shuang safely in his arms as they slowly rode toward the next city. Unbeknownst to them, a weasel was hiding in a bush, glaring vengefully at them as they vanished into the distance.

Chapter 703 - What If You Just Bear With It First?

Han Wu checked the map and noticed that Kang City was only five kilometers away. He had learned from Guan Nan that the city was rich and that nearly every household practiced some form of martial arts. A large mine operated within the city, where many warriors went to purchase ores to upgrade their Divine Weapons.

That was also his purpose. He had obtained four Divine Weapons, and other than the Small Locust Blades that could use the common ores, the other three required special materials to optimize their upgrades.

Both Han Wu and Qin Shuang needed to purchase a large quantity of uncommon ores.

Qin Shuang had lost time after Master Huang captured her, but she had still managed to unlock three Divine Weapons. Each had unique effects, which required uncommon ores as well.

They hoped to find what they needed in the mine.

As they were planning their route, a group of people blocked their path. They wore ragged clothes, but their horses were strong and well-trained.

The group surrounded them, and the bandit leader spoke. “I’ve carved this mountain and planted these trees. If you want to pass—”

Han Wu couldn’t be bothered. “Stop talking. Just tell me how much.”

The bandit leader had never encountered someone so willing to part ways with their money and was stumped. He quickly named his price. “Ten gold coins.”

Qin Shuang had been ready to kill them and to protect the common folk, but Han Wu gestured for her to stand down. She decided to see what he would do.

Han Wu took ten gold coins from his bag and tossed them over.

The bandit leader grinned as he accepted the money. He had spent years as a bandit but had never met someone so cooperative. Still, he had already noticed that Han Wu’s bag held far more than ten gold coins. Greed took hold, and he decided to squeeze Han Wu dry.

“I meant ten gold coins per person,” the bandit leader commanded.

Han Wu feigned reluctance and took out another ten gold coins. The bandit leader accepted them eagerly. The money came too easily to him, and it only fueled his greed.

“Your woman is very pretty. She’s worth at least twenty gold coins. You still owe me ten more,” the bandit leader claimed.

Han Wu frowned as if further inconvenienced. “Hey, isn’t that too much? You asked for ten at first, and now you want thirty. Aren’t you going back on your word?”

“So what? I can’t eat or drink on reputation alone. Pay up, or I will take her. Look at that pretty face and slender body. What do you think will happen if my rough brothers get their hands on her?”

Han Wu growled and produced another ten coins. This was the last of his gold.

The bandits had no intention of stopping at thirty. They probed his limits and tested his background. Usually, those with powerful backing would have threatened them by now.

Han Wu hadn’t, which suggested he had none. To them, a commoner without backing was livestock. They had no reservations about killing such people.

The bandit leader revealed his true intent. “Never thought you would be so obedient. I will give you a chance now. I like your woman. Hand her over, and I might spare you.”

The surrounding bandits jeered.

“Leave your horse and your clothes. You can leave this place naked.”

“Hey, I think he looks quite good too. His skin is tender and soft. He might be as good as a woman. Why don’t we capture him and have fun as well?”

“Hell yeah!”

The bandits spoke carelessly, as if the two were helpless livestock.

Han Wu memorized their faces and identified their leader. With that, he chose to end them.

“Qin Shuang, you can attack, but keep that one alive.” He pointed at the bandit holding the gold.

Qin Shuang had been itching to kill them from the start. She summoned her first Divine Weapon, which took the form of a feather. It looked soft, but it was deadly, capable of killing with a subtle force.

“Feather Dart, go!” She tossed it into the air, and it split into hundreds of feathers that shot toward the bandits.

The bandits were struck. Most were hit by at least five feathers, while some were hit by ten or more. The injuries seemed minor at first. The feather tips were small, no more than pinpricks.

One of the bandits, hit by many feathers, scoffed and tried to remove them. “I expected something powerful, but is this it?”

Unexpectedly, no matter how hard he tried, he couldn’t remove them. The feathers seemed embedded in his body.

“What kind of trick is this? I can’t remove them.”

“I can’t remove them either.”

“Damn! It's as if these feathers are growing out of my muscles!”

As they struggled to remove them, Qin Shuang shouted, “Lightning!”

The feathers started releasing arcs of lightning. Each feather carried a powerful charge, and the energy surged through the bandits at her command. Those struck by fewer feathers were paralyzed, while those struck by more were burned to charcoal. Even after discharging their energy, the feathers remained lodged.

Qin Shuang summoned her second Divine Weapon, the Wing Banner, to finish the rest. When she swung it, lightning orbs appeared. They moved slowly and could be easily avoided. However, the feathers embedded in the bandits reacted to them. They stood on end and turned into miniature lightning rods that drew the lightning orbs toward their targets. The paralyzed couldn’t escape, and even if they could move, they couldn’t outrun lightning. Soon, the remaining bandits died.

The bandit leader was the only one untouched by the Feather Dart. He quickly whipped his horse to escape. Qin Shuang summoned her third Divine Weapon, the Sparrow Bow. The beautifully crafted longbow, modeled after the Thunder Sparrows, fired arrows infused with potent Lightning Energy.

Qin Shuang pulled the string, and an electric arrow formed, crackling with energy. With a sharp whoosh, the arrow struck the bandit leader’s horse. The horse convulsed under the surge of lightning and collapsed.

The bandit leader was also affected and couldn’t stand up. He realized how powerful they were and tried to beg for mercy. “Warrior, please forgive my offense. I failed to recognize you! Please, I have a family to feed. Please let me go. I will return the thirty gold coins, and I will even give you another forty. Just ignore me and let me go.”

Han Wu smiled and approached him. “Forty gold coins don’t sound bad. But you have eighteen men with you. Each of you costs forty gold coins, so you still owe me 720 gold coins! Also, I think you are especially ugly. Instead of forty gold coins, you should be paying me eighty.

“It’s fine if you don’t want to pay. You seem quite durable. If I disregard your face, you should be as good as a mare. Why don’t you let my good old stallion have a round of fun?”

A chill ran down the bandit leader’s spine as he looked at Han Wu’s smiling face. He had thought himself the villain, but Han Wu was more ruthless.

“Alright, alright! I will pay!” the bandit leader shouted in a panic.

Chapter 704 - Destroying Evil with Lightning

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Han Wu and Qin Shuang followed the bandit leader to his camp. They hadn't anticipated finding an entire village!

The bandit leader was even the village chief, and his return drew the others to greet him. Their gazes lingered on Han Wu and Qin Shuang as if they were curiosities on display.

"Brother Ma, you're back so soon. Where are the rest?"

"I think Brother Ma managed to find some quality goods and couldn't wait any longer. Brother Ma, if you are tired, we are more than happy to help."

"*Wow*, that lady is beautiful. She looks even stronger than the rich young mistress we kidnapped last time. I wonder if she would be good in bed too."

...

They failed to notice the horror in the bandit leader's eyes as they continued their remarks. He was on the verge of losing his mind because the other bandits had no sense of danger at all.

Don't they find it suspicious that I returned alone? Why are they commenting on her so openly? Do they have a death wish? He wanted to curse them out. *If you are so eager to die, you should do it somewhere far away instead of dragging the whole village with you, idiots!*

Unfortunately, he dared not speak. Han Wu's Small Locust Blade was directly behind his back, its chilly edge grazing his skin. Each step felt like a walk through hell.

From their comments, Han Wu confirmed that this was indeed a bandit village. Not a single man here was an upstanding citizen. With that, he felt no hesitation about killing them.

Before long, the bandit leader brought them into his house. The moment they entered, Han Wu saw two naked women. They were covered in bruises and wounds and crawled forward on their knees like dogs toward the bandit leader.

Qin Shuang's killing intent surged. She wanted to end him on the spot for treating women as objects.

"Go and bring out the gold," Han Wu instructed, his tone colder.

The bandit leader didn't dare object and let them into a small vault filled with gold and jewelry stolen from others.

"Everything is here," he said in a low voice.

Han Wu poured them all into the urn at his waist. It didn't even fill half of it, so he growled, "That's not enough."

The bandit leader whimpered. "I don't have any more money!"

Han Wu controlled the Small Locust Blades and shaved off paper-thin strips of flesh from the bandit leader. The man watched them fall away, and a stinging pain spread through his body.

"Not enough!" Han Wu's voice was harsh and left no room for defiance.

The bandit leader quickly replied, "Yes, I will take you to more."

He endured the pain and led them to a large painting of a fat man. A name was inscribed on it: Liu Chunlai. He respectfully rolled up the painting to reveal a hidden compartment behind it. Inside sat a small box containing a pearl.

The bandit leader explained, "This pearl is worth at least 1,000 gold coins. I was going to offer it to General Liu from Divine Weapon City."

Han Wu took the box and confirmed that the pearl was of God grade. The man was speaking the truth.

He kept the pearl and turned back to the bandit leader. "That's not enough."

The bandit leader cried, "Why not? You have more than enough!"

Han Wu glared at him. "I said not enough!"

The man felt his heart pound. "I... I have something else."

He took down Liu Chunlai's painting and removed a deed from within the scroll. His voice trembled as he explained, "This is the deed to a prime piece of land outside Divine Weapon City. It's worth 20,000 gold coins!"

That wealth represented forty years of accumulation, the combined effort of both him and his father. They had waited for the day they could abandon banditry and live in Divine Weapon City as a wealthy family. To survive today, however, he had no choice but to give everything away.

Han Wu took the deed and pressed, “That’s not enough.”

“That’s enough! I really don’t have anything else.” At this point, the bandit leader sobbed. He knew that his chances of surviving were slim, yet for that slim hope, he was willing to sacrifice everything.

Still, it wasn’t enough for Han Wu.

“That’s not enough for the women you have bullied and those you’ve killed.” He controlled the Small Locust Blade as it wove around the bandit leader.

The blade shaved the bandit leader’s flesh away bit by bit. The pain drove him to cry out. Han Wu severed his vocal cords, leaving him to scream in silence.

With practiced precision, Han Wu removed only enough flesh to inflict pain without killing him. The muscular bandit leader was reduced to a skinny, blood-soaked figure.

Even then, Han Wu did not release him. He summoned the two women into the room and handed them a bowl of salt.

The women, who had endured prolonged humiliation and torture, had grown numb to external sensation. Yet the sight of the bandit leader shattered the restraints in their hearts. They lost control and hurled the salt over his body without restraint.

The salt bit into the raw wounds and intensified the agony. The bandit leader’s body twitched and convulsed under the pain. It was a fate worse than death.

The women wept as they finally took their revenge. They had at last avenged their families, yet the bandit leader did not die on the spot.

Han Wu ensured he would remain alive for twelve more hours, even as the salt cured his wounds. For every second of those twelve hours, he would endure pain unlike anything he had ever known.

Han Wu didn’t believe he had gone too far in dealing with such an evil bastard. Qin Shuang agreed. She wanted to punish every single bandit in this village, but Han Wu’s energy was limited, and the Small Locust Blades had limited durability.

As such, Qin Shuang decided to deliver justice to this evil village with her lightning. She summoned her Feather Dart and multiplied it to its limit.

Tens of thousands of Feather Darts filled the sky, covering the village like a storm cloud charged with lightning. At her command, they plunged downward toward the bandits. Powerful arcs of lightning surged through every inch of the village, destroying every single evil entity there.

Chapter 705 - Master Ou of Kang City

After releasing an attack with such a wide radius, Qin Shuang felt fatigued. Yet instead of exhaustion, she felt a surge of joy instead at having wiped out an entire village of evil bandits.

As they died, a huge amount of essence flowed into her Divine Weapon Atlas and unlocked her fourth Divine Weapon. She eagerly showed it to Han Wu. It was a coin; one side bore the engraved image of a Thunder Sparrow, while the other displayed her face. Unusually, this coin shared a trait with the Explosive Locust Blade: both had only 1 point of durability.

“How do you use this coin?” he asked.

Qin Shuang decided to demonstrate. She placed the coin on her fingertip and took a deep breath. The coin started absorbing Lightning Energy from the surrounding air, gradually turning white from the edges inward. Five minutes later, it was fully saturated and was completely white.

She stopped gathering energy and flicked the coin toward a mountain outside the village. A bolt of lightning roared forth, punching through everything in its path. Upon hitting the mountain, the coin exploded and released a powerful electromagnetic pulse. The mountain neither shattered nor evaporated. Instead, a crater five meters in diameter appeared on its surface.

What caught Han Wu’s attention, however, was the distance. They were at least three kilometers away from the mountain. The range, area of effect, and destructive power went beyond anything that could simply be called strong. A clone formed from 10 Divine Essence that could release such an attack would kill 99.999% of her foes on impact. Even Han Wu wasn’t confident that he could withstand it.

Qin Shuang lifted her chin proudly and asked, “How is it?”

Han Wu gave her a thumbs-up. “You are amazing, babe.”

She was genuinely pleased by the praise from someone she loved. “You surely know how to make me happy.”

The coin-shaped Divine Weapon was powerful, but it had a glaring downside. It required too much time to charge. Even if she supplemented the process with her own Lightning Energy, it would only cut the charging time in half; it couldn't be used instantly. This weapon was best reserved as a killing blow when sufficient time was available.

It was unsuitable for regular combat, so it was slightly different from Han Wu's Explosive Locust Blade. Still, obtaining such a powerful Divine Weapon would greatly benefit her.

Han Wu searched the village and killed the surviving bandits before leaving with Qin Shuang. From that day on, the place would most likely be known as Widow Village. Only women and children remained, and the food left behind would sustain them for a long time.

The couple resumed their journey and soon reached Kang City. After inspecting their identity plates, the guards allowed them entry. Though small, the city was surprisingly livelier than Qixia Town and the surrounding villages.

Shops of every kind lined the streets. Han Wu visited a pawn shop and exchanged the jewelry he had looted from the bandits for gold.

The shop owner attempted to deceive him, claiming that the jewelry he brought was worthless scrap in an effort to drive down the price.

Han Wu used the Small Locust Blade and initiated a friendly conversation. The owner quickly admitted his mistake, apologized, and offered all the gold and gold-backed notes in the shop as compensation.

Han Wu accepted the outcome with satisfaction. He wasn't unreasonable. If the natives treated him with respect, he would return it. If they broke the rules, he would show them that he could be even more unreasonable.

After he finished his business, night soon fell. He brought Qin Shuang to an inn to rest. They planned to visit the mine the next day to purchase rare ores.

Before sleeping, Han Wu counted his assets: 700 gold coins, 2,000 gold-backed notes, a Divine gem, and a deed to land outside Divine Weapon City.

Han Wu inspected the gem. It possessed an effect called Explosive Flare, which was highly effective. He intended to embed it into his Explosive Locust Blade to amplify the explosion's destructive power and imbue it with Fire Energy. The added Fire Energy would increase the explosion's strength tenfold.

However, embedding the Divine gem wouldn't be simple. The Explosive Locust Blade had only 1 point of durability, and even a minor impact could shatter it. This increased the difficulty for any blacksmith. Furthermore, Divine gems were invaluable, so the

blacksmith would have to be extra careful during the process. A single mistake could significantly reduce the gem's effect.

Han Wu needed an extremely skilled and experienced blacksmith to complete the work. An ordinary blacksmith wouldn't suffice.

He asked the inn servant and learned that only one blacksmith of that caliber was available. Everyone called him Master Ou, and his workshop was at the mine entrance. Han Wu decided to seek him out while purchasing ores the next day.

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The night passed without any incident. At dawn, Han Wu and Qin Shuang set out for the mine.

Even though it was still early, the plaza in front of the mine teemed with people.

After his experience in Qixia Town, Han Wu had learned some of the rules here. He brought Qin Shuang with him and tried their best to pass as a native couple. Thankfully, no one paid them any attention.

He brought her to Master Ou's workshop and saw a long queue already forming. Warriors lined up to upgrade their Divine Weapons.

From the length of the line, Han Wu inferred that Master Ou's craftsmanship had to be exceptional. Otherwise, so many people wouldn't wait so patiently outside.

How long will I have to wait?

As he considered his options, an apprentice stepped out of the workshop and shouted, "Master Ou is in a bad mood today and won't be forging. Everyone, please go back."

The warriors sighed and groaned, but none dared to argue. They dispersed quietly.

Han Wu didn't intend to leave. He needed to reach Divine Weapon City as soon as he could and couldn't afford to waste time in Kang City.

He stepped forward and intercepted the apprentice that was heading back toward the workshop. "Young man, can I ask some questions?"

The apprentice cast him a wary glance and said nothing. Han Wu quickly took out a gold coin and stuffed it into the apprentice's hand.

The apprentice smiled. "Is there anything you need? I will answer truthfully."

Han Wu had no idea what to make of the sudden change. *To think he would be so adaptable at such a young age!*

Han Wu really wanted to say that he preferred the apprentice's earlier arrogance, but held his tongue. "What has Master Ou so stressed? I might be able to help."

"It's nothing major. Master Ou is researching a new material, but it requires many carapaces from Steel Beetles. The hunting team told him that it would take half a month to collect enough. That's why Master Ou is upset."

"Are those carapaces that hard to acquire?" Han Wu asked.

"They aren't hard to find. There are plenty of them in the mines. They literally live in hives, and we can't even exterminate them. The problem is quantity. Master Ou needs thousands of catties," the apprentice replied.

Han Wu's eyes lit up. "I might be able to help. Could you tell him that if I provide what he needs, I'd like his help embedding a gem into my Divine Weapon in return?"

The apprentice couldn't make that decision on his own, but since he had accepted the gold coin, he decided to relay Han Wu's request.

Before long, he returned. "Master Ou has agreed, but the deadline is today. He won't accept it if you return after sundown."

Han Wu nodded. "No problem."

Chapter 706 - Sea of Steel Beetles

The clock was ticking, so Han Wu and Qin Shuang rushed to the mines. Numerous mine shafts dotted the area, mostly useless ones that had been abandoned after the ores had been mined out.

Once the foot traffic dwindled to nothing, Steel Beetles moved in. These shafts still housed many iron-rich waste ores that the Steel Beetle liked to eat, which allowed them to proliferate exceedingly fast within the abandoned shafts.

Standing above a vertical mine shaft, Han Wu could see black Steel Beetles swarm at the bottom, moving continuously. The fist-sized Steel Beetles were piled atop one another in the shaft. There were an incredible number of them, but fortunately, the smooth walls of the mine shaft were too slippery for them to climb. The beetles could only multiply atop one another in hopes of one day crawling out.

Han Wu couldn't help but smile at the sight.

Qin Shuang saw his expression and asked, "Han Wu, what are you smiling at?"

Han Wu pointed at the swarm of Steel Beetles below. "Do you see what I'm seeing?"

"Aren't they just insects?"

Han Wu's core race was the locusts, so Qin Shuang had long since become indifferent to insects, meaning the swarming Steel Beetles didn't put her off.

"They're insects," Han Wu agreed. "They're also a source of essence for upgrading our weapons. Who knows how deep the mine shaft is, and how many Steel Beetles are down there? How much essence do you think you could get if you unleashed your lightning in there?"

Qin Shuang's eyes lit up. Steel Beetles were weak and would yield little essence per one slain. However, the yield of a swarm would still be sizable. Coincidentally, Qin Shuang also had a powerful technique that required little energy.

"Let me try," she said, summoning her coin-shaped Divine Weapon that had since reformed.

As she gathered Lightning Energy, Han Wu summoned his Locust-V and fired at the Steel Beetles below. The powerful bullets penetrated several Steel Beetles in one go.

He also periodically tossed his Explosive Locust Blade down. Each explosion killed at least ten thousand Steel Beetles. Their essence flowed into Han Wu's Divine Weapon Atlas and brought him one step closer to unlocking his fifth Divine Weapon.

Qin Shuang's coin turned completely white once it gathered enough energy.

"Here I go!" she yelled, flicking the coin down the middle of the mine shaft.

A thunderous boom echoed as the coin exploded in the sea of Steel Beetles, blowing many of them apart. The electricity zapped the survivors into charcoal. Soon, all that was left behind were their thin and lightweight carapaces.

Han Wu picked one up and measured it in his palm. It was roughly a single gram. Master Ou needed a thousand catties, which equated to around 500,000 Steel Beetle carapaces.

It wasn't a lot, especially with the ease with which Steel Beetles could be hunted. The time-consuming part was actually extracting the carapace.

Luckily, Qin Shuang could skip this step with her lightning, which allowed her to heat the Steel Beetles and quite literally refine them from the inside out. She could not only burn

away the flesh of the Steel Beetles but even melt their carapaces together into a ball with her lightning.

After some experimenting, the first carapace ball soon took shape. It was still rather impure and needed to be refined further, but it was undoubtedly better than a completely unrefined carapace.

A single carapace ball was the size of a fist, but it wasn't heavy at all. It was at most ten catties. Han Wu kept it in the urn tied to his waist. Qin Shuang then used her other Divine Weapons to summon more lightning.

Her Feather Dart split into 30,000 darts, which she shot down into the mine shaft. This was the limit of her capabilities.

She then discharged the electricity contained within the feathers all at once. All the Steel Beetles within a certain radius of the Feather Darts were electrocuted. Some of them got off light and were only paralyzed, while others were carbonized entirely, leaving only their thin carapace behind.

Millions of Steel Beetles died in one go, bringing with them a wave of essence for her to absorb. She had only recently unlocked her fourth Divine Weapon, but was already close to unlocking her fifth one. However, extending her powers had left her exhausted and in need of rest.

Han Wu, on the other hand, remained spirited and continued to fire at the Steel Beetle swarm with Locust-V and his Explosive Locust Blade. He even summoned his Locust Soul Orb so the tiger could spit ghostly fire at the Steel Beetles as well.

Ah Da and Ah Er also appeared, riding Han Wu's Small Locust Blades as they attacked the Steel Beetles relentlessly. The Locust Soul Orb absorbed the souls of the slain beetles. Just like the essence, the individual amount was weak, but the sheer number of beetles made up for it.

The three souls attacked without reservation, and the orb's capacity was soon maxed out.

Qin Shuang and Han Wu killed at least 400 million Steel Beetles across the daylight hours from morning to evening, but their numbers didn't dwindle at all. They simply didn't have enough manpower or firepower to eliminate the swarm.

Thankfully, their task wasn't to hunt Steel Beetles, but to collect carapaces. With Qin Shuang's lightning, they had long since gathered the thousand catties needed.

Han Wu parted ways with Qin Shuang to bring the carapaces back to the workshop before sundown. Master Ou was shocked that Han Wu had actually accomplished the mission in the given time frame, to the point of suspecting that he had accumulated and kept these carapaces to gain a favor.

Master Ou dismissed that thought almost as soon as it appeared. His need for the Steel Beetle carapace came from a sudden burst of inspiration. It wasn't planned in the first place, so there was no way Han Wu could have gathered them in advance.

Upon laying eyes on the fused carapace balls, Master Ou lit up with delight. These would shorten the time needed to refine them. Having received the requested items, he readily agreed to help Han Wu.

Han Wu summoned his Explosive Locust Blade, and Master Ou was stunned when he saw its parameters. He had never seen a Divine Weapon that was designed to destroy itself. Using self-detonation to increase the value of a Divine Weapon was novel even to his experienced eyes.

Deeming it a worthwhile challenge to equip a gem to such a fragile Divine Weapon, he accepted Han Wu's request and immediately started work on it. The entire process lasted through the night.

After three failures, he finally managed to equip the gem onto the Explosive Locust Blade, granting it a new Divine effect. The compatibility between the gem and the Explosive Locust Blade was high enough that the effect was boosted.

This effect, called Flare Explosion, was far more powerful and had a greater range than Self-Detonation. Han Wu was extremely satisfied with it.

Chapter 707 - You're So Devious, but I Like It

Han Wu returned to the mine shaft with his upgraded Explosive Locust Blade, only to see a crowd gathered around the mine shaft where they had previously killed the Steel Beetles.

Qin Shuang appeared to be arguing with them.

Picking up his pace, he got close enough to hear their argument.

"This mine is huge. How can you prove that you killed these Steel Beetles? I can easily make the same claim too!"

"We're just collecting the materials. You can continue hunting them down. No one's interfering with you! Also, my brother is the deputy of the Noir Group in charge of this area. You won't get off easy if you dare to go against me!"

They surrounded Qin Shuang, spitting ridiculous declarations left and right. If they hadn't witnessed Qin Shuang's strength firsthand, they would've attacked her.

Qin Shuang was rightfully fuming at their shameless behavior. The mine was huge, and there were many mine shafts. They could've gone to another mine shaft to hunt the Steel Beetles, but they purposely surrounded her and used some special tool to attract the fallen carapaces to them after she killed the Steel Beetles with lightning.

They were even shameless enough to try goading her into hunting the Steel Beetles so they could collect the carapaces with ease. If she hadn't been trying to keep a low profile, she would've killed them long ago.

Han Wu pushed them away and asked loudly, "What's going on here?"

Qin Shuang explained the situation to him. He frowned at her story. Their audaciousness shocked him. This was the first time he had met people bold enough to steal fallen loot, even after knowing their intended victim's strength.

"We won't leave just because your man is here. We can collect carapaces wherever we want. No one can stop us."

"Don't try attacking us. My brother is the deputy of the Noir Group. If you harm even a single strand of hair on our heads, the Noir Group will toss the two of you into the Steel Beetle swarm as food!"

"Afraid, aren't you? Start killing the Steel Beetles if you are. We're still waiting to collect the carapaces."

Han Wu was speechless at their sheer gall. Qin Shuang was also furious. There was no world where she was going to kill Steel Beetles for them.

At that moment, Han Wu thought of an idea and whispered to her. Qin Shuang lit up when she heard the plan.

"You're so devious," she whispered with a giggle, "but I like it."

The two ignored the crowd and continued killing the Steel Beetles as before. With Han Wu's improved Explosive Locust Blade, the speed at which they culled the Steel Beetles was rapid.

More people gathered around them, each with a special ore that attracted the carapaces up from the mine shaft for them to bag up. All of them worked hard and quickly gathered plenty of carapaces.

They only stopped when it was nighttime. Qin Shuang and Han Wu stared in shock at the mountain of carapaces behind them. They hadn't expected to gather that many carapaces within a single day.

The people surrounding them stopped working when the two stopped killing.

"This is probably enough carapaces for now," one of them said. "We'll stop today and come back tomorrow."

As they went to haul the bags of carapaces away, Han Wu stopped them. "Sorry, but you can't take them with you."

"Who do you think you are? We're not going to leave them here just because you tell us to. I'm going to take them with me. What are you going to do about it?" taunted a tanned middle-aged man, the one previously claiming that his brother was the deputy of the Noir Group.

Grabbing one of the bags, he turned at the same time as he lifted it so it would slap Han Wu in the face.

Han Wu wasn't about to let this slide. Controlling his three Small Locust Blades, he pierced the man's torso. The man died on the spot, and the bag fell, the carapaces scattering around the man.

"Murder! Murder!" one of them shouted.

The rest summoned their Divine Weapon for the imminent fight, but the three Small Locust Blades hovered menacingly around them like evil spirits, and none of them dared to move.

"Thank you for collecting the carapaces for me. You can leave now," Han Wu said plainly.

One of them shouted angrily, "Based on what claim? We—"

Han Wu's Small Locust Blade zipped past the man. Its cold, sharp edge silenced him forever.

"Based on what claim? Perhaps the fact that we killed the Steel Beetles in the first place. Also, based on my blades here, and on your fear of death. Any more questions?" Han Wu's threat was clear.

The remaining crowd said nothing. They knew that gathering the carapaces from someone else's kill constituted theft. In fact, they were stealing them in front of their rightful owner!

Han Wu was merely taking back his property. Still, the group had spent time bagging the carapaces and, not wanting their labor to go to waste, refused to leave.

“Not going to leave? Scram!” Han Wu shouted.

They were intimidated and left with disappointment. After putting some distance between them and Han Wu, they gathered and plotted.

“We can’t let them go just like that. Someone go and contact the Noir Group. Tell them that the younger brother of the deputy has been killed.”

“But it’ll take too long for them to arrive. What if those two run away?”

“How? There are too many carapaces for them to move on their own. It's impossible for them to leave tonight!”

“True. Alright, let me go and call the Noir Group.”

Meanwhile, back with Han Wu, Qin Shuang was staring at the huge mountain of carapaces in worry. Although glad that they had taken back what was rightfully theirs, there was still the issue of transporting the carapaces. She also couldn’t help but wonder what they would even do with all of it.

Han Wu saw the unspoken question on her face and answered, “I can use them to nurture my Divine Weapon.”

Han Wu’s Divine Weapons came from the locusts, meaning he could absorb the carapaces of insects to upgrade them. While Steel Beetle carapaces granted very little essence, the sheer quantity was bound to do something at least. With that in mind, he decided to upgrade his first Divine Weapon, the Small Locust Blade.

The Small Locust Blade was his strongest weapon at present. Its speed and maneuverability made it excellent for assassinating people. The only downside was its low durability.

Even with the dedicated effects, its durability was still low. The only way to resolve this was to continue upgrading it so its durability could go up. He stabbed the Small Locust Blade into the mountain of Steel Beetle carapaces.

It absorbed the minuscule essence within the carapaces and slowly upgraded itself, steadily rising from 20 to 30 to 40, until it finally reached rank 100!

The Small Locust Blade could be upgraded once more! If Han Wu could find the corresponding materials, he could upgrade it to the Divine grade!

: Chapter 708

Chapter 708 - A Misunderstanding

Han Wu asked the Will of the Divine Weapon Civilization, and it told him that three materials were required for the Small Locust Blade's best upgrade path. These were a Tempering Stone, a Gold Beetle carapace, and fluid from a Gold Silkworm.

The Will of the Divine Weapon Civilization also gave him several other options, but they weren't as ideal. The Small Locust Blade was his main weapon, and he had to ensure it received the best upgrade possible. Han Wu needed to get those three materials no matter what.

With the Small Locust Blade at maximum rank, it could no longer absorb carapaces, so he changed to another Divine Weapon. This time, he decided to upgrade his Locust-V Gatling Gun.

Locust-V absorbed the carapaces like water on dry sand, and its rank quickly rose to 100 as well. Han Wu then used another question to ask the Will of the Divine Weapon Civilization about its upgrade.

The Will of the Divine Weapon Civilization gave him a variety of paths to choose from. The best one was to infuse Locust-V with various elemental effects to turn it into a powerful elemental Divine Weapon.

It was an excellent upgrade choice, but it required a massive amount of resources, eighty-six to be exact. Han Wu had no idea how long he would need to gather all of it.

Skimming through the alternative upgrade paths, he eventually settled on one that only needed three materials: leech jaw, Bloodstone, and Bloodbane Grass. This upgrade path would allow Locust-V to increase its shooting speed by absorbing the blood of fallen foes.

There were still quite a few carapaces left, so Han Wu decided to ask Qin Shuang to melt them into several balls before storing them in his urn. As they were about to leave, they saw several torches approaching from a distance.

Never thought there would be someone rushing to meet their ends here, Han Wu thought scornfully to himself. He then told Qin Shuang to stay with him as they waited for the torches to get close.

When the deputy of the Noir Group heard that his brother had been killed, he gathered forty reasonably strong men to help avenge him. As they stood before Han Wu and Qin Shuang, the deputy couldn't help but notice that something was amiss.

According to the intel, there were supposed to be piles of carapaces here, but the place was empty. The others failed to notice this, all too busy glaring at Han Wu and Qin Shuang.

"Boss Hui, it's them! That couple killed your brother!" blurted one of the earlier survivors.

Boss Hui sized up both Han Wu and Qin Shuang. "You killed my brother?"

"I did," Han Wu admitted truthfully.

Boss Hui was stunned. After all these years working at the mines, he had become accustomed to the slightly fearful manner with which other miners had treated him in the past.

Han Wu's contrasting lack of concern caused him to hesitate. He could bully the miners all he wanted, but Han Wu wasn't a miner, and it appeared that he wasn't afraid of the Noir Group either. That meant Han Wu either had a background stronger than the Noir Group or that he was physically stronger.

Boss Hui was at a loss. The dead middle-aged man on the ground was technically his cousin, not his actual brother. His cousin had simply treated him with enough respect that he had turned a blind eye to his cousin's claims that they were instead brothers.

However, his cousin had offended this person before he died. Boss Hui was in a pickle. He could avenge his cousin, but he didn't know if Han Wu was stronger. On the other hand, if he didn't avenge his brother, his underlings would lose respect for him.

Stuck between a rock and a hard place, he ended up shooting a pointed look at his most loyal underling. The underling instantly understood.

Grabbing his Divine Weapon, the underling stepped forward to scold Han Wu, "You idi—"

Han Wu's Small Locust Blade pressed against his neck. The underling dared not move even a single inch.

Having gained an understanding of the type of foe he was facing, Boss Hui decided to defuse the situation immediately.

"You idiot! Is that what I taught you? You need to treat guests with respect. How could you just attack him like that? Come back here!" Boss Hui scolded.

Then, turning to Han Wu, he apologized profusely, “I’m sorry for the rudeness of my underling. Please accept my sincerest apologies.”

Han Wu was actually quite fair most of the time and was more than happy not to deal with this mess. He recalled his Small Locust Blade, and the underling collapsed to the ground, knees weak from toeing the edge of hell.

“What about your brother?” Han Wu asked.

“What brother? I’m the only son in my family. I don’t have one.” Boss Hui waved his hand dismissively. “You must’ve mistaken him for someone else. It’s all a misunderstanding.”

The underlings following Boss Hui were stunned. They couldn’t believe their ears. On the way over, Boss Hui had been raving about avenging his brother, yet now he was claiming not to have one. It was as if Boss Hui had turned into someone else entirely! How could he just deny having a brother?

Despite their thoughts, none of them dared to poke holes in Boss Hui’s lies.

“My men told me that you gathered a lot of materials and couldn’t transport them on your own,” Boss Hui explained, “so I called some of my men down to help you.”

Only after hearing Boss Hui’s words did the underlings finally realize that the bags of carapaces around them were all gone. There had been at least several hundred thousand catties worth of carapaces. How could they possibly have disappeared?

“What material?” Han Wu asked, mimicking Boss Hui’s feigned ignorance. “There’s only the two of us here, and we don’t have any materials.”

Boss Hui nodded. “Then this is probably all just a big misunderstanding. In that case, I won’t bother the two of you anymore. Good day.”

With that, Boss Hui hastily tried to leave with his underlings.

“Wait,” Han Wu called out.

Boss Hui halted in his tracks, sweat pouring down his back. “Is there anything else?”

“I need some material.” Han Wu patted Boss Hui’s shoulder. “Can the Noir Group help me?”

Boss Hui wanted to decline, but the sensation of cold metal at the back of his neck had him swallowing his words. He tentatively reached back to touch it and flinched at its sharpness. It was a blade! Boss Hui dared not move a muscle, lest Han Wu kill him.

“The Noir Group can help,” Boss Hui quickly agreed. “But we need some time.”

“I don’t have time. You have one day to get all six materials I need. If not... Well, I’m sure I don’t have to spell it out for you, right?”

The blade at the back of Boss Hui’s neck seemed to grow colder, as if ready to pierce through him at a moment’s notice. Body trembling, he stiffly replied. “I understand!”

“I look forward to your good news,” Han Wu said, recalling his Small Locust Blade.

Boss Hui turned around, heart pounding loudly as he lamented to himself, What misfortune! I lost my cousin, and now I have to help him look for stuff?

Use arrow keys (or A / D) to PREV/NEXT chapter

Chapter 709 - TheNoir Group Assassination

Back at the Noir Group base, Boss Hui grew increasingly irritated. Han Wu had toyed with him, an elite in this city, so easily, and the only reason he could do so was his eerie Divine Weapon.

If he could figure out a way to deal with it, Han Wu would no longer have the advantage over him.

“Boss Hui, we just need to suppress his blade, and he’ll be like a toothless tiger for us to play with,” one loyal underling suggested.

Boss Hui obviously knew that. The issue was how. Han Wu’s Small Locust Blade was fast and moved bizarrely. Who could suppress it?

“Boss Hui, I heard that the big boss recruited several people with special powers,” said another underling. “They can defeat ten of us with ease. Maybe they could help us.”

Boss Hui’s eyes lit up. “You’re very smart for an underling. If we succeed, I will reward you generously.”

With that, Boss Hui ran to find their big boss for help. There was a reason the Noir Group had operated in Kang City for so long: their leader was powerful.

After learning of the situation, the head decided to help Boss Hui deal with Han Wu and restore their reputation. He then called for the three people with special abilities.

The trio walked in not long after. Despite standing before the head of the Noir Group, they still wore their black robes that covered the entirety of their body. No one could discern their appearance.

“Masters, a powerful foe has insulted the Noir Group today. I hope you can help us. We’ll reward you generously for dealing with him.”

The trio nodded before naming their price. “Once this is done, we want fifty kilograms of Strange Metal ore each.”

“So be it,” the boss agreed.

Boss Hui wanted to see the trio’s strength for himself, so he personally led them to the inn where Han Wu was staying. He followed the intel from the underlings, and they soon arrived at the inn.

“He’s in this inn. Third floor, room number one,” Boss Hui informed.

His underling had verified this information, so he knew it was correct. The trio nodded before silently entering the inn like spirits. Meanwhile, Boss Hui hid outside and waited for the good news.

The trio moved in the shadows and quickly found Han Wu’s room.

“Wait,” one of them whispered before they barged in. “Let me toss the hallucinogenic smoke into the room. Once it takes effect, we can deal with the target silently. That way, we can showcase our strength. The locals will probably pay us more for it.”

“I agree.” The other two nodded.

With that, the first speaker summoned their Divine Weapon. It was a thin bamboo tube. They then inserted the bamboo tube through the gap below the door and gently blew on it to release the hallucinogenic smoke into the room.

The trio waited outside for ten minutes while those in the room breathed in the smoke.

“Sia is a dancer, and her hallucinogenic smoke is already at rank 35. It should be quite potent, and they should be sleeping like pigs inside!” one of them said anxiously, ready to barge in.

“No, we need to be careful,” the other warned. “Let’s go in silently.”

The cautious one then summoned a key-shaped Divine Weapon and slid it into the keyhole, unlocking the door with ease.

“Good job, Rio.”

Rio nodded. He was a Magic Thief, and the key-shaped Divine Weapon was part of his arsenal that allowed him to unlock any locks.

The trio entered silently, making their way to the bed to check it. Rio had night vision and immediately saw that no one was in bed.

“Wait, what’s going on? There’s no one here!” Rio exclaimed, alarmed.

“That’s because we’re behind you.”

Han Wu had noticed them since they stepped onto the third floor of the inn, having forfeited sleep in favor of cultivating the Black Mountain Scripture. His senses were heightened in that state, so even though the trio had tiptoed their way here, they failed to escape his senses. Naturally, he had also been prepared for Sia’s smoke as well.

Assassination attempt foiled, the trio tried to fight Han Wu head-on. Han Wu noticed that each of them had seven to eight flashes on their bodies. Each flash corresponded to a Divine Weapon.

Han Wu and Qin Shuang raised their guard. The two of them only had four Divine Weapons each, while the three assassins had seven to eight. Their opponents had the clear advantage.

Deciding to take the offensive, Han Wu summoned his three Small Locust Blades and attacked. The distance was small, but Han Wu’s strike failed to land due to one of the assassin’s Divine Weapons—a horseshoe-shaped magnet.

This extremely powerful magnet attracted the Small Locust Blades, and no matter how Han Wu tried to control them, he simply couldn’t get them to resist its pull.

“I’m Wuteng, the Magnetic Warrior.” One of the assassins grinned. “Everyone’s Divine Weapons lose their effects when fighting me!”

While Han Wu’s Divine Weapon was suppressed, Rio, the Magic Thief, summoned two daggers to attack Han Wu.

“Whirlwind Slash!” Rio cried.

Several wind blades shot from the dagger, but Han Wu nimbly avoided them. Meanwhile, Qin Shuang tried to summon her Feather Dart to help. As it wasn’t made out of metal, Wuteng’s magnet didn’t affect it.

However, Wuteng also had a longsword-shaped Divine Weapon up his sleeve, which he used to block the Feather Darts with the ease expected of a warrior.

Sia, the dancer, didn’t join in on the fight, confident in her partners’ abilities. Instead, she started dancing. Her body let off a soft glow, buffing her two companions. The boost of strength allowed the two to suppress both Han Wu and Qin Shuang.

“It's an honor for you to die at the hands of Doron City’s three musketeers!” Wuteng shouted with glee.

Han Wu remembered Doron City. Back when he had taken the enrollment test for the Imperial College, he had used the identity of a locust-shaped demon lord, turned Doron City upside down, and recruited Alpheus to his divine realm.

He had also exiled Jing Jing to Doron City. Even now, he retained a gate connecting his divine realm to Doron City. He never expected the city to still be around. Sighing heavily, he eyed the trio.

They were clearly outsiders like him. The Divine Weapons of outsiders were forged using the power of their original civilization and the Divine Weapon Civilization. In other words, the trio had roughly twenty Divine Weapons infused with the power of their original civilization.

They were walking treasure chests. A newfound motivation to defeat them filled Han Wu. He was going to kill them!

Chapter 710 - Infusing Divine Weapons

Han Wu jumped back to put some distance between himself and the assailants. He then summoned the Locust Soul Orb, which immediately turned into a fiery tiger and pounced on the dancer.

“I’ll protect Sia. Rio, kill them quickly!” Wuteng shouted.

Rio nodded and used Whirlwind Slash once more. More wind blades shot toward Han Wu.

Han Wu deftly dodged before summoning his Explosive Locust Blade. Wuteng immediately activated his magnet to attract it. As expected, the Explosive Locust Blade flew toward the magnet and got stuck to it.

“Idiot. Your forgetfulness will be the death of you,” mocked Wuteng.

Han Wu merely smiled. “Flare Explosion!”

The blast from the Explosive Locust Blade consumed both Wuteng and Sia.

“No!” Rio cried out, fearing for his comrades.

Qin Shuang took advantage of his distraction to shoot her Feather Darts at him. Rio tried to avoid them, but failed, and some of the Feather Darts struck him.

The discharge of electricity within the Feather Darts immediately paralyzed Rio. The fiery tiger then pounced on him before biting his head off. The two of them had slain the three outsiders from Doron City in an instant.

Most of the customers at the inn had since woken up due to the loud explosion and rushed upstairs to investigate. Not wanting to risk exposing their identity, Han Wu and Qin Shuang quickly gathered up the fallen Divine Weapons and escaped through the window.

Boss Hui had been watching everything from outside, and cold sweat poured down his back when he saw that they were still alive.

We’re screwed. I hope they don’t know that we sent the assassins! Those ability users that the boss recruited were useless! They couldn’t even kill two targets! Boss Hui’s thoughts raced as he panicked. *But I’m still useful to them. As long as I gather the materials he wants, he’ll let me go.*

With that consoling thought, he hurried back to the base. He planned to use all his connections to gather the demanded materials.

Meanwhile, Han Wu and Qin Shuang had found a quiet little corner to hide after escaping. Han Wu’s eyes shone with greed as he examined the looted Divine Weapons. He could extract the energy within them and infuse them into his Divine Weapons to upgrade them massively.

After asking another question to the Will of the Divine Weapon Civilization, he learned that the trio’s Divine Weapons originated from their skills.

As adventurers from Doron City, they naturally had many skills, and when they entered the Divine Weapon Civilization, those skills turned into Divine Weapons. Their Divine Weapons basically acted as conduits that amplified the power of their skills.

Unfortunately, only those from Doron City could use this Law. He thought that it was a waste, but still proceeded to extract the energies from the Divine Weapons to upgrade their own Divine Weapons.

There were enough Divine Weapons that he could even upgrade Ah Da’s and Ah Er’s Divine Weapons as well.

Ah Da’s Divine Weapon was infused with the power of Wuteng’s magnet and longsword. The magnetism and increased sharpness made it useful against melee users.

Ah Er's Divine Weapon, on the other hand, was infused with the power of Rio's twin daggers, granting it the ability to release consecutive wind blades using Whirlwind Slash.

Han Wu's and Qin Shuang's Divine Weapons were also improved by at least 20% after the infusions. Since these enhancements were considered outside of their upgrade paths, they wouldn't affect their Divine Weapons' future strength.

"If we kill more outsiders, we can soon reach a strength equivalent to our real bodies," Han Wu said excitedly.

Qin Shuang patted his head. "Let's not think too much about it. Outsiders are sort of rare here, and their strength can be disproportionately powerful. We might not be able to win against all of them."

Han Wu nodded in agreement. The two then sat in the hidden corner until daytime. Once morning came, the two asked around about the Noir Group's main base and headed over after obtaining the information.

The two underlings who tried to stop them at the entrance were blown away.

The head of the Noir Group heard their arrival and quickly rushed to the entrance to receive them.

"What is the meaning of this?" the boss asked, playing the fool.

"I should be asking you that. What was the Noir Group thinking?" Han Wu shot back.

In truth, he actually had no proof that the Noir Group had sent the outsiders to assassinate them last night. However, the only party he had offended since arriving was them, so it seemed the logical conclusion.

It wasn't like they were some noble and upstanding organization either, so even if they weren't responsible, Han Wu was more than happy to blame them regardless. Seeing the stern look on Han Wu's face, the head assumed that he had caught on and immediately changed tunes.

"It's my fault for not teaching my subordinates well and having offended the two of you. I apologize for the previous matter, and I hope you will forgive me."

The surrounding underlings were confused. They had never seen their leader apologize before. Unfortunately for them, neither Han Wu nor Qin Shuang had any intention of accepting his apologies.

"Stop spouting nonsense," Han Wu snapped. "Have you gathered the materials I've requested?"

Fearing his strength, the boss could only try to assuage him. “The deputy has been working through the night to gather them, but he hasn't returned.”

“My patience has its limits. I’ll give you one hour. If you haven’t gathered the things I need by then, the Noir Group will cease to exist today.”

The underlings couldn’t endure his threats.

“Who are you to try and do away with us?” one shouted, pointing at Han Wu.

A second later, his head rolled on the ground like a gourd.

The others tried to run away in terror. None of them had even seen Han Wu’s attack. Only the leader had caught a glimpse of a silver flash flying out of Han Wu’s sleeve, slicing off the head of the underling, and retreating back into his sleeve.

The peculiar technique frightened the leader to his bones. He finally understood why the deputy had obediently run off to gather the demanded materials after returning last night.

Boss Hui was their final hope. If he didn’t return with the materials soon, the entire Noir Group would be turned inside out.

Chapter 711 - Effect: Seven Killings

The Noir Group’s underlings ran around the entire Kang City trying to locate Boss Hui. In the end, they found him at Master Ou’s workshop, attempting to negotiate for materials.

Master Ou cared greatly for his materials and didn’t want to sell them, but Boss Hui, desperate to survive, threatened him. As a mere blacksmith, Master Ou couldn’t afford to risk the threats from the Noir Group and begrudgingly gave in, agreeing to sell the materials to Boss Hui.

At that moment, the underlings ran inside and informed Boss Hui about Han Wu’s untimely appearance at their base. Boss Hui hastily ordered Master Ou to send all of the materials to the Noir Group’s base before leaving.

Upon arriving back at the base, he was greeted with the sight of Han Wu sitting on the main seat while their leader stood beside him. The leader of Noir Group glared at Boss Hui, a silent complaint for offending someone powerful enough to singlehandedly destroy the Noir Group. It was Boss Hui’s fault that the Noir Group had to suffer this humiliation!

Boss Hui ignored their leader's icy stare, kneeling in front of Han Wu as he said, "Master! I got all of the materials you requested."

Han Wu was surprised that Boss Hui actually managed to gather the demanded materials. "Give it to me then."

"It'll arrive soon." Boss Hui chuckled nervously.

"Did you really think I would believe you?"

Feeling the press of cold metal against his neck, Boss Hui quickly answered, "I bought the materials from Master Ou. He'll send it over soon!"

Han Wu recalled his weapon. While he didn't trust Boss Hui, he did have some faith in Master Ou. Sure enough, ten minutes later, Master Ou arrived with the promised materials.

When Master Ou saw Han Wu seated in the main seat of the Noir Group while the actual head stood to the side, he became visibly confused. He couldn't help but suspect that Han Wu was either a young master of a noble family, the leader of an influential faction, or someone from Divine Weapon City.

"Master Ou, we meet again," Han Wu greeted.

Master Ou was no expert at socializing, but he even knew the benefits of having a powerful backer. After all, Boss Hui could only threaten because he lacked one, but it seemed his future prospects wouldn't be as bleak. If this went well, he would not have to suffer the humiliation of being threatened again.

Thus, Master Ou took on a friendly demeanor and returned the greeting.

Boss Hui, on the other hand, started trembling. It appeared the two were close, and he feared Master Ou would report his misdeeds to Han Wu. Boss Hui stared at Master Ou, close to tears.

Master Ou ignored him. "These are the materials you requested, right? If I'm not mistaken, you're using them to upgrade two of your Divine Weapons."

"That's correct." Han Wu nodded. "Do you have any critiques?"

"The Tempering Stone, Golden Beetle carapace, and fluid from the Golden Silkworm are great choices. They're quite frankly the perfect combination to drastically increase the durability of small Divine Weapons. There's even a chance that an especially powerful Divine effect will manifest itself from this. I have no comments on this combination.

“But the combination of the Bloodstone, leech jaw, and Bloodbane... is not ideal. If you’re willing to show me your Divine Weapon, perhaps I could help you optimize it.”

Han Wu couldn’t help but acknowledge that Master Ou was a true genius in forging. His analysis was spot on, and in some respects even more detailed than the information obtained from the Will of the Divine Weapon Civilization.

“Master Ou, let’s find a better place to talk,” Han Wu suggested.

With that, Han Wu and Master Ou entered a room to chat privately. Qin Shuang stood outside to guard from eavesdroppers. In the room, Han Wu revealed his fourth Divine Weapon, the Locust-V Gatling gun.

Master Ou had never seen a Divine Weapon like it before and quickly became invested in researching it. When Han Wu demonstrated its use, Master Ou became even more convinced of its strength, regarding it as a weapon of mass destruction born for massacre. No walls or shields could hold up before it.

After witnessing its sheer power, Master Ou racked his brain before finally proposing three materials. Han Wu trusted Master Ou’s skill and gave him Locust-V to upgrade it. He wasn’t worried about Master Ou intentionally damaging his Divine Weapon. If Master Ou were to truly destroy Locust-V, Han Wu would lose a Divine Weapon, but Master Ou would lose his life.

Han Wu decided to upgrade his Small Locust Blade while Master Ou worked. After fusing the three materials, he upgraded it to a Divine-grade Divine Weapon.

The upgrade caused some visible changes. A faint golden engraving had appeared on its surface, and the gleam of the blade itself was more exquisite than before. It had also become more durable.

Three Divine effects then appeared.

[1: Golden (Divine): Doubles durability and increases baseline parameters of the Divine Weapon.]

[2: Thread (Divine): Doubles durability. Divine Weapon’s body is also filled with golden threads that can reform the weapon rapidly after breaking.]

[3: Seven Killings (Divine): Splits Divine Weapon into seven identical clones for a short period of time. Each clone inherits 100% of the Divine Weapon’s parameters.

Han Wu carefully considered each option.

The first was well-suited to his Small Locust Blade. It not only doubled its durability but also drastically reduced its rate of deterioration during combat due to the upgrade in its

basic parameters. Choosing it meant eliminating the main weakness of the Small Locust Blades, allowing them to last longer in a battle of attrition.

The second effect, Thread, allowed him to ignore the reformation process. Even if the Small Locust Blade's durability dropped to zero, it could reform extremely quickly.

He decided to ask the Will of the Divine Weapon Civilization about the speed of reformation, and it responded that it took ten seconds. In other words, the Small Locust Blade's durability could be refreshed in a mere ten seconds. This was exceptionally fast, and with Triplicate, he could cycle through them, keeping one attacking at all times.

Finally, the third effect, Seven Killings, enhanced his attacks by temporarily increasing the number of Small Locust Blades, giving him greater destructive powers. A single Small Locust Blade's attack power was limited, but the same couldn't be said about seven.

Han Wu asked the Will of the Divine Weapon Civilization whether he could stack Seven Killings onto Triplicate, and it replied affirmatively. This meant Han Wu could temporarily multiply each of his three Small Locust Blades into seven blades, for a total of twenty-one Small Locust Blades!

Three Small Locust Blades working together were already immensely powerful, let alone twenty-one.

Han Wu's mind was immediately made up.

"I choose the third one!"

: Chapter 712

Chapter 712 - Master Ou's Request

After his Small Locust Blades received Seven Killings, Han Wu immediately started testing them out.

First, there were three of them due to Triplicate, then when he activated Seven Killings, they multiplied into twenty-one Small Locust Blades!

He willed the twenty-one Small Locust Blades to fly in organized unison using the Spiritual Energy he had absorbed to cultivate the Black Mountain Scripture.

The effects of the Black Mountain Scripture had increased his strength to 150% of his starting value. This increase in power allowed him to control his Divine Weapon with ease. He could already envision the flabbergasted expressions on his opponents' faces when he summoned all 21 Small Locust Blades.

Recalling them, he grabbed a bunch of Steel Beetle carapace balls from the urn on his waist to upgrade the Small Locust Blade, as its rank had reset after becoming a Divine-grade Divine Weapon.

As it absorbed the carapace balls, Han Wu noticed a problem. When his Small Locust Blade had been a mere Faith-grade Divine Weapon, a huge fused ball was enough to increase its rank by 1. After upgrading, however, this didn't increase the meter past a tenth of the way to rank up.

Han Wu decided to put all the carapace balls he had into the Small Locust Blade, but even thousands of catties worth only increased its rank by 1. It seemed he would need ten times more resources to upgrade it this time. Collecting the carapace of Steel Beetles was too inefficient at this point.

As Han Wu was pondering his next course of action, Master Ou cried out, "I did it!"

Master Ou had completed the upgrades on Locust-V and was gleefully presenting it to Han Wu. The original silver-white sheen of Locust-V had been stained blood-red as if to reflect its more bloodthirsty nature, and when he touched it, three effects appeared.

[1: Blood Energy (Divine): Uses blood as energy. Absorbs the blood of those who have been hit by the Divine Weapon within a specific radius. Turns their blood into Bloodbane Bullets to be fired continuously. Bloodbane Bullets do not consume durability.]

[2: Blood Essence (Divine): Absorbs blood and turns it into essence. Can convert the blood of those hit by the Divine Weapon within a specific radius and turn it into essence needed to upgrade Divine Weapons.]

[3: Bloodburst (Divine): Infuse bullets with the properties of Blood Absorption and Bloodburst. Once hit by a bullet, the bullet will absorb blood from the target before exploding. The more blood it absorbed, the bigger the explosion.]

Han Wu greedily eyed the three effects, wanting to have them all. Unfortunately, he was forced to choose only one.

The first effect turned blood into Bloodbane Bullets that wouldn't consume the durability of the Divine Weapon. It complemented Infinite Firepower well and allowed it to fire without cooldown, making it extremely effective against larger groups.

The second effect, on the other hand, turned blood into essence to upgrade Locust-V. While it didn't increase its firepower, it did have utility in saving Han Wu time and

resources needed to upgrade it. The more intense the battles, the faster it could upgrade itself. Under prolonged battles, Locust-V could be his fastest-growing Divine Weapon.

Finally, the third effect increased its killing power. The effects of Bloodburst were most prominent in combat against tougher enemies. However, as Han Wu already had the Explosive Locust Blade, he ignored the third option.

Han Wu wavered between the first two options before eventually choosing the second. Gathering the resources to upgrade them would become more difficult as he unlocked more Divine Weapons. It would greatly reduce his burden if Locust-V were self-sufficient.

Pleased with the upgrade, Han Wu smiled.

Master Ou sighed with relief when he saw that expression. This was the first time he had upgraded an unfamiliar Divine Weapon, and he was glad that everything went well.

The two cheerfully exited from the room. Everyone in the Noir Group was relieved. It appeared that Han Wu was satisfied with the materials. Fearing that Master Ou had reported him, Boss Hui quickly stopped the two.

“Master, I’ve booked the best table in Kang City’s best restaurant to celebrate the success of your upgrades,” Boss Hui said in a rush. “Please do enjoy yourself!”

Han Wu glanced at him.

Boss Hui’s smile froze, body trembling. Every time he looked at Han Wu, he couldn’t help but recall the chilling sensation of cold metal on his neck.

“Haven’t I already said that my time is limited?”

Boss Hui slapped himself twice. “This is my mistake. I got too excited and forgot your words. Please don’t mind this.”

Han Wu ignored him, instead turning to address Master Ou, “Thank you, Master Ou, for your help. I’m certain that the Noir Group will be more than happy to pay for your services.”

The head of the Noir Group stepped forward and patted his chest. “Don’t worry, Sir, we won’t shortchange Master Ou for his services.”

Then, turning to one of his underlings, he shouted, “What are you waiting for? Go and take Master Ou’s money. Take one—No, make it three thousand gold coins!”

The huge sum was intended not merely to pay for Master Ou’s services, but also as an incentive for him not to rat on them to Han Wu.

“Master Ou, is that enough money?” Han Wu asked.

Master Ou nodded. “That’s more than enough.”

Pleased, Han Wu grabbed Qin Shuang’s hand and headed for the exit.

“Actually, I have a request,” Master Ou called out, halting them in their tracks.

Everyone from the Noir Group panicked.

Master Ou ignored the Noir Group as he approached Han Wu, “I can tell that you’re powerful, so I’m hoping that you won’t mind hearing me out. I’m willing to give you all of the materials in my warehouse as payment, regardless of the outcome. I’ll also accompany you on this mission.”

“What is it that you need?” Han Wu asked, intrigued.

“I need your help to retrieve my master’s bones.”

“Please elaborate.”

Both the leader and Boss Hui sighed once they realized it wasn’t about their Noir Group!

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: Chapter 713

Chapter 713 - Carefree Valley

Master Ou’s master had been one of the best blacksmiths in Divine Weapon City, but had been forced to flee due to a war between factions. During his travels across the lands, he had accepted Master Ou as his disciple and taught him blacksmithing.

On one of their travels, the two accidentally wandered into a dangerous beast-filled area. Master Ou had managed to escape but his master had unfortunately perished to the beasts’ attacks.

After escaping, Master Ou swore to one day bring back the bones of his master. This became his lifelong goal. However, he had never found someone strong enough to help him—that was, until he met Han Wu.

It was time for him to fulfill his promise. The risk was worth it if he could retrieve his master's remains. If he failed, he would follow his master's footsteps and die there too.

Master Ou's loyalty deeply moved Qin Shuang and Han Wu. Still, this didn't stop the pair from having questions.

"You said your master died there many years ago. Even if the beasts haven't eaten him, his remains would've surely decomposed, right?" Qin Shuang asked.

The eavesdropping Boss Hui nodded in agreement. "He's probably dust at this point."

"My master's remains will still be there," Master Ou said confidently. "I used a special technique to melt a Divine Weapon and turn him into an impervious bronze statue to preserve his body before I fled. His remains can withstand the elements just fine."

Blacksmiths were more creative than Han Wu had expected. Only a genius would even think to turn a body into a bronze statue to preserve it.

"In that case, let's see the materials you promised as payment," Han Wu said, more than willing to delay his journey for a few more days for the right price.

Master Ou quickly brought them back to his workshop and showed them the resources and Divine Weapons he had accumulated over the years. There were 659 of them, with the most expensive being a Dimension Bag with an interior space of a thousand cubic meters.

The Dimension Bag's capacity was far larger than the urn on Han Wu's waist and could store a greater variety of items. It was an invaluable piece of equipment.

When Han Wu saw the treasure trove of materials and Divine Weapons, he immediately agreed to Master Ou's request.

Master Ou packed everything into the Dimension Bag before passing it to Han Wu. After receiving the payment, they immediately prepared to set out. The Noir Group offered them a horse each, but Han Wu rejected it, and the trio left soon after.

Unbeknownst to the three, a weasel was tailing them. They traveled for half a day and a night before reaching Carefree Valley, named after its ability to make people forget their worries and stress.

As Master Ou had come here before, Qin Shuang and Han Wu made sure to listen carefully to his advice before entering.

"It's true that this place allows people to forget their worries. Beasts kill most of the people who wander in, and the dead have no worries," Master Ou explained. "Also, be careful while moving around. There are all kinds of beasts here. These beasts are special and are officially known as mutated beasts."

Han Wu asked the Will of the Divine Weapon Civilization, “What’s the difference between mutated beasts and monsters?”

[Both mutated beasts and monsters have sapience, but the former cannot take on a humanoid form while the latter can. In exchange, mutated beasts have stronger bodies and can better attune themselves to nature. Monsters, on the other hand, can use Divine Weapons. (Today quota for questions: 2)]

The trio entered Carefree Valley with their guards raised. The valley was filled with wild vegetation. Dense bushes and trees populated the entire area. The undergrowth in some areas was so dense that Han Wu had to use the Explosive Locust Blade to blast a path open.

An area with such overgrowth would undoubtedly have plenty of beasts. Of these, those that gained sapience became mutated beasts.

The group cautiously moved forward. Suddenly, a white rabbit leaped out in front of them.

“What a cute bunny!” Qin Shuang cooed.

Master Ou quickly squatted down and warned them, “Don’t let its cute appearance fool you. That’s a mutated beast called the Battleborn Lunarbunny. Its powerful legs can snap your bones with a single kick.”

The Battleborn Lunarbunny had noticed them during Master Ou’s explanation. Its black eyes turned blood red, and it charged at them with its explosive jumps. Han Wu quickly shot out a Small Locust Blade. It flew faster than the Battleborn Lunarbunny and severed its head.

Even without its head, its powerful legs continued to kick, tearing apart the vegetation where it had fallen. Qin Shuang watched in shock as a large stone was pulverized during its death throes.

“I never thought a single Battleborn Lunarbunny could be so strong. This area is indeed dangerous,” Han Wu remarked.

Master Ou warily eyed their surroundings. “Battleborn Lunarbunnies live in a herd. If there’s one here, that means there’s likely more hiding around. We need to leave now!”

The two immediately made to leave, but it was too late. Pairs of white ears popped out one after another from the rustling tall grass.

The main herd of Battleborn Lunarbunnies had appeared.

Han Wu summoned his Small Locust Blade and mowed down the surrounding vegetation for better visibility. Hundreds of Battleborn Lunarbunnies were hopping about, encircling their group.

The bunnies' eyes were all blood-red, sharp fangs gleaming as they prepared to pounce.

Han Wu lit up at the sight. "I've never killed mutated beasts before. Let me try."

With that, he threw out an Explosive Locust Blade into the area with the highest concentration of Battleborn Lunarbunnies. The blade split into ten with Tenfold, each inheriting 70% of the original's parameters.

The ten Explosive Locust Blades exploded in a burst of flames that swallowed the area. More than twenty Battleborn Lunarbunnies died from the blast. Their deaths only spurred the rest to fight.

More jumped forward. Fortunately, they could no longer hide within the undergrowth thanks to Han Wu's preemptive pruning.

Qin Shuang used her Feather Darts to fend them off while Han Wu summoned the Locust Soul Orb. He called forth Ah Da and Ah Er before transforming the orb into a fiery tiger to protect Master Ou.

Han Wu then summoned the newly upgraded Locust-V and unleashed a flurry of bullets at the Battleborn Lunarbunnies. Trails of blood-red energy flew out from the grass and into Locust-V. Its rank meter slowly increased.

"Not enough! This isn't enough! I need more!" Han Wu yelled into the bushes.

More Battleborn Lunarbunnies jumped out upon hearing his cries. He fired at them relentlessly. The roar of Locust-V's barrage could be heard even from a kilometer away.

Every time a Battleborn Lunarbunny was hit, a wisp of blood-red energy would emerge from its wound and merge with Locust-V. The Divine Weapon soon ranked up.

Mutated beasts were more powerful than regular beasts, which was reflected in their comparatively higher essence. Han Wu's Divine Weapon Atlas absorbed the bunnies' essence as they perished in droves, and he was soon granted his fifth Divine Weapon.

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: Chapter 714

Chapter 714 - Gluttonswarm Ring

After clearing out the Battleborn Lunarbunnies, Han Wu checked the information of his newly-unlocked Divine Weapon.

[Gluttonswarm Ring]

[Faith Equipment]

[Rank 1]

[Durability: 10/10]

[Satiation: 0% (When satiation is at 0%-50%, or above 150%, durability reduces by 1 every hour. Durability does not change when satiation is at 50%-150%]

[Effect: Glutton (Faith)]

[Skill: Summon Locust]

[Description: Originates from the Glutton Locust. Contains the power of gluttony]

[Glutton: Can consume food to increase the Divine Weapon’s rank]

[Summon Locust: Summons Glutton Locusts to consume food. Durability reduces by 1 with each use.]

Han Wu frowned.

The Gluttonswarm Ring wasn’t a combat-oriented Divine Weapon, but one intended for post-battle clean up, which made it effectively useless. Moreover, its durability drained over time. He could only hope one of the three God effects made up for it.

[1: Greed (God): Greed that cannot be satiated. Divine Weapon has no upper limit for satiation. When satiation is above 0%, durability will swiftly recover.]

[2: Wrath (God): Tenfold increase in consumption and digestion rate of summoned locusts. Wearer's parameters are also increased tenfold.]

[3: Pride (God): Summoned locusts will only consume nutrient-rich flesh and blood. Every time satiation hits 100%, part of the consumed energy will flow back to the wearer.]

Han Wu’s interest was piqued. All three effects were incredible.

The Greed effect basically turned his Gluttonswarm Ring into a summoning Divine Weapon, allowing him to call upon his locust army once more. However, that also depended on the rate at which its durability recovered.

The second effect, Wrath, was more balanced and improved its overall parameters. Having locusts that could eat and fight at the same time was great, but there was one glaring weakness: the tenfold digestion speed meant the satiation gauge would reduce rapidly unless the locusts were constantly devouring something. Thus, he wouldn't choose this effect.

Pride, on the other hand, increased his own strength through the summoned locusts. He was confident that this was the best of the three as it would drastically improve his strength in the long run.

Still, the first effect was good too. After spending a long time mulling it over and wavering between the two, he looked over at Qin Shuang.

"What's wrong?" she asked, cheeks reddening under the intensity of his gaze.

"Could you lend me your coin?"

Qin Shuang pouted, put out that his stare was just because he wanted to borrow her coin. Though inwardly grumbling, she still handed her coin to him.

"If it's the Thunder Sparrow, I'll choose the first one, and if it's her face, I'll choose the third," he whispered before flipping the coin.

As it fell, he caught it and checked the results. It was the Thunder Sparrow.

"This is Heaven's will." Han Wu sighed. "It's settled then, I'll choose Greed."

"Han Wu, what are you murmuring about?"

Returning the coin to Qin Shuang with a smile, Han Wu said, "Let me show you a trick."

He snapped his fingers, and the Gluttonswarm Ring appeared in his hand.

"A ring!" Qin Shuang cupped her blushing face in delight.

Is he proposing to me? Qin Shuang wondered, mind racing. But this isn't the greatest of places... Argh, who cares? Han Wu's finally proposing!

Then, she saw him putting the ring on his own finger.

"Not bad," he remarked cluelessly.

Snapping his fingers once more, a basin-sized gate appeared in the air. Hundreds of Glutton Locusts then flew out and devoured the Battleborn Lunarbunny corpses around them.

“How’s that? Isn’t it cool that I can summon my core race again?” he boasted, puffing out his chest.

Qin Shuang rolled her eyes, inwardly scolding herself for being so stupid enough to even think for a second that Han Wu, that clueless idiot, would actually propose!

“Yay. Congratulations. That’s amazing,” she said, a bitter note of forced cheer in her voice.

Han Wu didn’t notice the shift in her tone, too busy directing the hundreds of Glutton Locusts. They ate swiftly, able to devour an entire Battleborn Lunarbunny, bones and all, in just three seconds.

Each Battleborn Lunarbunny increased the satiation gauge by 1%. However, he couldn’t help but gripe at their speed. Three seconds seemed fast, but in reality, it would still take forever for the swarm to consume the thousands of corpses around them.

Impatient, Han Wu summoned five more locust swarms. Both the satiation gauge and the durability of the Gluttonswarm Ring filled rapidly.

Master Ou watched this unfold with curious eyes. He had never seen a Divine Weapon capable of summoning locusts before. While the Gluttonswarm Ring was undoubtedly intriguing, most of his attention actually lay with Han Wu. Master Ou couldn’t help but wonder how much he could learn from this outsider.

Once the summoned Glutton Locusts finally finished eating all of the corpses, the satiation gauge was at 1350%. As the satiation gauge depleted, the rank and durability of the Gluttonswarm Ring went up.

Both the number of summonable Glutton Locusts and the ring’s maximum durability increased with rank. Han Wu was soon able to call upon tens of thousands of Glutton Locusts. Fortunately, his experience in managing hundreds and billions of locusts at the same time meant this number was a cake walk for him.

Han Wu then commanded them to start eating everything around them.

As there were no corpses remaining, they started stripping the land of its vegetation. Grass, trees, and shrubs became nothing but food in their eyes. If that still wasn’t enough, they would eventually even start eating the earth and stone.

While these weren’t as nutritious as flesh and blood, there was still some residual energy in them. Han Wu didn’t let them stop eating for even a moment. With the Glutton Locusts clearing the way, the trio managed to travel a large distance without incident.

The sky darkened as night slowly fell. Mutated beasts were more active and dangerous at night, so Master Ou suggested they find a place to rest.

Qin Shuang and Han Wu agreed, immediately unleashing their coin and Flare Explosion to excavate a spacious cave that was both dry and warm.

Their exploits never ceased to amaze Master Ou. However, he couldn’t shake the feeling that something was off. It wasn’t until he lay down and closed his eyes that he identified the source of that sentiment.

That’s not how one should use their Divine Weapon! Using Divine Weapons to excavate a cave to rest is overkill!

Despite his thoughts, the cave was undeniably comfy, so Master Ou decided to let it be and slept to recover his stamina.

As the night went on, a dense mist gradually descended. A yellow weasel stealthily approached under the cover of the mist. Behind it were several mutated beasts.

They were all headed straight for the cave!

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Chapter 715 - Your Butt Is on a Tree

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Han Wu shook Qin Shuang awake before shouting at Master Ou, “Wake up! A group of beasts is headed for this cave!”

Master Ou’s eyes snapped wide open. “What? A group of beasts?”

The roar of beasts echoed from outside. They were trying to break through the boulder that Han Wu had used to seal the cave.

“What do we do? There’s nowhere to run,” Master Ou asked frantically, looking around in a panic.

This cave was manually excavated, meaning it led to a dead end.

Unlike Master Ou, Han Wu and Qin Shuang kept their composure. They came from the Divine Civilization and had experienced far more perilous battles before. After grasping the situation, the two immediately started to plan.

“Han Wu, stall for time while I gather Lightning Energy to fire off a single deadly blow,” Qin Shuang instructed.

Han Wu nodded before summoning his Locust-V. He also ordered the Locust Soul Orb, Ah Da, and Ah Er to protect Master Ou. With that, he pointed the muzzle of Locust-V through a gap in the blocked entrance he had prepared beforehand and fired.

Merciless bullets sprayed through the hole. Many of the mutated beasts were injured in the barrage. Streams of blood flowed into Locust-V, slowly increasing its rank.

Unfortunately, some of the mutated beasts had powerful defenses, meaning regular bullets did nothing to them. Noticing this, Han Wu activated Locust-V's innate skill, Armor Piercing Rounds, and changed the bullet type.

These bullets were sharper and were lined with corkscrew grooves, causing them to rotate at incredible speeds during their flight. It was more powerful, but in return, it exhausted Locust-V’s durability at a faster rate.

Still, the tradeoff was worth it. A hail of Armor Piercing Rounds shot out. All of the mutated beasts, even those with high defenses, became riddled with holes. Han Wu won through sheer firepower.

However, the weasel had not only gathered regular mutated beasts. The heavy thuds of a massive mutated beast sounded. Then, a rhino-like beast, ten meters tall and fifteen meters long, appeared.

The Armor Piercing Rounds embedded themselves uselessly into the rhino’s thick hide, stuck there like glue. The rhino charged forward, crashing into the boulder blocking the cave with a thunderous crash and leaving a gaping hole in its wake.

It would only take a few more attacks for the boulder to be destroyed. When that happened, the trio would be exposed to the mutated beasts, and everything would be over.

“Are you done?” Han Wu asked Qin Shuang.

“Not yet. I need fifteen more seconds.”

With no choice but to stall for time, Han Wu raised his guard, preparing for anything unexpected.

The rhino rammed into the boulder again. A massive two-meter crack appeared. Some of the smaller mutated beasts crawled through the tight space, but Han Wu's twenty-one Small Locust Blades shredded them to pieces.

Even more mutated beasts tried to sneak through, but Han Wu threw his Explosive Locust Blade and split them tenfold.

Continuous explosions rocked the entrance of the cave. The searing flames spooked some of the smaller mutated beasts into instinctively fleeing the battle.

The giant rhino, however, wasn't afraid in the slightest. Its thick hide meant it could ignore most attacks from Divine Weapons. The Explosive Locust Blade was useless against it, so Han Wu had to rely on his Small Locust Blades.

Aware that the blades weren't sharp enough to tear open its hide with brute force, Han Wu decided to attack more vulnerable areas.

Poking his torso out of the crack, he taunted the rhino. As a sapient creature, the sight naturally irked the rhino, and it roared as it prepared to charge in. Han Wu seized the opportunity to direct his original Small Locust Blade into the rhino's mouth before splitting it into twenty-one blades.

The inside of the rhino's mouth was sliced apart. Blood gushed out from its maw, and it charged at Han Wu with renewed wrath.

Thankfully, the fifteen seconds were up.

Qin Shuang fired her coin. Powerful lightning streaked past Han Wu, blasting sand, stones, the cracked boulder, and even the rhino out of the cave.

The trio ran out of the cave to check the rhino. Its breath was faint, and it couldn't stand, much less fight. It would breathe its last very soon.

With its defeat, the remaining mutated beasts knew it was over. If Han Wu and his companions could reduce even the rhino to this state, then much weaker mutated beasts like them stood no chance whatsoever.

A single glare from Han Wu had them scattering in fright.

At that moment, something small and yellow caught Han Wu's attention, and he directed his Small Locust Blades to intercept it. As he approached, he realized it was a weasel.

The weasel's presence was unlike the mutated beasts. Han Wu took this opportunity to inquire with the Divine Weapon Civilization.

It seemed the weasel was a monster. Specifically, it was Master Huang, the escapee from the wedding incident.

“Master Huang, it's been a few days since we last met. How did you end up like this?” Han Wu mocked, picking the weasel up.

Rage flickered within Master Huang. He had cultivated his humanoid form for several hundred years and had no issues mingling with the upper-middle class of monster society. Had he maintained his situation and eaten several hundred people to improve his cultivation, he would’ve become a legendary figure among the monsters in just a few years.

That was, of course, until Han Wu disrupted his wedding and heavily injured him, causing him to default back to his original form. This was a grudge that could only end with death.

Unable to endure Han Wu’s taunts, Master Huang released a noxious fart, trying to use it to disorient Han Wu so he could escape.

Unfortunately for him, Han Wu had noticed his intentions and tossed him toward the dying rhino, throwing an Explosive Locust Blade right after. The explosion ignited the toxic gas, and the resulting blast was more intense than a normal Flare Explosion.

The rhino was bombed to death, its body completely charred, though still intact. Master Huang, on the other hand, had his lower half blown off.

“It hurts... My butt... My butt...” he muttered, delirious from the pain.

Han Wu looked around and saw Master Huang’s lower half hanging from a nearby tree. “Master Huang, your butt is on a tree. I don’t think you can feel the pain.”

Master Huang turned to see his dangling lower half before his eyes fell begrudgingly close for the last time. If he could turn back time, he would remember not to fart in front of Han Wu, especially after learning about that explosive attack.

Chapter 716 - Finding The Bronze Statue

<h4 data-testid="heading" class="font-set-b18 flex items-start !font-sans sm:font-set-b26">Chapter 716 - Finding The Bronze Statue

Inside a forging chamber in Divine Weapon City, a woman’s howl echoed. “Who killed my fourth son?”

The voice belonged to Lady Huang, one of the city's five blacksmith masters. The Divine Weapons she had forged sensed her anger and started vibrating to soothe her.

Lady Huang had more than twenty children, but she cherished her fourth son above the rest. She sensed the moment his life was severed. That certainty left no doubt. He was dead.

"Revenge... Revenge!" she growled.

She summoned her two personal guards and tossed a compass to them. "Use this compass to find the killer. Kill them!"

The compass appeared old and broken, yet it was a powerful Divine Weapon. It could point toward whatever its wielder desired. It was also one of Lady Huang's most prized God-grade Divine Weapons.

"Also, bring back my fourth son's corpse. I need to give him a proper burial." Tears filled her eyes as she spoke.

The two guards said nothing. They picked up the compass and left to complete their mission.

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Elsewhere, Han Wu directed the Glutton Locusts to devour the mutated beasts' corpses. They ate Master Huang's corpse and left nothing behind.

Han Wu found two Divine Weapons scattered beside Master Huang's corpse. The first was the Deceiver's Cord, a decent God-grade Divine Weapon. The second was a Divine-grade cannon.

Han Wu fired it once and found that its explosive power rivaled the Explosive Locust Blade, though it reformed more slowly.

He discovered that Locust-V could absorb it, so he allowed the integration. As expected, Locust-V obtained a skill, which was called Explosive Rounds. Once activated, he could replace standard bullets with explosive ones. Each shot detonated on impact. While the blast radius was small, the increase in firepower was significant. Han Wu was satisfied with it.

As for the Deceiver's Cord, he had plans for it. However, after reaching the God grade, it had developed its own conscience. It refused to obey him and even fought back.

Han Wu didn't tolerate defiance and threatened to have his Divine Weapons absorb it if it continued to resist. Under that threat, the Deceiver's Cord relented but set a condition. It disliked Han Wu and didn't want to be used by him. It preferred the beautiful Qin Shuang.

Han Wu was pissed and even lectured it on gender equality. Still, the Deceiver's Cord refused to yield. In the end, Han Wu relented and gave it to Qin Shuang.

After she formed a contract with it, the Deceiver's Cord wrapped around her arm like a vine and responded to her will.

"You little pervert!" Han Wu scoffed and told himself not to compare himself to a rope, much less feel jealous over it.

Aside from Master Huang's Divine Weapons, there were many priceless materials of the mutated beasts. Under Master Ou's careful instructions, the Glutton Locusts avoided consuming specific parts. Master Ou gathered the materials with visible excitement, like a child with a new toy. The most valuable items were the giant rhino's horn and core.

Han Wu had once obtained an Ape Core from Master Huang before. It contained part of the White Ape's ego, along with the Freespirited Ape God Skill, which enhanced agility.

He had consumed many small animals and had learned only part of it. His frame had grown slightly lighter, but he was far from mastering it. His greatest obstacles were his eating speed and the lack of nutrients.

Han Wu had been searching for a solution. If he could match the Glutton Locusts' ravenous appetite, he would have mastered the skill already. He hoped to find a way to overcome this limitation.

Master Ou handed him the rhino's core, and he gingerly felt the power contained within it. Just like the Ape Core, this one contained part of the massive rhino's ego and its technique. It was called Brutish Rhino and allowed the user to raise their strength explosively for a short period.

Unfortunately, most of Han Wu's Divine Weapons favored ranged attacks, and Qin Shuang faced the same limitation. He ultimately tossed it to the Locust Soul Orb to raise its rank.

By the time they cleared the corpses, it was already morning. Sunlight cut through the valley's mist, and the trio made haste with their travel.

According to Master Ou's memories, they weren't far from the site of his master's bronze statue.

Along the way, Han Wu noticed numerous humanoid skeletons scattered across the path. They even managed to pick up a few Divine Weapons. This was a testament to how dangerous the Carefree Valley was.

After half a day of travel, they finally reached the place preserved in Master Ou's memory. In the past, he had turned his master into a bronze statue before escaping. Today, he returned with gratitude. "Master, your useless apprentice has come back for you."

Many years had passed. Only the stone walls remained visible, while vegetation had overtaken the entire area. Finding the statue would require considerable effort.

At Master Ou's request, Han Wu commanded his locusts to eat everything in the area. Once they chewed through the vines, they uncovered the bronze statue ten meters beneath the overgrowth.

Time had coated the bronze statue in green patina, blending it into the surrounding vegetation. Even so, Master Ou still recognized his master. He rushed forward and scrubbed away the patina until the statue's true form emerged.

"Master!" he shouted with excitement.

Because of his shout, Han Wu suddenly felt something was wrong in the area.

"Shuang'er, have you noticed how quiet it's become?" Han Wu's wariness made Qin Shuang pause. She sensed it as well. The silence was unnatural.

That was when a huge swarm of bats flew out from a nearby cave.

"There's a swarm of mutated beasts! Protect Master Ou!" she shouted.

Han Wu summoned his Divine Weapons. The Small Locust Blade attacked anything that got close. He kept the Explosive Locust Blade ready in his pocket, prepared to throw it at any moment. The Locust Soul Orb turned into a fiery tiger that roared at the bats, channeling Spiritual Energy to subdue or repel the bats.

Han Wu gripped Locust-V with his finger on the trigger. The Gluttonswarm Ring offered little support here and continued to reduce the satiation gauge and restore durability.

Qin Shuang also summoned her four Divine Weapons and turned the entire area into a lightning zone to protect them.

Master Ou saw what was happening, and the scene dragged his memories to years ago. It was the same. Thankfully, he was no longer helpless.

He placed his palm against the bronze statue, and it started to melt. Molten bronze gathered in his hands and formed a forging hammer. The weapon radiated a powerful aura unique to God-grade Divine Weapons. Even the Deceiver's Cord, which was supposed to be of the same grade, coiled tighter around Qin Shuang's arm and didn't dare move another inch.

Master Ou locked onto the swarm and hurled his hammer. It tore through the bats with tremendous force, reducing a wide swath to pulp. The scent of blood drew even more bats, along with additional mutated beasts.

Han Wu squeezed the trigger, and Locust-V roared to life, raining a hail of bullets on the enemies. At the same time, he shouted to Qin Shuang, “Get the railgun ready! That’s our way out.”

He turned to Master Ou and shouted, “Master Ou, gather your master’s bones and place them in the Dimension Bag! We may need to escape at a moment’s notice.”

: Chapter 717

Chapter 717 - Maze Killer

<h4 data-testid="heading" class="font-set-b18 flex items-start !font-sans sm:font-set-b26">Chapter 717 - Maze Killer

Master Ou listened to Han Wu, removed his outer coat, and gathered his master’s remains. He wrapped them in the coat and tied it into a bundle.

Han Wu placed it in his Dimension Bag, then resumed suppressive fire. He switched Locust-V’s bullets to the explosive rounds, which bombarded the air and the bats. He also controlled his 21 Small Locust Blades and cut down numerous bats.

Qin Shuang launched a barrage of Feather Darts and unleashed endless lightning at the swarm. She gripped her coin in her other hand, ready to deliver the finishing blow at any moment.

Master Ou held his hammer and stared at the mutated flying beasts in a daze. He tried to recall how he had escaped in the past. As he searched his memory, his gaze settled on a spot not far away from the bronze statue. According to his recollection, a hole there led to a distant location.

“I know how to escape!” Master Ou shouted as he ran toward that spot. He gathered his strength and struck the ground. The impact split the earth open and revealed a hole.

“This way! You guys, hurry up!” he shouted excitedly.

Qin Shuang and Han Wu rushed after him. Before entering, Qin Shuang unleashed her Railgun at the densest cluster of mutated beasts. A thunderous blast of lightning erupted and wiped out a large portion of the swarm.

Once inside, Han Wu used his Explosive Locust Blade to blow up the entrance and block the mutated beasts from entering. At last, they had time to catch their breath.

Han Wu waved his arm. “There are too many mutated beasts here. We can’t kill all of them.”

The battle had been dangerous, but it had its benefits. His Divine Weapon Atlas absorbed a lot of essence and was close to unlocking the sixth Divine Weapon. Moreover, Locust-V and the Gluttonswarm Ring had advanced significantly. With a few more days of the same intense slaughter, both would likely reach their maximum rank.

Qin Shuang had gained as much. Her Railgun’s final strike allowed her Divine Weapon Atlas to accumulate enough essence to unlock her fifth Divine Weapon: a pair of twin blades engraved with the Thunder Sparrow’s feather motifs. Lightning crackled and trailed behind each movement, giving the blades a striking presence. Moreover, this was a Divine-grade pair. Their initial quality matched Han Wu’s repeatedly upgraded Locust-V.

Han Wu felt defeated. He had to upgrade his Divine Weapons step by step, yet Qin Shuang’s began at the same level. It was ironic, but he wasn’t jealous. After all, the Fulther Blades were hers, and she was his.

The commotion above continued even after the trio disappeared. It was likely that they were feasting on the fallen bats.

Master Ou showed a hint of excitement. “I accidentally stumbled upon this place last time and managed to escape. Follow me.”

Qin Shuang and Han Wu shrugged and followed him. Master Ou led the way, but the cave had unexpected twists and turns. Before long, they were lost.

Master Ou started doubting himself. “That’s strange. I came here before. This should be the path.”

Han Wu stepped forward to take the lead. Although he had never been here, he had navigated enough mazes to dub himself as The Maze Killer. His confidence came from his core race. With countless locusts at his command, he could send them down different paths and receive real-time feedback. Finding an exit would be a piece of cake.

He summoned thousands of Glutton Locusts with his Gluttonswarm Ring and sent them spreading through the tunnels. He closed his eyes to track their movements and constructed a mental map of the maze. Within moments, he identified several possible exits.

After organizing the information, he said, “Follow me. I will take us to the first possible exit.”

Qin Shuang trusted him, but Master Ou didn’t. However poor his memory might be, he had escaped this place once before. This was Han Wu’s first time here, so how could he be that confident?

Still, he didn't dare stray from Han Wu. Although he had a powerful God-grade Divine Weapon, he remained a blacksmith, not a warrior. His combat ability was negligible. More importantly, his master's remains were in Han Wu's Dimension Bag. Leaving now would serve no purpose, so he decided to follow.

They moved through the maze until they reached a large, cavernous room.

The room was empty; it was a dead end.

Master Ou was going to speak when Han Wu cut in. "My summoned locusts are dead. Something inside this place killed them."

"We will know once we test it," Qin Shuang answered as she tossed her Feather Darts. Hundreds embedded themselves throughout the room.

At first, nothing happened. Then, less than three minutes later, the first Feather Dart fell from one of the stone walls.

Qin Shuang immediately realized something was wrong. Her Feather Darts were supposed to root into their targets upon impact. Nothing could remove them except her, whether the target was living or inanimate. Yet this dart had fallen. The base of the feather looked corroded.

Han Wu looked over and understood at once. He was very familiar with the corrosion pattern. The feather had been digested. The cavern was no cavern at all, but the stomach of a life form.

How big was this creature to possess such a stomach? He did not know. He only knew that they had attracted its attention and had to leave immediately.

He had no time to explain. Viscous liquid began seeping from the walls. The air filled with an acidic stench, and the ground sizzled where the liquid touched.

"Run! That's digestive fluid!" he shouted, grabbing the other two as he ran.

The three had just run out of the supposed stomach when a surge of digestive fluid burst out and corroded everything around it.

"Follow me and keep running!" He recalled the map and sprinted toward the next possible exit.

The digestive fluid pursued them relentlessly, as if something was controlling it.

Master Ou was stunned. He had come here before, yet the place had changed so drastically that he could no longer recognize it.

At a critical moment, Han Wu split his Small Locust Blades into 21 blades. The trio stepped onto them, and he controlled them to fly forward through the air. The extreme speed allowed them to evade the digestive liquid.

Soon, Han Wu brought them to the second possible exit. A gate stood before them, but he had no clue where it led.

“Master Ou, have you seen this gate before?” he asked.

Master Ou shook his head. He had no answer.

Use arrow keys (or A / D) to PREV/NEXT chapter

Chapter 718 - Upgrading the Small Locust Blade

<h4 data-testid="heading" class="font-set-b18 flex items-start !font-sans sm:font-set-b26">Chapter 718 - Upgrading the Small Locust Blade

Master Ou’s reaction rendered Han Wu speechless. *Wasn’t he supposed to have been here before? How could he know nothing? Is he lying?*

Nonetheless, the gate before them could be the exit they needed.

Han Wu glanced at Qin Shuang for her opinion. She said, “I will follow your lead. If you want to open it, let’s do it. Whether it’s an exit or a trap, I’ll face it with you.”

Han Wu felt a surge of warmth and wanted to kiss her, but Master Ou approached and ruined the moment. “I will too.”

Han Wu didn’t feel like kissing Qin Shuang anymore. With Master Ou as a third wheel, even if he didn’t mind, Qin Shuang would. Han Wu pushed the thought aside and examined the gate.

“Then let’s open it.” He pushed the gate while Qin Shuang readied her Fulther Blades to strike at any threat. Master Ou hoisted his hammer and prepared to attack.

Unexpectedly, no matter how hard Han Wu pushed, the gate refused to budge. It was completely immovable, as if sealed shut. At last, Master Ou lost patience and shouted, “Let me do it.”

He took Han Wu's place, gripped his hammer, and gathered his strength. With a thunderous boom, he struck the massive gate. The impact made it shudder, and chunks of stone and dust fell away, exposing the layer beneath. The gate was not stone at all. It was metallic.

As an accomplished blacksmith, Master Ou drew in a sharp breath when he touched the surface. "Such extravagance!"

The entire gate was made of pure Essence Gold. No matter the civilization, Essence Gold was exceedingly rare and valuable. Civilizations that excelled in forging or crafting prized it as a material of astronomical worth.

Almost 90% of all known Essence Gold was controlled by Divine Weapon City. Its value stemmed from its role in forging God-grade Divine Weapons, most of which required at least some Essence Gold. Some even used it as their primary material.

How much Essence Gold has gone into this gate? Master Ou had no idea.

Han Wu examined the gate, and his greed flared up. "Master Ou, this entire gate is made of Essence Gold, right?"

His Small Locust Blade was a versatile Divine Weapon and could absorb most metals to rank up. Essence Gold was among them, so he suggested, "Since we can't open the gate, why don't we use our Divine Weapons to absorb it?"

Master Ou was reluctant. He didn't want such a vast quantity of Essence Gold to strengthen outsiders' Divine Weapons, but he knew that he couldn't defend it alone. In fact, without their help, he wouldn't even be able to obtain a single piece. In that case, there was no reason to stop them. He stepped aside and allowed them to absorb as much Essence Gold as they wished.

Han Wu placed his Small Locust Blade onto the gate and started absorbing the Essence Gold. Dense golden essence flowed into the blade, and it ranked up rapidly.

Qin Shuang confirmed that two of her Divine Weapons, the coin and the Fulther Blades, could absorb the Essence Gold. She placed them against the gate as well. Although Essence Gold was not the ideal material to awaken their innate potential, it remained an excellent resource. She set aside further consideration and let her weapons absorb freely.

As they continued, the gate started to show signs of cavities. Soon, a small hole appeared.

Master Ou was curious and peered through it. Beyond the gate lay an empty space, at the center of which floated a glowing orb. He could not identify it.

Han Wu and Qin Shuang continued absorbing Essence Gold until Han Wu's Small Locust Blade reached rank 100. If he couldn't find the necessary materials to upgrade it to the God grade, it couldn't absorb any more Essence Gold.

He quickly used one of his quotas to ask the Divine Weapon Civilization about the required materials. As usual, its Will provided several options.

He searched his Dimension Bag and found the materials for one of the upgrade paths. It wasn't the optimal option, but the chance to absorb Essence Gold was rare. Without this gate here, it would be hard for him to find the necessary materials in the future. Thus, he decided to proceed with the upgrade on the spot.

With Master Ou's experience and help, he added several complementary materials to increase the chances of achieving a stronger result.

Once completed, Master Ou returned the Small Locust Blade to him. Han Wu accepted the newly upgraded weapon and saw the familiar three options for its new effect.

[1: Golden Strength (God): Increases durability by 100-fold. Massively improves the quality of the Divine Weapon.]

[2: Eternal (God): Locks durability at its current value. Durability will never change, resulting in an unbreakable Divine Weapon.]

[3: Split (God): Removes the upper limit for durability. Durability will slowly recover. When durability reaches 200%, the Divine Weapon will split into two, with each copy possessing 100% durability. After splitting, subsequent generations can continue to split. Upper limit: 10 generations.]

Han Wu salivated with greed when he saw two exceptionally powerful effects. The first one was mediocre in comparison, so he dismissed it.

The second effect, Eternal, reminded him of his own Microcosm. Locking durability meant the weapon could never be destroyed. Even if applied to scrap metal, the effect would be unimaginably powerful, let alone on a Divine Weapon.

The third effect followed a different path, one of multiplication. Controlling a single Small Locust Blade differed greatly from controlling 21 simultaneously. If he chose this option, he could command up to 1,024 Small Locust Blades even before using Triplicate and Seven Killings.

He imagined controlling 21,504 Small Locust Blades in a single attack and recalled that this was similar to the Ten Thousand Sword Array he had once seen!

He was in a dilemma between the two options: quality or quantity. Both effects were too good, and he couldn't decide. He looked at Qin Shuang once more. She understood at once and handed him her coin. He flipped it, and the result settled his choice.

He chose the third effect. With that decision, the Small Locust Blade completed its transformation into a God-tier weapon.

Chapter 719 - God-Grade Armament Spirit

<h4 data-testid="heading" class="font-set-b18 flex items-start !font-sans sm:font-set-b26">Chapter 719 - God-Grade Armament Spirit

Han Wu was excited to finally receive his first God-grade Divine Weapon here. He checked the information of the Small Locust Blade.

[Small Locust Blade]

[1-Star God Equipment]

[Durability: 708/708]

[Effects: Telekinesis (God), Tough (Common), Triplicate (Faith), Seven Killings (Divine), Split (God)]

[Current Number: 1]

[Skill: Blade Pressure]

[Description: Formed from the core race, the locusts. Its common exterior hides unbound potential]

The Small Locust Blade possessed numerous effects and emitted a faint pressure unique to God-grade Divine Weapons. Although the pressure was far weaker than that of other God-grade weapons, it did not diminish Han Wu's excitement.

The God grade was not the limit of his Divine Weapon. It could continue to grow by raising its stars. The more stars it had, the more powerful it would become. He looked forward to seeing how strong his Small Locust Blades could grow.

He then continued to let his Small Locust Blade absorb the gate's Essence Gold. The gate deteriorated at an even faster rate until a hole large enough for them to pass through appeared.

Master Ou ducked through the opening and entered an empty space the size of a football field. At the center floated a glowing orb. Upon closer inspection, it was not an orb, but a glowing brain.

Master Ou was stunned. He knew it was something extraordinary, but he had no idea what it was. Even Han Wu didn't recognize it.

Still, Han Wu could use his quota to ask the Will of the Divine Weapon Civilization. After exhausting a query, he learned the truth. The floating, glowing brain was a God-grade Armament Spirit!

He relayed the information to Master Ou, who was equally astonished. It was rare to witness such an Armament Spirit in person.

Naturally, none was willing to leave such a treasure there to gather dust.

Master Ou said, "Let me collect it. As for which Divine Weapon it's compatible with... The Armament Spirit itself will decide."

"Alright." Han Wu agreed.

Master Ou approached the brain-shaped Armament Spirit. The moment he touched it, a powerful, authoritative voice erupted. The force blasted him several steps back. He raised his God-grade hammer to block the impact and prevent his body from being shattered.

Han Wu split his Small Locust Blade into 21 blades to shield himself from the sonic force. Unfortunately, the blades were of lower quality, and he still suffered some injuries.

Qin Shuang was also hit by the attack, but the Deceiver's Cord wrapped around her arm wasn't just for show. While it lacked absolute offensive power, it excelled in defense and support. It coiled into a shield and fully blocked the attack.

The voice was a test. The Armament Spirit used it to evaluate whether any of their Divine Weapons were worthy. After examining the three weapons they had presented, it found none suitable.

It communicated through telepathy. "Your Divine Weapons do not meet the requirements for me to inhabit them. Take them away and get out of my home."

Its temperament was volatile, but Han Wu had no intention of giving up on an Armament Spirit with intelligence. He endured the buzzing in his head and said, "It's fine if you don't like the Small Locust Blade. I have others."

He brought out the rest of his Divine Weapons. The Armament Spirit examined the Locust Soul Orb and the Gluttonswarm Ring but ignored the others. It considered the Explosive Locust Blade and Locust-V too crude and unworthy of its intelligence.

“You dare present me with such inferior items? Are you mocking me?” Its voice grew louder, and dizziness struck Han Wu.

He steadied himself within three seconds. “It’s fine if you don’t like mine. My companion has Divine Weapons too.”

He signaled Qin Shuang. She displayed her weapons: the Feather Dart, Wing Banner, Sparrow Bow, Railcoin, and the Fulther Blades, arranged in a row.

The Armament Spirit scanned them and remained dissatisfied.

“You dare bring such trash before me? You are insulting my honor. Scram!” it shouted, and its voice impacted all of them.

Han Wu endured it better than before, though irritation flared at the scolding. The Armament Spirit was far too cocky. Han Wu was magnanimous, but he still intended to teach it proper respect.

He pushed through the shockwave and grabbed the floating brain. The Armament Spirit shouted even louder, its curses growing more intense, but Han Wu ignored them.

“Let me go! Let me go!” it shrieked from midair.

Han Wu ignored it and shot back, “One more word from you, and I will smash you to the ground into eighteen pieces!”

The threat silenced it, but Han Wu did not release his grip. He carried it to the selection of Divine Weapons that he and Qin Shuang had laid out on the ground. It had to choose one no matter what.

The Armament Spirit refused. It was a God-grade Armament Spirit! How could it just simply choose one?

Han Wu tossed it to the ground and issued another threat. “Choose one, or I’ll stomp you like a watermelon.”

Thrown to the ground, the Armament Spirit finally wavered. After a long moment of hesitation, it chose Locust-V.

After merging with it, Locust-V underwent a rapid change. Its formidable gatling gun form shrank and reshaped into a small child dressed in extravagant clothes. The child staggered forward and looked up at Han Wu, wary that he might throw it down again.

“What can you do?” Han Wu asked. He had assumed that the Armament Spirit would take a ferocious form, like a tiger or lion, yet it had become a child.

“I can do many things, such as this.” The child raised its arm, and under everyone’s gaze, the arm turned into a muzzle, which it pointed at Han Wu’s head. “Are you afraid now?”

“You little brat. Do you want to die that much?” Han Wu’s stern voice frightened it so badly that the child reverted to Locust-V.

Han Wu snorted. “You think you can outsmart me? I will show you who’s the real master here.”

Chapter 720 - City Lord’s Son-in-Law Sun Qingnian

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After intimidating the Armament Spirit, Han Wu extracted a considerable amount of information. For example, he learned the truth about the maze. The answer largely matched his expectations. This wasn’t a naturally formed underground cavern but the interior of a massive mutated beast.

Master Ou almost collapsed from shock. This was unheard of. He had never imagined that he had once escaped through a mutated beast’s body!

"How should we get out?" Han Wu asked.

The Armament Spirit answered crudely, "Naturally, through the place where an organism excretes waste. You enter through the mouth and exit through..."

Han Wu immediately de-summoned Locust-V. *Didn’t my earlier threats frighten it? Where did it find the galls to keep spouting nonsense?*

Han Wu wouldn’t press it further and didn’t fully believe it. After all, who would place a gate made out of Essence Gold within their own body?

The two continued to let their Divine Weapons absorb the Essence Gold. Even after raising all their weapons to rank 100, half of the gate remained.

Essence Gold was invaluable, so they wanted to take the rest with them. However, no matter what Han Wu and Master Ou attempted, they couldn't remove the gate. Aside from absorbing it on the spot, they couldn't take a single gram.

After trying numerous methods, they gave up. Absorbing the Essence Gold had already yielded significant benefits. They had three Divine Weapons at rank 100 now, which saved both resources and time.

Reluctantly, they abandoned the Essence Gold gate and searched for another path. Using the mental map, Han Wu checked the last three exit points before finally finding the true exit and escaping to the surface. He didn't know whether it really was the mutated beast's anus, but he was glad that they were finally free.

Once outside, they got their bearings and ran to the nearest village.

The village was sparsely populated, but the residents were kind and warmly welcomed them. After making inquiries, the trio learned that they were within the borders of Everlight City, which was 10,000 kilometers from Kang City.

They had only spent two days at most in the Carefree Valley, yet had somehow traversed 5,000 kilometers in a day. Not only had their journey not been delayed, but it had actually been accelerated.

Han Wu was both impressed and relieved. He resolved to investigate the massive underground mutated beast if he ever had the chance. He was very curious about what it was.

After leaving the Carefree Valley, Master Ou told them that he would part ways with them. He now needed to bring his master's remains to Divine Weapon City for burial.

Han Wu recalled that he had once obtained a deed for a piece of land just outside Divine Weapon City.

He told Master Ou to head there if he had no place to stay. He could rest there before deciding his next steps. Master Ou agreed, took the deed, and departed for Divine Weapon City.

Meanwhile, Han Wu and Qin Shuang traveled to Everlight City. Even though their destination was Divine Weapon City, the legendary Armament Spirit hadn't been born yet. Rather than waste time waiting and doing nothing, they decided to explore Everlight City in case they could discover something of interest.

Following the villagers' directions, they walked for half a day before finding themselves at Everlight City.

It was nighttime by the time they arrived, but the city glowed with lanterns and bright lights. The name was quite accurate.

After paying the entrance fee and presenting their identity plates for inspection, the two successfully entered the city. It was in full celebration, as if a festival were underway. Firecrackers burst in the streets, flower-shaped lanterns hung everywhere, and the citizens wore bright smiles.

Han Wu asked around to learn the reason for the festivities. A citizen explained that the city lord’s daughter was getting married, so the city lord had decreed ten days of celebration. Not only were the roadside stalls exempt from fees, but the shops also offered a 20% discount on wares to mark the occasion.

Han Wu found it interesting. A universal 20% discount was simple, yet effective in attracting customers. Sometimes, simplicity worked best.

They chose a random inn for their meal. They ordered a table full of food and spent only two gold coins. The price was remarkably low! Moreover, the inn had invited a speaker to advertise and spread the news of the city lord’s daughter's marriage for free to everyone else.

Although many parts of the story were exaggerated, it still entertained the many warriors who passed through the city. In fact, they loved gossip like this.

Han Wu and Qin Shuang listened as they ate. When they heard the name of the son-in-law, time seemed to stop. It was shocking, because his name was Sun Qingnian!

Despite the possibility of a shared surname and name, they more or less confirmed that it was the same Sun Qingnian they knew. They could not explain why, but their instincts told them so. To them, Sun Qingnian's method of living off women was as fundamental and immutable as a Law itself. He would never miss an opportunity to freeload.

"Should we... go and join his faction?" Han Wu suggested.

Qin Shuang nodded. If Sun Qingnian could rely on another woman to advance himself, it wouldn't be dishonorable for them to copy him by freeloading off him instead.

After finishing their meal, they ran toward the city lord's mansion.

Lanterns of various colors and shapes covered the grounds, and the entire mansion radiated celebration.

They approached a guard and said they were friends of Sun Qingnian.

The guard ignored Han Wu, but his gaze briefly lingered on the beautiful Qin Shuang. Without a choice, Han Wu took out ten gold coins and tried to bribe him into sending word that Sun Qingnian's friends were there.

Unexpectedly, the guard refused the gold and scolded them for even attempting to bribe him. This was the first time Han Wu had encountered someone in the Divine Weapon Civilization who wasn’t greedy, and the man was a guard at that!

Han Wu had to find another way now. Barging into the mansion would be a death sentence. He didn't know its layout, let alone where to find Sun Qingnian. It would also create trouble for Sun Qingnian if they forced their way inside.

He decided to use his locusts to deliver the message instead. He summoned a swarm and controlled them to infiltrate the mansion under the cover of darkness.

The mansion was heavily guarded, and it was difficult for one to evade the hidden surveillance. Moreover, bells that could detect energy emitted by monsters were strategically positioned throughout the grounds. They would ring the moment a monster entered their detection range, preventing any infiltration. Against the weak locusts, however, the guards, hidden sentries, and bells were useless.

Using them as mini surveillance drones, Han Wu soon located a courtyard filled with flowers and ribbons. It was most likely the residence of the city lord’s daughter.

Han Wu controlled the locust and quickly found Sun Qingnian. The locust perched near a window and picked up a youthful voice from inside. "Husband, I want to ride a horse."

Sun Qingnian's familiar voice followed. "Little Tuan, do you want to ride forward or backward?"

Han Wu was stumped. *Is there a difference between riding a horse forward or backward?*

He controlled the locust to squeeze through the gap and saw Sun Qingnian on all fours, his face and stomach turned upward. A young girl sat on his stomach, laughing in a clear, bright voice.