

Chapter 1311: Cup Demon Comes

Moving Star Shelter was riddled with bugs. It had been besieged and overwhelmed by a torrent of insects. There were ladybugs on the ground, like tanks to shelter infantry, and giant flying centipedes hovering and clogging the sky.

A variety of toxic insects, of varying proportions, dimensions, and powers, were coming from all around. If there was one constant between them all, it was that they were each a mighty creature that could take more than a few hits with a swatter to down.

Dry Bone King, Qing Jun King, and Blue Dinosaur were engaged in battle with the fiends. They were defending the shelter valiantly. Unfortunately, many of the buildings that filled the grounds of Moving Star Shelter had been toppled and broken into ruin.

Moment Queen was currently fighting a knight that rode atop one of the bugs in the sky.

And as she fought, so too did a lightning fox with ten electrified tails. This furry creature was engaged in combat with an emperor spirit.

Purple Emperor battled a blue centipede, and he arced the skies with bloody trails as he swiped the foe.

Moment Queen looked up higher from where she was, and she saw an emperor clad in chitin-forged armor. He looked down on the chaos that unfolded below and smiled in wretched delight.

There was a gold, humanoid super creature standing beside him.

“D*mmmit!” Moment Queen sputtered out.

Cup Demon Emperor had come to the shelter alongside an entourage of four additional emperor spirits, each with ten gene locks open. The host of creatures that accompanied them were nothing short of mighty, either.

The silver fox and Purple Emperor were able to engage and keep one emperor busy each.

Cup Demon and the berserk Gold General did not engage in the proceedings of the battlefield yet, though. As if they commanded the charge, they just watched and enjoyed the anarchic display down below.

Moment Queen was in the midst of combat against a duo of super creatures that had both opened nine gene locks. The rider was called Bug Knight, and the super creature it rode upon was called Toxic Bug.

The swarm of virulent insects almost choked the skies with their numbers, and the host was so thick, it was as if they formed a net over the entire shelter and the area surrounding it. Those who had been occupying the shelter were stuck fighting for their lives, whether they liked it or not.

All the occupants aside from the silver fox and Purple Emperor, that was. If things turned too awry and they either had to flee or die, only those two would likely be able to make an escape.

Moment Queen could only hope Han Sen would heed her call and return soon, but with how fast things were going wrong and how far away her master had traveled, she believed she'd be dead alongside the rest when he finally made it back.

Snowball was, of course, hiding as all this transpired. Blue Dinosaur was doing its best to withstand the punishing might of the three super creatures that had made it their target.

Baby Ghost was still weak, despite the time that had elapsed since his suffering, but he wasn't idle. He was currently being chased around by a snake-like super creature that had nine gene locks open.

Holy Rhino was the one beacon of hope for the tired battlers that did their best to defend the shelter. It repeatedly flashed its heals across the battlescape, doing its best to aid each of its allies.

The swarm of enemies and the damage they dealt would eventually catch up with them, but thus far, the only reason they were all still standing was because of the healing the Holy Rhino was able to dish out.

"Kill that rhino." Cup Demon smiled as he issued the command, knowing the felling of the rhino would be enough to crush their morale and lead to their submitting.

"Yes." Gold General did as it was bidden, and began its approach to the rhino.

Moment Queen saw him heading for their most valuable ally, but painfully realized they did not have the manpower to spare to save it. Gold General could not be stopped.

Seeing the Gold General about to strike the Holy Rhino, a silver light streaked by it.

Taking notice of this silver phantom, Gold General turned around to see the light zip upwards into the skies above him.

"You shouldn't be here!" the silver light cried out, as its form manifested in front of Gold General.

"Yes." Gold General smiled.

Gold General's body was bulky, and he looked heavy and cumbersome. But its appearance betrayed its true nature, which made it faster than most would imagine.

Xie Qing King was the silver light, and he roared as he threw a silver-wreathed punch at the golden fist that was also headed his way.

Boom!

The collision of their punches generated a most spectacular, balance-upsetting shockwave across the battlefield. Xie Qing King himself was sent backwards, barreling across the ground and through a building which then fell apart on top of him.

“Yes.” Gold General then resumed its approach to the Holy Rhino.

Boom!

The rubble that composed a destroyed building was sent flying all around like artillery, as a bloodied Xie Qing King emerged from the ruins.

The silver light that fueled the mad spirit was growing in volume.

“*sshole! You better pay for my shirt you just tore. This was a special crafting of the Alliance; 60% cotton, 40% polyester, boy!” Xie Qing King leaped into the air with a fist primed to knock Gold General’s head clean off its anchoring shoulders.

The silver light was so strong, it sent ripples through the fabric of the space they occupied.

The Gold General did not feel threatened, though, and he turned to repeat his previous performance. He threw a punch to meet with the new one that was coming.

Boom!

The silver light was like a super volcano, spitting out a torrent of lava that could melt the hardest of metals. And so, this silver leaped onto the Gold General in a bid to ravage its body.

“This isn’t even my final form!” Xie Qing King was gasping after unleashing that amount of power, but he did his best to keep his cool and spout a one-liner like his favorite humans from fiction did.

But when the silver light faded, it revealed Gold General who was simply hovering in the air unharmed.

Xie Qing King was stunned. The most powerful attack he could unleash was proven ineffective against the foe; this was something that had never happened before.

“Yes.” Gold General’s eyes blazed with the fire of murder, and he launched a punch targeting Xie Qing King’s head.

“Alu-Alu-Alu!” Xie Qing King used his silver light to deflect the incoming fist.

In the midst of the collision that ensued, more buildings collapsed. Pillars broke apart and tumbled over.

Pang!

Xie Qing King was thrown far backwards into a palace, the impact prompting him to spit out more blood.

Chapter 1312: Fighting with Full Power

Gold General landed in front of Xie Qing King’s battered and bloodied body. With each step, cracks formed on the ground, as an extra to his intimidating approach.

“Yes.” Gold General laughed and threw a wretched punch towards Xie Qing King.

Xie Qing King blazed his silver light as he quickly summoned the fumes of power that resided within him and punched back at the wicked foe that had beaten him.

He used every last ounce of power he could muster, going into this strike with the belief it could be his last. With great anger for the misdeed done upon him and what could possibly happen to everyone else in the shelter, he gave it his all.

“Alu-Alu-Alu-Alu!”

That complete release of strength led to a most magnificent display, as it leveled the palace and ruined everything around the two spirits that stood before each other.

Xie Qing King would never throw in the towel, even if the reaper had come knocking. Even if he was to stumble and fall, he'd do what he could to get the last laugh.

Gold General continued to smile as he broke the silver light that came for him. Then he broke it again, as Xie Qing King punched and punched with lesser strength each time.

There was a big difference between nine and ten gene locks, and that was the difference that separated the two. It was to be expected, though; after all, Gold General was Cup Demon's most favored subordinate. He was highly cherished and well looked after.

Xie Qing King had not opened his tenth gene lock, and despite fully acknowledging the power gap between the two, he did not concede. He wasn't going to, and he never would. Even with his body broken, he wasn't going to stop.

“End this pathetic display!” Cup Demon shouted, as he flew down towards the silver fox.

Cup Demon had come to realize Little Silver was the strongest out of all the creatures and spirits that populated the shelter.

And what's more, the ten gene lock emperor that had been going up against the furry blighter was now on the rails. The silver fox, with the repeated heals it kept on receiving, was still as fit as a fiddle.

“It's over...” Moment Queen sighed, wondering whether or not she should try to escape now before it was too late.

Moving Star Shelter had no spirit stone, so there was nothing tying anyone there. And neither did anyone have to worry a conquering of the shelter would result in Han Sen dying through the loss of a spirit stone.

Regardless of what could happen next, death would be the prevailing factor. It was an uphill battle against a force containing several times their strength and numbers. They had lost well before it began. Staying there could only lead to one thing, and that was them dying a fruitless death.

Death could come for her even if she did try to escape, but it was better that than the 100% certainty she would be killed by remaining.

If Moment Queen was the master of the shelter, she would command those defending there to flee. And if anything happened to the silver fox right now, she didn't think Han Sen would show much mercy to her or anyone else.

But Moment Queen was out of ideas on how she could remedy the situation or at the very least save the fox under fire.

No matter how strong Little Silver was, there was no way he could fight an emperor with ten gene locks open and the third Son of God at the same time.

But just as she saw Cup Demon approach the silver fox, something else appeared to stop the leading spirit.

Moment Queen was unable to fathom who might have come to their aid so suddenly.

It was a little girl Moment Queen saw, one with a purple horn, purple hair, and amethyst eyes. In her hands was her signature weapon, the Bone Dagger. She looked like the human girl that always used to accompany Han Sen and rarely spoke.

Moment Queen had never seen her like this before, and she couldn't be sure it was Zero due to her lifeforce being rather different.

But even if it was, she didn't think it mattered too much. She didn't think Zero was all that powerful, even in this new form she was taking on. There was no way she could hope to stop Cup Demon Emperor's approach, she thought. The little girl must just want to do her part, or something like that. If now was the end, it was now or never, anyway.

As Moment Queen pondered this peculiarity, she saw Cup Demon Emperor frown, commanding a legion of bugs to intercept her.

His command to the bugs was fast, almost panicked, yet in the face of all those insects, the little girl's resolve did not change. It was almost creepy, seeing how emotionless she was in the field of battle. She lifted her dagger as a red light began to gleam across it.

The light pierced through the host of bugs before her, with its ultimate target lying past them, in the region of Cup Demon Emperor's forehead.

Cup Demon Emperor evaded the red light that came for him, but somehow he hadn't. It was perplexing for Moment Queen herself to see. She had seen the spirit dodge, but somehow, the red light had still gotten him.

The mantra that said the Falsified-Sky power never missed was as accurate as ever.

"No way." Moment Queen was audibly amazed by what she saw. Never in her wildest dreams could she expect or even believe what her very own eyes were telling her; the quiet little girl that followed Han Sen around was able to one-hit kill an emperor such as that.

With one blink-and-you'll-miss-it hit, Cup Demon Emperor's lid had been peeled.

Pang!

Cup Demon Emperor exploded before everyone, which led to all the bugs vanishing with him.

Not long after, though, another crowd of bugs appeared. And out of that crowd came Cup Demon Emperor once more.

"You are strong, but you cannot kill me!" The newborn Cup Demon summoned a host of bugs once more.

This time, he watched her dagger closely. He hadn't been sure of what killed him earlier, so now he wanted to see.

Zero's expressionless face looked as unconcerned as ever, and so she simply raised the dagger up and lobbed it towards him.

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Gold General accepted the order and flashed with a gold light, ready to finish off Xie Qing King.

Pang! Pang! Pang!

Gold General punched Xie Qing King a few times, breaking most of the bones in his body.

Xie Qing King could no longer stand, as he had been damaged too much.

He wanted to stand and fight for the security of the shelter, but he was bleeding profusely and the lights in his eyes were starting to dim.

Gold General jumped up, ready to land his feet on Xie Qing King's head and break it open like a pinata.

Unable to dodge or do anything to repel this foe, Xie Qing King just watched the feet descend.

Chapter 1313: Three Chapters and You're Out!

A big white sphere appeared before Xie Qing King's eyes. The feet of his nemesis were continuing their descent, but they came into contact with the orb which plushly pushed down on Xie Qing King's face to cushion the blow. He was still alive.

Gold General raised his legs once more. Even if a ball-like cushion had come to soften the blow, he thought it curious how it had not been broken by his supercharged curb stomp.

After lifting up his leg, the squishy white thing returned to its spherical shape as if it had not been harmed in the slightest. The orb then began to circle around Xie Qing King, hoping to protect him from any further hits.

Snowball had spent most of his time with Xie Qing King, and they had fought alongside each other under dire circumstances once before. He was worried for his wellbeing, and despite being a scaredy-cat, even Snowball wasn't going to stand idly by while his friend suffered such terrible wrath.

Snowball used to find himself getting bullied in the shelter when he first came into Han Sen's care. After befriending Xie Qing King, though, this negative treatment stopped. And ever since then, it was only Bao'er who took the occasional time out to exercise her frustrations and bully Snowball.

Snowball was afraid of stepping out, risking his life for others. But he couldn't bear the thought of letting Xie Qing King die when he had the chance to do something. So, with a grand mustering of courage, he shielded himself in the white sphere, ran out to Xie Qing King, and tried to be as spry as he could to protect him.

Woof! Woof! Woof!

The furry creature's fear was greater than ever now that he was in harm's way, but he still jovially barked at Xie Qing King to let him know that he was there, and in delight at knowing that his initial rescue had been a success.

But Xie Qing King was injured too badly to respond, and he couldn't stand up, either.

Gold General looked at the white orb with much disdain and tried to curb stomp Xie Qing King again. Snowball quickly dashed beneath where the foot was to land and blocked the attempt. The ball was pushed down a great deal, but it did not break.

Gold General did this many times, and he tried stomping the white sphere multiple times in a row. As much as he was surprised, he was frustrated at his inability to break the white orb that taunted him.

Again and again, he stomped on the white sphere like a raving lunatic. But still, the orb held strong.

Gold General then tried something else, and he pulled out a golden spike from beneath his gauntlets. It was like a terrifying cocktail stick.

As if he was going to fiercely pop a balloon, he leaped towards the white ball and drove the spike into it like a stake would be driven into the heart of an incapacitated vampire before it woke.

The sphere was flattened, but not to the point it could pop just yet. Acknowledging the need for more strength, Gold General pushed down harder on the orb.

Like a mist of chalk, white dust began to clog the immediate vicinity as Gold General continued to press his sharp golden prod into Snowball's snowball. After an extra loud pang sound, the orb popped open to reveal the furry little critter that had been pestering Gold General. It came rolling out the orb roughly.

Gold General kicked Snowball away, as if he was simple vermin that was no longer worth his time.

The kick was a rough one, though. Snowball was sent coursing through a number of concrete walls before coming to a stop, shivering on the precipice of death.

The Holy Rhino immediately applied a heal on the creature, but it'd take a while for it to get back on its feet. And a restoration of its courage was another matter entirely.

Gold General now walked over to the Holy Rhino and tried to kill it, as it had initially sought to do.

"Stop!" A voice sounded from directly behind the general.

Gold General turned to see the bloodied, broken-bodied Xie Qing King standing there. His eyes gleamed with silver, wanting to make one last effort before submitting to the cold embrace of death.

"Yes." Gold General threw a punch towards Xie Qing King's head, in one last bid to destroy the noggin he so much loathed.

Xie Qing King was trembling with the last bit of power he wished to exhaust on his foe. He also knew there'd be no turning back now, as an attempt to dodge or block the attack would be futile.

One of Snowball's eyes had been squished like jelly after the kick it received earlier, and now, with its other one half-open, it looked at Xie Qing King and barked in sadness.

And unable to dodge the attack, all Xie Qing King could do now was hope he had bought the Holy Rhino enough time to supply everyone with what they needed, and for Han Sen to possibly return before it was too late.

Seeing the fist bear down on him, ready to finish him off, Xie Qing King looked at it with wide eyes. He wanted to see that which was trying to kill him; he wasn't going to turn away. And as he watched it come, he watched as another fist reached out from nowhere and blocked it.

Gold General was as shocked as Xie Qing King was, acknowledging it was Xie Qing King's own hand that had somehow stopped the hit despite his grievous injuries.

Xie Qing King grabbed the fist and smiled with a seething hiss.

"In my comic, sh*t characters like you don't survive more than three chapters," Xie Qing King said, as his lips formed a faint smirk.

"Yes." Gold General threw another fist at Xie Qing King.

Xie Qing King grabbed this fist, too, and said, "I was going to be nice and let you live, despite the fact you're some emperor's yes-man jellyfish. But then you go and hit my little homey over there? Bruh, you done goofed. It's time to write you out of this. I'll see you on the cutting room floor."

After that, Xie Qing King's body blazed with a silver light unlike anything anyone had ever witnessed before.

"No." Gold General could feel Xie Qing King unleashing the true extent of his powers, and he could quickly feel that strength overwhelming his own.

His hands were like chains, latched tightly around his fists. There was no escape.

Gold General, in his panic, tried to do all that he could to break free. He began swinging his legs like a madman in a bid to escape.

Gold General was happy that Xie Qing King had not tried to dodge his fierce kneeing, but that slight modicum of joy turned to shock and fright a second later.

His knee was only one inch away from striking Xie Qing King's belly, but it could go no further.

No matter what he tried, his knee kept stopping one inch short of its target.

"No!" Gold General was terrified. Loss was something he rarely felt, and more than anything right now, all he wanted to do was leave.

He wanted to leave, but Xie Qing King's grasp was too tight and forbade him from doing so.

"No!" Gold General could not repel the power, and he was dragged closer and closer into the silver sun before him.

Boom!

Gold General was pulled into the silver star, resulting in a devastating explosion that turned the entire sky silver.

"Argh!" Gold General let out one last scream of agony. A second later, it was cut short.

Moment Queen herself was shocked seeing this, and she watched as half the shelter was turned to gravel and dirt by the release of that power.

Everyone fell back seeing this. A giant crater was all that remained where that power had been unleashed, and at its center stood Xie Qing King. And that was all.

Next, Xie Qing King pulled out a cigar and lit it. With a deep inhale and a puff of outward smoke, he said, "Oh, I know what the ladies like. And to all you who seek to push their luck like the Golden Dong did? Listen up, because you don't get to fight the author and expect to win, boys and girls."

Xie Qing King gave Snowball a thumbs up.

Snowball came crawling out of the rubble, wishing to give a reply. But then, he saw Xie Qing King suddenly collapse as a stream of silver blood began to pour out of him.

Chapter 1314: Indestructible Cup

Moment Queen was overjoyed for a short while. She had not expected Xie Qing King would be able to actually open ten gene locks and defeat Gold General.

But whether or not he'd live to see another day had yet to be determined. He had exhausted far too much strength and energy in unleashing that devastating hit, and it had left him on death's door. At the very least, he had helped turn the tides on the enemy and give them a hope of pulling through to emerge victorious.

“If that little girl can drive the final few nails into Demon Cup Emperor’s coffin, we might just pull through this,” Moment Queen thought to herself, as she looked on Zero with hopeful eyes.

Cup Demon Emperor had been killed by the Bone Dagger again, but just like last time, he had been brought to life out of another bug.

He had been killed four times by now, but no matter what Zero did, he kept coming back a few seconds later.

It was as if a bug took on his appearance, lifeforce, and everything about him. They behaved like him and even made use of his powers to the same strength and extent.

Moment Queen watched the bugs intently, whenever she could. There had to be something she could learn through observation, a trick or a puzzle she could decipher, which could lead to a solution they could employ in taking out Cup Demon Emperor for good.

The bugs that turned into Cup Demon Emperor did not look all that special compared to the several others that were buzzing around. It seemed to her as if any random bug of his could serve as a re-animation host.

“What is this power he wields? Gah! We need information if we are to solve this conundrum.” Moment Queen wracked her mind for a possible solution.

She watched the proceedings for a while, but she was unable to learn anything.

If Serpent Throne was with them, things would be considerably easier, she believed.

Moment Queen wondered where it was, and recalled it was currently in Thunder Hell Shelter. Even if it was to come over and aid in the battle, it would take a good long while to arrive. There was a great distance separating this shelter from the others.

Cup Demon Emperor frowned, seeing his beloved Gold General be killed.

For a berserk super creature like that to be killed by a spirit that had just opened ten gene locks, he thought it was humiliating.

“I need to hurry up and end all these vermin,” Cup Demon Emperor said to himself, as his eyes flashed with an ominous thunder.

Suddenly, countless bugs appeared, each of them turning into a carbon copy of Cup Demon Emperor. They all flew forward in a swarm to put an end to the girl that had caused him so much strife.

Moment Queen’s face turned grim when she saw this. She thought he could only copy himself once.

But all of a sudden, there were now six Cup Demon Emperors coming for the girl. With the real one, that made seven.

She observed each of them, noting how they were all as powerful as each other, all as powerful as the real Cup Demon Emperor.

Moment Queen was worried, thinking the girl might end up getting killed. The girl had defied her expectations, but what she was faced with now was far greater than anything that had come before.

But with events concerning Zero, a defiance of expectations was a common occurrence. Moment Queen almost had her socks blown off, when she saw Zero slay each and every copy of Cup Demon Emperor with ease. It truly was as if she was swatting a bunch of bothersome flies.

Every time she attacked, there'd be one Cup Demon Emperor less to deal with.

But when these Cup Demon Emperor copies died, more and more were summoned to take their places.

Moment Queen was flabbergasted. Even when she was at her strongest, at peak performance before her fall from grace, not even she had achieved such wild amounts of power.

Although the girl could not kill Cup Demon Emperor entirely, she had easily exerted what was necessary to do so many times over. And she had greatly suppressed Cup Demon Emperor and his plans by killing him over and over, not letting him go free to deal with other matters on the battlefield.

"So, how do we kill him once and for all?" Moment Queen was still searching for the answer.

She noticed ten was the max number of copies he could create of himself at any given time.

"I may not know what power he possesses, but there is no way he can keep respawning so easily. Unless his true body is not connected to these or something? Would that mean none of those bodies are real? And if that was so, where does his true self lie?" Moment Queen's mind was a tangled brush of questions right now.

Moment Queen's eyes then flashed. In her mind, she recorded the precise moment a bug turned into a copy of Cup Demon Emperor.

She kept replaying the sight in her mind, over and over again, desperate to learn something new or find the trick to this entire shenanigan.

And eventually, she did catch something strange.

She smiled, thinking she might have learned something. She said to herself, "They really aren't real. They're little more than doppelgangers."

Moment Queen was not entirely correct. If it was a doppelganger, Zero would have been able to kill the real one just as easily. The Asura Sutra could destroy the spirit stone when killing the spirit itself, after all.

The fabricated emperors were like pets of Cup Demon Emperor himself.

He placed his power in one bug and turned it into a copy of himself. When that "cup" was killed, he could make another one just as easily as he had made the first.

And because Cup Demon Emperor had opened ten gene locks, he could create ten active cups at the same time.

Unfortunately, that did not matter much. Moment Queen only wanted to find out where the real Cup Demon Emperor was. Cut off the head of the snake, and the body dies, after all.

Suddenly, she smiled again, saying, "Aha! I found you."

Chapter 1315: Godslayer Legend

Moment Queen had been looking for the true spirit, but in her constant re-watches of the video she had recorded in her mind, she did notice something.

With every bug that became Cup Demon Emperor, she saw another smaller bug writhe around them. It was like a little football, but its dominant color was black, and it possessed a cup on its back.

It was camouflaged well, so it didn't stick out. That was why spotting it had been so difficult and it had taken so long, but whenever a bug became a cup, that little one was around it.

Unfortunately, finding it was difficult, and she didn't think she could keep an eye on it alone.

Before the bugs became copies of Cup Demon Emperor, the little bug that possessed a cup on its back was similar to a chimney that was emitting black smoke.

It disappeared quickly, and then, the bugs that were around it would become those copies of Cup Demon Emperor.

"That must be it!" Moment Queen watched it intently now, with her own two eyes. She was able to spot it every now and again, emitting the black smoke like a puff of perfume. And then, when this occurred, she'd see the big bugs in its vicinity transform and take on the shape of Cup Demon Emperor.

She didn't take action just yet, though. It'd be impossible for her to walk up and kill it, considering how agile it was. She knew she should take her time and not be so hasty.

Seeing the little girl do her thing, Moment Queen decided to teleport next to her.

Then, over the fraction of a second, she went elsewhere right past her. But just before she did this, her lips swiftly moved to speak and provide Zero the intel she sought to impart.

With how quickly she was going, any onlookers would only see Moment Queen hurriedly speed right past her.

The bug knight Moment Queen was still dealing with eventually caught up to her, spitting out silk in an attempt to trap her.

Moment Queen evaded everything it tried to do effortlessly, and unbeknownst to her opponent, she was still secretly keeping an eye on the little girl and her own dilemma.

But more importantly, she was keeping track of where the black bug with a cup on its back was scurrying to.

Suddenly, Moment Queen teleported to the black bug and used her geno sword to stab it.

Dong!

Moment Queen was incredibly fast, and before the eyes of the opponent, it was as if she had vanished into thin air.

Unfortunately, her sword was unable to pierce the shell of the little bug. And while that was dismaying, it was enough. That was because she had left an ugly white mark across the carapace, which worked against its black camouflage.

The bug was maddened by what she had tried to do, though. Like the exhaust of a humvee or the flue of an upset volcano, it began emitting its black smoke everywhere.

Moment Queen quickly dashed away from the smoke, not wanting to hang around and find out what effects it might have on her. But the bug wasn't keen to let her transgression slide. With great anger, it made the decision to chase after Moment Queen, but it was all too late. A Bone Dagger had pinned it in its place.

The bug squealed and squirmed for a couple of seconds, before exploding into a thick, soupy, red haze. When the bug died, all the Cup Demon Emperor copies went with it. They all went up in a puff of smoke.

And then, in tandem, the enemies that had come to the shelter sought to flee the battle. In great terror and fright, the host that had come to conquer the shelter began running away in every direction they could.

Moment Queen immediately started killing them as they went, and picked off any stragglers she could.

In Cup Demon Shelter, there was a robed spirit staring at a can. Inside the can were three black bugs with cups on their backs.

"The heir of Godslayer Luo has revealed himself. My Cup Demon has died; send word. I am sure the emperors of this realm will relish the opportunity to aid me." The spirit smiled. And then, many black bugs began to fly out from underneath his fingers.

In Moving Star Shelter, Snowball and Xie Qing King clutched each other tightly as they were electrocuted back to full health.

They were the ones who had been injured the most, and the silver fox was keen—almost too keen—to help them recover.

"I'm groovy! I'm fit as a fiddle!" Xie Qing King pleaded, beneath the brutality of the electricity he was being forced to endure.

Unheeding, the silver fox continued shocking them both back to full health.

Woof! Snowball said, in a half-squeal.

Moment Queen performed a quick headcount and noted not many had died, primarily through the healing distributed by the Holy Rhino and the silver fox. Unfortunately, the shelter itself was in wild disarray. There was little of it left following the carnage.

They had managed to kill seven creatures all in all, but the strongest of them had been vaporized by Xie Qing King. There was not a trace of its body left to be found.

The black-haired lady Zero was busy preparing food, as everyone regained some happiness in the jovial mood brought on by victory. Moment Queen stared at the girl for a while, thinking about how much she admired her. She knew the girl was the purple-haired lady.

Even Dry Bone King looked at her with admiration.

They were all shocked by Zero's performance that day, and how after all the time they had spent together, they had not known the full extent of what she could do. She wasn't just the near-mute cook Han Sen kept as a companion. There was something special about her, that was for sure.

Across the Third God's Sanctuary, black bugs were individually being sent to emperor shelters.

"Gu Demon, what are you up to?" an emperor asked, while looking at the bug.

The bug then displayed a video of Zero fighting ten Cup Demon Emperors, all at once.

"Godslayer Luo?" the emperor said, as he stared at Zero with a sudden feeling of contempt.

"The heir of Godslayer Luo has come."

"I would like to see the true extent of his power."

"The time for revenge has come."

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Across all the emperor shelters, their rulers all looked to be in shock.

Chapter 1316: One Versus the Whole Sanctuary

It took Han Sen four days to return to Moving Star Shelter.

By the time he got back, the fight was already over and the crisis had been averted, or at the very least met head-on during his absence and resolved in a massive battle he had missed out on.

When Han Sen returned, though, he wasn't exactly delighted at the results. Before him lay the ruins and remnants of what was once a glorious and immaculately conceived and constructed shelter. And in the midst of the ruins was Xie Qing King, who seemed to be enjoying a nice, cold beer. Still, he was glad the place had been saved and his companions had pulled through.

"Good job." Han Sen gave him a high-five.

Han Sen had heard what had transpired through Thorn Queen, especially what Xie Qing King had managed pull off in order to kill Gold General.

"I am Xie Qing King, not Xie Qing Emperor," Xie Qing King said.

"I thought you were a super emperor now!" Han Sen said, in hysterics.

Fortunately, no one had died during the siege. An incredible thing, too, given how hairy things became. Having the silver fox and the Holy Rhino around to heal was a brilliant thing, and they had both proven themselves to be invaluable assets to the composition of Han Sen's primary force, despite Xie Qing King's personal feelings towards Little Silver's shock therapy treatment.

The talent of healing was quite rare, overall. Individually, such creatures had a hard time surviving due to their weakness in attacking.

And because of that, it was difficult for them to level up.

Nine gene lock creatures like the Holy Rhino were an extremely rare find, and it was no wonder its original owner had gone to such lengths to procure it.

Saint Fan himself made sure to use the Holy Rhino a lot, too, and it had proven a great asset for him, before his death.

Han Sen, Thorn Queen, and Xie Qing King were having a merry chat when Moment Queen exited the spirit hall, heading in their direction. Moment Queen didn't seem like her usual self, though. In fact, she was looking quite grim. It prompted the interest and concern of those talking.

"Can someone tell me who Godslayer Luo is?" Moment Queen asked.

Moment Queen was in the Second God's Sanctuary when Godslayer Luo was in the third, so it wasn't too surprising to learn she did not know much about him.

"A human elite; why? What's wrong?" Han Sen thought her asking such a question was strange. Something was amiss.

Moment Queen pointed at Zero and said, "I just returned from the spirit base. All the spirits there are saying she is the heir of this Godslayer Luo guy, and that they're all planning to kill her as revenge or something."

"Define the all that is planning to kill her."

Han Sen knew this was going to happen, one way or another. Spirits were quite vengeful creatures, but none had yet learned he was the true heir to Godslayer Luo.

He didn't expect this to become an issue this far down the line, though, prompted by a misunderstanding.

Still, he wasn't too afraid. Han Sen was an incredibly mighty person now, and he'd do whatever it took to protect Zero, provided she even needed protection—the wild and wonderful thing she was.

Moment Queen went ahead to say, "All the spirits want to kill Zero. They know we are in her company. We're on our own out here. This is bad!"

"Well, what can we do about it? We're not feeding Zero to the dogs, if that's what your poisonous heart is contemplating," Han Sen mused.

Moment Queen suggested, "We go into hiding. We go underground, like, literally. We give this dump up for now. Go to the underground shelter, have a nice cold pint, and wait for all this to blow over."

"And what about the humans we've ensured the security of?" Han Sen asked.

Han Sen had asserted control and assured the safety of many shelters by this point. There were many humans, far more than the underground shelter could offer refuge to.

"Maybe they can go hide in that Alliance place Xie Qing King likes to drone on about?" Moment Queen offered.

Han Sen rejected the idea, saying, "No. If we lose the shelters, we might as well off them ourselves."

Moment Queen said, "I fear you are having difficulty grasping the gravitas of the situation here. There are at least a dozen emperors coming, all looking to plant Zero's head on a pike. She's a remarkable fighter, I'll give her that, but this is a threat that is too much for any one person to even dream of defeating."

"I'll help her fight, and fine: tell the humans to return to the Alliance while we sort this out," Han Sen conceded.

"And how do you hope to stop this enemy force? It'll only take one punch off one of them to end our lives," Moment Queen thought Han Sen was overestimating his own talent. He was jeopardizing everything by being so cocky and boisterous, she believed.

Moment Queen composed herself and then said, "The second, fourth, fifth, and seventh Son of Gods are on their way. We hide or we die, it's that simple!"

"Let them come. I will kill them all," Han Sen said, casually.

“Yeah, what are you fussing about? Back in the day, when I had to face a siege, I didn’t have any fancy-schmancy super creatures to heal. We had sticks! Two sticks, and a rock for the whole shelter—and we had to share the rock! Buck up, girl, you are one very lucky spirit!” Xie Qing King said, chucking the remainder of his beer away. It was difficult to tell if he was being serious or not.

“This is madness!” Moment Queen had no clue what was going through their minds anymore.

“Madness? This is the Third God’s Sanctuary! Have some godd*mn faith, Moment Queen. I have a plan! So, for now, go and tell humans to return to the Alliance. Things are going to heat up, of course, but we’ve weathered worse storms than this. They will not crush us,” Han Sen said.

Moment Queen was unable to convince them to change their course of action, so she ended up having no choice but to abide by their decision. She notified the other shelters as she was told to.

Han Sen then got deep into planning out how he was going to defeat what was coming and turn the tides in his favor. He wanted to take over the entire sanctuary, anyway.

Han Sen had opened ten gene locks with Jadeskin, and with Little Angel by his side, slaying emperors should prove no problem, he thought.

With Zero and the silver fox’s help, he wagered he’d be able to take on thirty emperors without even breaking a sweat.

Thorn Queen came to Han Sen in a bit of a rush, and then she presented the snake egg. There were cracks running along the shell, suggesting it was about to hatch.

Not long after, it all came apart as a red-scaled dragon emerged, saying, “Oh yeah! I’m back.”

Han Sen smiled and said, “Well, you just remember to keep your end of this bargain. We made a deal, remember?”

“Of course! A hundred years is nothing. You are too kind!” Dragon King was starting to talk more like a human now.

Chapter 1317: Asura’s Betrayal

“Well, now that I know you’re on my side, I have a problem you might be able to help me with.” Han Sen went on to tell Dragon King about the coming siege Moment Queen had reported.

“Are you saying the entire Third God’s Sanctuary is against us? And who is Godslayer Luo, anyway?” Dragon King asked, with widened eyes.

“He was a human who slaughtered a bunch of spirits in this place,” Han Sen explained succinctly.

“Are you sure? How could he have triggered the ire of so many emperors if all he did was go about killing and conquering, very much like what you have done?” Dragon King thought it was quite strange.

Han Sen admitted, "I don't know the full story behind it, I'll be honest. But to make so many spirits and emperors hate him, he must have done something far worse than kill a bunch of pompous spirits. This is unusual, I'll confess."

"This..." Dragon King did not believe he was hearing the truth. That wasn't to say he believed Han Sen was lying, mind.

Han Sen then slowly started to say, "I have heard that Godslayer Luo wields the power of Asura."

"Pah! Don't feed me that cowpat. I'm the only person in existence who knows the true power of Asura," Dragon King said, with confidence.

"Isn't it the Asura Sutra? And you're the sole one? How can you know, but not the other generals?" Han Sen asked.

"The Asura Sutra is..." Dragon King's talk suddenly trailed off. When he resumed his speech, he said, "How dare you! Stop trying to trick me into telling you. This Godslayer chap couldn't have the power of Asura, because he isn't Asura."

"The Asura Sutra isn't even that good. Zero learned it, and all she did was go a little hyper and kill a spirit. That's what has prompted all the other emperors to take up arms and go after her. It's a little too much of a coincidence, though, don't you think?" Han Sen explained further.

"But humans are unable to learn the Asura Sutra," Dragon King said, resolutely.

Han Sen then went to find Zero and bring her before Dragon King so she could demonstrate the Asura powers she could wield.

"Impossible! Impossible. Impossible! Impossible. Impossible! How are humans able to practice the Asura Sutra?! Impossible. Impossible! Impossible," Dragon King repeated, as if the shock had thrown him into a daze.

"Godslayer Luo's Falsified-Sky Sutra is practically the same as the Asura Sutra," Han Sen told him.

"You're talking crap." Dragon King refused to believe what he was hearing.

Han Sen smiled and said, "I have a blood relation with Godslayer Luo; I am the true heir. It isn't Zero. And I have read the Falsified-Sky Sutra and I can confirm, 100%, they are one and the same."

Dragon King didn't even say anything in response to this claim.

So, Han Sen spoke again, telling him, "My sister has practiced the Falsified-Sky Sutra, and I have seen her use it in action. The powers are the same, and now, I have a personal stake in all this trouble. The last thing I want, when she comes here to the Third God's Sanctuary, is for her to suffer what I am about to go through. I don't want emperors looking to bully her because of a skill she possesses."

Dragon King appeared to be conflicted, but shock was the prevailing emotion. And he was feeling so much shock, he could hardly speak.

Han Sen went on to say, "In the Alliance, there is another race of beings. They aren't human, and they are whom we call shura. The Falsified-Sky Sutra was retrieved from a tomb belonging to one of their perished kings."

Dragon King finally responded, and he asked, "What do they look like? These... shura?"

Han Sen described their appearance, and Dragon King's face distorted.

"Can you tell me if there is a relation between the shura and this stuff?" Han Sen asked.

Dragon King told Han Sen, "I don't know why I..."

"If you don't help me find a solution to this problem of ours, it's us versus the rest of the sanctuary. We're both in the same boat here," Han Sen said.

Dragon King nibbled his lips before talking again. "Okay, tell me what you want to know. Personally, I don't think anything I tell you will be of any service, but if peace of mind is enough, then I am here for your elucidation."

"Tell me what you can, then," Han Sen said.

Dragon King sighed and said, "Fine. Even if didn't tell you, the truth would have to come out eventually."

Dragon King went quiet for a while, as if he was composing what he was about to say. Then, after a period of silence elapsed, he said, "You were right. Mister Ancient Devil summoned a demi-god with a Demi-God Geno Core, but you were wrong in the suggestion that he used us as the sacrifice. He was able to summon the super creatures and spirits necessary, but that aside, he required my help."

"Help?" Han Sen did not understand what help Dragon King could provide, or if the summoning of a demi-god even required help when he was able to do it so simply.

Dragon King said, "I told you that demi-gods will help you after being summoned. But, as with all things, it depends on their mood on that particular day. And what's more, Ancient Devil Emperor did not summon a demi-god for aid."

"What did he want, then?" Han Sen had a guess in mind, but he still wanted to ask for confirmation.

Dragon King said, "He wanted to kill the demi-god and take the core for himself."

Han Sen was able to guess this, but still, hearing that was what Ancient Devil Emperor wished to do was rather unnerving to hear.

"And what happened then? Did he succeed?" Han Sen asked.

"Of course," Dragon King paused, and then went on to say, "Well, success is all relative."

"And what is that supposed to mean?" Han Sen frowned.

"Mister Ancient Devil did trick the demi-god, but it wasn't him who killed the summoned one. And it wasn't him who took the core," Dragon King said.

“Asura?” Han Sen was shocked.

“Yes. He killed the demi-god and took the Demi-God Geno Core. That was what formed the basis of the betrayal incident you have long pestered me about.”

Chapter 1318: Strange Demi-God

Han Sen waited for Dragon King to finish his speech, but he struggled to believe the validity of the tale he had just been told.

If Ancient Devil Emperor wanted to fight a demi-god, would it even be possible for him to be careless enough to allow a subordinate to not only stealing his kill, but take the Demi-God Geno Core, as well?

And if Asura was able to get away with doing so, on the circumstance of what could be considered dumb luck, how could he have been strong enough to turn against Ancient Devil Emperor, so much so that it influenced others to betray their supposed leader, too?

Furthermore, Ancient Devil Emperor already had a Demi-God Geno Core of his own. Why would he risk everything by using it to slay another demi-god, just so he could obtain another?

Just like the jue Han Sen possessed, they weren't artifacts that boosted the abilities of a person in any way.

Dragon King and Yaksha, up to this point, had not spoken a single word concerning the betrayal. Although Dragon King had now stepped forward to elucidate a few minor details, the majority of the mystery Han Sen had long sought to uncover still remained fogged and unlearned.

Han Sen's mind was clogged with a number of questions, just as it always was. And he earnestly hoped Dragon King would be willing to give him the answer he wanted most.

But it seemed as if he had overstepped his own boundaries, because he had reeled back now and quit being so talkative.

He was Han Sen's servant now, though, so Han Sen wasn't going to stop prodding him for more answers. After learning the few tidbits he had, Han Sen was hungry for more. He decided to ask, “How did Asura manage to kill a demi-god? What did he get out of doing that?”

Dragon King's lips trembled and tripped over each other, holding in words that weren't quite willing to part his vocal box. He looked away for a moment, as if to consider what exactly he should say. When he was ready, he turned back to look at Han Sen and said, “It's complicated. The entire thing is like a feverish dream when I remember it now. Truth be told, we weren't entirely sure whether or not it was a demi-god we had actually killed.”

Han Sen wasn't really sure what to make of that, so he pushed for more and asked, "Didn't you just say you summoned one? How can you not know you summoned a demi-god, when you went through the necessary steps for the summoning of a demi-god?"

Dragon King was still remaining mum about the crux of the issue, skirting around the subject as best he could.

Han Sen was worried Dragon King would buckle. It was obviously a difficult subject for him to talk about, and it was impressive he had given up as much as information as he had. Han Sen didn't want him retreating back into some sort of shell and refusing to say more.

Dragon King said, "Mister Ancient Devil used the core to summon a demi-god, but it was... weird."

"What was so strange about it?" Han Sen enquired.

Dragon King said, "Mister Ancient Devil planned on summoning a weak demi-god. He could learn the strength of a demi-god by examining their altar before he committed to the summoning ritual."

"He had more than one Demi-God Geno Core, and eventually, he settled on one for the sacrifice. The altar, however, was so weak that it was unable to consume a super creature that was offered in sacrifice; alive, leastways. And this weakness was reflected in the demi-god himself, when he was fully summoned."

"No matter how weak demi-gods are, they must have a fitness of at least five thousand. That's right, isn't it?" Han Sen asked.

Han Sen had learned about demi-gods through the Ji family. The Fourth God's Sanctuary's weakest creatures had a fitness level of five thousand, and that was the bare minimum. Survival in such a place, for any human, was a trial and a half.

Grandpa Ji told Han Sen that even if he did manage to obtain a greater fitness number than five thousand, he should never underestimate the creatures and spirits of that place.

Even if they were weak in the Third God's Sanctuary, they'd be no laughing matter in the Fourth God's Sanctuary.

"He was going to use our collective power and geno treasures to kill a demi-god. Even if we were unable to kill the demi-god we summoned, making it bleed and collecting its blood would make the venture worthwhile. After all, it was a being that inhabited the Fourth God's Sanctuary we were summoning, and it was only natural for us all to be afraid and nervous with the task at hand. But when that demi-god appeared before us, it was already on the precipice of death. Killing it would have been an easy job for any one of us."

"Whoa, you guys were that lucky?" Han Sen was surprised to hear they were that fortunate.

"Lucky?" Dragon King gave Han Sen a strange look before proceeding to say, "None of his plans were of any worth, so Asura stepped forth and killed it. Then, he took his power! It was like the savage twist of a knife, and suddenly, there was division in the ranks and contention amongst the generals. A fight broke out, and it resulted in the utter ruin of Ancient Devil Shelter."

“It sounds like Asura did a good, old-fashioned kill steal. I don’t really see what the big fuss is about. Couldn’t you guys have just talked it out?” Han Sen was a little underwhelmed, learning this was the answer to the mystery he had long wished to be revealed.

Dragon King looked at Han Sen strangely once more, and he told him, “I said the demi-god looked weird, didn’t I?”

“Yeah, weird. As in, it’s weird this emperor we summoned is dying weird, right?” Han Sen said.

“It would have been lucky if that had actually happened.” Dragon King paused and sighed for a brief moment, before explaining, “Before the demi-god died, he said something that chilled our very bones.”

“Okay, and what did he say?” Han Sen asked. He wished Dragon King spoke a little faster, as it aggravated Han Sen when every word and syllable was delivered so slowly.

“He said he was God.” Dragon King’s voice trembled to speak that final word.

“God?!” Han Sen had heard a lot about some figure proclaiming itself to be God, and he didn’t think Dragon King was preaching about the Big Cheese of Christianity when saying this.

It sounded just like the God figure Han Jinzhi was said to have met.

Chapter 1319: Completely Erased

“Well, it might be normal for some demi-gods to refer to themselves as gods, right? It’s in their title, after all. I know enough stuffy spirits around these parts that have a god complex,” Han Sen said, grasping at straws for a possible reason why the spirit might have called itself God.

“Well, those thoughts crossed our minds, too. And thinking it to be arrogance, we wanted to kill it even more. That, however, was when the spirit said something else.” When Dragon King’s sentence came to a close, his face drooped into an unsettling grimace.

Han Sen did not ask or prompt him to tell what was said; he just stared at Dragon King intensely.

With bent vocals, Dragon King stuttered out a few words. He said, “Whoever kills God will be erased.”

Han Sen didn’t think much of it, at first. More than anything, he believed the demi-god that called itself God was merely bluffing. It was like a riff on the cliché of, “If you strike me down, I’ll become more powerful than you could possibly imagine.” That sort of thing.

It would either be that, or “I’ll haunt your *ss from beyond the grave.”

Dragon King went on to elaborate, given the awkward silence that followed what he had just spoken. He said, “Again, we didn’t care much for what the demi-god said. Asura had heard enough of the pompous spirit he believed it to be, and with great anger, he struck it down. This, of course, was to the grand and terrible displeasure of Mister Ancient Devil.”

“Me and Asura were tight. We were very good friends. That being said, I knew where my allegiances lay, and I did not want to betray Mister Ancient Devil. The others, for whatever reasons compelled them, did not. They were with Asura and immediately started fighting.”

“Asura was the strongest out of us all, though. After he killed the demi-god, that might and power were only amplified.”

“Those who followed him believed Asura would win. And as spirits often do, they gravitated towards the strongest amongst them, which was likely to be him. If Mister Ancient Devil was going to lose, of course the generals would want to support the master that took his place. But that did not come to pass, and shortly after the transgression, he disappeared.” Dragon King almost looked afraid, speaking this.

“What do you mean exactly?” Han Sen asked. The tale was riveting, and he was eager for an elaboration of every detail.

“He disappeared. He vanished. He was simply gone. The prevailing belief over what might have occurred was split between two ideas; either he was taken to the Fourth God’s Sanctuary, or he legged it and had no need for anyone else.”

Dragon King’s speech stumbled once more, as it frequently did. After a breath for composure, he went on to say, “Aside from those of us who accompanied Mister Ancient Devil in the hopes of slaying a summoned demi-god, everyone seemed to forget Asura’s existence. He was a famous spirit, and his name was heralded far and wide. But after those events, it was like he had been forgotten about. Everyone forgot who he was! Even spirits who had known him for one-hundred-thousand years forgot the name “Asura.” Neither his creatures nor his heirs recalled who he was. It was just as that frightening spirit had said, before its death... He who killed him would be completely erased!”

“The only ones who remembered him were the generals that were there with him, but even that was only for a brief while. Even they soon forgot.”

Dragon King looked visibly afraid as he told this story, and he leaned closer to tell Han Sen, “Before Asura left, though, he made me swear not to tell anyone what had transpired that day. He also wrote down the sutra on my scale. He told me to look after the people who practiced that power, and while I initially believed him to be talking about his kids, I later learned none of them had practiced his powers.”

“I tried looking for Asura for a long time after, but over time, the notoriety of our band began to fade, too. Even we were forgotten about; Mister Ancient Devil, included. We faded to legend, and then to myth, and then to nothing. The only difference was, we remained here,” Dragon King explained.

Han Sen was shocked, hearing all this. He told him, “Maybe Asura was taken to the Alliance, and the shura are his descendants. And maybe that’s why they cannot enter the sanctuaries. It all adds up!” If the story was true, Han Sen firmly believed that to be the most logical reason. The pieces seemed to fit.

Dragon King said, "You could be right! And if you have shura blood, you can practice the Asura Sutra. I've stewed in the memory of this strange affair for far too long, and I think it's time I myself received some answers."

Han Sen knew Dragon King had told him everything he could, and there was little more he knew. His mention of the shura blood was curious, but it had thinned and become so light, the relation was practically non-existent.

The one with the true blood relation was the Luo family who followed the shura.

"Maybe I'll need to enter that shura tomb myself and do a little archaeology if I'm to search for definitive answers. In retrospect, it's almost a shame I did not associate myself a little more with the Luo family. Given my history and spats with them, I doubt they'd let me take a peek in their big book of secrets now," Han Sen's mind wandered down the various avenues of how he might learn even more.

Han Sen told Dragon King more about the shura and the Falsified-Sky Sutra, after that.

Judging from what he was told, Dragon King started to believe Asura must have indeed gone to the Alliance. But in regards to how that had even happened, he had no clue.

Perhaps he broke through the dimension, but if that was what had happened, Asura would have found himself in the Fourth God's Sanctuary, instead. The demi-god they had killed most certainly had some strange powers.

"I wonder, is Asura still alive?" Han Sen asked himself, fancying an encounter with him one day. He'd have much to ask.

If his spirit stone had not broken, he should still be alive. Provided the rules for spirits still applied, even when they were outside the sanctuaries.

Chapter 1320: Another Lock

"If Ancient Devil Emperor killed a demi-god, what would he gain from obtaining a core and its blood? Minus the whole being erased business, mind you." Han Sen wondered this, reflecting on all he had been told in his conversation with Dragon King.

With the magnitude of Ancient Devil Emperor power, he was the sort to have no problem ascending to the Fourth God's Sanctuary and becoming a demi-god. From what he had heard, there would be no need for him to try something as risky as challenging a demi-god in the Third God's Sanctuary.

There must have been a great benefit or bonus to achieve and retrieve, by willingly summoning a demi-god and attempting to kill one. Even the weakest demi-god would be no laughing matter to deal with.

What transpired after Asura killed the demi-god went completely against what anyone imagined might happen. Even Ancient Devil Emperor must not have expected the results, and so that was a catalyst for Han Sen asking this.

Dragon King answered, saying, "Mister Ancient Devil said spirits and creatures, and now humans I guess, could only open ten gene locks. If you became a demi-god, you were unable to open any more."

"He must have opened ten of them, yes?" Han Sen asked. He thought this was a given, but asking for confirmation did not hurt.

Dragon King said, "He did, yes. But he was driven by the belief that more could be unlocked."

"There is an eleventh gene lock?" Han Sen asked.

"Not quite. There is another gene lock, but it isn't one of simple progression. It operates on a slightly different spectrum," Dragon King said.

"Okay, and what's the difference?" This was the first Han Sen was hearing about such a thing, and he was keen to learn more.

"Admittedly, I'm not entirely sure. Mister Ancient Devil didn't tell us much about it, but other emperors pursued the opening of this gene lock, too."

Dragon King continued, saying, "Mister Ancient Devil strived tirelessly to open it. He worked on it for the longest time, employing various different means and methods. He never was successful. The demi-god method was his last resort."

Dragon King did not explain what this special gene lock was, so Han Sen was still at a loss.

"Is No God Emperor like Ancient Devil Emperor, I wonder? Is he going after this special gene lock? The dude wrecks, and he could totally become a demi-god if he wanted to. There has to be something keeping him here, not wanting to ascend just yet." Han Sen mulled the oddities surrounding his latest nemesis.

Han Sen returned to the Alliance shortly after the discussion was over, at the behest of Ji Ruozhen who had given him a call.

Han Sen picked it up and said, "Hey Dad, how's Mom?"

Ji Yanran's mother had been sick for a while. It wasn't an illness of any life-threatening capacity, but he still thought it polite to ask.

Ji Ruozhen seemed to not be in the mood for the exchanging of social niceties, and he immediately asked, "Did you send all those humans back to the Alliance? If you did... is it true?"

"Hmm, that depends. What did you hear?" Han Sen asked.

Ji Ruozhen explained to Han Sen, "The spirits believe a child of Godslayer Luo is in one of your shelters, and now they're out for blood."

Han Sen told him, "Yes, I sent all the humans back. I'll get this situation ironed out, though, don't worry. And when I've resolved the matter, they can all go back."

"Hmm, what are you planning to do?" Ji Ruozhen asked.

Han Sen told it to him straight, "Fight, of course!"

"You really think you can pull a feat such as that off? You've accomplished things not thought possible, so I won't doubt you. But you're certain you can pull this off?" Ji Ruozhen sounded worried for Han Sen's wellbeing.

"Yes, I'm certain." Han Sen answered Ji Ruozhen resolutely, with no room for doubts or second-thoughts.

Ji Ruozhen said, "Good. But take care, please. Take a step back and understand the gravitas of this situation, for the entire stake of humanity's advancement in the Third God's Sanctuary will be in your hands. You shoulder our future there, right now. If you lose, all will be lost."

"I understand it well," Han Sen said.

Ji Ruozhen then muttered something inaudible before pausing. As if to compose himself, he then cleared his throat and spoke, "I said that as a president. As a father, it would pain me greatly to... see my daughter be upset."

"Don't worry; I understand. I'll see this through to the end and come away smiling. You have my word on that," Han Sen spoke with the intent to inspire confidence.

Han Sen went on Skynet next to read the news. Reports of what was going on were everywhere. You'd have to be living beneath a very large rock on some icy asteroid in the distant corners of the galaxy to not know what was happening.

Dismayingly, people thought Han Sen should quit while he was ahead. They thought he shouldn't stand his ground, and that it would be best to retreat and throw in the towel.

The humans who had been sent to the Alliance were all worried for what their future would hold. If their shelters were lost, then they'd be unable to return, and their time in the sanctuaries was over.

Many professionals analyzed the situation to the best of their abilities, and the general consensus amongst them was that Han Sen should leave, too.

Before things went any further, though, Han Sen decided to have dinner with Ji Yanran. Throughout the meal, her lips staggered on the precipice of saying something. She clearly had something on her mind, but some phantom force stayed her from speaking.

Han Sen decided to approach her from behind, knowing what she was feeling. He embraced her from behind and spoke on her behalf. "Do you believe I can do this?"

"Yes, but I'm afraid," Ji Yanran said, stroking the arms that caressed her.

"I would never do something that would prevent my return to your loving warmth. I will be careful, I promise. I don't want my time with you to end, ever. I might not be the strongest, and things might turn

awry, but if they do, I'll run. I'll run right through the teleporter, through that door, and into your arms. You'll see me again." Han Sen leaned down to kiss her, and then said, "Plus, I want a son. I can't let myself die just yet."

Ji Yanran laughed and said, "I'd rather a daughter, one that is like Bao'er!"

"I wouldn't mind a little princess of my own, either. Four or five of them would be ideal, I think. That would sure make for a lively household."

"Are you sure you don't just want to revel in the exercise of making so many children?"

"Well, that is always fun."

"Oh, you have some cheek!"

"Ouch!"

Han Sen then returned to the sanctuary. His companions had been on red alert, not wanting to miss the precise moment an approaching enemy could be spotted. This was not the time for sloppiness nor mistakes.

A few days later, while Han Sen spoke with Xie Qing King, he saw a shadow begin to approach the shelter. It had the intimidating presence of a looming mountain that was set to swallow the earth.

Boom!

A giant landed atop the rubble of the ruined shelter, forming two craters; one for each foot.