

Chapter 1351:

Jumping Egg

A creature had crept up behind Han Sen, unbeknownst to him. The egg struck its arm and then bounced away again. The bouncy ball was around the same size as an ordinary fist, and it bounced around from enemy to enemy but didn't hurt any of them.

"I've spent all this time and energy to produce this? This is what I get after all my hard work?!" Han Sen was heartbroken, seeing no benefit to the geno core he had earned.

"Whatever; I'll continue on my way to that pit." Han Sen put the crystal egg away and got moving.

The creatures the egg had hit continued going for Han Sen, just as they had before. This, to Han Sen, proved it was bona fide useless. It was a waste of space.

As Han Sen made his way to the hole in the ground, he slew countless beasts in his path.

A silver-winged ape managed to dig its talons into Han Sen's back and deliver a nasty cut. He felt the point of entry, and he expected the pain to flare up at any moment. But much to his surprise, he didn't get hurt. He felt nothing.

Han Sen was rather shocked, because he knew that strike ought to have hurt him. So, he fired up the Dongxuan Sutra to observe the wound he had incurred.

Surprisingly, there was no damage. Not even his armor had been pierced.

"Eh? What happened? I swear I felt something," Han Sen thought in disbelief.

The talons of the airborne ape were incredibly sharp, and the Jade Snail armor should not have been able to defend against the hit. Han Sen had suffered a few minor scrapes and scratches before, and he knew for a fact that the talon strike had been considerably worse.

Han Sen's Jadeskin was strong, but not that strong.

The ape had surely delivered a massive hit to Han Sen's back, but lo and behold, there was no damage.

"Did he go easy on me?" Han Sen wondered.

But the creatures that assaulted Han Sen were not real, and they did not possess emotions. They obeyed the will of their master, and he clearly wanted Han Sen to die. They could not dictate their own actions.

The boss of Jade Hill wanted Han Sen dead more than anything, that much was clear. You could see it on his face. Why would he command them not to hurt Han Sen?

As Han Sen pondered this peculiarity, another ape got in close and threw a strike. Han Sen raised his arms to block the hit. After deflecting the talons, Han Sen observed his arms and saw a number of scratches across his crystallized skin. He knew they had not gone easy on him.

“What was that? Seriously. It confuses me. Why didn’t I get hurt earlier?” Han Sen was perplexed.

Han Sen turned his attention to the ape that had somehow not damaged Han Sen, but it looked the same as the rest. One ape was able to leave a mark on him, but the other could not.

“Did the egg hit that ape?” Han Sen’s mind began to hover around a possible solution to the confusion.

Due to his staggering disappointment with the item, Han Sen had not paid attention to how many times the egg had bounced or which targets it had struck. His mind had been a blur at the time. The egg had bounced around quite a bit, too.

“If a monster was struck by the egg, does that mean the creature becomes friendly?” Han Sen’s view of the egg changed, but he thought his hypothesis was a little wild. It sounded fairly ridiculous.

If that was true, the ape would not have attacked Han Sen in the first place.

“But even though he hit me... he didn’t hit me. Is it an undercover ape, pretending? Maybe he doesn’t want to hurt me, but acts like he’s trying his best to? After all, if the boss found out, he’d be killed.”

Han Sen looked at the ape’s murderous face and didn’t think that was true, either.

So, Han Sen continued on his way, battling as he went. He couldn’t think of a reason why the hit had not damaged him.

The boss of Jade Hill had only drawn four of the creatures. His book was a geno core, but there had to be a limit on how many creatures he could summon at a time.

When the boss saw his ape hit Han Sen, he frowned, too. Even the spirit himself wasn’t sure why the human had not taken any damage. The boss observed Han Sen closer, and then his eyebrows became crooked. He started to frown even more.

The boss of Jade Hill flipped open his book and then began to draw again. He drew even slower this time, with an excruciating amount of focus. His forehead was sweating bullets. After a few minutes, he was done, but his face looked to have been drained of all color. He was pale.

A silver light beamed out of the book, followed by something else.

It was a creature that looked like an evil, angry demon.

When the demon emerged from the book, its green eyes stared at Han Sen intently. It raised its trident and came rushing towards him. The demon was incredibly powerful, that much was clear. Its trident was a menacing, frightening weapon to watch bear down on you.

Han Sen was still holding the chef, so he could only use one hand to fight.

Dong!

The trident came against the horn, and it sent Han Sen flying back a hundred meters before he came to a stop. Han Sen's hands were trembling, and he acknowledged he had tried to block far too much power at once.

And just as this happened, while Han Sen was stunned, an ape had closed the gap to strike him. The silver talons were driven deep into Han Sen's back, but pain was not what he felt. It was shock.

Chapter 1352: Power of the Bouncy Egg

Han Sen was in a daze. The ape that had just hit him was the one that had confused him earlier.

The ape's talons were incredibly strong and swift, and they should have torn Han Sen to shreds upon contact. But when the knife-like nails came upon him, they were like rubber. They did not damage him in the least.

The ape had come in so strong, though, its fingers and the hand itself came down on Han Sen. Where this strike should have utterly destroyed him, it felt as if his enemy was made of putty. There was no pain, and then, the fingers of the ape all bent upwards like broken, twisted twigs.

"Why's this happening? Are all the creatures that get hit by the egg like this?" Han Sen thought to himself.

The other three apes were quickly bearing down on Han Sen now. They lifted their talon-fitted hands up to strike Han Sen with greater strength than the previous ape.

Han Sen summoned the egg with haste and lobbed it at the enemies that had gathered around to finish the human that had led them on their chase, and given them a great deal of trouble.

On its airborne flight, the egg spun. Its traversal lacked finesse and stability, but the speed at which it went more than made up for that.

The demon looked furious. With its trident, it tried to impale the egg.

The boss of Jade Hill watched what was happening with great curiosity, and just like Han Sen, he wondered what the egg did. Now, seeing Han Sen muster the effort to summon the egg and throw it, as one last ditch effort to avoid getting destroyed, he was utterly confused.

Still, he believed Han Sen had to be up to something. The human wouldn't happily submit to death and throw an egg for a laugh. There had to be something concerning about the item he had lobbed, and so, the spirit had commanded the demon to take it out.

The demon was incredibly strong, and its trident came into direct contact with the egg.

Han Sen was worried, as it was just a bronze geno core. He wasn't entirely sure it could withstand the brunt of a strike delivered by a silver geno core-summoned creature.

Pang!

When the trident struck the egg, the shape of the egg caved in on itself.

Fortunately, the trident had been unable to break or pierce through the egg, though. The surprisingly malleable shape of Han Sen's curious geno core bounced back to its original shape, but it was now moving faster than ever.

The egg bounced everywhere at ridiculous speed, and each of the apes was hit by it. And once they had been touched by the renegade egg, the item moved on to tag the rest of the creatures in the wider vicinity, as well.

And every time it hit a creature, the speed increased. It was like the speed kept on stacking and stacking, so it'd become faster and faster.

Han Sen kept on dodging attacks, keeping an eye focused on the crazy egg.

It wasn't like an ordinary bouncy ball. The egg was oval, so when it bounced away, it was incredibly difficult to keep track of. Even the initial point it'd jump away to was unpredictable.

With Heavenly Go and the Dongxuan Sutra active, not even Han Sen was able to trace its flight. And if Han Sen could not keep track of it, then neither could the creatures. And one by one, they all continued to get hit.

Shortly after, each and every monster had found themselves tagged by the egg at least once.

Pang!

When it was done, the egg bounced back to Han Sen.

He did not know whether the egg had bounced back to him by sheer chance, or if the egg had instinctively returned to Han Sen once its job was done. But more than anything, after it had finished tagging the enemies that were all before him, Han Sen was simply keen to find out the nature and extent of its power.

He didn't have the time to think, though, for the demon and the apes all came towards Han Sen. They resumed their plan of murdering the human. The trident was coming for Han Sen once more, raised and ready to skewer. So, Han Sen raised his horn to try to knock it away once again.

The last time this occurred, Han Sen was knocked back a hundred meters. He knew what to expect this time, so he committed to the strike and brought his horn down against the incoming trident, bracing for the impact.

When both of the weapons came together, Han Sen's eyes opened wide in sheer, unbridled joy.

The powerful trident was like a cheap rubber toy, and it bent backwards with ease.

Ignoring the apes and beasts around him, Han Sen moved forward to slay the wretched demon that had become a thorn in his backside. He stabbed it with great heft behind his thrust.

But just as he was done, the four apes leaped atop Han Sen with jaws open, ready to bite and chew him up. It wasn't just the apes, either. It was the rest of the creatures, as well. He had become well and truly swarmed, and the scene was like the maddest game of British Bulldogs one might have ever laid eyes upon.

The chef was with Han Sen, too, and in her unconscious state, she was subjected to the massive pile-on.

The boss, seeing Han Sen fall beneath the countless creatures, raised a smile. He believed his pest had finally been dealt with.

He gave the human the credit he deserved, though. Han Sen had proved troublesome, and the boss was well and truly relieved to think he had been taken care of. But this happiness was short-lived. Despite the number that had piled on top of Han Sen, his lifeforce was the same as ever.

"What is this?" The boss frowned harder than he had ever frowned before.

The four apes should have been able to tear him apart several times over by now, but there was not a single smidgen of blood to see.

Boom!

The boss felt a large gust of power blast its way out of the crowd. The beasts he had spawned were all blown away. Even the four apes were sent flying, and despite them biting Han Sen over and over, the human looked to be perfectly fine.

Chapter 1353: I Can Kill Ten Thousand of Them

In Han Sen's eyes, the creatures were like the flimsy orbs of a ballpit.

When they were touched by the egg, their bodies did not look different. In fact, they looked exactly the same. But it was like the construction of their beings had been radically morphed into something like rubber.

It wasn't just the creature's bodies that were like that, either. Even any weaponry they wielded would suffer the same effect, just like the demon's trident.

Han Sen did not exert much strength to push the creatures of the dogpile aside. He shook his body as if he were shaking off excess water, and with the lightness of waterdrops, the monsters were cast away.

The horn Han Sen had plunged into the demon's chest was still inside it. It spun inside the cavity, drilling its way through the flesh and bone as the fiend lashed and flailed around in an attempt to bite the human that had gotten the best of it.

At one point, it managed to actually connect its flapping maw to Han Sen's wrist. But when it brought its teeth down on him, the teeth all went out of shape.

Then, Han Sen pulled out his horn and drove it through his foe's brain. He killed it with ease, as the skull of the beast offered no resistance. Now, Han Sen was determined to tackle all the rest.

Han Sen no longer had to worry about any damage they could deal. As far as they were concerned, and as far as he had to worry when facing them, he was indestructible.

"Awesome! This is going to be my kind of massacre. Let's see if I can kill ten thousand of you." Han Sen's horn was then driven through the ape that was nearest to him.

The boss of Jade Hill could not believe his eyes, and he found it staggering how the human had turned the tables and robbed his minions of all their powers.

Seeing Han Sen mercilessly slaughtering his way towards him, the fearful spirit commanded his bird to fly away.

Han Sen grabbed the egg and chucked it at the spirit. It went towards the fleeing spirit with the speed of a meteor.

Pang!

The boss of Jade Hill, seeing the egg, drew a few extra beasts to deflect and bounce it away. He had taken advantage of the only real con the egg had exhibited so far. It was very bouncy, and it could be knocked away with the greatest of ease.

When the egg changed direction, the boss was given enough time to expand the gap between the two and escape. He was long gone.

And when the boss fled, the monsters that remained all began to disappear. It seemed as if they could not remain in an area long if their master was absent.

"After all these years, I've gotten something truly miraculous! This geno core is amazing." Han Sen fingered the egg, reveling in exuberant joy.

Han Sen was also starting to believe it was almost sentient, as it could follow his commands. All he had to do was take care when throwing it. Before it left his hand in a throw, he just had to influence it in the direction he wanted it to go.

If Han Sen could predict where it would go efficiently, he'd have full control of its path. This would not be too difficult for Han Sen to perform, because he was talented with Yin Yang Blast and Drillhead.

Baseball pitchers could throw a curveball and football players could curl the ball, but Han Sen was far more talented than the average sportsman. With the imbalance of the egg and its instability in travel, it could be used very effectively against others.

Of course, that meant it would be harder for Han Sen to control and guide it himself, but with enough practice, he'd be able to do just fine. And with his special abilities, calculating the course it would take would eventually come naturally to him.

For all intents and purposes, the egg was a perfect fit for Han Sen. With his talent, he believed he'd be catching everything off guard with majestic throws in no time.

And to kickstart his practice, Han Sen started throwing the egg on the ground and bouncing it back into his hands. It wasn't a ball, so the direction it would rebound was unpredictable. It was trickier than he imagined at first, and he failed to catch the egg ninety percent of the time.

If Han Sen had to use Drillhead, it'd become even wilder and more difficult to control and guide, so he thought he might have underestimated how much practice he might need before he became super proficient with it.

Bao'er was delighted with the funny little egg, though. Whenever Han Sen threw it, even she tried her best to catch it. Han Sen was afraid of her attempt and was given a quick fright when she first leaped towards it. He was scared the egg might turn her to rubber.

Fortunately, the one time she did catch it, nothing ill happened.

Han Sen might not have been able to control its course of flight, but it seemed as if Han Sen could determine who or what he wanted the egg to affect. Han Sen tested it a few more times, and the radius of its bounce was around one meter. And whatever it touched, if he willed it, would become rubbery.

If the egg hit the same spot again, the effect was removed.

This was a strange geno core, and Han Sen had never heard of such a thing before. He must have lucked out. Of course, he hadn't heard much about geno cores, regardless. That was because there were so few demi-god humans in existence.

Han Sen took the chef to a forest and then threw the egg at her so she'd become rubbery.

She had spoken Han Jinzhi's name before passing out, and now, Han Sen finally had the time to grill her and find out why.

Han Sen healed her a little, just until she regained consciousness. When she awoke, she immediately threw a punch at Han Sen.

He grabbed her incoming fist and began to twist and spin it for fun. She looked at her arm as if she was peering at a ghost. She didn't feel pain, but she couldn't understand why her arm was behaving like that.

Han Sen held the horn to her throat and said, "Answer my questions and I'll allow you to live."

After that, he pushed the serrated edge of the horn to shred a little skin and draw a slight amount of blood.

"What is your relation to Han Jinzhi?" Han Sen asked, then frowned as she remained silent.

Chapter 1354: Our Own People

When the chef heard Han Sen's question, she stared at him but did not speak a word.

With the serrated edge of the horn, Han Sen dug a little deeper into her throat. The shredded skin of her neck began to ooze droplets of blood, which rolled down to her shoulders.

"Don't try my patience!" Han Sen feigned anger and impatience for any resistance she might give.

"Then kill me, if that is what you wish." The chef spoke with a chilling tone, without a single hint of her words being a bluff. She was not afraid of dying in the least.

Of course, Han Sen still hoped to extract information; he wanted whatever she might have known about Han Jinzhi. Killing her was the last thing he wished to do, for this very reason, and this reason alone.

He decided to soften his tone and try to insert a touch of friendliness into his approach, and so he told her, "I only want to about your relation to Han Jinzhi. If you answer, and tell me what I want to know, you are free to go."

But her mouth remained firmly shut, prompting Han Sen to elaborate on the specifics of what he ultimately wished to ask. He said, "I want to know if you're a friend or foe of Han Jinzhi."

"We... hate each other. We hate each other very much. You are clearly an ally or thrall of his, so stop talking." The chef spoke with a tone that was laden with spite and disdain, and her eyes drilled holes into the young man in front of her.

If the man before the bark door of the underground shelter's entrance was a follower of Han Jinzhi, what she said now suggested that she might have killed him herself.

Seeing the chef speak with a muzzled rage, it looked like Han Jinzhi must have done something awful to her.

"Why do you think I'm with him?" Han Sen asked.

"You two share the same race," the chef said.

Han Sen smiled and said with a laugh, "Oh, you've misunderstood things a great deal! We are humans, yes, but our race has a grander population than even you lot, if I were to wager. That doesn't mean we're all the same, though. So, what makes you think I'm a friend of Han Jinzhi?" Han Sen did his best to explain things as simply as he could.

The chef looked at Han Sen with confusion, and she stuttered to ask, "Is what you say true?"

"I'll be honest with you; I'm not a friend of Han Jinzhi. In fact, I am his enemy. If you dislike Han Jinzhi as much as your behavior suggests you do, then you and I have a common goal." Han Sen put his horn away and put on an expression of apology.

Then, Han Sen continued to heal her wounds before touching her once more with the egg.

“You really do have a bone to pick with Han Jinzhi, too?” the chef asked.

Han Sen brought her over to a nearby tree to resume the healing, and as he touched her wounds, he said, “If I was a friend of his, you’d be dead right now. I risked life and limb to save you; you know that, don’t you?”

The chef examined her own body, and although the healing was a fairly slow process, she could tell she was improving.

She had been hurt badly, and Han Sen’s holy light was still very weak. Because of this, it’d take a long time for Han Sen to finish healing her completely. But Han Sen stayed with her and kept on healing her. They spoke about many things, but in their chatting, Han Sen didn’t ask anything too concerning or serious.

When Han Sen had tried to be hard and firm with her, she did not give him what he wanted. Now, he was going to do his best to be soft and fair. If he behaved that way, perhaps she’d be more willing to open up to him.

They spent the next few days together, and over the course of that time, the chef continued to receive swell treatment, in addition to other kindnesses Han Sen was willing to impart.

“Why were you trying to kill me, can I ask? I know I took the head of that cow, but was that the sole reason that you came after me?” The tension between the two seemed to have dissipated now, so Han Sen thought it was the best time to ask about this.

The chef, by this point, had fully recovered. And she knew she was stronger than Han Sen, too. For him to ask this, it was obvious he had no grudge against her.

The chef said, “You and Han Jinzhi look like one-and-the-same; that is why I wished to kill you.”

“Did you see many humans in the Third God’s Sanctuary? There should have been a few in every shelter,” Han Sen said.

The chef then said, “Han Jinzhi was the only human I ever saw.”

“Then, how did you two become enemies?” Han Sen pushed his luck to ask.

The chef did not answer him directly, and she instead said, “Come. I will help you hunt some creatures, so you can improve. Consider it me paying you back. Then, we’ll be even.”

“There’s no need to do that, but since we both hate Han Jinzhi, we should share what we know. We can help each other like that, but if you’re busy, feel free to move along,” Han Sen said.

Han Sen was going to act this nice for as long as he could, in the hopes that when she departed, absence would make her heart grow fonder. If all went according to plan, perhaps the next time they encountered each other, she’d be more willing to share what she knew.

The chef seemed to feel guilty about not doing anything to return the favor, though. She said, "You just became a demi-god. It is dangerous for you to be left alone out here. If you want, I can get you residence inside my shelter."

"There's a shelter in these parts?" Han Sen was shocked to hear this. If there were spirit shelters nearby, he'd be in considerable danger.

The chef went on to explain, "There is a silver-class shelter, owned by a primitive creature. If you offer it resources of value, I see no reason why you would not be allowed to stay there."

Han Sen immediately agreed. If he was still allowed to return to the Alliance, and he was in no danger of being enslaved, he saw no problem with it. In fact, it would be a fairly amazing deal.

The chef then led Han Sen to the shelter. It was a distance away, so the journey was long. At the midpoint of their travel, they encountered a sheep. It was the Cheap Sheep that Han Sen had developed a love-hate relationship with.

"Ah, Boss Number One and Boss Number Two! I have found you both." The sheep looked giddy with excitement.

Chapter 1355: Bronze Shelter

When Han Sen's eyes caught the image of Cheap Sheep, his face turned dark. And being called "boss" was irritating. If he heard the sheep say "bub" again, he'd lose his mind.

The sheep was a traitor, coward, and a bringer of trouble. Just seeing it trot over, Han Sen wanted to kick it away.

Arriving before them, Cheap Sheep merrily said, "Bosses; gurrri, bub; I have found a bronze shelter not too far from here. It is unoccupied."

"And where is this so-called shelter?" Han Sen released the clenched fist he had been ready to hurl. A bronze shelter might have been a shelter of the lowest tier, but any shelter you commanded was better than no shelter.

If there was a shelter like that, Han Sen really could come and go as he pleased.

"It's situated deep inside a cave, near the Jade Hills. I can take you there," Cheap Sheep said.

Han Sen and Chef looked at each other and nodded; they were both in agreement of where they should head next. Han Sen was still rather worried about a potential curse that might have followed the sheep around, but nothing bad seemed to happen after their encounter that day.

Cheap Sheep led them with the happiest spring in his step, and he said, "Bosses, when you claim the shelter, you can give me as many geno cores as you please!"

“Shut up! I’m not your f*cking boss.” Han Sen was getting worked up, being repeatedly referred to as boss.

The volatile reaction was unexpected, though, and it made the sheep jump in fright. After that, it kept its mouth shut. Cheap Sheep only opened it to graze occasionally as they traveled.

After a while of walking, Cheap Sheep rustled a few bushes and said, “This is it, bub.”

Han Sen looked inside the cave and frowned. It was long, but the ceiling was low, and he’d have to crawl if he wanted to make his way through.

“There’s a shelter beyond this? Are you pulling my leg? If you are, I’ll cut yours off.” Han Sen hammered the threat in with spaced syllables.

“Boss Bub, I’m really loyal! I swear upon my wooly coat, I’m not lying!” Cheap Sheep pleaded.

After a brief discussion with Chef, Han Sen decided to follow after the sheep. He was going to go forward anyway, with or without them.

The ground of the cave was mainly comprised of dirt, but it was solid, nonetheless. After ten minutes of crawling, the cave opened up into a typical rock tunnel. At that point they were able to stand up, as well.

The trail took them deeper underground, but where they were going and how long they would have to walk, they could not tell.

It was fortunate Han Sen and Chef’s vision were excellent, for not even the faintest glimmer of sunlight pierced that black veil. Their eyes provided them night-vision.

“How much further to go?” Han Sen frowned.

Cheap Sheep answered, “We’re almost there; we’re just over half way!”

Han Sen dubiously allowed the sheep to continue leading them, and much to his relief—and to the sheep’s continued health—they arrived half an hour later.

“Boss! It’s here!” The sheep raised one of its hooves, pointing directly ahead of them. Han Sen looked forward and saw a castle of stone.

Han Sen appraised the area they had arrived in. The tunnels and caverns had opened up to reveal them standing in a valley someplace. The cliffsides around them were massive, and the sky was a thick, straight line that sat atop them, as if they were the legs of a table.

The castle itself was comprised of grey stone, and certain elements of its design made it appear more like a well-fortified manor or mansion.

Chef went ahead first. She had been in the Fourth God's Sanctuary for a while, and in that time, she had not once had the opportunity to claim a shelter. Cheap Sheep quickly tailed her, thinking she would take better care of him than Han Sen would.

Han Sen, deeming the area safe, also followed from behind. And judging the shelter from its fairly unkempt, rugged exterior, he well and truly believed it to be a bronze-class shelter. Han Sen only had a bronze geno core, so claiming a silver shelter would be rather silly.

Chef pushed against the door of the shelter, and they came to some sort of lobby. Before them was a large rectangular table. It was very long, like a dining table for the rich in their excessively large estates. There was one seat at each end, and five seats on the left and right sides of it.

Upon the table was silverware. There were pots, trays, crockery, and cutlery. Fruit and meat were piled on the plates, and a pot of something was cooking above a fire.

Han Sen and Bao'er began to drool, and they felt their bones ache for the comfort this place was sure to provide them. It had been a long time since they had been someplace so nice. Not wanting Bao'er to run off, though, Han Sen tightened his grip around her.

However, Cheap Sheep had told them the shelter was unclaimed. If that was true, why was there a fire going, with food being cooked?

"Did someone take this place before we got here?" Han Sen wondered, before shouting out, "Anyone home?! We're here to borrow some brown sugar."

After Han Sen's call, no reply came.

"Let's check further inside," Dragon Lady Chef said, sharing his concern.

Han Sen and Cheap Sheep followed after her, and after a brief poke about, they found no one else there.

The shelter was comprised of four floors and twenty rooms, and despite checking out each location, they found no one there. Furthermore, there were no statues or teleporters.

"Are you sure this is a shelter?" Han Sen asked, after they returned to the lobby.

Dragon Lady started to say something, too, but suddenly, there was a large pang sound. The doors to the outside pulled themselves shut, and the candles lit up.

Chapter 1356: Start Cleaning

Cheap Sheep fled to cower behind Dragon Lady, as she and Han Sen dubiously looked at the table.

There was a man standing near the master seat, dressed in a black suit and tie.

He looked strange, and beneath the eerie glow of the candles, Han Sen was able to get a flickering glimpse of his face. It was the face of a wooden puppet, and his nose was unnaturally sharp. The black suit was very elegant, and it was the sort you'd expect to see worn by some noble butler.

"Welcome to Dinner Shelter; dinner is now ready, so please take a seat." All of a sudden, the puppet-doll bowed and spoke to them.

The three were surprised, and as Han Sen observed the butler, he could not detect the presence of a lifeforce in it. And with its wooden face, its speech was creepily devoid of emotion.

Cheap Sheep leaped forward with a burst of confidence and said, "Wait, you are the geno core of this shelter! I bet your food is poisonous. That's your game, isn't it? You want to poison us? I know the type, bub!"

The doll did not wait before responding to the allegations, and with a monotone, robot-like response, said, "You have been added to the Naughty List. Start cleaning."

They stared at the doll, who remained unmoved. Its beady, red eyes were fixed on the sheep, but aside from that, nothing happened but an unnerving silence.

Han Sen saw Cheap Sheep move its mouth to say something more, but just as it did, the sheep was turned into a doll itself. It remained frozen in its expression, with a half-open mouth.

Han Sen and Dragon Lady were shocked, seeing their annoying little companion become a doll.

Fortunately, the Cheap Sheep doll still had a lifeforce. It was likely the creature itself was fine, but its body had become stiff wood.

"Now, will the remaining three guests take a seat? Dinner will be served momentarily." The doll bowed and gestured for the others to sit down.

The butler was not referring to the sheep when he was referencing the three. The third person he was now referring to was Bao'er. Dragon Lady looked peeved, barely able to accept that a bronze geno core possessed the audacity to threaten and command her the way it was.

"Let's sit down first, before making a scene." Han Sen tugged at Dragon Lady's arm, bidding for her to sit down.

Han Sen wanted to get a better feel for the situation first. Ever since the doll appeared, he had been keeping a close eye on it.

"Please maintain your manners and adhere to dining etiquette. That also means each individual should sit on their own seat," the doll advised.

Han Sen knew the doll was referring to Bao'er, so he took her off his lap and placed her down on a chair of her own. Han Sen was co-operating because he didn't know how the sheep had been turned into a doll. He didn't quite want that happening to himself.

The Fourth God's Sanctuary was a wild place, and even the weakest of creatures could not be underestimated if they had a bronze geno core.

Han Sen thought he and his party had unwittingly waltzed into the proximity or radius-of-effect of the hostile geno core, and without a way out of their predicament, they had no choice but to do what they were told, lest they too were turned into dolls.

Demi-god powers were very weird, and Han Sen knew he'd have to find out what was generating this entire charade soon. He needed to put an end to it. Until then, Han Sen was going to play nice and evaluate his options.

And so, after accepting the doll's invitation and doing as they were told, they did not end up like Cheap Sheep.

The sheep had been turned into a doll, but it still had its lifeforce. Its body was so stiff, however, and not even its eyes could move.

"Please, enjoy our first dish." The doll suddenly rolled out a dining cart. He took the dishes off of it and placed them on the table. They were hot, sizzling steaks. Although the food smelled very good, Han Sen made sure to hold Bao'er back and prevent her from lunging forward to grab the meal.

"This is the flesh of a Snowbeast. Fret not, for it is safe." Dragon Lady cut the meat and took a bite.

Dragon Lady was a professional chef, and so she knew her meats. If she thought it was okay to eat, Han Sen would have no qualms eating the food. He trusted her. After Han Sen decided to tuck into the meal, he acknowledged it to be some good stuff. There were no toxic tricks at play, and quite honestly, it tasted divine.

"Snowbeast Flesh Consumed. Ordinary Geno Point +1."

Han Sen was pleasantly surprised, for he did not expect to receive a geno point from the freebie meal. Bao'er cut herself a slice and had a bite, too. Then, with surprising proficiency, she cut up the rest of the steak.

"My dear guests, there is also some excellent wine." The doll then started to pour their drinks.

Han Sen and Bao'er observed what Dragon Lady was doing. If she took a sip, so too would they. Han Sen and Bao'er hadn't been able to enjoy a meal such as this in a long time.

The sheep must have been feeling awful, Han Sen imagined. He was missing out on a most amazing dinner.

Bao'er, in particular, was hyped. But her enjoyment of the food eventually went too far, to the point that she abandoned using a knife and fork, and instead started stuffing the food into her mouth with greasy fingers.

“You have violated the necessity for manners while dining, and you have been added to the Naughty List. Start cleaning!” The doll said this with surprising anger, as if he had been personally slighted and was triggered.

“Oh, no!” Han Sen quickly turned to look at Bao’er.

Chapter 1357: One-Hit Kill

Without hesitation or concern for himself, Han Sen reached for Bao’er to place her behind him. But before he could, the doll’s eyes flashed red. Then, strangely, it looked surprised.

Han Sen examined Bao’er, and much to his relief, he saw she had not been turned into wood.

This came as quite the surprise. Judging from the doll’s behavior and facial expression, it would seem as if it had cast its power, but it simply had not worked on the baby.

The doll’s eyes flashed with that same red, menacing light again. It also spoke, and it said, “You have all been added to the Naughty List. Start cleaning.”

The doll’s eyes flashed like a bright, oscillating light, as they turned to look at Han Sen. He had summoned his crystal egg, but before he could muster the strength for a throw, he began turning into wood.

Dragon Lady, who had leapt up from her seat to fight with her cleaver in-hand, was starting to turn into a deadwood puppet now, too.

Han Sen found himself unable to move, and the doll and its powers were far stronger than he had expected them to be. Dragon Lady’s silver core could not resist the encroaching woodening, and neither could Han Sen’s Jadeskin. The butler was effortlessly turning them all into dolls.

“Maybe this isn’t a bronze shelter, after all. Maybe it’s a silver one,” Han Sen thought to himself.

The doll had turned its attention back to Bao’er by this point, and its eyes repeatedly flashed.

Fortunately, and curiously, the powers had no effect on Bao’er.

“Start cleaning.” As if it was programmed to, the butler repeated this command every few seconds. It was a rather sinister thing to hear, over and over.

Bao’er looked incredibly angry at the butler. She didn’t like the way her master or her friends were being treated, and so she pulled out her gourd.

The butler despised disobedience, and the fact that he couldn't turn her into wood prompted him to move forward to try to grab her. But before he could, Han Sen's wooden body suddenly started to glow white.

This came as another surprise for the butler. The wooded skin began to evaporate, returning Han Sen to normal.

"You have been added to the Naughty List. Start dying!" Han Sen shouted, as he glowed with a luminosity that made direct eye-contact impossible. A few seconds later, a punch was unleashed towards the butler.

The doll was shocked, acknowledging the power that was suddenly headed its way. The fiend flashed its eyes a number of times to repel it, but nothing worked. The bright light wielded by Han Sen laid the smackdown.

Boom!

The doll's body was immediately destroyed, as a flurry of wood chips peppered the air and rained across the ground.

"Silver Geno Core destroyed: Butler Doll. Silver Geno Core obtained: Butler Doll."

Amidst the storm of wood bits, one suddenly rose and shot over to Han Sen. Then, it entered his Sea of Soul.

Han Sen exited super king spirit mode, and when he went to check the item he had received, he saw an odd doll sitting in his Sea of Soul. It was around the same size as a human's hand.

Butler Doll: Wood Element Silver Geno Core

When the doll was destroyed, Dragon Lady and Cheap Sheep were freed from their wooden bindings. Their bodies had returned to normal, but their mental composure hadn't. That was because they had both been stunned by what they had just witnessed Han Sen perform.

Their eyes had been stuck in place while they were dolls, so they did not see the super king spirit mode clearly. But they had seen a bright white light utterly annihilate the pompous butler.

A set of staircases in the lobby suddenly opened, one that led to a hallway that ended at an ominous-looking door. They figured that had to lead to the spirit hall.

"Boss Bub! You are so powerful and handsome. You must be a god amongst the demi-gods, and oh, I cannot express how deeply my admiration for you has penetrated my soul," the sheep waxed lyrical.

After Han Sen broke the butler, Cheap Sheep well and truly acknowledged who the real deal was, in their party.

Han Sen ignored what he said and simply took Ba'er along with him to the door. Beyond it, as suspected, was the spirit hall and residing statue. Strangely, the statue's forehead was empty. There was

no spirit nor creature residing in this place, after all. But the statue was made of silver, indicating it was indeed a silver shelter.

And this surprised Han Sen's companions even more, for they now knew he had been able to destroy a silver geno core with as little as a single punch.

Han Sen asked the chef, "Do you want to place your spirit stone there?"

She shook her head and said, "This is not what I seek."

When spirits put their stone inside a statue, it was nearly impossible for them to become unbound from the place they had put it. They had to live in a shelter of their choosing, lest their stone get destroyed or claimed. As such, a shelter had to be selected carefully, and they had to ensure it met their every demand and satisfied each of their needs.

Han Sen summoned Moment Queen and instead made the shelter hers.

He could still use the teleporter, but he'd be unable to enable the defense systems of the shelter, control the security, and unlock doors without a spirit occupying it.

Moment Queen made sure to look at Han Sen with disdain before she put her stone inside.

She obeyed Han Sen, though. For better or for worse, she was stuck with him, and for whatever reason he wanted her around, he was stuck with her. And if they ever did want to move, Han Sen could always take out the spirit stone.

If the chef's allegiance was of a similar guarantee, she could have done the same.

She was quite surprised to witness Han Sen summon a spirit, though. Although Moment Queen was still very weak, Dragon Lady could tell she was something special.

With Moment Queen occupying the shelter, Han Sen was immeasurably happy. It was a well-hidden place that was sure to have no intruders, but better than that, the treasures of the shelter should have remained untouched without a prior occupant.

The treasure possessed by the shelter must have included a silver geno core, so Han Sen eagerly went to take a look and see what he could get his mitts on.

Chapter 1358: Demon Heart Ring

Shelters in the Fourth God's Sanctuary were different than those of the Third God's Sanctuary. Aside from the geno core you could obtain from a claimed shelter, an additional geno core could be retrieved from a treasure chest if the shelter was previously unclaimed.

Moment Queen had yet to recover from her injuries, but she was still able to control the shelter.

Han Sen, Dragon Lady, and Cheap Sheep visited the vault where the treasure chests were supposed to reside. Upon opening the door and giddily stepping inside, they were presented with three treasure chests beside each other.

The design of the chests was very different than they had initially expected. They weren't containers; instead, they were more like pedestals that extended all the way from the ground and into the ceiling. They looked like pillars, that way.

One of them was silver, indicating it possessed a silver geno core. The other two were bronze, undoubtedly containing bronze geno cores.

Han Sen went straight for the silver pedestal, an action that went unopposed. After all, if it wasn't for him, they might have all died under the sinister gaze of the psychotic butler.

Han Sen pressed his hand against the pedestal, and it began to descend.

There was no button, and the pedestal did not descend under the force of Han Sen's hand; instead, it was an operation performed by Moment Queen.

Atop the pillar was something hovering in a magical light. It was a purple ring.

Han Sen grabbed the ring and heard an announcement play:

"Silver Geno Core obtained: Demon Heart Ring."

When Han Sen reviewed the information that came along with it, he was pleasantly surprised.

Demon Heart Ring: Dark Element Geno Core

Dark elemental geno cores were extremely rare, and so were the geno points. It was fortunate Han Sen had gathered all that he could in the Third God's Sanctuary.

Han Sen left the bronze geno cores for Dragon Lady and, begrudgingly, Cheap Sheep. They were of no worth to Han Sen, now that he had a silver one.

Dragon Lady received a set of armor, while Cheap Sheep received a mirror. The mirror was able to concentrate light and deal damage via the reflection—a neat item, but wholly useless for Han Sen to even consider stealing.

Han Sen researched the two silver geno cores he had received, and he learned that the Butler Doll could petrify opponents.

The Demon Heart Ring was able to fortify the heart of its wearer. Unfortunately, it came with a trade-off. Its usage would damage the body, so Han Sen wouldn't be able to wear it very long. It was a situational item.

Weary, Han Sen decided to return to the Alliance. His mother, Ji Yanran, and Little Yan were delighted and greatly relieved to see him again. Han Sen contacted his good friends, who all went on to congratulate his successful ascension as a demi-god, and his ability to return.

He didn't stay there for long, though. He didn't want to risk an attack on his shelter during his absence. Before he was comfortable leaving there for a time, he'd have to become much stronger.

Even ordinary geno points were able to increase one's fitness a great deal.

One hundred ordinary geno points could increase a person's fitness level by two thousand. One hundred primitive geno points could increase a person's fitness by four thousand. One hundred super geno points could increase a person's fitness by thirty thousand.

If Han Sen was able to max out his ordinary geno points, he'd have reached a fitness figure of ten thousand. Once he got to that point, he could fight primitive creatures without much of an issue.

Killing ordinary creatures was not a difficult task for Han Sen, and he was able to keep using the egg in his post-return hunting ventures. He was able to max out that figure in no time.

Han Sen's poisonous meat trick hadn't worked, it also turned out. Whatever creature lurked in the deep depths of that pit was still alive.

Cheap Sheep was getting cozy with the prospect of Han Sen being his boss, and he accepted the role of being Bao'er's plaything. The sheep wasn't the strongest of allies one could have, but Han Sen had developed a bit of a soft spot for him. He'd feel bad about kicking the sheep out, so he allowed him to stay.

There was only one condition for him being allowed to remain in Han Sen's company, though. Cheap Sheep was not allowed to call Han Sen boss. Every time Han Sen heard it, a shiver and a chill would strike his spine like lightning.

When he maxed out his ordinary geno points, Han Sen decided to follow Dragon Lady to the shelter she had once mentioned.

Because Jade Hill did not have many primitive creatures, and they always seemed to travel in a group, it was best if they ventured out together as one, as well.

Dragon Lady was already in a group, one Han Sen was gladly invited to join, given his recent performance. With that group, he was sure to do well.

Han Sen did not think himself invincible, and he knew his hyper geno arts and geno cores weren't good enough to face whatever challenge came his way, so he thought the prospect of having a few buddies to back him up would be a great idea.

Bao'er rode Cheap Sheep as they traveled away from Jade Hill.

Dragon Lady was familiar with the region they were headed, so any potential hotspots were avoided. She knew the best routes to take, too.

But on the fourth day, two meteors streaked across the sky. And then, all of a sudden, a blizzard blasted a frightful freeze across the land. It made for a terrifying journey, in awful conditions.

They still pushed on, but on their way, they encountered many ordinary creatures that had been frozen solid. It was horrifying to see, and so Han Sen made sure to keep Jadeskin active and hold Bao'er to ensure her warmth. To make matters worse, an avalanche began rumbling down towards them.

"Oh, no! Someone is fighting." Dragon Lady summoned a transparent bowl to shield them from the tide of snow that was descending upon them.

It wasn't a second too soon, either. Immediately after she did so, the snow buried the bowl completely.

Han Sen could not tell how thick the snow was, but it was incredibly cold in there.

Chapter 1359: The Freeze

Han Sen's Jadeskin provided great cold resistance, but even he felt extremely chilly now.

Dragon Lady and the sheep were quivering and shivering due to the cold, prompting the former to light herself on fire. That helped her out a bit, but the gnaw of the ice was so strong and bitter, it couldn't help shake the freeze.

The sheep's fluffy wool was wholly caked in ice and snow, by comparison. Han Sen acknowledged it was an unfortunate consequence of the cold getting to it, but regardless, it was a strange look for it to bear.

The cold was hurting it badly, though. Cheap Sheep could only twitch every few moments, indicating that it was becoming increasingly likely that the sheep would freeze to death.

Han Sen continued to hold Bao'er close, but with his free hand, he cast a fire. She didn't seem to be affected by the cold, fortunately. With great curiosity, she just peered outside the bowl as if she was watching something only she could see.

The temperature was continuing to drop, though. Bao'er's safety aside, Han Sen was concerned not even he would be able to withstand the ice and frost much longer. There was a grave concern that all three of them would perish due to the sudden shift in weather.

"Who is fighting out there? The powers they've unleashed are wickedly fierce," Han Sen asked, due to his Dongxuan Sutra being unable to detect and register what was going on outside.

The sky continued to pump, cough, and exude as much snow and bone-chilling winds as it could.

"I am not sure. It could either be a royal or king-class spirit battle," Dragon Lady said, offering her own explanation.

Even though she was on fire, her lips were turning purple and her teeth were chattering between a few sputtered words. She held her arms in a hopeless attempt to restrict her shivering.

Suddenly, an extremely sharp noise sounded. It was horrendously high-pitched, like the drill of a dentist had pierced their eardrums and ventured onwards to excavate their brains. The sound made them all fall to their knees.

“D*mn it!” Han Sen’s face turned grim. It was excruciatingly painful, even though his brain had been fortified by Crystallizers and was far more resilient and stronger than the average human brain.

And it wasn’t one short, sole shriek. It continued, fading in and out, bringing the party more pain. It was certainly the frightening wail of a creature of some sort.

It came from a distance away, that much they could tell, but it was worrying how damaging it was, regardless of that.

Dragon Lady cupped her ears and fell to the ground. Bao’er did the same with her ears, but it didn’t seem as if she was too undisturbed. The way she behaved did not exhibit any pain, and it seemed like that hurting sound was more of an annoyance. And in comparison to the behavior of the other three, the sheep was rolling around on the ground in freezing agony.

If the sound came any closer, they believed, their heads would explode like watermelons greeting the strike of a hammer. But with the scream continuing like so, and the temperature still descending, the situation was getting worse by the second.

“How much longer will the fight go on? If this keeps up, we’ll be dead in less than two hours!” Han Sen thought to himself.

Half of the sheep’s body was now pure ice, and the only thing keeping it in the land of the living was its weak, faintly pumping heart. Dragon Lady was faring better than Cheap Sheep was, but that wasn’t saying much.

Getting another look at Bao’er, even she now seemed to be suffering. This was something Han Sen had never seen before, and it made his heart ache.

With the Dongxuan Sutra open, Han Sen fired up all ten gene locks and attempted to see if he could filter the cold and noise.

The seventh sense was able to filter some of the piercing screaming.

And so, Han Sen battled the noise, hoping to reduce the damage it was dealing to his allies. If the battle wrapped up soon, or they were able to fly far away from where they were, they’d be safe.

But unfortunately for them, it turned out that the screech was drawing nearer.

Han Sen was having trouble trying to fight this noise, so he minimized and concentrated his Dongxuan Sutra to circle the same radius as the bowl.

The scream was disturbing their energy flow, too. It made them unable to deal with the cold as efficiently as they might want to. Han Sen used Dongxuan Aura the best he could. The Dragon Lady looked a smidgen better, but Cheap Sheep was unconscious.

“That guy really is a cursed charm. I bet the whole reason we’re in this mess is because he insists on calling me boss. That’s the reason!” Han Sen was disheartened by the ordeal they had found themselves in.

As the sound continued to ascend, they gripped their heads in vain resistance to the wail that felt as if a bevy of knives were trying to stab each of their brains. Bao’er’s face had been drained of color, and Dragon Lady finally collapsed to the ground entirely.

“When I get stronger, I’m going to find whoever has done this and serve them up a cold platter of revenge!” Han Sen cast Dongxuan Aura with all his might now, doing the best he could to save his friends.

Suddenly, Han Sen’s cells felt as if they had flared to life. A mystical substance was generated, just like before, and went to his Sea of Soul.

“Is Dongxuan Sutra going to generate a geno core?” Han Sen wondered to himself.

The substance began to build up inside the Sea of Soul, and the black crystal reacted just as it had with the Jadeskin geno core. It released its inky liquid, which combined with the substance.

The screaming was like an explosion of shrapnel in his ears, but he couldn’t pay it much heed. Survival was the name of the game right now, and he had to do all he could to ensure he’d make it through this horrific ordeal.

Dragon Lady’s skin was beginning to flake with ice, as Bao’er began to shiver and shake in Han Sen’s arms.

The temperature dropped further and further, as the screech drew closer and closer.

“D*mn it! Come on. This can’t be happening. I can’t die! I won’t die!” Han Sen looked around for an escape route. If he couldn’t save the others, he’d have to save himself. But unfortunately, he was well and truly trapped, and there was no way out.

Suddenly, the Sea of Soul vibrated. And then, something appeared in front of him.

Chapter 1360: Bulwark Umbrella

Han Sen was taken aback when he saw what emerged from his Sea of Soul. It was an umbrella. It was thin-framed and elegant, like the sort you’d see fancy women use.

Its color was blacker than the filthiest coal, though. Even its handle was.

When the umbrella appeared, it flew above Han Sen’s head. Beneath this umbrella, Han Sen felt a veil or shroud envelope him.

The cold and the shriek were gone.

Han Sen noticed, if he was able to stay within the umbrella's covering radius, all the negative and detrimental effects were filtered and kept away.

"Is this the geno core of the Dongxuan Sutra?" Han Sen quickly reviewed the information of the geno core.

Self Geno Core: Bronze Bulwark Umbrella

Beneath the protective canopy of the Bulwark Umbrella, no power was able to breach the defense and ravage them. Bao'er had returned to normal, and she seemed surprised by the sudden disappearance of the cold and sound. She examined the umbrella that now shielded her.

Han Sen went over to check on the Dragon Lady and Cheap Sheep. The lady was now doing fine.

The sheep was breathing in a raspy wheeze. It looked like the umbrella had manifested just in time, as the sheep had to have been hanging on to its life by a measly thread.

Han Sen healed Dragon Lady and Cheap Sheep as best he could for the time being. For the Dragon Lady, chunks of ice and frosty air were expelled from her mouth and various orifices. She was doing well, but the same could not be said for Cheap Sheep. He was doing poorly, despite the healing. He couldn't even speak.

"Are they gone?" Dragon Lady said, with a strained voice.

"Not yet," Han Sen replied, taking a look outside the bowl.

She couldn't sense anything outside, but that may have been a result of her condition. Han Sen, however, even though he could not detect much, could just feel a battle continuing to rage.

Fortunately, the Bulwark Umbrella had appeared to protect them when it did. With relief for their newfound safety, the group rested for a while as Han Sen tended to the sheep.

But suddenly, a sound that was as loud as a toppled mountain was heard. And then, a soft and unnerving silence enveloped them.

"It sounds as if there might have been a victor," Han Sen thought to himself.

He wasn't yet going to move from where he was, though. He didn't know who was fighting or what the fighting was about. If he emerged, and the winner was in a foul mood, he'd be foolish to reveal himself.

So, they waited where they were for a few hours. Nothing stirred for the duration of that time.

Han Sen decided to return the umbrella, and Dragon Lady her bowl.

To cut and shovel their way through the snow that had almost buried them, Dragon Lady employed her various kitchen utensils.

Everything around them was white. The mountains, the trees, the fields; all of it was perfectly blanketed in virgin snow.

“That was scary,” Han Sen thought to himself, now that their frightening ordeal was over. If it wasn’t for the Bulwark Umbrella, they’d be dead.

Han Sen wondered if the shelter Dragon Lady had mentioned might have suffered the same freezing fate. If it had, it was very likely the occupants of the shelter would not have survived.

Han Sen hurried Dragon Lady to guide them to the shelter, but not out of concern for the inhabitants. Had they all died, it’d make for great, easy pickings. There’d be plenty of flesh and geno cores for the taking.

Dragon Lady started taking them there, but it was a struggle. The landscape was vastly different now, having been buried by so much snow, and she feared that she might lead them astray

For a thousand miles, the snow lay thick across the land.

Dragon Lady had decided to find the shelter by choosing a direction and following it, as a crow would fly. But it was difficult for them, for they’d have to dig an entire trench that led there. The snow was too thick and too soft for them to delicately journey across.

Han Sen really wanted the treasure, though. And after a few hundred miles of non-stop walking, they thought they should have been close. Unfortunately for them, they were lost.

But at least they were not in danger. It seemed as if the snow had reset the land, and everything within the snowglobe radius had been killed. There was nothing left alive to threaten them.

“Never mind, then. Forget the shelter. Let’s just get out of this place; there’s nothing else for us here,” Han Sen said, with a dismal tone.

They selected a new direction and decided on leaving the snow-devastated landscape behind, opting to find fonder pastures. After a thousand miles of walking, they discovered nothing. They might as well have been back where they started, for each horizon was another line of white.

“Oh, wait a minute! Something is up ahead.” Cheap Sheep, who was doing better now, drew their attention.

Han Sen and Dragon Lady climbed a slope that the sheep had pointed to, and there, in the snow, was an anomaly.

Looking closer, they realized it was a tree.

“Let’s take a look. If it survived when everything else didn’t, it must be something pretty special. If it bears fruit, we’re rich!” Han Sen quickly jumped before it, ensuring he’d be the first to grab its treasures.

The tree was ten meters tall, and pink flowers dressed the branches. It was like an oversized, pink bonsai. It possessed a lovely scent.

It was strange, seeing this tree stand out amongst the snow that had covered everything else.

As if it had a Bulwark Umbrella of its own, it seemed as if the tree had been shielded by some force that provided it a radius of protection. There was no snow circling it on the ground, either, and you could see the grass below as clear as day.

There were a few creatures beneath the tree, as well. Han Sen imagined they had been hiding there, using the eaves for shelter.

Unfortunately, the tree must have only protected them from the cold and snow, but not the noise. The creatures looked as if they were drunk, falling asleep.