

Chapter -44

Bee and I ran out of the room with the strange moss floor. The screaming and frenzied mob quickly followed behind us, stirred on by Steve the Birthday Boy and Annabella Exposición, who seemed to still hold a grudge from me killing her friend that had turned into a Skinstealer. They numbered at least twenty, but possibly even as many as thirty. I was surprised that so many people had been able to stay in the same area without trouble, but it seemed it was thanks to Steve’s strange Class.

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| Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement! ^x |
| <i>‘Witch Hunt’</i> |
| Got chased by an angry mob for no reason. |
| <i>Maybe you were framed by a scorned lover or betrayed by a former friend, but, whatever the reason, a mob is now on your tail.</i> |
| <i>Being hunted for no good reason is a traumatic experience that leaves deep scars of mistrust on the soul.</i> |
| Reward: <i>‘Outcast’</i> Passive |

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| ‘Outcast’ ^x |
| <i>Passive</i> |
| <i>“All alone! Whether you like it or not, alone is something you’ll be quite a lot!”</i> |
| <i>Neutral or Morally Good Players will instinctively be mistrustful of you, while Outcasts and Morally Evil Players will be inclined to trust you.</i> |

*It's time to dye your hair black and find moral wisdom in the
angsty lyrics of screamo bands.*

“I just got a Passive called ‘Outcast’,” Bee said in-between breaths, as we sprinted down a wide hallway with doorways lining either side of the room, though we were heading for the one down at the far end.

“I got it too,” I said, swiping away the pop-ups.

“The System is really trying to make you two into the bad guys,” Panda said.

“You should see what my unHero Plugin does,” I told him.

“I think I can guess,” he replied knowingly.

“Wait, why are we running from them, actually?” Bee asked, coming to a halt.

“They have guns? And pitchforks, apparently.”

“So what? Let’s just kill them!”

I came to a halt as well. “Huh, actually... yeah.”

“Guys, please, don’t do this,” Panda said.

“I’m tired of running away,” I told him.

“I don’t want to be labeled an Outcast,” Bee added.

We turned around to face the incoming mob, which had already lost some steam, since it seemed their Athleticism ratings were quite a lot lower than mine. Granted, Bee was also pretty out of breath.

I pointed my palm at the front of their ranks, where Steve and Annabella were. The latter of the two had a crossbow in her hand, and as she saw us turning to face them in the wide hallway, she levelled it towards me. Bee copied my gesture.

“Giant-Slayer Lance!” I yelled and a large slowly spinning bolt the girth of my thigh manifested in the air in front of me. It began spinning faster-and-faster, while growing from one foot in length to a total of eight, before launching straight at the mob.

“Beetle Bolt!” Bee exclaimed, aiming at Annabella.

Her projectile hit just as the woman fired her crossbow at me, and the Beetle Bolt tore through her upper torso in a spray of blood and viscera. Then my Lance hit the center mass of the mob and produced an effect like a bowling ball hitting a pack of closely-stacked pins.

Players were flung in all directions, some going straight through the floor, others flying through the ceiling or getting stuck halfway-buried, with the rest flying against the walls, Steve included. This was the true power of my unCollide Plugin and its Glitch Collision.

“Holy fuck, Gambit!” Panda yelled in outrage.

“*Fak yea, bruv!! Strike!!*”

Bee’s hit on Annabella had unintentionally saved her from a head-on collision with my Lance, though a lot of the other people with them hadn’t been as fortunate.

“You’ve got an arrow in your forearm, Gambit,” Panda said.

I looked down and saw that he was right. With a simple tug, I tore it out of my body.

“Don’t worry, I’ll get her this time!” the Beetle Girl promised.

As she took aim and prepared to launch another Bolt, several of the survivors were putting up defenses, either as literal shields or magical ones. There were even two healer-type people amongst them, who were tending to those that’d survived. But, I’d still killed five outright, with two stuck in the world geometry and slowly choking to death, judging by how their legs were wriggling desperately.

EVENT WARNING!

You have retaken 3rd place!

Kills remaining: 5

I was actually starting to feel a bit bad about it all, as I’d proven them all right in their suspicions of me, but then several of the Players began charging for us and my feelings changed. Some were shooting off their unevolved guns, while others were lifting bats, swords, bows, crossbows, wands, and any other type of weird weapon they had thanks to their Class or Dungeon rewards.

“Beetle Brawn!” Bee exclaimed, just in time for several bullets to *pling* off her carapace. Three of the flintlock shots graced me, while a fourth rebounded back towards the man who’d fired it, destroying his hand.

In the end, despite it all, I did exactly what I knew the Great Game and its insidious creators and showrunners wanted. I went on a massacre.

Because of my attributes, I was so much stronger than everyone else, so it was like I was going seal-clubbing. Every swing of my hammer was so devastating that when it hit it broke their bodies and tossed them against the walls or ceiling, where many of them flew through thanks to Glitch Collision.

EVENT WARNING!

You have taken 2nd place!

Kills remaining: **1**

As my hammer descended on the fifth person, I was suddenly yanked out of the hallway and—

The sensation of falling through a black void filled me. Then two achievements appeared in front of my eyes in quick succession:

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| Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement! ^x |
| <i>‘Game Event Clear’</i> |
| Completed your first Game Event. |
| <i>Against all odds, you completed your first Game Event. You showed that you have the power to get things done, despite the odds being stacked against you.</i> |
| <i>Or maybe you just cheated or stole the kills of other Players, who knows?</i> |
| <i>Such an achievement demands a reward of course!</i> |
| Reward: +1 level & ‘Participation Trophy’ |

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| Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement! ^x |
| <i>‘Rising Star’</i> |
| Finished in the top 10 of a Game Event. |
| <i>If not for the fact that someone who isn’t Glitched completed the Game Event before you, we’d seriously be doubting your credentials here. However, the footage has been reviewed, and you have indeed fulfilled the requirements of the Event without cheating...</i> |
| <i>As such, here is your special reward. I hope you choke on it, cheater.</i> |

Reward: +2 levels & ‘*Top Ten Trophy*’

I was tossed down onto a soft black leather couch. A moment later Bee landed in my lap, along with Panda who’d been riding on her shoulder.

“What the hell just happened?” I wondered, looking around the room we’d landed in.

Brock, who had been in my hand just a second ago, was gone.

Congratulations!

You have completed the WEAPONLUTION Event!

You finished with a placement of:

#2 out of 1000

Sit back and relax as the Event runs its course.

Enjoy the refreshments brought by our staff, and talk with your fellow victors, while you watch the other Players on the screens.

Event time remaining:

36 hours 38 minutes 41 seconds

There were several large black leather couches scattered around the room, as well as a myriad of screens to watch other players, although this time the screens showed a lot more information, such as kills remaining, Class, and so forth. Besides the couches and screens, the large room was built like a hotel lobby, though there were no windows, but plenty of gaudy embellishments, like marble pillars, crystal chandeliers, and polished wooden flooring. There were also cockroach humanoids in fancy concierge and bellhop outfits, as well as some dressed like servers.

One such cockroach server came over with a tray of glasses full of sparkling champagne. In the distance I saw a person I recognized. It was the woman called ‘Samantha’. Apparently she had finished as #1 of the Event and that was without using Glitches like me, which was both impressive and terrifying in equal measure.

“Care for a refreshment?” asked the cockroach. His mandibles clicked as he spoke and the polished red-brown carapace of his head reflected a chandelier above us.

I almost instinctively declined, but then took one of the fancy glasses and said, “*Inspect.*”

| ‘Victory Champagne’ x |
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| <i>Truly the drink of champions. Savor its delectable flavor sourced directly from the Champagne region of France!</i> |
| <i>Imbibing this drink will reset the cooldowns on all of your abilities and fully recover your injuries & fatigue.</i> |

“We’re going back in,” I told Panda and Bee, then grabbed the entire tray of drinks and put it in my inventory. The server didn’t seem bothered by this and instead just walked away to fetch more.

Panda stood up and gave me a judging glare. “Why? You beat the Event, you can take a break now.”

“Fuck that,” I said. “Even though we destroyed the Broadcast’s Production Control, they’re still able to broadcast this whole thing!”

“Huh, you’re right...”

Bee pointed to a screen, which, although it had no sound, had subtitles showing what the Announcer was saying. “Look, they even replaced Riii!”

It was another Wasp in the bottom-right of the screen, though this one was colored like an emerald. She was laughing hysterically at the footage of a guy, who was desperately crawling away from someone with a sawn-off shotgun, while trailing blood on the ground.

“All we did was pointless,” I told Panda. “But there’s something else I can do that will really piss them off.”

I downed the glass of champagne, which tasted of bubbly grape soda.

Then I grabbed Bee by the wrist and said, “*back_door.bat!*”

The comfortable couch was replaced by bright-green soft moss in an instant.

Nearby a Player shouted in alarm at our sudden appearance.

We were back inside the Event again.

With a *pop* Brock appeared in my lap and immediately began crying.

“*Oh god! I saw what non-existence is like!! Don’t send me back there again, Mister Gambit! I’ll be good!! I promise!!*”

“Welcome back, Brock,” I said. “Ready to smack an Adjudicator?”

There was a pause, as he collected himself.

“Fak yes cunt!!”