

## Chapter -67

The seven women and Hawaiian Shirt Guy all scrambled up-and-over the walls we were standing behind. Samantha, like a miserly guardian of some hidden stash, quickly went over in front of the door to the women’s bathroom, barring them from entering. The women didn’t seem to notice, and instead hurried through the door to the men’s.

Steve tried to join them, but Samantha stopped him with her good hand, nearly knocking him to the ground.

“What are you doing!?”

“You help clean up your own mess!” she scolded him, and for a second I actually had some respect for her.

“What about them!?” he complained, pulling the ‘but everyone else is doing it so it’s fine’ argument, just as a weak-minded person like him would.

“They’re too low-levelled and you got them into this mess!”

Bee was sending Beetle Bolts whirring down the length of the hallway now sporting a massive hole, only for them to repeatedly be deflected by the Swan’s sturdy beak. Her aim was good, but it was a bad target she was shooting for.

“Aim for the base of the neck!” Panda advised her.

I pulled pieces off the furniture wall and finger-flicked them at the Swan, which waddled towards us ominously while honking loudly. Its footfalls made the floor and ceiling shake, panels falling down from above and leaving dark empty squares behind.

The impacts of my projectiles struck its fluffy white feathers, but the damage was only really surface-level. I thought about pumping up Brock using the valve, but in order to use him, I’d have to get close...

Steve clambered up onto the platform Bee and I stood on. She was preparing one of her bombs, while the Swan made it to the first of the gauntlet’s fall walls.

“Birthday Wish!” he said out loud, and a large translucent candle appeared in front of him. As he blew it out, he closed his eyes and seemed to be making a wish.

The candle vanished.

Steve opened his eyes.

“What’d that just do?” I asked.

“You’ll hit harder for the next 30 seconds! Don’t waste it!”

“Beetle Bomb,” Bee said, then handed me the bomb she’d made. It was the size of a bowling ball, so she had definitely put a lot of oomph into it.

I chucked it at the boss, but before it could get close enough, the Swan released a warbling roar that made all the walls shake as though they would topple over. Then it lifted its wings and flapped them. The bomb, the furniture the walls were comprised of, and us, were sent backwards and away from the enormous Swan, carried by the powerful wind generated by its wings.

A bench hit Steve and took him for a ride down the left-going hallway without giving him a say in it, while I was slammed into the wall and pinned there by a grill and heavy restaurant chairs. Bee tumbled towards Samantha, who managed to catch and shield her with her transforming weapon, just before weaponized lamps and pots assailed them, followed by the bomb that Bee had made.

I watched it fly towards them, as though time was slowed to a crawl, and began lifting my hand in response. Each slow drumbeat resounded in my inner ear as I formed an O-shape with my broken thumb and my middle-finger, then flicked the air.

“*Get it!!*” Brock yelled.

Time immediately resumed to its normal flow and my finger-flick sent a concentrated burst of air directly into the side of the bomb, pushing it away from the pair, just before it exploded and showered Samantha’s shield with flechettes. She winced in pain and I saw that several holes now adorned the hastily-made half-bowl shield she’d created. Both of them were hit by the fragments, but not anywhere that mattered.

“That was close,” I muttered, before repositioning my legs against the grill and chairs pinning me. I pushed them as hard as I could. The metal chair legs scraped against the tiles on the floor and left behind black streaks. Wriggling free, I made my way to where the platforms had been and now a sea of rubble lay. Meanwhile the Swan was gearing up for another attack.

“Get out of the way!” Panda yelled, suddenly on my shoulder, and Bee began pulling Samantha back towards the bathrooms.

I knew I had no choice but to get in close and hope I could take down the boss.

“I might have to sacrifice my left arm,” I told the plushie.

“Don’t be an idiot, Gambit. Use your Soul Blade, then follow it up with your Giant Lance.”

I blinked. “Huh, you’re right, why default to punching when I have useful skills?”

The floor and ceiling shook as the Swan honked loudly, then it lifted its wings up and lowered its head, straightening out its neck. It raised its black right foot, the webbing between each clawed digit

pulled taut, and then slammed it down in front of it. Then its left foot followed, then its right again. Each footfall of its long strides made the scattered furniture debris jump off the floor, while crushing anything they landed on.

“Watch out!” Panda yelled as the huge Swan barreled through the messy hallway towards the bathrooms.

I ran to meet it.

“*Unequip All!*” I yelled, and the many Skill Trigger messages followed as I picked up speed and did my best to maneuver through the junk that covered every inch of the floor. For once, Miranda didn’t comment on my nakedness. Perhaps she was pissed that I hadn’t put on the Fur Collar.

As only fifteen yards separated us, I invoked my new ability: “**Soul Blade!**”

Putting my left hand to my chest, I drew my weapon in a blaze of light that was tinted suspiciously violet.

I only had a second to gape in horror at the large *purple* banana that appeared in my hand, before it unfurled its three sections to reveal the katana blade within. I lifted it up over my head in preparation for a wide slash.

At the same time, the Swan lowered its head and opened its orange beak with ridges and teeth that seemed eager to bite down on me.

My boots kept landing on debris, while each of the Swan’s feet made everything bounce with the weight of their impacts.

Suddenly only four yards separated me from the Swan’s open beak.

With a kick off from the lid of a trashcan, I cleared its enormous head and swung my Soul Blade at its back, carving a channel between its wings that quickly began spewing out blood.

As I landed on the floor where the Swan had pulverized a stone countertop and large plant box, the purple banana katana disappeared from my hand, the light retreating back into my chest where I’d pulled it from.

“Why was it purple...?” I muttered in confusion. “Oh my god, is my soul purple!?”

“Gambit look!” Panda said and I quickly spun around to take in the Swan, which had collapsed only a few yards from the bathroom doors. The cut on its back was turning purple, with the color dying its feathers and spreading down its body.

With one great effort, the Swan stumbled upright.

Then it honked so loudly that an entire section of the ceiling panels shook loose and fell to the floor all at once.

It began lifting its wings, even though the effort made more blood well forth.

The first beat displaced all the nearby furniture debris away from it in a circle, the second flung it further away and with greater speed, and the third wingbeat made me drop to the ground for safety, as all the things that’d piled up near the bathrooms were sent back the way they’d come with ruinous force. Things crashed into the walls and floor, and the entire building seemed to begin violently shaking alongside the destruction. Shopfronts and restaurants were showered with dangerous debris and the bodies of the dead enemies.

From where I lay, I pointed my hand at the furious Swan.

“Giant-Slayer Lance!” I yelled against the wind created by its wings.

The projectile began to form in front of me, spinning as it grew in length, becoming a ballista bolt.

One of the chairs that’d pinned me earlier, spun as it flew through the air towards me. Since standing up was certain death and I didn’t have time to properly react, I lifted my arm in front of my head and hoped for the best. The chair hit the floor tile just inches from my face, before jumping over me.

Then the Giant Lance fired. Its sound was impossible to hear because of the storm the Swan was conjuring, but I watched its trajectory as it flew past debris and struck the boss in its side, just above its left leg.

Immediately the wind died down and the monster collapsed to the floor.

The flying furniture all came to a halt, and I got to my feet, quickly scanning the hallways for any monsters that might’ve snuck up, but the coast was clear.

I let out a long exhale.

My body was sore and tired, my skin was sticky with the blood and fluids of several dozen monsters, and my right arm was still fucking gone...

Then a message rolled across the world.

### **WORLD FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT!**

**Player ‘Samantha’ is the first person to establish a Safe Zone in the GREAT GAME!**

**The Safe Zone is located in the ‘Serenity Park Mall’ within the city of Castleburg, Massachusetts, in the United States!**

—Patreon-exclusive Copy—  
—Kristoffer Pauly (aka “Dosei”)—

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to know your neighbors!**