

## Chapter -34

I landed on the ground safely, but well out of stamina. If we’d been any higher in the air above the amphitheater, I would surely have exhausted my energy from gliding and fallen to my death.

Panda fell from the sky with a loud “Weeeeeee...!” before bouncing off the stone floor with not a mark on him, landing back down again safely. He looked around for a moment, then spotted me and began waddling over.

“That was a close one,” I said to myself, then took in the many pop-ups that’d arrived.

<b>Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement!</b> <sup>x</sup>
<i>‘Like Running in a Nightmare’</i> <b>Fought in zero gravity.</b>
<i>I cannot understate just how lame of a Boss fight that was. The Broadcast Department is especially furious, but, also, fuck those guys.</i>  <i>Here’s a lame reward for a lame accomplishment.</i>
<b>Reward:</b> <i>‘Moon Boots’</i>

<b>Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement!</b> <sup>x</sup>
<i>‘Bad Catchphrase’</i> <b>Hasta la vista, dumbass.</b>
<i>Did you know that Demons can cringe?</i>  <i>We didn’t. Until now.</i>  <i>Our viewers have already flooded our inboxes with letters asking for you to stop. So, anyway, now suicide-by-bad- catchphrase is possible for you.</i>

<i>Enjoy.</i>
<b>Reward:</b> Lame catchphrases now deal 1 point of damage to yourself

<b>Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement!</b> <sup>x</sup>
<i>‘Statistical improbability’</i> <b>Defeat a Boss 50 levels above you.</b>
<i>So, uhhh, this achievement was one we literally had to make just for you, because it’s not really meant to be achievable. Just like so many other of the achievements you’ve already received...</i>
<i>We’ve reviewed the footage and gone through the logs of your weapon evolutions, but, yeah, it’s unfortunately above board, so it is with great sadness that we have to reward you for this, quite frankly, astonishing feat.</i>
<b>Rewards:</b> +2 levels & ‘Giant Killer Trophy’

<b>Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement!</b> <sup>x</sup>
<i>‘Announce this!’</i> <b>Defeat an Announcer.</b>
<i>You know, the way that the hierarchy works in the Agencies of the <b>GREAT GAME</b> is that the strong get the cushy high-position jobs, while the weak do fieldwork like being Agents, Collectors, and Species Samplers.</i>
<i>Announcers are slightly above the middle strata and are known for their cunning and tricks, so the fact that you defeated one is quite an accomplishment.</i>

<i>Unfortunately for you, Riii was popular amongst many of the grunts of the Agencies, so you've made a lot of new enemies.</i>
<b>Reward: 'Fairyfly Wing'</b>

<b>Congratulations! You have leveled up!</b> <sup>x</sup>	
<b>You have reached Level -9!</b>	
+2 new Attribute Point available to invest!	
<i>Kills required for Level -10</i>	<i>3/25</i>

“That’s a ton of achievements,” Panda said.

I was slowly reading through them, and by the time I got to the last one, I was almost drooling to find out what the ‘*Giant Killer Trophy*’ and ‘*Fairyfly Wing*’ would give me.

“Gambit! Are you okay!?” I heard Bee yell as she ran over to where I was sitting, my back to the first row of the amphitheater seating.

“I’m fine,” I told her, but she drew up short as she saw my face.

“He’s not fine,” Panda told her. “Half his face is missing after all.”

“... Wait? Half? I thought it was just my chin.”

“I’ll get the sewing kit out,” Bee said and knelt down next to me.

“Thanks.”

“Nice hat by the way,” she said.

I blinked, uncomprehending.

“The purple hard hat,” she explained.

“Oh... right. I forgot I had that on.”

“Didn’t do anything to save your face,” Panda remarked.

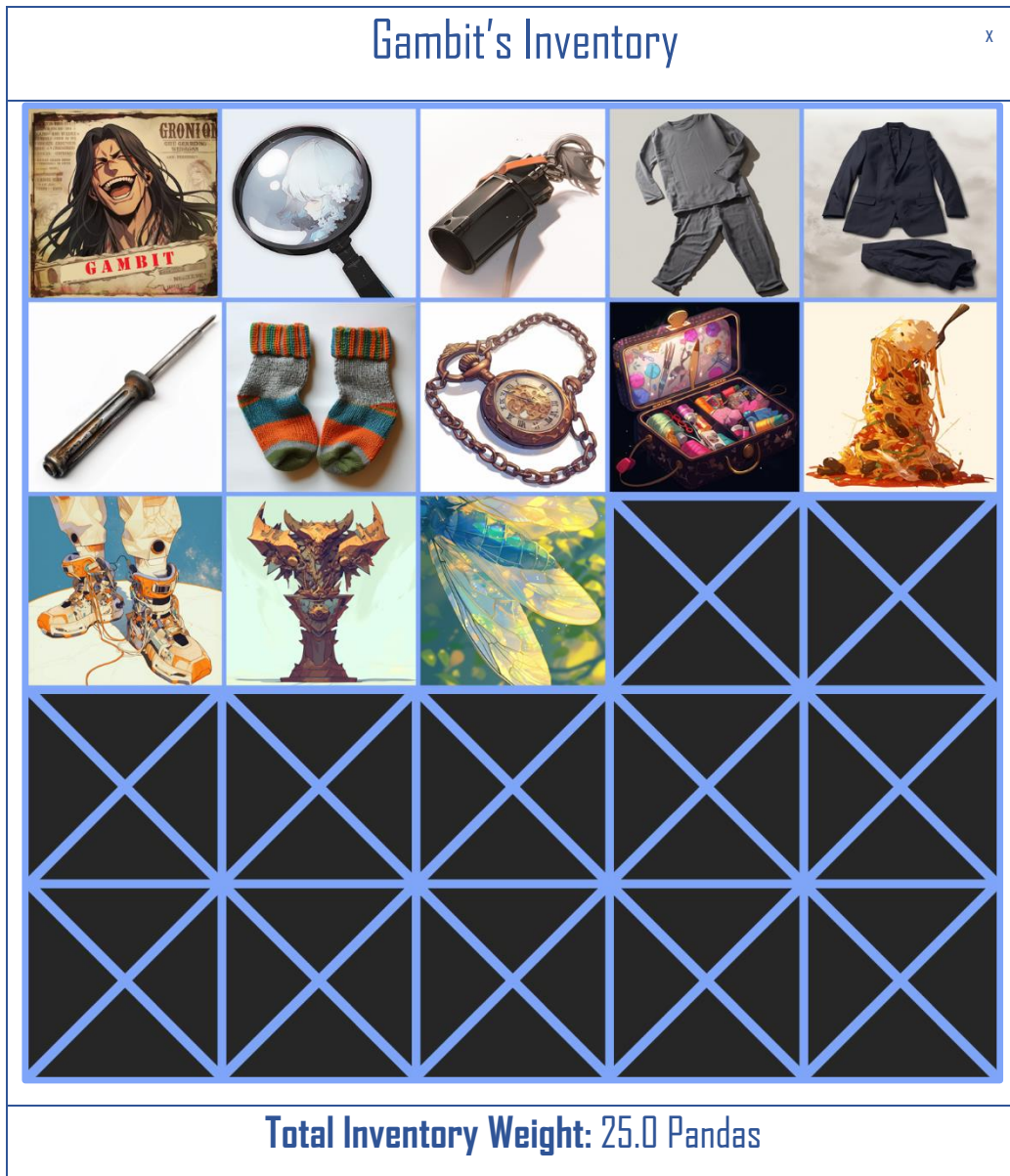
I pulled up my inventory while she prepared to sew up my entire face, then quickly realized that, apart from the hard hat, I was totally naked. With frantic speed I equipped the ruined suit.

“Sorry!” I said.

“What for?”

“Nevermind,” I quickly added, since she hadn’t noticed, apparently. Or maybe, and rather disturbingly, she had grown accustomed to seeing me in my Birthday Suit...

I looked back at my open screen, trying not to think too much about it.



Since I was hungry, I pulled out the spaghetti first.

It arrived with a *splat*, just a single plastic fork and a curled-up ball of spaghetti with mothballs all over it, landing on the ground between my feet.

“What’s that?” Bee asked.

I wasn’t sure how to answer the question, so I looked at the unappetizing meal and said, “*Inspect.*”

<b>‘Spaghetti with Mothballs’</b> <span style="float: right;">x</span>
<i>With a strange perfume scent and chemical aftertaste, this meal is perhaps not the healthiest thing you could eat, but,</i>

*eating the entire meal in one sitting will imbue you with 2%  
Health recovery per minute while not in combat, lasting 4  
hours.*

Bee inspected it as well and then said, “Maybe I won’t need to sew you up after all.”

I sighed, she was right, it was too good not to use, so I quickly got to work stuffing the whole thing down my gullet. For once I was glad that all I could taste was synthetic grape, but I still felt a chemical tingling in my mouth afterwards.

Right away, I could feel how my face began to shift and change, thanks to the recovery effects.

“That’s really gross,” Bee said, looking at my face in deep fascination.

“Don’t forget to invest your new attribute points,” Panda reminded me.

“Did you level up?” Bee asked.

I nodded. “Level -9 now. I think that perhaps I might get something special for level -10.”

“Could it be the Class change and evolution stuff that was mentioned in that announcement two days ago?”

“No idea,” I replied, but I also couldn’t really recall the specific wording. I began to wonder what sort of Class change would be available to me though, given that I was Glitched.

“*Status*,” I said, and then, after only a few seconds of deliberation, I chose Defense and Strength.

<b>Level -9</b>	<b>‘Gambit’</b>	<b><i>System Glitch</i></b> <sup>x</sup>	
<b>STATS</b>			
<b>Health:</b> Ain’t Not Good	<b>Stamina:</b> いいけど	<b>Armor:</b> Dobleck Coating	
<b>Carry Weight:</b> 1050 Pandas	<b>Top Speed:</b> Mountain Bike	<b>Mana:</b> Literally Zero	
<b>ATTRIBUTES</b>			
<b>Strength:</b> 2415 lbs.	<b>Dexterity:</b> Joey	<b>Intelligence:</b> TBD	<b>Vitality:</b> Ribeye
<b>Athleticism:</b> 蝙蝠	<b>Perception:</b> ‘Yes?’	<b>Wisdom:</b> N/A	<b>Defense:</b> Dobleck
<b>ABILITIES</b>		<b>PASSIVES</b>	
‘Punch.harder( )’ ‘I_CAN_FLY’		‘Glitch’ ‘Insanity’	

'Dungeon-Break'	'Inanimate Voices' 'Math.multiply(Punch)' 'BIRTHDAY_SUIT' 'Reflective Shell'
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Panda gasped. “Finally, a pattern emerges! A point in Strength is equivalent to 115 pounds and 50 Pandas in Carry Weight.”

“What’s Oobleck?” I asked.

“It’s a non-Newtonian fluid made from cornstarch and water.”

“What’s it do?”

“Well, it gets hard if moved rapidly, but flows like a liquid when at rest. I think it was once tested as a potential replacement for Kevlar.”

“The System seems to think its stronger than plastic bottles.”

Bee didn’t respond and instead was staring at my chest, where the hole from the Ambusher made my skin visible beneath the suit. I was about to explain what had caused it, when she asked:

“Why do you have a nametag that says ‘*Gambit the Moron*’?”