

Kill the Sun

Chapter 16: Ruins

Nick swam forward in silence.

From time to time, he could hear the sound of someone walking on the road above him, but that was about it.

All the other sounds were just the liquid sloshing around Nick's body and face.

CRK!

Nick's shin suddenly hit something solid, but thanks to his ability, his shin didn't receive any real damage.

The next moment, Nick stopped and used his feet to see what was below him. After all, the liquid was so murky that he couldn't even see further than ten centimeters.

Nick's feet found something big and stable beneath him.

In fact, Nick could even stand on it, allowing his torso to rise above the murky liquid.

'Wonder what that is,' Nick thought as he continued wading across the stable foothold.

Splash!

But after some seconds, Nick lost his footing and fell forward.

A moment later, Nick shot upward and scrambled back onto the stable foothold.

'It's in my mouth!'

Nick immediately started retching uncontrollably, and it only stopped over two minutes later.

'Note to self, don't breathe in while walking forward,' Nick thought.

'Anyway, seems like my foothold ended after about ten meters.'

'I guess that's the size of a house.'

A moment later, Nick decided to walk along the edge of the perceived building he was walking on, and within a minute, Nick had mapped out what he was standing on.

'Sure enough, it's a house,' Nick thought.

But then, Nick furrowed his brows. 'However, the form is unusual, and it's made of stone or brick instead of metal.'

'Almost all houses have a slanted roof because of the rainwater, but the roof of this one is perfectly flat.'

'Even more, all the houses above me are made of metal.'

'A house made of something as luxurious as stone would be far too expensive for the people living in the Dregs. Even the houses in the actual Outer City are mostly made of metal, albeit rust-free.'

That was when Nick remembered what the Parasite had said.

The Parasite had called the sewers ruins at some point.

'Ruins,' Nick thought. 'I guess this stone house is part of the ruins then.'

'But why are there buildings down here?'

'Obviously, no one is living down here. Yet, there are still valuable and functional houses.'

'Even more, the sewers wouldn't have swallowed everything if we had just lived in the houses to begin with.'

'Why did someone build a metallic city above this one?'

'I don't know,' Nick thought after some seconds, 'but one thing is clear.'

'Humans have lived here before.'

Nick looked around a bit.

'I want to know how big the house is.'

The next moment, Nick went to the edge of the house, took a deep breath, and dove down.

Nick's hands grabbed the rough stone of the house and pulled him downward.

Since no one was watching him, Nick easily managed to pull himself downward.

After descending for around ten meters, Nick reached the bottom, but when he felt it, he furrowed his brows in surprise.

'Metal?'

'The ground is made of metal here as well?'

The Dregs were buildings made of rusty metal sitting on top of grates and plates of rusty metal.

Below that, Nick imagined a stone house sitting on top of more metal.

'Then, is there even more?'

Nick pulled back and kicked the floor with all his power.

BOOOM!

The ground vibrated, but Nick suddenly felt pain in his leg.

He knew all too well where that pain came from.

He had hit something that was way too hard.

'This feels just as hard as the metal that Wyntor's Containment Unit is made of! I think he called it steel.'

'A house made of stone on top of a floor made of steel. This sounds way better than the rusty metal of the Dregs.'

Nick thought about this for a while.

'There's not enough information.'

A moment later, Nick shot towards the surface to get a "fresh" breath of air before returning underground.

Over the next few minutes, Nick mapped out the building. He even found the door and some windows.

'Sure enough, it's a residential house,' Nick thought.

By now, Nick had acclimated to the disgusting liquid, and as long as it didn't get into his mouth, he could keep his disgust in check.

As Nick looked down at the house below him, he suddenly got the urge to investigate further.

'Maybe there is some treasure inside?'

'Maybe there are some secrets to uncover?'

But then, Nick felt a bit of crackling from beneath his feet.

The house wasn't breaking apart, but it definitely wasn't stable.

That was when Nick realized something crucial.

'That's dumb!'

'There's no way anything valuable would be left! After all, the people who moved here to build the city must have cleared everything out already!'

The next moment, Nick narrowed his eyes.

Then, he remembered when this feeling had actually occurred.

While Nick had been deep below the surface, he had already had the urge to investigate the house.

In fact, the urge had been the strongest when Nick had found the door.

'It's already started.'

The liquid was so incredibly murky that no light reached a depth of even just two meters.

This meant that Nick had been in pure darkness down there.

'The Nightmare.'

The Nightmare's influence could be subtle or noticeable, whichever was more useful.

Naturally, the Nightmare had influenced Nick in a very subtle manner down there, slowly planting ideas into his head of riches and secrets.

If Nick had followed these urges, he would have been in quite a lot of danger.

The house was not stable, and even more, the Nightmare could also warp someone's perception and create illusions.

It could have made Nick move in a different direction than he wanted, and without being able to see or hear down there, Nick wouldn't be able to find his way out.

In the end, he might become panicked and break through the wall, but then, the house might collapse on top of him.

'The Nightmare has already influenced me.'

Nick took a deep breath.

'I have to be careful.'

The next moment, Nick decided to stop investigating the ruins below him.

Without a constant source of light, investigating the ruins was far too dangerous.

'I can look at them at some other time.'

'For now, I should look for the Dreamer.'

Chapter 17: Rules of the Sewer

Nick focused on searching for the Dreamer.

'The Investigator doesn't know what the Dreamer looks like exactly, but he said that he knows it can fly.'

'Physical and Possession Specters of the first level are not nearly powerful enough to fly without wings, which means that the Specter is most likely a winged creature of some sort.'

As Nick swam forward, he kept looking upward.

Naturally, the Dreamer most likely didn't reside inside the actual murky liquid.

'It's probably living inside some of these structures.'

Naturally, there had to be some support for all the metallic plates and grates that made up the floor of the Outer City.

These supports came in the form of long and wide pillars of rusty metal, but they were not the only kinds of support.

Nick had already found a couple of other ruins jutting out of the liquid.

For example, there was a wide building made of stone that seemed to touch or fuse into the metallic plates above it.

There were also several other sizable buildings made of metal and stone jutting out of the pool.

While most of the normal pillars ended in a part of the street with a couple of plates, the sizable ruins that supported the city often ended in big areas of plates.

There were no grates for over ten meters around these big structures.

Additionally, most floors below the actual buildings in the dregs were also made of plates instead of grates.

In a way, since the sun was directly above Nick at all times, the map of the Dregs was reflected on the murky liquid in the form of shadows and big areas of darkness.

While Nick was swimming through the sewers, he was essentially following the roads of the Dregs above him.

It had a kind of bizarre sense of order.

Sadly, this meant that Nick couldn't fully investigate every part of the sewers without having to enter the darkness.

Many buildings were often clumped together, and since the people wanted to avoid the rising smell of the sewers as much as possible, they also replaced their floors with plates.

This created areas of pure darkness over a hundred meters wide.

Naturally, there were also ruins and supports in these areas, and Nick couldn't see much from a distance.

Nick was in the light, and if he wanted to look into the darkness, his eyes had to acclimate to darkness first.

This meant that he had to enter the darkness if he wanted to see in the darkness.

But for now, Nick avoided the darkness.

He would only enter when it was necessary.

Nick remained on the "streets" as he continued to search for any movement above him.

The good thing about the sewers was that they were so incredibly toxic and disgusting that not even insects came here.

The only movement Nick saw came from the rats scuttling across the ceiling of the sewers.

Surprisingly, not even the rats were swimming in the liquid.

Instead, they were scuttling across the metallic grates with their claws.

In fact, there were quite a lot of them.

In a certain way, these rats were the pedestrians of the sewers since they also followed the roads.

While Specters were not being hunted by the Nightmare, most of their minions were.

So, even the minions of a powerful Specter, like the Parasite, had to avoid the dark places.

Luckily, none of the rats were looking at Nick, keeping his ability active.

In the beginning, some of them had looked at him out of curiosity, but after Nick had thrown them a glare, they turned around.

If the Parasite annoyed Nick too much, Nick might decide to hunt its rats.

So, out of politeness, the Parasite tried to ignore Nick.

As long as it didn't antagonize Nick, Nick wouldn't antagonize it.

That was their unspoken agreement.

For several hours, Nick continued searching for the Dreamer.

The sewers were kilometers upon kilometers long, but luckily, not all the flooring was made of grates.

The Dregs didn't surround the city. After all, no city would want every single visitor to travel through the absolute worst place they had.

So, while the sewers covered most of the underground of the city, the Dregs were only about two kilometers wide and three kilometers long.

Nick was quite certain that the Dreamer didn't go outside the sewers below the Dregs.

First of all, the other parts of the cities had far more Zephyx Extractors, and if any of them found a level one Specter appearing near them, they would hunt it down.

Every Specter represented an incredible amount of wealth!

Additionally, the nicer parts of the town had the sewers completely isolated, making it impossible for the Dreamer to surface.

This meant that the Dreamer had to focus on the Dregs.

'By now, it should be late evening,' Nick thought.

The sun didn't move, but Nick's inner clock was telling him that it was getting late.

'According to the Inspector, the Dreamer has received its name due to the method it uses to hunt and feed.'

'Once a night, it leaves its nest and visits a sleeping person.'

'While they are asleep, the Dreamer creates terrifying nightmares for them but doesn't allow them to wake up.'

'For several hours, the person is stuck inside a terrifying nightmare.'

'The next day, the person wakes up again, but they feel even more tired than before they went to bed. Naturally, they also need a long time to recover from the mental stress.'

'Since it's already late in the evening, the first people should already be going to bed.'

'In at most a couple of hours, the Dreamer should leave its nest to feed.'

'That's when I can find it.'

'Sadly, I also need to reach it and sneak up on it.'

'That won't be easy.'

'But for now, I should wait.'

Nick went to one of the ruins that were below some grates and grabbed the edge.

Then, Nick slightly pulled himself down so that only his nose and eyes poked out.

He didn't want the Dreamer to see him when it searched for its food.

And like this, Nick waited.

Chapter 18: Nightmare

Nick waited for several hours in the horrible liquid.

During this time, he had a lot of time to think.

For example, he had thought about how he had ended up in this place.

Naturally, after being inside such a disgusting place for so long, Nick had questioned his life choices.

But in the end, Nick thought that it actually wasn't so bad. After all, he was currently trying to turn his life for the better.

The worse it was, the fewer regrets he would have in the future in case he decided to accept the Investigator job.

At least, he could say that he had even swam through a pool of piss and shit in an effort to become a Zephyx Extractor.

By now, it was deep in the night, but the sun still shone brightly in the sky.

Way fewer people were walking around above the grates, and Nick had also seen a drop in streams of piss and nuggets of shit coming down through the grates into the pool.

Yet, Nick still hadn't seen the Dreamer.

He constantly kept a lookout for its whereabouts, but Nick just couldn't find it anywhere.

'It should be 12 a.m. already,' Nick thought with furrowed brows. 'Most people should be asleep already, and there should be plenty of victims to choose from for the Dreamer.'

'Yet, I haven't seen anything fly around.'

'From this position, I can basically look at everything below the Dregs, but I still can't see anything flying around.'

Naturally, Nick grew worried.

Just to be safe, Nick waited for another two hours.

But still, nothing.

'It should be 2 a.m. now, but I still don't see anything.'

By now, even Nick's powerful and strengthened skin started to get itchy all over.

The liquid was a bit acidic, and Nick had been in it for over eight hours by now.

In the end, Nick surfaced with a helpless sigh.

'Since it's not flying around, this can basically mean only one thing.'

'Its nest is directly below its victim's home.'

'That means it doesn't need to fly around to feed.'

Nick looked around and focused on the several big and dark spots in his surroundings.

The direct beams of light coming from above Nick created shadowy squares when blocked by the houses of the Dregs.

In a way, they created shadows of the houses themselves.

But instead of being two-dimensional, it was like the shadows took up the entire space below the houses, creating a sort of black domain.

However, there were also a few houses with a couple of small grates, representing small spots of light.

These grates were mostly left in the houses as toilets.

'For now, I should focus on the houses with toilets.'

Nick created a map inside his head of the layout and started from the edge of the Dregs.

After swimming for a while, Nick stopped in front of the first dark place.

In front of Nick was a shadowy area, around twenty meters wide and fifty meters long.

There were two grates in that area of darkness.

Naturally, houses in the Dregs didn't get that big. This was simply a small block of houses with two toilets.

Nick took a deep breath.

And then, he swam forward.

Nick directly swam towards the beam of light in front of him, but he also kept looking around for the Dreamer.

He saw several pillars and even a ruin jutting out of the pool around him, and he looked at all of them.

The Dreamer probably wasn't very big, and it could probably even live on the sides of one of the rusty pillars.

Nick inspected all the pillars.

Suddenly, Nick's body shook, and he stopped moving forward.

In front of him, the pillars seemed to distort and morph into each other.

Just a couple of moments later, a terrifying grimace with teeth had been created, and it looked down at Nick with rage.

Nick's heart rate rose.

'That's the Nightmare! This is only an illusion!'

Yet, knowing that it was an illusion didn't help a lot.

Nick's terror was still very present and visible.

Someone with a phobia of spiders also knew that almost all the spiders weren't even dangerous.

Yet, their fear was still overpowering.

Nick was in a similar situation now.

He knew that the huge grimace floating above him was not real, but he still genuinely felt like he was about to die.

Nick's speed increased.

It was almost like his disgust for the liquid had vanished as he desperately tried to get away as quickly as possible.

"You're going to die!"

The darkest voice Nick had ever heard had just spoken that sentence, and Nick felt his mind shiver.

Yet, Nick just looked forward at the safe beam of light that was the toilet of the house.

"You're never going to reach it."

The next moment, Nick saw the beam of light slowly going away from him.

Nick's breathing quickened, and he didn't even care that some of the liquid entered his mouth at that moment.

He needed light!

Nick kept swimming.

And swimming.

And swimming.

Why hadn't he reached it yet?!

From the start, the toilet was barely ten meters away from him!

That took some seconds, but that was it!

Nick was quite sure that he had been swimming for over half a minute by now!

Where was the light?!

"Hahahahaha!"

The dark voice laughed as the light traveled further and further away from Nick until eventually...

It was gone.

There was no more light.

There was only darkness.

An endless forest of tall and rusty spires rose from the pool around Nick.

But that was it.

No matter in which direction Nick looked, he only saw an endless forest of rusty spires.

There was no escape.

The next moment, the grimace of spires slowly descended, its expression morphed into a malicious smile.

And then, it slowly moved towards Nick.

Nick knew all of this wasn't real, but he also knew that he would die if he stayed in the darkness.

The longer the Nightmare influenced people, the worse it got.

Nick turned around and swam away from the grimace.

He had to flee!

He was going to die!

"Hahahahaha!"

The grimace laughed as it came closer.

No matter what Nick did, it was coming closer.

Nick closed his eyes in terror.

He would die!

'I'm sorry, Wyntor.'

'But I have to use it!'

Then, Nick grabbed one of the tubes of glass and broke it over his knee.

Chapter 19: The Second Swim

The next moment, Nick was bathed in light.

From black, everything transformed into white.

Nick's eyes burned due to the sudden influx of light, but they quickly adapted.

The next moment, the light became less bright, and Nick could finally look around.

'How did I end up here?' Nick thought with surprise.

Right now, Nick was between the two toilets when he had not even reached the first one.

'The Nightmare must have created more illusions that made me change my trajectory.'

Nick took a deep breath.

'As long as I enter a sizable area of darkness, the Nightmare can actually keep me perpetually trapped in it.'

'No wonder no one wanted to search for the Dreamer down here.'

'The danger is not the Dreamer.'

'The danger is the Nightmare.'

Nick noticed that the light was getting dimmer, and he was preparing to move forward again.

'I need to find a way to get to the toilet.'

A bit later, the light was nearly gone, and Nick shot forward again.

The pillars were transforming into the forest of rusty spires again.

However, Nick just kept swimming forward with all of his power.

The next moment, Nick saw something dark slowly rise out of the pool in front of him.

It was like a whale had just put its breathing hole a bit above the surface before submerging again.

Something was in the water, and it was big!

A second later, it rose again, but this time, it was angled towards Nick!

It was swimming towards him!

Nick gritted his teeth, ignoring the liquid that poured through his lips.

And then, he tightly shut his eyes.

But he continued swimming!

Everything became silent.

It was deathly silent.

The only thing moving was Nick.

He almost felt like he was in an endless void of nothingness.

Ding.

Nick's right knee hit something solid, but the object was pushed away.

However, Nick knew exactly what he had just hit.

It felt a bit soft but with a hard core.

It was a head!

A human head!

The next moment, Nick hit something again.

This time, it was an arm.

However, Nick just kept moving forward.

More and more body parts appeared in Nick's way, but he just batted them to the side.

"I'm sorry," the crying voice of a kid said quietly.

The next moment, a small arm grabbed Nick's ankle.

"I'm so sorry!" the kid shouted.

"Please, forgive me!"

The next moment, several other arms grabbed Nick.

They wanted to pull him into the depths!

"I'm sorry!"

"I'm sorry!"

"I'm sorry!"

A chorus of different but desperate voices shouted from all around Nick as the grips of the arms tightened.

Nick couldn't move anymore.

He had been completely immobilized!

Nick's terror reached new heights, but he only kept trying to swim forward.

That was the only thing that could save him!

Splash!

Nick was suddenly pulled under!

The arms tightened around him and continued pulling.

And then, Nick suddenly felt it.

Teeth!

Huge teeth!

Nick's legs hit a couple of teeth, and the teeth were almost a meter long!

Even more, Nick's body wasn't nearly strong enough to resist these teeth, and his legs started to bleed.

In his panic, Nick desperately tried to swim away, but the arms kept pulling him back.

Even more, the arms seemed to come out of this thing's mouth!

The arms were pulling him into the maw!

Nick felt the maw advance.

A deep shadow appeared around Nick as he was engulfed.

There was another Specter in here!

And this was not a level one Specter!

He would die!

He would die!

Nick felt himself get pulled further and further down into the maw.

And then...

Everything stopped.

Nick didn't move for several seconds.

But nothing happened.

Slowly, Nick opened his eyes.

And he saw light!

He was below one of the toilets!

'I did it!' Nick thought in shock.

'I actually did it!'

For several seconds, Nick just looked at the light above him.

He was safe!

There was no second Specter!

Splash!

Suddenly, something splashed in the liquid in front of Nick, and all his anxiety returned!

Nick looked down.

And then, he saw it.

A floater.

A turd.

The person in the house above him had just taken a shit.

Nick grimaced in disgust.

'Really? Now?'

And with that, all of Nick's elation was gone and replaced by annoyance.

'Anyway, I can look for the Dreamer now.'

Due to the extreme darkness, Nick couldn't see all parts of the ceiling from any one spot.

Because of that, he went to the little safe spots to search the ceiling.

The next moment, Nick poked his head into the darkness, but his body remained in the light.

The Nightmare's influence returned, but it was far weaker than before.

By moving his head out of the light like this, Nick could look at the 100 square meters above him with quite a lot of confidence.

However, since 100 square meters were only ten by ten meters, Nick needed to do this from several locations to check everything.

After he looked at the ceiling above him, Nick readied himself to swim towards the next toilet.

Obviously, the Dreamer wasn't here.

Nick took a deep breath and readied himself.

'I've done this before. Now, I just need to do it again!'

Then, Nick shot forward.

The terrors returned.

Nick closed his eyes.

CRKSH!

Nick stopped breathing as he felt some teeth tear a part out of his arm!

The pain was brutal and sharp.

Nick opened his eyes and looked at his right elbow.

His flesh had been torn off!

Only the bloody bone of his elbow was left!

'Is... is this real?' Nick thought.

'I've never heard that the Nightmare could do something like this before!'

'Right! The teeth of the maw also tore my legs open, but when I reached the light, there was nothing!'

'I have to keep swimming!'

Even though a huge part of Nick's arm had just vanished, he still continued swimming as he closed his eyes.

He had to reach the toilet!

The next moment, something tore Nick's leg off, and Nick was nearly pulled under by the force.

Nick wanted to scream due to the pain, but he just kept swimming forward.

He had to reach the light!

He had to reach it!

More and more of Nick's body was torn apart, and Nick wasn't even sure what he was anymore.

His being was so overwhelmed with pain that his mind even blacked out for some seconds.

He was dying.

He wanted to die.

But he wanted to live.

It was so bad.

It was so horrible.

Just move forward.

Just a bit.

Please.

Just a bit!

And then, everything stopped again.

Nick opened his eyes.

He had reached the second toilet.

Chapter 20: Too Much

Silence.

Nick just looked at the ceiling in silence.

He had expected that things wouldn't be as bad the second time.

He had been wrong.

Things had been even worse the second time.

Back when Nick had been underwater, the Nightmare had used subtle influences.

The next time, it had used horrors to stop Nick from moving to where he wanted.

Then, it created illusions of Nick losing control and being swallowed.

And now, it had just directly inflicted an unending amount of pain on him.

The Nightmare had lost all its subtlety.

It had transformed from horror into terror.

Nick just looked at the light at the ceiling.

He wasn't sure what he was feeling.

Fear, apprehension, relief, anxiety.

This wasn't like the last time.

The last time, Nick had been happy that he had managed to do it.

But this time, Nick was not happy.

The pain had been bad.

Real bad.

For several minutes, Nick didn't do anything.

He just looked at the ceiling with a worried expression.

He didn't want to feel such pain again.

He never wanted to feel something like that again.

Just now, his body had been torn apart one piece at a time.

This was a pain that should have killed someone.

But he was still alive.

...

...

Nick gulped in worry.

'I don't want to do this again.'

'How many times do I have to do this?'

'What will happen next?'

'I can barely swim for a bit more than ten meters in pure darkness, and it's already this bad.'

'This is one of the smaller blocks of houses.'

'There are blocks with no toilets, which means I have to look at the ceiling while under illusions.'

'And then, I need to go back.'

'Also, what about when I actually find the Dreamer at the ceiling in one of those?'

'At that point, I need to climb one of the pillars in pure darkness and catch it.'

'The Nightmare could easily show me illusions and make me move in the wrong direction.'

Nick just floated on the liquid as he looked up.

Silence.

'I don't know.'

'I have no idea how to find and catch the Dreamer.'

For over ten minutes, Nick didn't do anything.

Naturally, Nick knew that he couldn't spend the rest of his life in the light of this little toilet.

He had to leave at some point.

Yet, he just couldn't.

The terror he had felt just now was too much.

The pain was too much.

He was only 16 years old.

He had never undergone something this painful or terrifying.

This was not the work of some random weak Specter.

No, this was the Nightmare.

One of the only five level nine Specters.

Even the strongest Zephyx Extractors couldn't remain in the darkness for an extended period of time.

The Nightmare's power was absolute.

It had killed tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of people just by mentally breaking them.

It had killed people far more experienced and tenacious than Nick.

'I can't do it.'

Silence.

'I just can't do it.'

'I have to do this one more time to get out, but I don't think I can enter another block of houses.'

Nick felt his chest shiver and hurt.

Regret, frustration, self-loathing.

'I'm not strong enough to do this again.'

'I want to turn my life around, not end it.'

'If I go through something like this again, I don't know if I will ever recover.'

'What then?'

'I want to try my best, but if I fail, I fail.'

'It's fine.'

'I can become an Inspector.'

'It's not like I have some lofty and idealistic goal that requires me to become the strongest person in the world.'

'No, I just want to live a good life.'

'But what's the point of living a good life when I wake up in a cold sweat because I keep re-experiencing the things I have seen and felt here every night for the remainder of my life?'

Nick looked to the side at the block of darkness waiting for him.

And then, some tears appeared in Nick's eyes.

'I'm sorry.'

'I just can't do it.'

'I'm not strong enough.'

Silence.

The only sounds down here came from the quiet scratching of the rats' claws and Nick's crying.

It was just too much for him.

Nick had just started his journey as a Zephyx Extractor, and he had already confronted one of the five strongest Specters several times.

This wasn't something that he could deal with.

This was far beyond his current level.

He gave up.

For the next couple of minutes, Nick looked at the darkness around him.

Then, he moved his head into the darkness and did a routine scan of the ceiling.

Maybe he was lucky, and the Dreamer was actually here.

It wasn't.

Nick took a deep breath.

He only felt fear right now.

He didn't want to enter the darkness again.

But he had to.

He couldn't remain here for the remainder of his life.

Nick took another deep breath.

It took a couple minutes for him to gather his courage, but eventually, he shot into the darkness again.

As soon as Nick entered...

Nothing happened.

However, Nick didn't let down his guard and just kept swimming forward.

Silence.

Nick just kept rapidly swimming forward in silence.

After a bit, Nick opened his eyes.

He saw the light of the "street" of the Dregs in front of him.

He was almost there.

Nick continued swimming.

And then...

He entered the street.

Nick was now in the light of the streets of the Dregs.

Nothing had happened in the darkness.

Nick turned around to look at the block of houses behind him with suspicion.

Had the Nightmare given up?

He doubted it.

Yet, Nick was back in the light again.

The Nightmare had no influence over Nick here.

BANG!

Suddenly, something hit Nick's head!

Splash! Splash! Splash! Splash!

Nick quickly shook his head and looked around him.

Rats!

"Don't wanna give me bodies, huh?" one of the rats spoke.

"How about you give me your body then!"

And then, the rats all charged at Nick.