

## **The Sun 191**

### Chapter 191 – Nothingness

Nick looked at the entrance to the locker room leading to the Fog's Containment Unit and sighed.

He always felt a bit nervous before working with a Specter for the first time.

He knew that he would be able to work with it just fine, but the unknown still made him feel a bit apprehensive.

Next, Nick walked over to the huge console beside the entrance and inspected it.

He knew how it worked, thanks to the training course, but he still wasn't comfortable working with it.

Nick spent several minutes familiarizing himself with the console and looked at all the statistics.

The Fog was contained without any issues, but its escape attempts had cost them some Zephyx.

Obviously, keeping something like a Force Specter contained required Zephyx.

After being locked in the Containment Unit for over an entire day, the Fog had cost them about seven grams of Zephyx.

It was a necessary cost, but it wasn't super high.

One had to remember that the Fog was, at least, a Mid Adolescent, making it at least equal to the Dung Heap.

The Dung Heap had been here for much longer, but the literal food it required to grow was ridiculous.

The Dung Heap wasn't growing at its maximum capacity due to the limited amount of food it was getting.

Because of that, the Dung Heap had just recently become a Mid Adolescent.

And the Fog was most likely a Mid or Late Adolescent, and compared to the Dung Heap, the Fog was actually dangerous.

The most the Dung Heap did was try to consume a Zephyx Extractor, but it wasn't very agile.

Sure, if someone didn't jump away immediately, they would get consumed, but all the Zephyx Extractors would obviously jump away as soon as the Dung Heap showed any signs of aggression.

This made the Dung Heap as dangerous as a Mid Hatchling or something like that. Containing it wasn't an issue.

As long as it had its food, it didn't even attempt to escape.

It was just happy where it was.

Meanwhile, the Fog would kill any Zephyx Extractor in Dark Dream except for Nick since none of them had the power to escape from its domain.

Luckily, the Fog was killing them extremely slowly, which meant that Nick could still use others to work with it.

'Well, no need to delay the inevitable,' Nick thought as he walked into the locker room.

Nick left his spears at the side and walked in with only his fist weapons.

As soon as he opened the door, the forcefield inside the Containment Unit suppressing the Fog intensified, pushing the Fog away from the entrance.

Nick entered, and the door closed behind him.

The forcefield retreated, and the Fog enveloped him.

Nick immediately felt his ability deactivating, but that didn't matter for now.

Nick walked forward for about 50 meters, making sure that he was well and truly inside the Fog's domain.

The fact that he could walk forward for 50 meters inside a 5x5 meter room was proof enough that he was in the Fog's domain.

After that, Nick stopped moving.

'Well, now, we wait,' Nick thought.

Then, he scratched the back of his neck.

Minutes passed.

'It's a bit boring.'

There wasn't really much to do in an endless void of nothingness.

'I mean, I could train, but that would create gaps in the Fog, which would reduce the amount of Zephyx produced since it would need to repair the gaps.'

In the end, Nick just lay down and looked upwards.

There was just nothing to do.

Nick's mind drifted through his memories.

Whenever he thought of Horua, Nick felt like his insides were cramping up.

'I just have to redeem myself,' Nick thought.

'I just have to help all the people of the Dregs, and this guilt will vanish.'

But then, Julian's words echoed through Nick's mind.

Would Horua really wish for something like that?

How would helping others make Horua forgive him?

Horua had been a child, and he probably wouldn't sacrifice himself for a bunch of people who shunned and exploited him.

Julian had said that Nick needed to accept that he had committed a mistake and live with it.

Trying to redeem himself by helping others wouldn't lessen the guilt Nick was feeling.

Nick would just continue feeling guilty because he would never feel like he had done enough to redeem himself.

And that feeling would be there because Nick wasn't dealing with the root cause of the issue, Horua.

'Do I really need to repay the people of the Dregs?'

'So many of them stole my food when I was a child, and they even stole the little bit of credits I managed to collect.'

'Do they deserve a better life?'

Nick wasn't sure.

He just kept looking into the nothingness.

'But if I don't help the people, what's the purpose of my life?'

'Why am I alive then?'

'To become rich? What's the point of being rich when I can't even feel happy?'

'To get a girlfriend? My guilt would still eat me up inside.'

'To become powerful? And then what? Great, I'm now powerful, and I can do whatever I want. But what's the point of that when I still feel guilty?'

'What's the point of anything if this darkness in my chest won't vanish?'

Nick felt like his chest was shaking with nervousness, stress, and anxiety.

'As long as this darkness in my chest still persists, all kinds of achievements are meaningless.'

'But how can I deal with it?'

'Julian said that helping the people of the Dregs won't help with my guilt.'

'However, does it need to?'

'I mean, all my achievements won't mean anything with this darkness, but that's only if my goal is to be happy.'

'What if my goal is just to improve the lives of others?'

'A selfless goal, you know?'

'Couldn't I have then said that living my life wasn't a waste?'

'After all, who else can claim to have helped so many people?'

Nick took a deep breath.

'But I want to be happy...'

'No matter how grand my goal is, in the end, I still want happiness.'

'I don't know...'

Chapter 192 – A Lot of Zephyx

After an unknown period of time, Nick started to feel tired.

Obviously, night hadn't arrived yet, but the lack of any and all stimulus had tired Nick.

Nick kept thinking about his life, but no matter how much he thought, he just couldn't find a real solution to his problem.

His mind kept trying and trying to find a way to make peace with everything, but it just kept going in circles.

It was like Nick's mind was caught in an inescapable maze.

The more Nick thought, the more hopeless his situation seemed.

After a while, his mind started to drift away and think about things that Nick couldn't discern.

He felt like his mind was working right now, but Nick had no idea what his mind was working on.

For a long time, he just looked into the nothingness beside him.

He started to get hungry, but it seemed so unimportant again.

It was like all of Nick's power and care had left him.

None of this mattered.

'Sleeping in here might be dangerous,' Nick thought as his eyes were closing.

'However, I don't think that the Fog kills people in their sleep. At least, the chances are extremely small.'

'When we caught it, I kept attacking it for hours with my ability, and it still didn't let me go, which means that it was producing a ton of Zephyx, which in turn means that it's producing Zephyx by isolating living beings.'

'Killing me would stop its Zephyx production, and that's not what it wants.'

Under normal circumstances, Nick still wouldn't take the risk and go to sleep inside the Fog, but with his current mindset, he just didn't care enough to spend more time inside its domain while being awake.

So, he decided to go to sleep.

Surprisingly, the Fog felt so comfortable.

Its temperature was just perfect, and Nick felt nice and warm.

Even more, he didn't even feel thirsty.

Sure, he was starting to get hungry, but as someone who had grown up in the Dregs, Nick was used to sleeping while hungry.

And finally, Nick fell asleep.

A dreamless sleep.

It was almost like no time had passed.

When Nick opened his eyes again, he wasn't even sure if he had actually fallen asleep or not.

He had no idea how late it was.

He had no idea how long he had been in here.

Had he actually slept?



'I must have fallen asleep,' Nick thought. 'I feel quite a bit hungrier.'

Nick slowly sat up and took a deep breath.

'Well, I don't know how long I have been in here, but I already learned one important thing.'

'People can sleep inside the Fog.'

'That means that the shifts can be extended.'

'Maybe we'll go with one person going in for 24 hours and then getting two days of rest. I bet several of the Extractors would love such a timetable.'

'The Puppy and the Dreamer are both being worked with 24 hours a day in three eight-hour shifts. The Lover is being worked with by Kiara. That means that seven Extractors are constantly busy, and I only have seven Extractors.'

Nick sighed.

'As far as I can see, the Fog needs another three.'

'Seems like I have to get at least three new people.'

'I might as well use the opportunity to find out what kind of abilities the Puppy, the Lover, and the Fog give to new Extractors.'

'But first, I need to check a couple of things.'

After that, Nick stood up and readied himself.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Nick unleashed many punches and kicks while turning into fog and back.

Huge gaps appeared in the Fog, and Nick rapidly moved forward while unleashing attacks.

BOOM!

Nick hit a wall, and his entire body vibrated.

After that, Nick started to attack the wall while traveling along it.

Eventually, he found the employee exit and the button for opening it.

After unleashing a punch, Nick quickly pressed the button.

WHOOOOM!

The Fog around him was pushed to the back as the Containment Unit strengthened its forcefield.

The door shot open, and Nick quickly walked through, which was followed by the door closing again.

Then, Nick stretched a bit in relaxation.

He was glad that he was done working with the Fog.

Nick grabbed his things and walked to the lobby of the building.

After asking the receptionist about the time, Nick knew how long he had been in there.

'About twelve hours,' Nick thought. 'I guess that's a good metric.'

Nick walked back to the sixth floor and checked the Zephyx container.

'67 grams in twelve hours?!' Nick thought with raised eyebrows.

'That's good!'

'That's like 130 grams per day. If we deduct the five grams or so needed to contain it per day, that's still something like 125 grams or so.'

'The Dreamer is barely producing 70!'

But then, Nick furrowed his brows.

'I need to test if the Fog always produces this much or if it is dependent on the power of the person inside it.'

Nick replaced the Zephyx container and walked to the third floor.

After walking through two doors, Nick was greeted by a blonde lady playing with a cute puppy.

This was Marvila, one of the Zephyx Extractors they had gotten from Ghosty's Lab.

When Marvila saw the door open, she furrowed her brows.

She had to stop already?

But when she saw Nick, her eyes shot open.

"I didn't refuse to leave!" she immediately shouted defensively.

"I know," Nick said. "I'm here for something else."

"Am I in trouble?" she asked.

"No," Nick answered. "I need you to test something for our new Specter. Are you fine with staying a couple hours longer today? You don't have to if you don't want to."

"Oh? What for?" she asked.

"I want to see if the Fog produces less Zephyx if it is working with weaker Extractors. I want you to stay inside the Fog for just as long as I have, which is twelve hours. Naturally, if there are any issues, I will get you out."

Marvila furrowed her brows.

"Am I getting paid for that?"

"Same thing as always," Nick said. "You get 10% of what you produce."

"Hmmm," Marvila uttered as she fell into thought.

"Sure, but I need someone to tell my family that I won't be coming home on time."

"Of course," Nick said.

Chapter 193 – New Timetable

A couple minutes later, Marvila entered the Containment Unit.

Nick told her everything he knew about the Fog and also told her how to behave.

As soon as she stepped through the employee entrance, she stopped moving.

Right now, the Fog was being pushed away by the forcefield, and as soon as it deactivated, Marvila would be enveloped by the Fog again.

However, when it was time for her to leave, as long as she didn't move from her spot, the forcefield should be able to pull her out again.

Then, it would mean that Nick didn't even need to get involved.

A moment later, the door closed, and Marvila was enveloped.

Outside, Nick grabbed one of the clerks and told them to stay in the locker room.

If they heard any kind of screams or commotion coming from the console, they had to send someone to get Nick.

After that, Nick left Dark Dream, grabbed something to eat, trained, and slept.

Early the next morning, Nick entered Dark Dream again.

In one hour, he had to get Marvila.

For the next hour, Nick dealt with his daily chores.

Finally, it was time to get Marvila.

Nick walked to the locker room and opened the employee door.

The Fog was pushed away and...

Marvila was gone.

Nick furrowed his brows. 'Did she move?'

Nick cracked his neck and readied himself.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

Nick kept attacking his front and moving forward, making sure that he wasn't hitting Marvila on accident.

For over a minute, Nick kept punching through the Fog, but he just couldn't find Marvila.

By now, Nick became worried.

Dunk!

Suddenly, Nick nearly tripped over something.

The thing on the ground quickly retreated in fright, and Nick realized that it was Marvila.

She had probably just slept, and Nick had woken her up.

"Marvila? Are you there?" Nick shouted.

No reaction.

'Is she not hearing me?' Nick thought. 'Or is she hearing me, but the Fog keeps isolating her from me?'

Nevertheless, Nick continued punching and kicking, and a couple of minutes later, he felt her again.

This time, she didn't retreat.

Nick grabbed her and asked her if everything was okay.

No answer.

'She probably can't hear me. Even our voices are probably isolated.'

Nick moved Marvila's hands to his belt, and she grabbed it.

Then, Nick turned around and moved forward while unleashing kicks and punches.

The hands were losing their grip whenever Nick turned into fog, making them desperately move forward in a panic.

But after a while, they seemed to get used to Nick appearing and disappearing from their grasp.

Several minutes later, Nick hit one of the walls and did the same thing as when he had exited the Containment Unit the first time.

Eventually, the forcefield activated, and Nick pulled Marvila out of the Containment Unit.

When Nick saw her, he could tell that she was quite spooked, but that was the only thing of concern.

She didn't seem unhealthy or injured otherwise.

"Everything alright?" Nick asked.

Marvila breathed heavily but nodded. "Yeah, that was terrifying! I thought you were a second Specter or something earlier!"

"Sorry," Nick said. "Anyway, what did you experience in there?"

"Well, nothing, really," Marvila said. "As soon as the Fog surrounded me, I just sat on the ground and leaned against the wall behind me."

"I was thinking about random things and getting tired. At some point, I fell asleep, and I woke back up when you touched me."

"I got startled and moved away, but I quickly realized that this was probably you, and well, you know the rest," she said.

Nick furrowed his brows. "So, you didn't move?"

"No," Marvila said, shaking her head. "I didn't move a single step until you touched me."

Nick scratched his chin. "Strange because I didn't find you near the entrance. I had to look for you for several minutes."

Marvila's eyes widened in shock and horror. "What?" she asked.



Nick just nodded. "It seems like the Fog can move people without them noticing. Additionally, I don't move slowly at all through the Fog. I can get from one end of the Containment Unit to the other in barely ten seconds."

"Yet, it took me minutes to find you."

Marvila didn't seem happy at all right now.

Eventually, the two of them left the locker room, and Nick checked the Zephyx.

"48 grams of Zephyx," Nick said.

Marvila's eyes widened in shock.

48 grams?!

When she worked with the Puppy, she barely produced seven grams after eight hours!

This was like an entire week of her salary in just one day of work!

"That means the power of the Extractor is relevant to how much Zephyx the Fog produces," Nick muttered to himself.

"Thanks, you can go home now," Nick told Marvila.

"Oh, okay," she said. "Do I get to work with the Fog again?"

"Not sure," Nick said. "I have to talk with Wyntor and Jenny about this."

The two of them said goodbye to each other, and Nick went to Wyntor's office after calling Jenny over.

Then, the three of them talked about everything Nick knew about the Fog.

In the end, they created a new timetable for the employees.

Since the Fog produced the most Zephyx, the Johns were assigned to it, which meant that Jenny and Trevor would stay inside it for 24 hours each, followed by two rest days.

Of course, Jenny wouldn't get two days off fully. She wouldn't need to work with the Dreamer for the next two days, but she still needed to be available in case one of her Extractors needed her for something.

After some talking, they also decided on something else.

They scrapped the plan of making Trevor a spy.

They needed a second team leader, and Trevor was the best candidate by far.

So, Trevor was promoted to team leader position.

When Jenny was with the Fog, Trevor would be the team leader, and when Trevor was inside, Jenny would be.

Of course, they also needed a third employee who was working with the Fog, and in the end, they decided on Jonathan.

Jonathan was the closest to becoming the next John.

Naturally, the duty of getting the employees out of the Fog was added to Nick's daily list.

So, Jenny, Trevor, and Jonathan worked with the Fog.

The Dreamer would be worked with by Marvila, Larry, and Constanze, the three people they had gotten from Ghosty's Lab.

The Lover would be worked with by Kiara.

The Screaming Coffin, the Dung Heap, and the Bleeding Lady were for Nick.

And the Puppy?

That one would be left for the three new people Nick would be hiring very soon.

The Puppy was, by far, the least dangerous and easiest to work with out of the group of relatively normal Specters, which made it perfect for new Extractors.

#### Chapter 194 – Promotion

"Good news, Boss said that he needs three more Extractors, and he's planning on getting them from our team," a middle-aged man with black hair said to a team of ten people in front of him.

The others all looked at each other in surprise and excitement.

Finally, they had a chance to become Extractors!

This opportunity was one of the biggest reasons for accepting this job.

This was the Investigator team of Dark Dream.

Naturally, as people who had already worked for Dark Dream and who had already come into contact with Specters, the Investigators were very often the favorite candidates for new Zephyx Extractor positions.

In essence, becoming a Zephyx Extractor was a big promotion.

The Investigators already earned around 5,000 credits per month, which was quite a lot for the Outer City, but becoming an Extractor often meant a tenfold increase in pay at minimum.

Of course, the increase in power and status was even more valuable.

As the Investigators looked around, they became more excited.

Only ten of their people had been called into the meeting.

In total, there were around 30 Investigators.

So, did this mean that Boss would only look through the ten of them?

If so, that would be amazing!

"Will he choose one of us?" one of the men asked the leader in front of him.

"Yes, one of you," the leader said with a laugh. "I already sent him all the files, and he said that everyone present is considered for the position."

The ten of them grew more excited.

All of them wanted to become Extractors.

And three of them would achieve their dream today!

Sadly, or luckily, depending on the viewpoint, the team leader and his two substitutes were not considered for the position, but that had been clear from the very beginning.

In order to stop the team leaders from abusing their power and making them seem better for promotion, Wyntor and Nick had only hired rejected Zephyx Extractors for the team leader position.

This meant that the team leaders already had gained an ability from a Specter, but the ability wasn't good enough to become a Zephyx Extractor.

But on the other hand, they were paid 9,000 credits instead of 5,000.

Such a large number of credits made them part of the richest 5% of the Outer City.

"When will we know who is chosen?" one of them asked.

"By the end of today," the leader said with a smile.

This made the Investigators even more excited, and they started to talk to each other animatedly.

"How will he choose them?" another one asked.

"Well..."

At that moment, the door to the room opened, and a tall and extremely muscular person walked in.

The Investigators all quieted down.

Boss was here!

Nick looked at all the gathered people with furrowed brows.

Silence.

"Aman, come to meeting room two," Nick said before leaving the room again.

Everyone looked at one of the Investigators.

Aman, the Investigator who had just been called, took a deep breath and left.

Everyone else started to talk with each other.

They were all talking about what kind of questions Boss would ask them and how to best answer them to be chosen.

Should they say that they are brave and strong to show their confidence, or would that make them appear arrogant and difficult to manage?

Should they lie about which Specters they had come into contact with to make them seem more experienced?

Should they praise Boss to get into his good graces, or would that disgust him?

Should they say they were outgoing and liked talking to others to make them seem like they fit well into a team, or would that make them appear lazy and easily distracted?

The Investigators had worked with Nick several times before, but they didn't really talk a lot.

Nick mostly talked to the team leaders, and the team leaders relayed his orders to the team.

At most, they had made a small bit of small talk.

Nick always seemed friendly and genuine, but was he really like that with his team?

What if he was a tyrant who wanted total discipline from his team?

After about ten minutes, the person that Nick had called came back.

He seemed neutral, and the people couldn't tell if he had done well or badly.

"Cryon, you're next," he said to someone. "He's waiting in meeting room two."

Cryon took a deep breath, nodded, and left the room.

By now, the people could tell that Nick was calling them in alphabetical order.

Cryon walked across the corridor and entered meeting room two.

His heart was beating loudly in his chest, and he had already started to sweat out of anxiety.

"Good morning, Cryon," the muscular and intimidating man said with a friendly tone and smile. "Please, take a seat."

"Good morning, Boss," Cryon said as he sat down.

Silence.

"Now, how are you with Specters?" Boss asked with his deep voice.

Cryon became even more nervous.

This was such an open question!

How was he supposed to answer that?!

"I..." Cryon started.

The intimidating man didn't say anything and just waited.

Cryon almost felt like he was sitting in front of a Specter.

This was the Chief Zephyx Extractor of Dark Dream!

All in all, Dark Dream had over 50 employees, and the Chief Zephyx Extractor basically decided who got hired and fired among the Investigators and Extractors.

And they were talking about Cryon's future!

If he messed up, he wouldn't only not get his promotion but might even get fired!

Cryon felt like his heart was beating in his head with untold intensity.

There was only silence in the room for 20 full seconds.

"I don't know," Cryon eventually said with a nervous and awkward smile. "Except for the Puppy, I never met one."

Nick wrote something down on a sheet of paper.



"And what about the Puppy? How did you handle it?"

Cryon's mind froze again.

He had no idea how to answer that question.

Chapter 195 – Crushing the Puppy

"You already met the Puppy, right?" Trevor asked.

Cryon nodded. "Yes, I had it in my arms for a couple of hours across a couple of days," he said.

Right now, Cryon and Trevor were standing in front of the locker room leading to the Puppy's Containment Unit.

Surprisingly, Cryon got the promotion.

He thought he had done horribly since he froze several times during the interview.

He would have never expected that he would have been chosen.

Yet, funnily enough, everyone else had felt the same way.

All of them had been frozen solid during their talk with Nick, and some of them had even needed Nick to prod them to continue talking.

In the end, Nick told the three lucky ones that he had used a bit of Zephyx during their talks, which made all of them nervous and scared.

After thousands of years, humans had evolved to become scared when Zephyx was around them.

Zephyx meant that there was a Specter, and humans that didn't immediately flee from a Specter had a higher likelihood of dying.

Together with the power imbalance between Nick and the Investigators, this achieved a result similar to sitting in front of a Specter.

So, the fact that Cryon managed to answer the question after 20 seconds of silence was definitely not bad.

"Good, so you know what to expect," Trevor said. "However, things will be a bit different this time."

"How so?" Cryon asked.

"Because we want to see the ability that the Puppy can give new Extractors," Trevor explained. "As you know, humans gain abilities by being in contact with Specters."

Cryon nodded.

"Yet, even though all of you held the Puppy for multiple hours, none of you have gained its ability."

Cryon blinked a couple of times.

Right!

That was strange!

Why hadn't he thought of that?

"This means that the normal way of working with it most likely won't cut it," Trevor said. "We haven't tested it yet, but we presume that you need to get it to cry out and injure you if you want its ability. At least, that's what Boss believes."

Cryon took a deep breath.

When he had signed his new contract, he had already read that he would gain the Puppy's ability, but he hadn't thought much about it.

"What happens when it cries?" Cryon asked nervously.

"You've seen Boss when we caught the Puppy," Trevor said. "You know what happens."

Cyron gulped.

He had seen Nick being in intense pain back then.

If someone as strong and intimidating as Boss was already in so much pain, how would he feel?!

"Don't worry," Trevor said with a smile. "I'll be right beside you."

Yet, Cryon was still scared.

But for his future, he wouldn't retreat now.

"I know it's a lot for your first day," Trevor said, "but at least you don't have it as bad as Kerry."

"Why? What's with Kerry?" Cryon asked.

Trevor sighed. "She's going to get the Lover's ability."

"Is that bad?" Cryon asked.

"The ability? I don't know. The process of getting it? Yes, very much so," Trevor explained.

Cryon just gulped again.

"Let's get right in, shall we?" Trevor said with a smile.

Then, the two of them walked into the Containment Unit while Trevor explained how the Containment Units worked.

Right now, nobody was working with the Puppy since all the more experienced Extractors were busy with the Fog and the Dreamer.

As soon as they entered, the Puppy excitedly ran up to them.

It seemed very happy.

Trevor picked it up and held it in his arms for a bit.

The Puppy couldn't understand human speech, which was why Trevor didn't even explain what was about to happen before he handed it to Cryon.

Cryon held the Puppy awkwardly and looked at it.

It was so difficult to associate this cute little doggy with a terrifying Specter.

It was just so cute and helpless!

"Crush it."

"Huh?" Cryon asked as he looked at Trevor.

"Crush it," Trevor said. "It's a Specter. If you want it to cry, you have to attack it. If you're worried about it, don't be. It's a Peak Hatchling. You couldn't crush it even if you stood on its head."

Cryon still looked at Trevor in complete confusion.

Then, he looked at the Puppy.

Crush it?

This little and cute thing?

A dark void appeared in Cryon's chest.

He felt like he was asked to do something impossible and unforgivable.

"H-how?" Cryon asked.

"Punch it, try to crush its head, tightly hug it, I don't know," Trevor said. "Even though it is a Specter, it acts like a puppy. So, even though you can't injure it, it will still act like it's getting injured when you try."

Cryon's heart rate increased as he looked at the cute Puppy with nervousness and fear.

He didn't want to crush it!

It was so cute!

"Crush it!" Trevor shouted.

Cryon looked around nervously.

"Do it!"

Cryon's hands shook.

"Crush it!"

Then, Cryon tightly hugged the Puppy, and the Puppy started to yelp in discomfort.

At that point, Cryon noticed how resilient and tough the Puppy's body actually was, and his emotions finally accepted that this was a Specter, not an innocent puppy.

So, he used all his power to hug it tightly.

The Puppy started to whimper and screech in terror and pain.

"Aaaahhh!"

Cryon also started to scream in pain as he felt like his insides were being torn apart.

However, Cryon didn't let go, and the two of them continued to scream in pain.

"That's enough!" Trevor shouted as he yanked the Puppy out of Cryon's arms.

The Puppy continued to cry, and Trevor just threw it to the side.

Immediately, the Puppy retreated towards a corner and looked with fear at Trevor and Cryon.

It looked so scared and vulnerable.

Cryon's entire body shook.

And then, he puked vomit mixed with blood.

Trevor took out a small vial of green liquid and dropped one drop into Cryon's mouth.

"This will keep you alive, but it will still take a while for you to recover. Boss said that the injuries can't be healed by Recovery Liquid."

"You get the next two days off."

Chapter 196 – Abilities

Cryon left Dark Dream in shock, pain, and horror.

And for the next two days, he felt like he was going through hell.

He was no longer bleeding or anything, but he felt like all his organs were inflamed.

Eating, drinking, breathing, and sleeping was painful.

He would have immediately run to the hospital if Trevor hadn't said that there was nothing they could do.

Cryon just needed to hold out, and he would recover with time.

Over the next couple of days, his family took care of him.

Luckily, the love of his family made things easier.

But on the second day, an incident occurred.

Cryon was recovering in bed when his sister accidentally pressed too hard on his stomach, which made him cry out in pain.

At the same time, Cryon's sister also cried out in pain as she retreated in panic, constantly looking at her hand in horror.

After a quick argument between the two, they finally realized what had just happened.

When Cryon's sister had touched him, she had felt like her hand was submerged in acid.

However, that was the only time it had happened.

All the other times, things had been fine.

The two of them experimented a bit, and they finally found out what was going on.

When Cryon cried or screamed, his body became "dangerous".

Anyone who touched him while he was screaming would feel like they had touched acid.

When the two days of relaxation were over, Cryon talked to his team leader, Trevor, about his ability.

A bit later, Nick arrived and asked Cryon to use his ability on him, which he did.

Cryon felt quite embarrassed shouting this loudly in front of others, but he did so anyway.



After a while, Nick confirmed that it felt identical to the pain he had been in when they had captured the Puppy.

This meant that, most likely, Cryon was tearing Zephyx out of whoever was touching him, which made it feel like his body consisted of acid to others.

They experimented a bit more, and they found an additional aspect.

The Zephyx that was torn out from the other person was absorbed by Cryon.

Cryon was using Zephyx to use his ability, but he also recovered Zephyx by using it.

This meant that Cryon could keep damaging his opponent as long as they touched and as long as his vocal cords didn't give out.

The only bad part was that the damage accumulated very slowly.

It would probably take Cryon almost ten seconds of constant physical contact and screaming to severely injure someone at the same level as him.

In the end, they noted the ability down and told Cryon to keep it a secret.

Which Specter gave what ability was sensitive information.

Eventually, Cryon was told his schedule, and he sighed.

He had to work with the Puppy for eight hours a day.

He just hoped that the Puppy wasn't too angry at him.

Meanwhile, Nick finished the document he had created about the Specters and their abilities.

He now knew all the abilities his Specters gave to new Extractors.

The Dreamer gave someone the ability to make them sleepy and read their dreams.

The Bleeding Lady gave someone the ability to put an additional cutting effect on their attacks and weapons.

The Dung Heap gave someone the ability to release poisonous gas in a big area.

The Screaming Coffin gave no abilities.

The Puppy gave someone the ability to tear Zephyx out of anyone who touched them, but one had to scream to activate it.

The Lover had an interesting but also straightforward ability.

It made others horny.

That was it.

There were a couple of uses for it.

It could be used to subtly make someone believe that they were attracted to the person with the ability. After all, if someone constantly got horny while looking at the same person, they would think that they were attracted to them.

This would be a good ability for spying on others and gaining information.

However, it could also be used in a fight.

When one was horny, one's blood was gathered in one's nether regions, which meant that there was less for the brain. Additionally, the enemy would be quite confused.

In the case of men, it could even act as a small hindrance to movement, based on the size of their thing.

It would also embarrass them, making them more likely to make mistakes born out of emotion.

However, if the one with the ability lost, their death might become quite a bit worse since the enemy might be motivated to relieve their lust.

Lastly, the Fog gave one the ability to launch clouds of fog, which they could see through.

Of course, only the person with the ability could see through the fog.

Everyone else would be blinded by it.

This had no direct offensive power, but the ability made it easier to escape and confuse the enemy.

Nick was especially interested in the ability.

If he had someone with him who could launch fog, Nick could fight with much more power since his ability would be active for longer.

Sadly, even though Nick's ability had been augmented by the Fog, he still couldn't see through the fog that had been launched by someone who had the ability.

Nick would have to see how things developed in the future.

There were quite a couple of ability combinations that seemed useful.

During the next couple of days, the three new Extractors, Cryon, Kerry, and Taren, got familiar with their new jobs and settled down.

All three of them belonged to Trevor's team.

Excluding Nick, Dark Dream had ten Extractors.

Jenny led the advanced team, which consisted of Jonathan and the three people from Ghosty's Lab: Constanze, Marvila, and Larry.

Trevor led the Newbie team, consisting of Cryon, Kerry, and Taren.

Kiara was also part of Trevor's team since she was working with the Lover and since Kerry had the Lover's ability.

And with that, Dark Dream could finally work with all of their Specters.

Chapter 197 – The Layers

"Hey, Wyntor," Nick said as he entered Wyntor's office for his daily meeting.

Every day, Nick and Wyntor would have a quick meeting in the afternoon to talk about things.

"Hey," Wyntor answered as Nick sat down. "Got anything noteworthy?"

"Not really," Nick said. "Just a bit of drama with the Puppy."

"Oh? What's it about?" Wyntor asked.

"Kerry didn't want to leave when she was supposed to, and Trevor had to get involved," Nick answered.

Wyntor nodded. "Keep me posted on this. I don't want any Extractors falling victim to the Puppy."

"Of course," Nick answered.

"Is that it?" Wyntor asked.

"Yep, that's everything."

Wyntor nodded. "Then, let me tell you about something interesting."

"Oh?" Nick uttered.

"We got invited to the yearly meeting of Manufacturers," Wyntor said.

Nick's eyes widened. "There's a yearly meeting? I don't remember one happening last year."

"Because we didn't get invited," Wyntor explained. "We were just a bunch of Newbies with some weak Specters."

"Ever since we captured the Fog, things changed."

"A Manufacturer that can catch and contain a Force Specter is a Manufacturer that has proven themselves."

"Because of that, the other Manufacturers treat us as a new Manufacturer, although weak and inexperienced."

"Makes sense," Nick said. "When's the meeting?"

"Late morning in three days. It's on the middle layer of the Inner City," Wyntor said.

"Inner City, huh," Nick repeated. "I've never been there."

"It's nothing too special," Wyntor said. "The lower layer is just like the Outer City but cleaner, and the middle layer is hard to navigate, but that's the only special thing about it."

"What about the upper layer?" Nick asked.

"Difficult to explain," Wyntor said. "Why don't you just see for yourself in the future?"

Nick scratched the back of his head. "How do I get there?"

"That's going to take a while," Wyntor said with a chuckle. "There are two ways to move up in the Inner City: power and wealth."

"If you want to live on the lower layer of the Inner City, you need to either be a level two Extractor or have a net worth of over a million credits."

Nick's eyes widened in surprise.

He knew that he could live in the Inner City as a John, but he hadn't heard about the wealth requirement.

"Of course, you only need one of the two," Wyntor said. "By the way, if you are living in the Inner City, you are allowed to live there with your parents, your partner, and your children. You are not allowed to bring your siblings, uncles, and so on."

"At least, that's how it works for Zephyx Extractors," Wyntor said.

"It's different for rich people?" Nick asked.

Wyntor nodded. "Every additional person that lives with you in the Inner City, assuming you live there due to your net worth, requires another million of net worth."

"So, if you want to live in the Inner City with your wife and two children, you would have to have a net worth of over four million credits."

Nick took a deep breath.

"Why?" he asked.

Wyntor chuckled a bit. "The people living in the Inner City believe themselves to be vastly superior to everyone living in the Outer City, and they don't like upstarts from the filthy Outer City to join their illustrious circles."

Wyntor's voice was quite sarcastic.

"If you manage to get rich enough to join the Inner City, they can tolerate you, but they don't want people that are worthless. Of course, most of the people thinking like that are living in the Inner City only because someone else pays for them," Wyntor said with a chuckle.

Nick didn't like what he was hearing.

That sounded like a lot of hypocrisy.

"Why doesn't that apply to Zephyx Extractors?" he asked.

"Can't you tell?" Wyntor asked.

Nick just blinked a couple of times.

"Because Zephyx Extractors are scary and bring security."

"With their power, they can protect the people living in the Inner City from Specters and threats, but they are also scary when you try to go against them."

"None of the normal but rich people in the Inner City want to antagonize someone that can tear them into two pieces like they're a piece of paper."

Nick furrowed his brows and nodded.

That made sense.

"What about the middle layer?" he asked.

"Level three Extractor or ten million credits," Wyntor said.

Nick took a deep breath.

Ten million credits was insane.

"Naturally, the same policy applies here as well. If you want to live with your family in the middle layer, you better be even richer," Wyntor said with a chuckle.

"Why is it so expensive?" Nick asked. "The amount of money required is ridiculous!"

"Space," Wyntor answered.

"Space?" Nick repeated.



Wyntor nodded. "Over 60% of the Inner City consists of the lower layer, and only 30% of the city consist of the middle layer. Additionally, the middle layer is not on the ground, and the residences are also far bigger."

"At most, a thousand people can fit onto the middle layer."

Nick's eyes widened in shock.

"Wait, only a thousand?" he asked.

Nick had seen the huge structure that was the Inner City almost every day.

It was around five kilometers wide and three kilometers tall.

Tens of thousands of people should fit in there!

Yet, the middle layer could only hold about a thousand?!

And that was 30% of the city?!

"Only a thousand," Wyntor repeated. "Due to the requirements, only about 800 spots are filled, and that's how they want it. It's better to have more space than less."

"Then, what about the upper layer?" Nick asked.

"It has spots for about 300 people," Wyntor said, "and all those spots are filled. If someone new joins, someone old has to descend to the middle layer."

"The poorest and the weakest are not allowed to live there."

"Officially, you need to either be a level four Extractor or have a net worth of over a hundred million credits, but practically, you need to belong to the stronger 20% of level four Extractors or have over 500 million credits."

"Also, you don't get to take your entire family with you."

"You only get your significant other and up to two children."

"If you want more, you better be vastly more powerful than the average of the upper layer."

Nick had difficulties accepting what he was hearing.

"What about your family?" he asked.

"We are ten people. My mother and father, their mothers and fathers, and me and my three siblings."

"Oh, and our head butler and two head security guards. Everyone else has to travel to the upper layer for work."

Chapter 198 – Horrifying World

"So many people?" Nick asked.

Wyntor nodded. "We used to have our servants also live in the upper layer, but father decided to give up these ten spaces after seeing how much trouble one of his Zephyx Extractors had to find a spot."

Nick knew that the Melfions were insanely influential, but once more, he had been shocked by their power.

Wyntor's father was so rich and powerful that he had dedicated over a billion credits just so that his servants didn't have to travel so far to work.

Such a mindset was unimaginable for Nick.

Nick still felt nervous whenever he spent over a thousand credits on anything.

Wyntor and Nick talked for a while longer and planned out everything for the meeting in three days.

The next two days, Nick prepared for his trip.

And then, it was time to go.

At about eight a.m., Nick and Wyntor walked out of Dark Dream and traveled towards the huge structure in the middle of the city.

The gigantic pyramid-like structure had become so normal for Nick, but today, it seemed more imposing and impressive than on other days.

Nick had never been in there.

Today would be his first time going into the Inner City.

As the two of them approached the huge structure, Nick saw several guards.

Four of them were standing by the entrance, and over ten more were stationed on different buildings around the entrance.

Naturally, these people were the force of the city, the Extractors that the Manufacturers had to dedicate to the city.

None of the guards reacted as the two of them approached.

A moment later, Wyntor took out an emblem and just held it up.

Nick became nervous and just kept walking.

And then...

Nothing.

Nobody was stopping them.

The doors opened, and the two of them had just walked in.

"There's a scanner," Wyntor said.

"A scanner?" Nick asked.

"There are scanners in the entrance that scan us. They saw my emblem and your uniform and let us through. The guards only react when the scanners tell them something's wrong."

"Oh," Nick uttered before looking forward.

The doors had already opened, and Nick saw...

Another door.

The next moment, the door behind them closed, and Wyntor stopped walking.

WRRRRRRR!

Then, a loud sound came out of the walls, and blue liquid started to rain on them.

"Cleansing Liquid?" Nick asked in shock.

Wyntor nodded.

The hall they were in was around ten meters long and four meters wide, and yet, all of it was being doused in Cleansing Liquid!

That was insane!

Some seconds later, the Cleansing Liquid stopped appearing and was siphoned into the ground.

Then, Nick felt several strong gusts of wind.

A minute later, the wind stopped, and the sound coming from the walls also quietened.

Nick's nose moved a bit as he smelled something he had never smelled before.

What was this smell?

It was so... strange.

But also comforting?

Wyntor noticed Nick's reaction.

"It's plants and trees," he said.

Nick's eyes widened. "That's how trees smell?"

Wyntor nodded.

Nick had heard of trees, but he had never seen one in his life.

The image of trees Nick had in his mind was unpleasant and terrifying.

Huge hard and brown pillars that rose from the ground and were also alive?!

That sounded like some Specter or some kind of monster from a horror story.

And outside the city, they were apparently everywhere!

Wasn't that like some kind of army of huge teeth from some huge monster?!

Also, since they were alive, they might even move!

Nick just imagined a huge pillar of metal bending and moving to look closer at him.

Additionally, since when did plants smell so nice?

The plants that grew on the metallic walls of buildings didn't smell nice at all!

The next moment, the big door in front of them opened, and Nick could finally see the Inner City.

Green!

There was so much green!

It was like everything was covered with veggie cubes!

The streets were made of stone, which was formed into many identical shapes instead of metal.

It looked so fancy and beautiful but also unsafe.

Nick craved the strength and certainty of steel.

Stones didn't seem safe.

However, only parts of the street were covered in stone.

The others were made of... ground?

A couple of parts in the Dregs and the Outer City are made of actual ground, but that ground was hard and resistant, while this ground looked green.

But then, Nick noticed that the ground wasn't actually green.

It was just that the ground was covered in many little green hairs that swayed gently in an artificial breeze.

Nick was immediately reminded of the hairy mold he once ate off a wall when he was younger.

Was this mold?

Why would anyone cover the ground in mold?!

That's disgusting!

However, a moment later, Nick saw something even stranger.

It was a big brown pillar that had a big "umbrella" of green growths.

The growths were moving in the wind, and Nick started to feel nervous.

Was that a tree?!

And were these weird green things the leaves Nick had heard about?!

Yet, before Nick could say anything, he noticed something else.

Water!

So much water!

There was some kind of long and wide stream of water!

It was over five meters wide and very deep, and the water constantly moved in one direction.

That was when Nick realized how rich everyone in here was.

So much clean water!

Just being here!

Without being used!



This was insane!

Wyntor looked at Nick with an amused expression as Nick just kept looking around in horror.

It was like Nick had entered some kind of horrifying and alien world!

"You'll get used to it," Wyntor said.

"What?" Nick asked as he looked at Wyntor.

"Come," Wyntor said, gesturing with his head towards one of the grassy fields.

Nick awkwardly followed Wyntor.

Wyntor stepped onto the grass and sat down with a smile.

Then, he gestured to the grass beside him.

"Come, touch it."

Chapter 199 – Lower Layer

Nick looked at Wyntor and the grass with apprehension.

He really didn't want to touch it since it looked so unnatural.

Having little green living things growing from the ground sounded like some kind of nightmare somebody thought up.

However, Nick trusted Wyntor, and he eventually walked forward with apprehension.

He carefully touched the green things on the ground.

"It's soft?" Nick said with uncertainty.

That made it even worse!

It was like little hairs were growing out of the ground.

Nick felt like touching the grass was similar to petting some kind of huge and dangerous monster.

"Just sit down," Wyntor said with some annoyance.

Nick took a deep breath and eventually walked over to Wyntor.

And then, he carefully sat down.

"See? It's not that hard," Wyntor said with a smile.

Nick looked extremely uncomfortable.

He didn't like this sensation one bit.

Humans weren't supposed to touch grass.

They were supposed to be surrounded by metal and ground.

While Nick sat on the grass, he kept a lookout for the tree that was a couple of meters behind him.

He didn't feel safe with a tree so close to him.

What if the tree bent down and attacked him?

It was alive, after all.

For a while, Nick just looked at the lower layer of the Inner City.

He had been so overwhelmed with the grass, trees, and the river that he hadn't even looked at the people.

Nick saw several people with children sitting in different locations in the Inner City.

Almost all of them were dressed very nicely, and laughter filled the air.

It was so strange.

The people sounded... happy.

This was what Nick had always dreamed of.

A world where humans could be happy.

And it actually existed in the Inner City.

'But it's actually not that surprising,' he thought. 'After all, all of these people have a crazy amount of money. They can afford to be happy compared to the people in the Outer City.'

The people in the Outer City seemed more neutral.

They didn't seem happy but also not miserable.

They saw the Inner City and knew that they could do better, but they also saw the Dregs and knew that they could do worse.

Meanwhile, the people in the Dregs were miserable.

Laughter was rarely heard in the Dregs, and everyone looked like they were fighting for their lives.

Pressure and anxiety were constant companions in the Dregs.

And here?

People looked so peaceful.

Many people even sat on the grass while eating a couple of sandwiches, their kids playing in the grass just a bit of distance away from them.

It looked like a paradise.

It was like there was no danger.

It seemed like they felt safe.

After a while, Nick looked at the houses.

They were made of stone instead of metal.

Additionally, all the houses had windows made of actual glass on them.

These houses looked so very different from the houses in the Outer City.

Even more, almost all the houses had a little yard with grass on it.

After that, Nick noticed that every house had at least one weird contraption in front of it.

It was some kind of thing with two wheels and some pedals.

Nick looked around a bit, and he could finally find one of these contraptions in action.

Apparently, people pushed on the pedals, and the wheels moved forward, transporting the person on their back with quite some speed and ease.

'How are they not losing their balance?' Nick thought in wonder.

Then, Nick noticed the next thing.

It was bright everywhere.

It was almost like Nick was outside, even though he was inside a huge structure.

That was when Nick noticed that the glass windows of the huge structure were shining with gentle sunlight.

It was like the rays of the sun were reflected off the panes of glass and dispersed across the city.

Then, Nick noticed that the houses didn't have the light holes that every house in the Outer City had.

Instead, there were just a couple of tiny windows spread across the house.

The tiny windows captured the sunlight and moved it along a small shaft of mirrors that kept reflecting the light and distributing it across all the rooms.

All the rooms in the houses had a good amount of light spread throughout.

That was when Nick noticed that almost all the people were almost pale white.

In the Outer City and the Dregs, people were lightly browned due to the constant sunlight, but here, the people were almost pale.

'It's probably because of the lower amount of light in the Inner City,' Nick thought.

There was still light everywhere, but it was more subdued and gentler.

This made the people of the Inner City seem different from the people of the Outer City.

It was almost like they were of a different species.

It was such a different world.

Different people, different roads, different ground, different houses, different light...

It was so strange.

The people even acted differently.

Most of them acted like Nick didn't exist. After all, Zephyx Extractors were common in the Inner City.

However, the few who took note of Nick showed a gentle smile and nodded in greeting, which Nick returned awkwardly.

In the Outer City, everyone made way for Nick while seeming a bit scared and in awe.

Here, it was like Nick was just another person.

Suddenly, Nick felt something poke his shoulder, and he turned to Wyntor.

Wyntor just gestured up, and Nick looked up.

That was when Nick's eyes widened in shock.

Was this the middle layer of the Inner City?!

In the lower layer of the Inner City were several huge and gigantic pillars.

Some of them were even over a hundred meters wide!

These pillars stretched upwards into what seemed to be infinity.

And these pillars seemed to be the very foundation upon which the middle layer of the Inner City worked!

At least from what Nick could see.

Chapter 200 – Capsule

Over a kilometer above Nick was a complex, chaotic, but beautiful array of structures.

The huge pillars were surrounded by a couple of metallic plates, which Nick couldn't see through.

He guessed that these were platforms where the people of the middle layer lived.

Surprisingly, almost 80% of the "sky" was blocked by these metallic platforms.

In a way, Nick was reminded of when he had been swimming in the sewers and looking up at the ceiling.

It was very similar here.

One of the most important differences, though, was the fact that the "light streets" in the sewers were solid while the "streets" in the middle layer were actually empty spaces.

Well, not completely empty.

Nick saw rails going along the streets.

Every street had at least one rail going through it.

It was like the sky was made of huge circles and a mesh of thin lines surrounding the big circles.

Nick wanted to know what the rails were there for, and he looked around until he found his answer.

Capsules?

Nick saw a capsule moving along the rails.

While it was moving, it was swaying back and forth a bit, which filled Nick with a bit of anxiety.



There was a human in there, right?

Didn't they feel unsafe with the constant swaying of the capsule?

From what Nick could tell, the capsules were not very big.

At most, they were three meters long and only about a meter wide.

Nick watched as the capsule moved upward along a rail until it was hidden behind one of the huge circles of metal.

"Is that the middle layer?" Nick asked.

"It is," Wyntor answered. "The big metallic platforms are where the people live, and the rails are for the vehicles."

"What are these vehicles?" Nick asked.

Wyntor smirked. "You'll get to see one real soon since we'll need one to get to the middle layer. Without them, we can't get there."

Nick just looked around the lower layer again.

Earlier, Nick had been excited about going to the middle layer, but now, he didn't want to anymore.

What if he fell down?!

What if one of these rails collapsed?!

Nick would be falling for an entire kilometer!

He would die!

"Come, we need to get going," Wyntor said as he stood up.

Nick's heart rate increased, and he took a deep breath.

Then, he nervously stood up and followed after Wyntor.

After walking along the river for a while, Nick saw something that shocked him.

There were long moving things in the water!

Was that an animal?!

"What is that?!" Nick asked in shock, pointing at the thing in the water.

"Oh, that's a trout," Wyntor answered.

"A trout?" Nick asked.

"A fish," Wyntor elaborated.

Nick blinked a couple of times. "Is that an animal?"

Wyntor nodded. "It tastes pretty good. We can eat one after the meeting if you want."

Nick just looked with wonder at the trout.

How would something like that taste?

Would it be as good as chicken or mosquito larvae?

The two of them walked through the lower layer, and Nick kept looking at every two-wheeled contraption that drove by him.

"It's a bicycle," Wyntor said. "Or bike, for short. The people of the old world used them to move around in their cities."

"A bicycle," Nick repeated absentmindedly.

After a couple of minutes, the two of them closed in on some kind of building with several rails coming out of it that seemed to go towards the sky.

Nick saw one of the capsules exiting the building on the rails and driving towards the sky until it reached the middle layer.

Was this how people traveled from the lower layer to the middle layer?

The two of them walked over to the building, and Nick saw two guards casually chatting in front of the entrance.

Compared to the guard presence between the border of the Inner City and Outer City, this was barely anything.

Outside, there were many guards standing near the entrance, but here, there were just two who seemed quite relaxed.

Wyntor walked up to one of the guards while Nick followed him.

"Ah, Mr. Melfion," one of the guards said with a polite smile. "Going back home?"

"Not today," Wyntor answered with a smile. "We're here for the yearly meeting."

The eyebrows of the two guards raised in surprise. "Oh wow, you got an invite? Congratulations!"

Wyntor nodded with a smile. "Thank you."

"May I view the ticket?" one of the guards asked.

"Of course," Wyntor said as he took out a small piece of paper, which he handed over to the guards.

Naturally, Wyntor was allowed to go wherever he wanted, but Nick wasn't.

Because of that, an invite had been sent to Wyntor so that his Chief Zephyx Extractor could enter the middle layer.

That was the first time something like this had happened.

Chief Zephyx Extractors tended to be a bit stronger than Nick.

They didn't need invites to get to the middle layer.

In fact, they could all also go to the upper layer, except for the one from the Spartans, who was only a Peak Veteran.

The two guards looked at the ticket, nodded, and gave it back to Wyntor.

"You can pass," one of them said.

"Thanks," Wyntor said as he walked past them.

Nick followed behind Wyntor without saying anything.

The two guards were looking at Nick with strange expressions.

The guards didn't know what to feel about calling someone this weak a Chief Zephyx Extractor.

An Initial John was about to meet the most powerful people in the city.

This was so strange.

Wyntor and Nick entered the building, and Nick immediately saw several capsules hanging from a couple of rails.

Wyntor walked over to one of the capsules and opened them.

Now, Nick could finally see the inside.

He immediately recognized the pedals since he had just seen them on the bicycles.

"This is a mode of transportation from the ancient world," Wyntor said. "Only very, very few have been found, which means that they have belonged to the most illustrious people."

"We are pretty sure that they used to be status symbols."

"Because of that, Crimson Fungus City uses them to move around. Additionally, they are great at moving vertically."

"You simply lie in it, put your feet onto the pedals, and move the pedal. It's very simple."

"According to documents we have recovered, these are called Shweebs, and only the richest and most powerful people used them."