

THE VILLAIN'S POV

#Chapter 14 14: The Nightmare Lands (2) - Read THE VILLAIN'S POV Chapter 14 14: The Nightmare Lands (2)

-Frey starlight POV -

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I felt butterflies in my stomach as I was engulfed in a blinding light.

The images before me kept shifting continuously until they gradually became clear.

With my next step, I had already emerged from the portal. A severe headache struck me, as if I had been thrown out of a car moving at 200 km/h.

I dropped to my knees for a moment, trying to steady myself.

When I finally managed to take a proper look around, I found myself inside a massive forest. The towering trees stretched so high that they completely obscured the sky.

The thick vines on the ground intertwined like a mass of slithering serpents, creating an ancient and eerie atmosphere.

"So, this is the Nightmare Lands..."

I steadied myself and leaped up, climbing one of the trees. Sitting on a thick branch of a massive tree, I retrieved my laptop from the dimensional ring.

Wandering aimlessly in the Nightmare Lands would be the dumbest thing I could do right now.

My goal was to reach the Chun Ma Sect, where the technique of Ten Thousand Steps of Shadow was located.

The sect was uniquely positioned atop a black-colored mountain, distinct from the surrounding peaks, so identifying it wouldn't be difficult. The real issue was its location. The area I was in was vast—if I was lucky, I would find it quickly. In the worst case, it could be hundreds of kilometers away...

Fortunately, I had my own cheat tool.

Opening my laptop, I immediately accessed the "Author's Advice" feature.

"Which should I choose? Random or Direct?"

Random Advice (10 Achievement Points):

Provides vague and cryptic guidance, but undoubtedly leads to the safest course of action despite its difficulty to decipher.

Direct Advice (30 Achievement Points):

Offers clear and straightforward instructions, easily understandable even by a child. However, while it leads directly to the goal, it always presents some kind of obstacle along the way—so beware! Hahaha!

"Should I go with random?"

It was cheaper and supposedly led to a safer path, though I doubted any path inside the Nightmare Lands could be considered safe.

"Alright, let's do this."

I chose the random advice, and it immediately lit up.

"Random Advice! Pay close attention and try to understand what you will see—it may be the key to your survival!"

"No one can determine the starting point, is it from the night or from the day?... It transcends all colors and times in its brilliance... When you find the dawn, go north, then east, then south, then west. Repeat, and when you feel you have reached your peak, you will find the way."

I stared blankly at the nonsense before me.

"Am I seriously supposed to understand this? Where did the system even come up with this garbage? I bet it doesn't mean anything and is just messing with me."

I immediately discarded the random advice, realizing I wouldn't understand anything. I didn't have the luxury to experiment in a place like this.

That left me with no choice but to use the direct advice.

Direct Advice (30 Achievement Points)

Current Achievement Points: 610

What a waste of points...

With no other options left, I activated the direct advice. It glowed just like the random one did.

"Direct Advice: Go east."

Simple and direct—no poetry, no riddles, no bullshit.

This was advice I could follow. Though, I couldn't shake off a slight unease about the "obstacle" it would place in my way...

Storing my laptop back into the dimensional ring, I instead drew one of the firearms Ada had prepared for me.

This would be my primary weapon on this journey—a Walther P99 equipped with a suppressor. The last thing I wanted was to make noise in the Nightmare Lands and attract the various creatures lurking here.

I jumped down from the branch I was sitting on, checked the portal's location—it had disappeared moments ago—and tried syncing it with the key in my hand. It responded immediately.

"Perfect. Now I won't have to worry about my way back."

Taking a deep breath, I steeled my resolve.

"Alright... Now, which way is east again?"

After determining my direction, I began my journey into the Nightmare Lands.

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"Phantom Steps."

Activating the skill rendered my steps completely silent as I advanced forward.

The scenery around me continued to change, yet I remained within the dense forest. Everywhere I looked, there were only trees and vines covering the ground.

After running for about half an hour, I encountered my first unsettling change—one that made me slow down cautiously.

A heavy scent of blood lingered in the air, warning me of something ahead.

I wasn't accustomed to the smell of blood, but it was so overwhelming that it was almost suffocating.

Moving carefully, ensuring I made no noise thanks to Phantom Steps, I finally spotted the source of the stench.

An open clearing devoid of trees lay ahead. A few hundred meters away, a massive creature lay on the ground, half-devoured.

From my vantage point, I saw multiple figures, about my height, hunched over its corpse. However, I was too far to make out their features; they looked like ants from this distance.

"Hawk's Eye."

Activating my second skill, I zoomed in for a better look—only to recoil in disgust.

They were grotesque creatures, with oversized heads and massive bodies adorned with tentacles and terrifying claws. Dozens of these abominations were tearing apart the fallen beast beneath them.

The corpse itself appeared to be some monstrous hybrid of an eagle and a raven, likely one of the dominant creatures of this land before something had slain it.

Now, those abominations were feasting on its corpse.

I quietly changed my course, slipping between the trees. I neither had the courage nor the strength to deal with those creatures.

Those claws, in particular, looked capable of slicing me in half with a single strike.

I took a wide detour to avoid them and succeeded—for a while, nothing obstructed my path.

I continued running, relying entirely on Phantom Steps to remain silent.

Just when I thought everything was going smoothly, the unexpected happened.

As I took a step forward, I felt something strange. It wasn't the same solid ground I had been running on—it was something else entirely.

Trusting my instincts, I immediately threw myself to the side.

When I looked at my previous position, my heart sank as I saw a massive claw standing there.

Had I hesitated for even a second, it would have impaled me.

From beneath the grass, a creature emerged—one similar to those I had seen before. I could now discern its features clearly. Its head resembled that of a massive crab, with three appendages on each side.

It had four massive claws, but two of them were completely broken, and it appeared to be injured.

"Did it fail to join its pack due to its injuries and instead set up an ambush here?"

A sharp screech pierced the air as the creature lunged at me, ravenous and desperate.

Without hesitation, I pulled out my pistol and, using Hawk's Eye, fired three rounds in less than a second.

All of them hit, yet the abomination didn't stop. It charged forward, undeterred, aiming to kill me at all costs.

Without any regard for defense, it lashed out with wild, relentless attacks.

Thanks to Hawk Eye, I anticipated its strike and dodged by the narrowest margin.

I rolled across the ground, creating as much distance as possible while firing in quick succession—though my shots weren't as precise due to my movement.

It continued its frenzied assault, its claws slashing furiously, making each dodge harder than the last.

A creature that attacks recklessly without a hint of self-preservation—just what the hell am I dealing with?

I had to take it down fast. I didn't know its exact weaknesses, but if it was anything like most living beings, the head was my best bet.

To land a guaranteed shot, I had no choice but to move in closer.

Exploiting the fact that it could only use two of its four claws, I weaved through its attacks and fired directly between its eyes.

It worked—the abomination staggered back, reeling from the impact.

For a brief moment, I thought I had won.

But that naïve assumption shattered in an instant.

Realizing it was at a disadvantage, the creature flew into a frenzy, thrashing wildly in every direction.

And I was still too close.

With Hawk Eye, I could see the erratic paths of its attacks, but dodging was futile—it was too fast, too unpredictable.

I immediately tried to retreat... sidestepping the first strike, then the second.

I pushed my body beyond its limits, forcing myself to move faster than ever before.

But survival demanded more than skill—it demanded luck.

And mine had just run out.

A single misstep.

Pain exploded through me as something tore into my left shoulder. I looked down, barely processing the massive claw impaling me clean through, the tip protruding from my back.

A searing agony erupted from the wound, a kind of pain I had never experienced before.

Hot blood poured freely, soaking my clothes, and in that instant, something inside me snapped.

I lost control.

I fired wildly, riddling the abomination's body with countless small craters.

"It hurts, it hurts, it hurts!, you bastard!!"

My screams merged with the creature's howls, a twisted symphony of pain and rage.

The monster had been dead for some time, its body collapsing under the relentless hail of bullets. But I was too consumed by agony to notice—I kept pulling the trigger like a madman.

Only when silence settled did I realize I was the only one still fighting.

Panting, I finally lowered my weapon and reached for the claw lodged in my shoulder.

The moment I tried to pull it out, a fresh wave of searing pain shot through me—so sharp, it felt like my body was being torn apart.

A scream tore from my throat as I cursed every vile word I knew.

For someone who had spent their entire life in a peaceful world, this was pure hell.

When I finally yanked the claw free, the extent of my injury became horrifyingly clear. Blood poured from the wound in terrifying amounts.

I fumbled for a health potion and downed it in one gulp.

Then, wrapping the wound as best as I could, I collapsed against the trunk of a nearby tree.

The potion worked fast—my body was already healing. But no amount of regeneration dulled the pain.

As my mind cleared, an unsettling realization hit me.

I wasn't safe yet.

"I need to move."

Clenching my teeth, I forced my battered body forward, staggering with every step.

Between my screams and the dying shrieks of that creature, the commotion we had caused was bound to draw more horrors my way.

I struggled to escape, but fate wasn't done with me yet.

From the shadows of the trees, more of those monstrous crabs began to emerge—closing in from both the front and the rear.

Unlike the one I had barely managed to kill... these ones were unscathed.

"I'm fucked."