

# THE VILLAIN'S POV

## Chapter 18 18: Shadow Sect

-Frey starlight POV-

---

The Scourge of Scythes lunged at me, its massive limbs swinging with deadly force.

Thanks to Hawk's Eye, everything moved in slow motion, allowing me to see every detail with chilling clarity.

The creature was in a pitiful state—its charred body bore the scars of battle, and only one scythe remained intact, the other shattered beyond use. It now stood on six legs instead of eight, its balance faltering.

"So, life hasn't been kind to you either, huh?"

By my estimation, it was somewhere within the E-Class—an entire rank above me. But with those injuries, I might actually have a chance.

A colossal scythe arced toward my neck, yanking me back to reality.

I twisted my body at an impossible angle and threw myself beneath the beast.

A sickening crunch echoed from within me, a stark reminder of an undeniable fact:

"I'm injured too..."

A fair fight, isn't it?

Now directly beneath the Scourge, I barely dodged as its six clawed limbs slammed down, each one powerful enough to leave gaping craters in my flesh.

"You bastard..."

I hadn't forgotten the wounds it had inflicted on me before. Now, it was time to return the favor.

Gripping my sword tightly, I plunged it into the creature's underbelly, channeling Aura into the blade as I drove it deeper.

A wound like this was nothing more than a mosquito bite to a beast of its size—but I wasn't finished yet.

With a burst of speed, I dashed forward, dragging my sword through its flesh, carving open a massive gash in its underside.

The monster convulsed violently, its limbs thrashing in a desperate attempt to crush me.

"Ah, so you can feel pain, huh? It hurts, doesn't it?"

Scarlet blood poured from the gaping wound, soaking me, but I didn't care. In fact, I reveled in it.

Then, suddenly, the beast stopped flailing. Its limbs ceased their frenzied stomping.

"Wait... don't tell me it's—"

I threw myself aside, desperately trying to escape, as the massive beast—weighing several tons—collapsed, attempting to crush me beneath its bulk.

The impact sent a shockwave through the area. Thankfully, I had escaped its range just in time. But now, I stood directly in front of it.

The abomination raised its remaining scythe and swung.

"No time to dodge—"

I raised my sword, bracing myself for the impact.

The scythe collided with my blade, sending me flying dozens of meters away.

I tumbled violently across the ground before finally regaining my balance.

My sword was knocked far from me, and my arm... I could no longer feel it. The sheer force of the impact had shattered my bones into dust.

I glanced down at my limp arm, my heart sinking as the terrifying realization hit me—I might never use it again.

The Abomination of Scythes wasn't finished. It charged again.

It wouldn't stop until I was dead.

"Damn it."

"Phantom Steps."

I surged toward the Black Mountain, using the force of the creature's strike to propel myself forward.

As I ran, I downed a health potion in one gulp, but even with its effects, my left arm still hung uselessly by my side.

"Shit, shit, shit!"

The monstrous roar behind me sent shivers down my spine. Its scythe barely missed me each time, slicing the air with lethal precision.

I yanked out a handgun and fired wildly, hoping to slow it down even for a second.

I just needed one moment to breathe.

But the Scourge didn't bother defending itself—it simply kept attacking.

My luck finally ran out.

Just as I raised my gun to fire another shot, the scythe struck.

My weapon flew from my grip—along with my right hand.

"...Huh?"

I stared at my arm.

Blood gushed from the stump where my hand had been.

I screamed at the top of my lungs, tears filling my eyes.

The pain was unbearable, but more than that—I couldn't accept that I had lost my hand.

And my left arm? It was nothing more than a mangled mess of flesh, rendered useless from the earlier impact.

Both my arms were now completely worthless.

Gritting my teeth, I forced myself to run

At this point, I wasn't even sure why I was still trying.

I had made it inside the Black Mountain, but the Scourge of Scythes was right behind me, destroying everything in its path.



My life flashed before my eyes, but ironically, that was the only thing keeping my body moving despite the immense blood loss.

My Aura surged instinctively, pumping energy into my body, screaming at me: Don't stop.

Amidst the cavernous expanse of the Black Mountain, I spotted a colossal staircase stretching upward. The peak of the mountain resembled the mouth of a volcano, allowing the silver moonlight to illuminate the ruins in an eerie glow.

At the top of those stairs... that was where they were.

The Shadow Sect.

I forced my battered body forward, but before I could take another step, a searing pain erupted from my back.

The scythe had pierced straight through me.

I watched in horror as the blade protruded from my stomach, warm blood spilling from the wound.

A violent wave of nausea overtook me, and a crimson torrent gushed from my lips.

With a flick of its scythe, the beast hurled me toward the staircase.

I crashed against the black marble steps, my blood spilling like a crimson carpet.

I couldn't even scream anymore.

Every time I opened my mouth, only blood came out.

A gaping wound in my abdomen, a missing hand, a crushed arm, shattered bones... how was I still alive?

My blood seeped into the cracks of the stairs, as if the mountain itself was drinking it.

I crawled, dragging myself up the steps.

Like a worm.

I had come so far.

Only a few damned steps separated me from my goal.

Behind me, the Scourge of Scythes strode forward, stepping through the blood trail I had left behind.

Slowly. Mockingly.

Just a little further... just a little more...

Drenched in blood, lost in waves of agony, I barely registered the shadow that loomed before me.

"Am I hallucinating?"

A towering figure stood at the top of the stairs—a statue-like warrior, clad in armor from head to toe. In its hands, it gripped a colossal black sword.

Its face was concealed behind a terrifying mask, but within the mask's hollow sockets, two piercing eyes burned into me.

Another figure emerged beside it—similar to the first, yet different, with a mask of its own.

Through my blood-filled vision, I no longer knew what was real.

Was I hallucinating?

Had I finally died?

Had these things come to claim my soul?

The Scourge of Scythes seemed unaware of their presence, continuing its march toward me.

It raised its scythe high for the final blow.

"This is the end."

The scythe was about to shatter my skull—

But in that moment, the monster froze.

No, it wasn't frozen.

It had been attacked.

The first statue impaled it from the right with its massive sword.

The second drove a colossal spear through its left side.

Their strikes were so swift, the monster didn't even realize what had happened.

In a single instant, they unleashed hundreds—no, thousands of strikes, reducing the abomination to mere fragments.

Its body dissolved, its remains absorbed into the cracks of the stairs.

The statues stood silently, watching me.

I had been bleeding out for a while now.

By all logic, I should have lost consciousness long ago.

Yet something—something—forced me to stay awake.

Blood filled my eyes, tinting the world crimson.

Surrounded by these terrifying sentinels, beneath a crimson moon, I parted my lips to speak—

—but only blood came out.

Yet, I still tried to speak...

"Ah... k-kill... kill me..."

End this suffering... Why am I still conscious, still enduring this agony? This is too much for my mind to bear...

Through tears mixed with blood, I pleaded with the creatures surrounding me to put an end to my torment.

But they just stood there. Watching.

Minutes passed, and then... the hallucinations began.

Cold whispers slithered into my ears.



"By blood, and for blood."

"By blood, and for blood."

"By blood, for blood."

Suddenly, one of the statues seized what remained of my severed right arm, while another gripped my shattered left.

They dragged me up the stairs, my body scraping against the cold ground, leaving a crimson trail in my wake.

I had lost too much blood... I should be dead.

Why am I still alive?

Why am I still conscious?

"By blood, and for blood."

"By blood, and for blood."

"By blood, and for blood."

The chant echoed in my mind as we reached the summit.

Now, they were pulling me into an enormous temple.

Its walls were drenched in black, its architecture unlike anything I had ever seen.

But I lacked the strength to focus on any of it now.

"Ah... is this hell?"

At last, they dragged me into the heart of the structure and threw me onto a massive marble altar, white as bone—its surface pierced by twisting black thorns.

I felt them burrow deep into my flesh.

But I no longer cared.

Above me, the moon bathed the chamber in silver light.

Behind me, bound in heavy chains, stood a sword—black as the void, pulsating with a malevolent aura.

I knew that sword.

But my mind was too fractured to comprehend it.

The statues withdrew, leaving me alone on the platform.

Drenched in my own blood, I gazed at the sky.

Why?

Why am I still conscious?

Why haven't I died?

My body was drying up. My blood was almost gone.

"Ah... finally..."

Once the last drop left my veins, I would die.

Only then would this nightmare end.

My vision blurred, my senses faded... so much so that I failed to notice the dark energy swirling around me.

Seven shadows emerged, moving in wild, erratic dances.

As I lay in the center, they twisted and writhed, their chaotic frenzy shaking the very air.

Strange visions flooded my mind—images I couldn't understand.

Some shadows laughed. Others wept.

And some... screamed.

My blood slithered through the chains, creeping toward the black sword, swallowing it entirely.

At last, my body turned deathly pale, and my vision faded to black.

"Finally... I'm dying."

I took one last look at my ruined body before slipping into darkness, surrendering to oblivion.

"It's over."

...

...

...

"Darkness. Only endless darkness."

I drifted weightlessly in the void, convinced that I was truly dead.

"Awaken, child of darkness."

Just as I thought it was over, I heard it—

A voice.

Ancient. Deep. It vibrated through my very soul.

And then, I heard my own words.

"From the womb of suffering, the strong are born."

My eyes snapped open.

Gasping for air, I pushed myself upright, my chest heaving with ragged breaths.

I ran a hand over my head, trying to fight the searing pain in my skull.

"Wait... my hand?"

I looked down—



My right hand was there.

Pale, smooth skin.

The very hand I had lost.

"Am I hallucinating?"

I frantically examined my body.

No wounds. No scars.

Even the old ones... gone.

"What the hell is going on?"

Then, I felt something on my left hand.

Whether it was due to the shock or something else entirely, I hadn't noticed it until now.

Clinging to my palm...

Sleeping there...

A cursed, black sword.

It had no hilt.

My own hand had become the hilt.

A terrifying obsidian blade extended from my wrist, exuding an aura of death.

Just looking at it sent chills through me.

But you know what?

"I know this sword..."

"Balerion—the Black Dread."

I stood alone.

The statues were gone.

None of this was supposed to happen.

I hadn't written any of this.

Stepping out of the temple, I scanned the massive sect before me.

How had I survived?

How had my wounds healed?

How had my limbs returned?

I had no answers.

According to the story, the protagonist, Snow, was supposed to find this place years from now.

By then, he would have already mastered a sword technique of his own.

I lifted the cursed blade, now fused to my hand.

In that future, Snow would claim this very sword and use it to annihilate the sect, ensuring that no one else would ever learn the Ten Thousand Steps of Shadow technique before leaving.

That was what should have happened.

But somehow, everything had changed.

What were those shadows?

Where had the statues come from?

I didn't know.

I was staring into the unknown.

Then, I noticed the sky.

The sun would rise soon.

And with that, I remembered something important.

"I don't know what's happening here..."

"But I'm alive."

I didn't die.

Which meant...

"I have to finish what I started."

I had come here for one reason—

To obtain a combat technique.

My gaze swept across the sect.

"I need to find higher ground."

After some time, I found the tallest structure and climbed to its peak.

Combat techniques were usually recorded in books.

Even the protagonist had learned his One Sword style from a text.

But the Ten Thousand Steps of Shadow—the technique I sought—was different.

The sect sat at the mountain's summit.

As the first rays of dawn touched the horizon, golden light spilled across the land.

Before my eyes, the light reflected off the black walls of the Shadow Sect.

And in that moment...

The walls, the buildings, the ground itself—

They lit up.

Ancient inscriptions and sigils flared to life, glowing with an ethereal brilliance.



Yes.

This was the Ten Thousand Steps of Shadow.

The entire sect was the technique.

Before me, the once-dark domain shimmered in radiant gold.

"This technique... is mine now."