

## Hell Difficulty Tutorial

### #Chapter 11 - Read Hell Difficulty Tutorial Chapter 11

#### Chapter 11

It makes Damon start grumbling, but he surprisingly stands up and says, "Let's make it quick."

He lifts up his goblin, and a surprised look appears on his face.

Did he invest his stat points?

He should have leveled up, and Sophie as well. I am pretty sure he put it all into strength, so I decide to watch him carefully to compare his increased strength to my constitution.

My theory is that my increased constitution means I can use my peak strength for longer, and I will need shorter rest to be back at my peak form. I also have a suspicion that I will heal faster and have tougher skin and stronger bones. Just like the goblin.

Increased strength should increase the density of muscles and their strength, but it also comes up with a potential problem.

What if you invest too much into strength, but you don't have a body strong enough to handle it?

Once again, I become annoyed for not knowing and not being able to test it out as much as I want.

I also put the goblin on my shoulder, but I make sure to have my right hand free and be ready to throw the body on the ground. At worst, I can also use the goblin as a shield against an attack. Sophie also picks up the goblin, she does it quite easily.

Hmm. I guess that means that stat increase manifests fairly quickly. Few minutes maybe?

Hadwin puts the gun into his right hand and the goblin's spear in his left, and starts leading us into the forest.

As we enter, I don't feel as pressured as before, but I am still careful. The wind is now stronger, so we can hear the rustling of leaves and creaking branches as they bend in the wind. The sun seems to be right over us.

I still twitch every time I hear an unexpected noise.

As before, Hadwin walks first, me to his left, and Damon to his right. Sophie follows behind us, and I notice that she moved the goblin slightly lower to cover more of her back.

At this point, I am sure that the results of my increased constitution are showing, as I don't feel myself getting tired from carrying the creature. The only thing I notice is my empty stomach.

Food. I need lots of food.

I glance at the goblin, but I instantly decide that I am not that hungry.

Yet.

When we finally throw the goblins into the hole, I notice Damon's rugged breathing. He seems better than before, but it's easy to notice how tired he is.

I am now also 100% sure that he didn't put much into Constitution.

Sophie seems to be better than him, so I guess that she put at least something into it.

I move the knife to my left hand and pull out the pipe into my right hand.

On our way back, we are even more careful than before, but we move much quicker. Not being able to see what's behind the trees makes us all nervous.

When we get back to the bus, I feel relieved, even though there isn't too big a difference in our safety.

As I move away from people, I take a peek at my stats.

**[Name: Nathaniel Gwyn]**

**Difficulty: Hell**

**Floor: 1**

**Time left until forced return: 4y 364d 20h 52m 59s**

**Lvl 2**

**Strength: 6**

**Dexterity: 8**

**Constitution: 8**

**Mana: 3**

**[Primary Class: Unavailable]**

**[Sub-class: Unavailable]**

**Skills:**

**- Focus Lvl 3**

**- Mana manipulation Lvl 1**

**[Skill Points: 0]**

**[Stat Points: 0]**

I let Hadwin and the others take care of annoying stuff and sit on the ground, leaning once again against the bus's tire.

Wind brushes my hair as I close my eyes, and slowly breathe in fresh air.

It's so different from the air in the city. There's a hard-to-describe smell to it, slightly sweet but not too overpowering.

I like it

Warm rays of the sun on my hands touch my skin, and other than the passengers, I don't hear anything.

No cars, no machines, no planes.

It's quiet, almost peaceful, yet I know how dangerous this place is.

Also, It's called the 1st floor, so does that mean that the sun, wind, and sky are fake? Are there other floors above or below us, or is it just a place on a distant planet? Is it the whole planet? Simulation?

At the moment, I'm curious about what will be in the sky tonight, but at the same time, I feel a hint of fear.

It's hard enough to fight against unknown creatures during the day, but at night, with reduced visibility...

Sure, we can set up a campfire, but that would be like running around the place and screaming that we're here.

"Haaa..." I let out a sigh.

We're fucked, aren't we? I have a feeling that we were insanely lucky until now.

The wolf seemed to be starved or wounded and without its pack. We got ambushed by only three goblins, but even then, Hadwin almost died, and the other two got injured.

There will be more of them. I'm sure of it.

Should I leave? I glance back at the bus and try to ignore the discussion inside.

There are pros and cons to staying, but I feel like the pros outweigh the cons. I need someone to keep watch when I'm sleeping. Hadwin has a gun, so that's something, and it looks like the guy knows how to move around the forest. If we're going to stay here for five years, he would be useful.

I don't know how to hunt or skin animals.

Hell, I wouldn't even know how to set up a campfire or cook.

Then there are also others. I can collect some data just from watching them - stat point distribution, skills, classes if we get to it.

Footsteps catch my attention, and a student emerges from behind the bus - a girl around 17-18 years old, slim, blonde, and taller than me.

She briefly glances my way but then directs her focus towards the forest, leaning against the bus. Retrieving a cigarette and lighter from her pocket, she lights it up.

With her eyes closed, she slowly inhales, savoring the smoke.

"Haa... It will be really bad when I run out of cigarettes," her voice is quiet as she slowly smokes, enjoying every whiff.

She looks at me. "Do you want one?" she offers.

I just shake my head and stay quiet.

"So you did stop smoking... so responsible."

I still don't react. Let's see what she wants.

The girl stops when she is halfway through her cigarette and extinguishes it against the bus. Then she carefully puts it back inside the pack and then pocket.

One minute.

Two minutes.

Five.

She is leaning in silence while looking towards the forest.

"Do you also think that we are in deep shit, Nat?" her voice is quiet, and she still doesn't look at me.

Isn't that obvious?

One minute of silence.

"It all looks so normal... trees, grass, sky..." She falls silent after glancing at the sky.

"You know, before we ended up here, I had a fight with my mom," she said, her voice even quieter now. "I called her..." she pauses for a moment and a self-deprecating chuckle echoes in the surrounding silence.

She then continues to talk, and I don't say anything but listen.

I can do that much for her.

I feel like I owe her at least that much.

"Do you think I'm an asshole?" she looked at me.

I didn't get it.

Isn't what she thinks more important than my opinion?

I shrug my shoulders, and there is a slight disappointment in her eyes.

Then she chuckles.

"I should have expected such an answer from you. Anyway, Kevin found out something. Just say 'quest window'," before she disappears back inside, she asks, "Nat, will you help me if you can?"

I look up from the ground and our eyes meet.

Obviously, my life is a priority.

But if it doesn't put me in danger...

My answer is just a short nod.

Before she disappears from my sight, I see hint of relief on her face.

"Quest window," I say out loud.

### **[Floor quest]**

***Stay alive for 30 days***

**Rewards:**

- **Entrance to the second floor**
- **Access to Community**
- **1 skill point**
- **5 stat points**

### **[Side quest]**

***Stay alive for 24 hours.***

**Rewards:**

- **gear of your choice**

Chapter 12

Ok.

Okay.

Fine.

I am not a person who tends to get angry easily, but even I have my limits.

If I ever meet an asshole who designed this thing, I will fuck him up.

Well, let's not think too much about it. My mind is most likely being read even at the moment, so it's better if I make some plans after I come up with a way to counter it.

Now then, Mana.

I lie on the ground and roll under the bus.

Let's try it here. I need to focus, and I don't want to get hit by a ranged attack from the forest. We are pretty far from it, but I wouldn't be surprised.

I close my eyes and try to use focus.

I have already used it a few times, so I know the feeling I should have.

It's hard to activate it at will, but after 10 minutes, I am finally able to do it.

It isn't as deep a focus as I was able to gain during fights, but it should be enough.

As I try to keep it activated, I start remembering the feeling of what I think is mana flowing through my body and strengthening it.

I start with my hand.

While slowly breathing in and out, my focus deepens.

What is it even? What needs to be done to turn something into a skill?

I quickly shake my head to get rid of useless thoughts and focus a bit more.

Sounds slowly fade out, and I can hear my heart beating slowly. Then I feel a slight tingling in my hand. It starts with my fingers and continues up to my wrist.

It's the same feeling as before.

By force, I calm down my now-faster heartbeat.

I focus on the feeling and try to understand it.

It's hard to explain.

It really is.

More than relying on my mind, I let my body do it.

Maybe it's something like when you catch something falling down from a table, and at the end it's just your body that reacts by itself. Just a simple reflex.

And only when you hold falling item in your hands, then you realize what happened.

So here I am, trying not to think about it too much.

Somehow it feels cringy.

Allow your heart to guide you.

Sense it deep within your soul.

Do not think, just do.

Let force...

God damn.

I just can't think of another way, not at the moment.

I try it again.

The feeling extends up to my shoulder, and I squeeze my fist.

I can't be sure if it isn't placebo, but I feel that my right hand is stronger than my left.

I furrow my brow.

I have a feeling that if I said it out loud, someone would laugh at me.

The system better not be recording my current thoughts or streaming them somewhere.

So, where is the mana coming from? That's what I am curious about at the moment.

Sure, I have a mana stat, but what does it mean?

Did I get another organ that is producing mana?

Is it just flowing through my body, or is it stored somewhere and moving to the part of my body I want it to?

Let's try again, and this time, slower.

I once again enter the focus and let my body take care of the rest. I feel strength in my right hand, but I just don't know where it came from.

I cancel it.

Again.

...

Again.

...

Again.

...

After around twenty more tries, and when I start feeling lightheaded, I finally feel it.

A thin thread of mana connecting my heart and hand.

Don't tell me.

I try it again, and now I focus on my heart right from the start.

I barely feel it, but mana forms there and then slowly flows through my veins, reaching my hand. It's not using only one vein but multiple of them.

So that's how it is.

I spend another 30 minutes trying to feel my mana, and when I hear Hadwin calling my name, I find a new skill between my existing ones and one of my skills leveled up.

**[Mana Perception Lvl 1]**

**[Mana Manipulation Lvl 1 > Mana Manipulation Lvl 2]**

I guess it's something.

Under Hadwin's amused gaze, I roll out from under the bus and stand up. Other than that, he doesn't react to it, which makes it even worse.

Asshole.

"Do you want to join us for another expedition? Damon and Sophie are coming as well, and I have one place I want to check out a bit more."

I grab my stuff and follow him after I nod.

"I noticed a spot where it appears to slope downwards. If we're fortunate, it could be a valley, and there may be a stream in the vicinity."

We come near the other two already waiting for us. Both of them hold short spears in their hands, the ones goblins used.

I guess it's better than nothing.

"Of course, we have to be careful. If there is water, then there is a high chance we will end up running into more animals or... other creatures."

"Anyone else joining us?"

My answer is Damon's derogatory laugh.

"They are busy shitting their pants every time they hear some noise."

Well, it's not unexpected.

"A few kids wanted to join but I turned them down," Hadwin adds in between Damon's trash talk.

I ignore Damon's mumbling as he continues complaining.

Will I get a skill from it?

Damon's trash talk resistance lvl 1?

Hmm, maybe if I try hard enough?

While I am trying to acquire a new skill with Damon's help, Sophie is saying goodbye to her sister.

It's easy to see how worried she is.

Somehow, I can't help feeling a tiny bit of jealousy.

Chapter 13

Almost as if by habit, I am once again on the left, Damon on the right, and Sophie in the back as we follow Hadwin.

After just a few minutes of us clumsily sneaking, we stop at Hadwin's gesture. He just points in front of us, slightly to the left.

I frown.

I didn't notice anything.

I don't like it.

Leaves around a stone's throw in front of us start rustling, and I hear Sophie screaming in warning as the enemy also appears from behind.

Green creatures surround us while growling and showing their teeth.

Two level 2, two level 3, and one level 5 goblin shaman.

Not good.

Actually, it's pretty bad.

Really bad.

I get ready to run away when it becomes even worse.

A car sized wolf appears from behind the goblin shaman.

### **[Reanimated Wolf, lvl 2]**

He's big, brown, and bloodied, but the most eye-catching thing is the iron pipe sticking out of its blinded eye.

I enter the deepest focus I ever have.

The world around me quiets, colors lose some of their vibrancy, and my mind filters out useless information.

My and the goblin shaman's eyes meet, and I swear he looks like he is laughing.

The goblins don't seem to be surprised to meet us at all.

Fuck.

Someone screams.

We don't even get time to run as the animated wolf rushes at us.

Hadwin makes the first move, and I can hear gunshots.

One.

Two.

Three.

All of them hit, but the wolf keeps charging and only slightly staggers after every gunshot. There is no blood.

Its target is Hadwin, who quickly swaps to the spear.

As the wolf shortens the distance, I put my knife away and hold my pipe in both hands. I let mana flow through my body, focusing more of it on my shoulders and waist as I burrow my feet into the ground

I clench my core, spin in my waist, and swing with all the strength I can muster.

The wolf passes by me, aiming for Hadwin, and I hit its front leg.

Something cracks really loudly, and the weapon in my hands bends. The wolf staggers, but there is no painful cry as it falls down while stepping on its broken leg. Hadwin quickly stabs with his spear.

But I am already behind the three and making a circle to the left towards the other goblins, knife back in my left hand. Mana is still flowing through my body.

I would like to save some and turn the skill off when I don't need it, but I want to stay as careful as I can.

The goblin shaman is holding his hands in the air and mumbling something under its nose, and its eyes are glued on me. One level 3 stays near him, and another level 3 slowly walks towards me together with a level 2. The last goblin is already fighting with Damon while Sophie is helping Hadwin with the wolf.

The level 2 goblin stabs at me with his spear, and its moves are painfully amateurish. With my body strengthened by mana, I easily dodge it and hit its face in exchange, breaking its nose and injuring an eye.

As he steps back with a painful groan, I move to the left and kick the dashing level 3 goblin. My leg hurts from it, but as he staggers, I dash back into his reach while he is regaining balance.

I stab my dagger as deep as I can into its neck and twist, breaking it in the process.

He falls to the ground, twitching his limbs and letting out wet choking noises.

Good.

After dodging one more attack, I finish off the lvl 2 goblin with multiple hits from my iron pipe on its head. Its skull cracks and it falls down without much resistance.

The fight took less than ten seconds, and the whole time, I kept a few trees between me and the goblin shaman.

Before continuing, I pick up both of their spears and peek at the duo. The shaman seems to be done with whatever he was doing, and now he is only waiting.

I peek just for a second and throw a spear at him. The weapon is terribly balanced, and it just hits the ground a few meters away from them.

It's harder than I thought.

When I glance backward, I see that Damon's level 2 goblin is already dead, and they seem to be finishing off the wolf. Hadwin is limping with a deep wound in his thigh, and Sophie's hand seems to be wounded too. Damon is holding a wound on his chest.

I have an opportunity but something stops me from running away and I turn back to the duo in front of me.

I bend to pick few stones from the ground when I hear it.

A terrible piercing noise

Not good.

Without even thinking, I dash to the side as quickly as I can.

**Boom.**

Something explodes, and I feel a pressure wave hitting my back, throwing me against a tree.

Even before the pain hits me, I know I have broken a few bones, but I try to roll as soon as I hit the ground. While limping, I run a few meters.

**Boom.**

Another shockwave throws me to the ground. The world around me starts spinning, and I feel blood in my mouth.

NOT GOOD.

I let mana flow through my body and crawl back on my legs. They are not broken, but one of my arms is, uselessly hanging along my side. That leaves my iron pipe uselessly on the ground. The spear I picked up is broken, and I am just holding its upper half.

As expected, the level 3 goblin is already next to me, and this time, I am unable to fully dodge its swift stab.

The spear grazes my side, and the goblin grabs my broken arm, sending a painful impulse through me and making me scream in pain.

But I stay focused.

I keep mana flowing through my body.

Even battered like this, I feel confident.

He will die.

My heart is beating like crazy, pumping mana and blood through my veins.

My breathing is ragged but steady.

It hurts.

It hurts so much.

But.

Even in such a state, there is not a single speck of doubt in my mind.

I will win.

Then I kick the goblin between his legs.

He lets out a painful groan and bends slightly.

I swing with my hand holding a broken spear and stab into the goblin's neck.

My spear doesn't enter too deeply, but with a loud scream, I pull back and thrust again and give him another kick between his legs.

He lets out a suffocating noise as blood starts flowing from his neck and mouth. He bends more while trying to cover his lower parts, and as he does so, I kick his lower chin with my knee.

Even in such a state, my kick is powerful enough, and I see consciousness disappear from his eyes.

As he falls down, I fall on him and stab his neck a few more times.

In the back of my mind, I hear a notification.

While holding a bloodied, broken spear in my hand, I stand up.

One more.