

Night Ranger Chapter 19 Painting World -

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Headless Girl Vanessa.

Marvin started to remember something about this name.

In the game he often took time to check the game forum. He once saw a picture posted by an anonymous player ID.

On the picture was an ornament shaped like a platycodon flower.

That ornament was an uncommon item, but the effect was quite astonishing. Marvin still remembered its attributes

[Vanessa's gift]

Quality: Uncommon

Effect: Fear resistance +10

Requirement: Help the headless girl accomplish her dream.

...

This was obviously a quest reward item.

At the time, that guy sharing his equipment info was most likely just showing off, so most people overlooked it. Luckily, Marvin's memory was quite good as he was still able to remember its attributes.

There were not many items that could raise fear resistance in this world. Marvin remembered a few but they were hard to get hold of.

There was originally no clue for how to get Vanessa's gift.

But he just now figured it out. That anonymous player posted the picture just a week after the Scarlet Monastery instance was released.

He probably was the first player to enter the Scarlet Monastery and triggered the headless girl quest then.

"Vanessa... Why can't I look at you?" Marvin asked hesitantly, wanting to know the ins and outs of the situation.

He could feel that the girl had no malicious intent.

"Because my current appearance is very frightening. Every ordinary human that looked at me would be cursed from fear. You might lose your mind!" Vanessa explained, "So please, by all means, don't turn and look at me, please?"

Marvin nodded.

The headless girl's body probably had a [Strong Fear Effect] attached to it, that kind of trick. If someone saw her body, he would need to face a fear check.

Although Marvin had a tough soul, if his body was unable to endure and failed the check, he would be done for. He still wasn't fond of taking risks.

"Why did you appear?" he asked.

"My head has been stolen by a despicable person. Can you help me retrieve it?" Vanessa quietly asked.

The girl's voice felt somewhat terrifying in this quiet empty room.

Marvin glanced at the shadow on the ground. Under the light of the moon, a blurry shadow could be seen on the ground.

'There really is no head.'

Marvin gloomily cursed in his heart; sure enough, it's the [Headless Girl].

He forced a laugh. "I am a mere human, why do you think I can help you?"

"I can feel that you have strong willpower, and your fighting skills are quite excellent," Vanessa said in a low voice. "You can stealth and could easily steal my head back without that despicable guy noticing you."

"I need more detailed information to decide whether I should get involved in your matter." Marvin spread his arms as if there was nothing he could do, adding, "I don't want to lose my life."

...

Ten minutes later, a sneaky shadow returned to the ghost hallway.

He approached the painting. Headless Girl.

He was pondering whether he should accept the headless girl's request or not.

An item able to increase fear resistance wasn't something easy to find. On top of that, the quest didn't require fighting, only stealing something, which was his domain.

After agreeing to the headless girl's request, another quest appeared in Marvin's quest menu.

Marvin already knew about the quest details, and the reward was a "???".

This kind of random quest reward was always a gamble, but luckily this time, he already knew what the quest reward was.

He followed Vanessa's directions and gently put both hands on the painting.

"Relax, relax."

Vanessa's gentle and soft voice could be heard next to his ears.

"Close your eyes."

"Now step forward."

Marvin did as told.

"Creak!" Marvin opened a door and took two steps forward while closing his eyes. The quiet and peaceful surroundings suddenly turned clamorous.

A bird was chirping on top of a branch. It seemed like he had arrived in a forest.

The next second, Marvin opened his eyes and sure enough, he was in a small forest.

[You have discovered a mysterious location – Boknin]

[Knowledge – Insight +5]

[Knowledge – Insight – Boknin world]: This place is a painting made up of distorted space, located between Feinan Continent and the Underworld. It looks like an ordinary farm, but Evil Spirit envoy Morris rules over every piece of land here. He has two forces under his control, crow patrols and dark knights. Every fine thing in this place is false.

[You have entered the painting world – Boknin...]

He was surrounded by birds, fragrances and surroundings full of vitality.

Behind him was an almost dried up locust tree. He made sure to remember that tree's look and location as it was his only way home.

The headless girl wasn't able to come with him in the painting world, so he had to act alone for what came next.

His target was a castle on a hill in Boknin. This castle belonged to the lord of this area, known as old Morris, who apparently was an lower plane Evil Spirit Envoy specialized in removing people's souls and sealing them in his own painting world.

Caution was required in this kind of place. Otherwise, a careless person might have to stay forever inside this terrible painting world.

Vanessa's head was concealed in Morris' castle bedroom. Marvin had to sneak in, steal the head, and then return it to Vanessa.

Then Vanessa's soul could be freed, and Marvin's quest would be completed.

'If it were a high-level Evil Spirit Envoy, he should have been able to subdue the willpower of the girl's soul. Morris is probably an ordinary Evil Spirit Envoy, perhaps a 2nd rank Evil Spirit Sorcerer.'

'Unfortunately, the holy water sold by the Silver God Church had a very low concentration. If I could get hold of a #13 holy water, maybe I would have a chance to get rid of Morris.'

Evil Spirit Envoys and those like Heiss were different. Even though they might share the Evil Spirit Sorcerer class line, their races were different. Lower plane Evil Spirits were very vicious, had a strong vitality and didn't have any weak points like human grave robbers.

...

Marvin walked quickly and stealthily out of the forest and arrived on a small hill mound.

He gazed into the distance from the small hill and saw a large field of wheat growing healthily and a few silhouettes roaming there.

Those were obviously the farmers tending to the land.

This was a true world.

"Really amazing..." Marvin was astonished.

There was a castle on top of a small hill at the end of the wheat field. Marvin crossed the wheat field without startling anyone.

His perfected Stealth had outstanding results, even if it was limited by the skill level.

He soon arrived at the castle.

There was only a bridge made of a single log outside the castle. The other sides of the castle were surrounded by cliffs.

And at the other end of the single log bridge was a team of guards.

‘A bit tricky.’

Marvin didn’t dare try to get past those guards using stealth; that would be courting death.

Stealth didn’t make someone invisible. What’s more, in broad daylight like right now, the effect would be very weak.

It seemed he needed to wait for the evening.

He found a hidden place to rest.

...

In the evening, an ox-cart set off from the ranch at the bottom of the hill and slowly made its way toward the castle.

Marvin’s eyes brightened from his hidden spot.

‘Hmm? The ox-cart upper layer is green vegetables and fruits? And potatoes?’

‘That farmer is going toward the castle!’

‘That’s it!’

He ran quickly.

...

The farmer driving the ox-cart was leisurely waving his long whip as the old cow slowly advanced and hesitated on the small path.

After passing a small curve in the road, the farmer suddenly saw a hint of silver through the corner of his eyes.

“Eh!?”

He immediately stopped the cart and jumped down.

That was a piece of silver!

A piece of silver, that kind of thing was good currency in any place, even in Boknin!

The farmer's face showed a hint of happiness while checking his surroundings before quickly putting away this piece of silver. Afterwards, he quickly got back on the cart before setting out again toward the castle.

The farmer slowly moving forward didn't find out that there was another person under his cart.

Marvin's four limbs clutched onto the walls of the hollow depression under the ox-cart in an X-shape, with his back pushed against the bottom of the cart.

Fortunately he was only 14 years old this year with a small build, allowing his body to fit in this hiding spot.

He once had a similar experience, but at that time he had used the assassin's special [Bone Shrink] skill to change his height and weight.

Five minutes later, the ox-cart arrived at the castle gate.

After a simple check, the guards let it go inside.

Marvin, still under the cart, felt his limbs getting very weary but clenched his teeth and persevered. This was the safest way to enter the castle.

The cart was slowly moving inside the castle, probably toward the kitchen or the warehouse.

Marvin carefully scouted around and when he saw that no one was around, he suddenly let go, silently lying on his stomach.

The ox-cart kept going, the driver completely unaware of what had transpired.

Marvin checked his surroundings, used Stealth and instantly disappeared into the castle main lobby.

...

The lord's bedroom was quite easy to find, as it was the highest room in the castle.

In general, only idiots would set traps in their own bedroom.

After learning through the servants gossiping that the city lord Morris would spend the night in his laboratory, Marvin waited until evening and then decisively sneaked into that spooky room.

He looked around the room for a while before finally beginning to search through the mess. Bat claws, a human skull, bones from the hand of a demon... Some spell reagents in short.

He finally managed to find a parcel among the mess. It was covered with a dark cloth with a special and somewhat strange nail keeping it closed.

This was exactly what Vanessa described.

‘A curse to turn one into an Evil Spirit Slave?’

Marvin recognized these patterns. It looked like this Evil Spirit Envoy had planned to turn Vanessa into an Evil Spirit Slave. It was no wonder that he didn’t want to destroy her soul.

He hid the parcel into the Void Conch, ready to leave.

But right when he was about to leave, footsteps could be heard from outside the bedroom.

Marvin heart sank as he rolled and hid under the bed.

One second later, fire brightened the room and a pair of cloth shoes appeared in his sight.