

VILLAIN 180

Chapter 180 Cold war

Earlier... Frey Starlight had seen what happened to Snow and Daemon.

Hawk Eyes made spotting things from a distance trivial.

Despite how rough things looked for them, Frey knew his chosen hero would survive.

After all...

Snow was made to be the perfect version of the writer—of Frey.

Superior in every way.

A being like that—

Couldn't possibly fall to something like this.

And so, unlike the rest of the Empire—who watched in fear and uncertainty—

Frey remained calm, continuing through the trial without pause.

–Day 17 on the Island–

–Ding!–

Ranking Update:

10 – Ragna Claude (Year One): 2,400 points

9 – Dawn Polaris (Year One): 2,650 points

8 – Danzo Smasher (Year One): 2,680 points

7 – Raegan Zennin (Year Three): 2,800 points

6 – Seris Moonlight (Year One): 2,900 points

5 – Ghost Umbra (Year One): 3,000 points

4 – Magnus Greil (Year Three): 3,750 points

3 – Frey Starlight (Year One): 3,800 points

1 – Snow Lionheart (Year One): 4,500 points

1 – Daemon Valerion (Year One): 4,500 points

Snow Lionheart and Daemon Valerion's scores had been frozen for two full days.

Yet even so, the gap between them and the rest of the competition was still massive—

A result of their ferocious rivalry since Day 10.

On the other hand, earning points had become significantly harder now.

The Lady of Eight Legs had plunged the entire island into chaos.

She continued to destroy everything in her path—relentlessly.

On the first day of her appearance, a few fools tried to attack her.

Some even succeeded in severing one of her legs...

But they regretted it deeply—

Because two legs grew in its place.

The Lady of Eight Legs—whenever she lost a limb, two more would grow, almost instantly.

Each one stronger than before.

She now had ten legs—and was actively eliminating students one after another.

This time, the instructors were intervening directly to extract eliminated students, since her venom was instantly lethal—a single touch meant death.

The number of players had dropped at a terrifying pace.

Now, everyone avoided her location completely, even if their watches directed them there.

Despite a few deaths, Ivar succeeded in his goal—

Forcing the students to experience the terror of beings far beyond their strength.

Of course...

People like Frey never needed that kind of lesson.

And now...

With more than half the exam completed,

Only 80 players remained on the island.

When the exam began, there were over 500 players.

A terrifying number had already been eliminated...

Somewhere high in the mountains, at one of the checkpoints—

A young man with blond hair sat calmly, wearing the armor of House Valerion.

Aegon gazed at the distant figure with a faint smile on his face.

"So that's her... the Lady of Eight Legs."

One of the most ancient Nightmare creatures.

Even though it wasn't the real one—just a newborn child—Aegon still found himself intrigued.

"My Lord... how strong is that thing?"

The question came from one of Aegon's escorts—a slender young man with black hair and narrow eyes.

Raegan Zennin, one of the strongest Awakened of the third year.

He was now accompanying the prince, ever since Misandei had been eliminated.

Aegon spoke to the surrounding third-years like he was their superior—not the other way around.

"The real Lady of Eight Legs lays countless eggs every few years... but then devours them all to increase her power."

"That's the secret behind her terrifying strength—and her continuous evolution. What we're seeing now is a lucky survivor. A child who escaped her mother's fangs. A fascinating creature."

Aegon explained casually.

Even though the creature before him had caught his interest—it was nothing more than that.

He shrugged, finishing his statement.

"This one's a newborn. So she's probably around S+ or SS- class at best.

Don't even think about fighting her—death is all that awaits."

Everyone nodded at once.

"As expected of the prince—his knowledge is unmatched."

Raegan admired the young prince greatly.

That made him hesitant to say what came next...

"My apologies, my Lord..."

As soon as he apologized, Aegon replied with a smile:

"Frey, isn't it?"

Raegan nodded.

"We didn't expect him to defeat Missandei and her entire elite squad."

"Indeed. He did quite well there."

Raegan was a bit confused by Aegon's praise of Frey...

But he didn't dwell on it for long and continued:

"This time, we'll all move together under Magnus' lead. We've got enough points to locate him—it's only a matter of time."

Only about 30 third-years remained now.

A decent number—but most of them were average students, as the best of their ranks had fallen alongside Missandei during that ill-fated day.

Still, the number was more than enough—especially with both Magnus and Raegan leading the charge.

Both of them were among the top-tier fighters.

This would likely be the strongest assault they'd launch on Frey so far.

Aegon nodded in approval.

"Very good. You may go."

Raegan hesitated slightly before nodding.

"Are you sure, my Lord? About staying here alone while we deal with Frey..."

This entire plan had come from Aegon himself.

He had ordered them all to attack—leaving him without any guards.

For a moment, Aegon was disgusted by Raegan's words—

But didn't let it show on his face.

"Yes. That's an order. All of you will attack."

Raegan didn't dare press further. He left—reluctantly.

Aegon remained alone, eyes fixed on the Lady of Eight Legs.

"Trash like you, protecting me? Don't make me laugh..."

From the very start, they hadn't been his bodyguards.

He had simply kept them nearby—pawns for his greater schemes... a way to secure their allegiance in the Throne Succession Race.

All political games.

As for protection—he didn't need any.

In the midst of these thoughts—

Aegon's right hand trembled suddenly, black lightning crackling faintly around it.

He immediately grabbed it—grinning.

"Haha... Ah, how I long for it..."

Slowly, the hand settled.

Aegon rose to his feet.

"Not yet..."

And with those words—

The prince vanished.

—Day 18 of the Island Trial—

The Empire breathed a collective sigh of relief.

The reason was simple—Snow Lionheart and Daemon Valerion had finally dug their way out.

Covered in layers of dust and grime, the two finally emerged into the open, gasping for breath.

Badly injured, exhausted...

But the light in their eyes never faded.

"It's finally over..."

Snow exhaled, greedily inhaling the fresh air.

Beside him, Daemon turned away and began walking off.

"Remember this, Snow Lionheart.

Our fight... isn't over yet."

Snow stared at his back for a moment.

"You're welcome to come at me whenever you want."

Daemon smirked—then disappeared in a flash of lightning.

Snow, too, went his own way.

As they both opened their maps, the same thought crossed their minds:

Get supplies.

Recover.

Then return to the battlefield—ASAP.

They were machines—relentless.

Snow now had another reason to push harder—

That armor Daemon had used...

If they fought again and Daemon used that armor—

Snow knew he'd lose. And badly.

But he wouldn't accept that.

Even if his opponent was using an external weapon or tool like that—

In the battlefield, life can be taken in an instant.

There's no room to cry about unfairness.

"Stronger..."

Snow clenched his fists tightly.

He had to become strong enough to crush his opponents—and everything they brought with them.

V and that strange sword he'd fought with...

Daemon and that monstrous armor...

He had to become strong enough to break them all.

With those thoughts—

Snow dashed toward the nearest supply ring.

The trial wasn't over yet.

—Frey Starlight's Perspective—

Sitting atop a massive rock...

I gazed out across the forest in front of me.

The Lady of Eight Legs was roaming through the tall trees, wailing softly.

Less than 12 days remained until the exam ended.

And with the end drawing near...

Their move was coming.

"The group that's trying to kill me... will strike soon."

But how?

That, I didn't know.

I could no longer afford to handle the third-years like I had during the earlier days of the trial.

I didn't know when the Moonlight extremists would come for me.

Which meant—

It was time to make a move of my own.

I couldn't keep playing along to Aegon's tune forever.

I already had a plan in mind...

But before I could put it into motion, I opened my system panel.

Looking over my stats, achievement points, and the empty quest list,

I felt something strange stir within me.

Host Name: Frey Starlight (Dual Soul)

Class: Swordsman

Talent Grade: S

Current Rank: C+

Strength: C-

Speed: B-

Agility: C+

Endurance: C

Aura: SSS

Magic: –

[Swordsmanship Lv. 4] (Limit broken – user can now reach Level 7)

Inherent Talents:

{Swordsmanship}, {Aura Manipulation}, {Poison Resistance}

Combat Style: Ten Thousand Steps of Shadow

Skills:

Hawk Eyes (A class)

Phantom Steps (A class)

Seduction (D class)

Ascension (S class)

Ignition (SS class)

Abilities:

Shadow Adaptation : 0/7

Anti-Magic: Level One

Current Achievement Points: 5,000

I had some achievement points saved up...

I wanted to gather more—to shatter the next talent barrier and push it up to SS.

It would take 8,000 points to make that happen.

But I couldn't stop myself from trying.

Direct Advice (500 Achievement Points)

Random Advice (250 Achievement Points)

The cost for advice had skyrocketed...

This system was total garbage.

But I didn't care.

I immediately used the Direct Advice option.

–How can I win the Victoriad?–

That's how I phrased the question.

The Victoriad... it's all I'd been thinking about, day in and day out.

If I didn't ask now, the thoughts might actually kill me.

And unexpectedly...

The system replied.

> "Look at yourself in the mirror... and understand the reflection."

Huh?

I reread the advice—over and over.

But I couldn't make sense of it.

"Did I really use the direct advice? Why does it sound like a random fortune cookie?"

Just to be sure, I tried the same question with the Random Advice option.

And the result?

> "Look at yourself in the mirror... and understand the reflection."

Same garbage.

Did the system finally break?

Or maybe the idiot behind the screen got hacked...

Why are you throwing nonsense at me?

Look in the mirror? What am I supposed to see?

My miserable face?

My cursed system... was utterly useless.

Even Shadow Adaptation hadn't budged in two years.

Shadow Adaptation : 0/7

What a worthless system.

I tossed my device into Valerion's tattoo storage and turned back to my original plan.

I fiddled with my smartwatch.

I needed a way to fend off the third-years—and Aegon.

And the solution... was simple.

–Ding!–

> Are you sure you want to spend 500 points to locate a player?

I didn't hesitate—I confirmed immediately.

> Points deducted!

Frey Starlight: 3,300 points

Rank: 4

I dropped one rank...

But I didn't care.

In the search bar, I typed her name—

"Sansa Valerion."

Time to play this your way, Aegon.