

## Chapter -37

Spider humanoids swarmed around us and I swung left-and-right wildly, BONK after BONK echoing through the Production Control Room structure. The concussive impacts of every hit crushed and pulverized nearby monitors and screens, while splattering the creatures and sending blue blood everywhere, staining the walls, floor, and ceiling.

Brock was whooping and yelling in ecstasy, while Bee stayed behind me, conserving her mana for when it mattered. The room past the reception, which I belatedly realized was a waiting room, became so crowded with dead bodies that the flexible floor began to sag.

Coupled with the copious amount of blood soaking into the flexible silk fibers, the result was that, after just a couple minutes of ceaseless slaughter, a loud tearing of fabric announced an enormous hole forming in the floor.

The dead rained down to the bottom of the cavern far below, while yet more of their brethren stormed us. More than a few times I'd been cut and stabbed by the creatures' claws, but whatever venom they possessed was slow to make itself known.

After what felt like an eternity, but which was maybe just eight minutes in total, my muscles were sore and useless, my Stamina utterly vaporized, and my body hardly able to stand upright.

As I took a wobbling step backwards, Bee pushed in front of me and let off a Beetle Bolt that tore through a spider that'd been about to go for my throat, before activating her Beetle Brawn. The carapace on her body visibly thickened and grew, repelling the attacks of the last few stragglers of the mass exodus of Broadcast Department employees.

I'd completely lost count of how many I'd killed, but it might've been as high as thirty or even forty. My clothes were soaked in blue blood, my skin was stained in the same hue, and my hair had chunks of viscera and small bone fragments in it.

Panda, somehow, was utterly unscathed, staying on Bee's shoulder throughout the whole ordeal. Even now he was actively advising her on who to shoot.

“That one, on the ceiling!” he yelled and Bee swung her arm up. “Beetle Bolt!”

The buzzing drone of her projectile filled the reception and made my tired ears hurt.

Her target, a horrified-looking spider, didn't even have time to get out of the way before it was cored through the head. Bee was evidently out of steam though, as she began to look unsteady on her feet.

The last two spiders jumped her, but their strikes bounded off her green carapace. With a loud exhale of air, Bee hammered her fist into the chin of the nearest one, sending it reeling backwards. I struggled to my feet and shambled over, just in time to see her strike the other one in the side of the head.

As they were preparing to attack her again, they saw me come closer and quickly decided not to test fate. They spun around, tethered themselves to the floor and then leapt out of the hole.

“Oh no, you don’t!” Bee said through gritted teeth, then knelt down and began tearing at the tethers they’d made. But the silk was too strong for her hands to pull apart. *That* didn’t deter her though, instead she just switched to her teeth.

“Enough, Bee! Just let them escape!” Panda pleaded.

I came over and fell to my knees beside her, trying to tear the fabric as well. But the lack of Stamina made me too weak. I also realized that the venom from the spiders was having some sort of Vitality-draining effect.

With a sigh, I rolled onto my back, splattering my frayed scraps of a once-beautiful suit in blood.

Bee let out a sound of frustration, but gave up on trying to sever the tethers, then she too dropped to her back.

Around us, the blood from the ceiling dripped down as though we were in a cave full of stalactites, the sound soothing in a way.

“That was fucked up, you guys,” Panda said in exasperation. “You didn’t have to kill them all! They were clearly noncombatants!”

“What about us?” I said. “We were noncombatants too, before this shit.”

“Two wrongs don’t make a right,” he replied.

“*Get off ye high horse, Jiminy Cricket!*” Brock told him.

As though to reinforce Panda’s argument, an achievement appeared. From the sound Bee made, I could tell she got it too:

<b>Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement! ✕</b>
<i>‘Corporate Genocide’</i> <b>Killed more than thirty noncombatants of a GREAT GAME Agency.</b>
<i>This is one of those things that are bound to happen during the course of the GREAT GAME, as many of the Agencies’</i>

*grunts and noncombatants always stay close to where the action is taking place.*

*However, this is the first time that we’ve handed out this achievement before the end of the 2nd Day.*

*We’re going to have to send a lot of faxes to the next-of-kin. There are children who’ll never see their parents again.*

*Thanks to you.*

*I hope you feel good about yourselves.*

**Reward:** ‘Genocider Trophy’

“God damn, they’re really laying it on thick,” I groaned.

“Well, you did kill a bunch of people just doing their job...” Panda noted.

<b>Congratulations! You have leveled up!</b> <span style="float: right;">x</span>	
<b>You have reached Level -10!</b>	
+1 new Attribute Point available to invest!	
<i>Game Event required for Level -11</i>	<i>0/1</i>

“Oh, I levelled up,” I said, ignoring his scolding words. I didn’t give two shits about some evil monsters profiting off humanity’s slow extinction to their machinations. “I need to clear the Game Event for the next level now. Wonder if it’s retroactive for people not already at level 10?”

“I guess that’d make the most sense,” Bee commented. “I hit level 6 by the way. I got a new ability called ‘Beetle Blast’ from the level 5 achievement.”

I clicked the pop-ups away and a photograph appeared above my face out of thin air. I grabbed it before it started floating down and said, “*Inspect.*”

**‘Genocider Trophy’** x

*This is a family photo of one of the people you killed. Have a look at those smiling eight-eyed kids. They’ll never smile like that again.*

*In order to unlock the power trapped within, you must tear the photo apart, just like you tore their loved ones from them.*

**Weight: 0.2 Pandas**

I glossed over the message, ignoring the guilt-tripping they were trying to pull, then tore the image in two. Bee had gotten the same reward, but she stared at the photograph for quite a long while.

**Choose your reward!** x

*You’re a monster, you know.*

Pick one of the options:  
**‘I-Frames’** | ‘Serial Killer’ | ‘Blood Sport’

I rolled my eyes, then inspected the options.

**‘I-Frames’** x

*Passive*

*Dodgerolling allows you to phase through attacks if timed correctly.*

*We’re not sure how this works...*

**‘Serial Killer’** x

*Passive*

*Killing a noncombatant or unarmed Player will give you a 1-hour-long 25% boost to Stamina and Health recovery, as well as a sweet dose of serotonin.*

*Why fight people who fight back, when you can kill the innocent! Embrace the lifestyle you were meant to lead, you **sicko!***

**‘Blood Sport’** x

*Passive*

*Spilling the blood of an Enemy or Player will increase your Movement Speed and Dexterity by 2 Attribute points for 5 minutes.*

*Since you like showering in the blood of your enemies like a **barbarian**, this is right up your alley!*

“Is it just me or have the tooltip messages gotten more aggressive?” Panda asked.

I immediately picked ‘I-Frames’, even though I wasn’t sure I knew how to do a dodgeroll...

“Why are you glowing?” Bee asked, having scooted over to sit next to me. I hadn’t even noticed she’d begun sewing up the small puncture wounds in my torso, since I’d been too focused on reading the options.

“I am?” I asked. Since I was still lying down, I lifted my right arm up to look at it. There was indeed a golden glow emanating from my skin, almost like a supernatural spray-on tan.

Then a new kind of window appeared:

**Congratulations! You have reached a Class milestone!** x

**Pick an option!**

*You have reached the first Class milestone by reaching Level [;ERROR?].*

*You now have the choice between switching to a higher-quality Class or evolving your current one. An **Evolved Class** will follow the theme of your current Class, while a **Class Change** will be something new.*

***Warning:** changing Class will change your current Class abilities.*

*Change Class*

*Evolve Class*