

Chapter -100

Bee was looking at the two Puzzle Boxes we’d gotten from the last achievement, her eyes focused like a hawk’s.

‘Puzzle Box’ <small>x</small>
<i>Since you’re so good at solving puzzles, take a crack at this!</i>
<i>The reward inside is random. It might be a packet of ‘Fusion Gum’ or it might be a viper with an incurable venom in its fangs. The fun is not knowing!</i>
Weight: 1 Panda

Since there was no way for Matthew Twine and his friends to get to us here, we were taking a short breather. We’d been running pretty much nonstop, and our last rest had been hours ago. I hadn’t realized just how tired I was, but, unless we made it back to the Safe Zone, taking a nap was basically impossible.

“That’s the real problem with everyone hunting you down,” Panda mused. “Eventually the attrition gets to you and you become unable to keep running.”

I frowned, but I knew I had no counter to that, because it was true.

“How do you think we get to the Broadcast Nest that my new Benefactor wants me to destroy?” I asked him.

“There might be a way to get under the area that the Dungeon occupies,” he replied.

“You don’t think it’s inside the Dungeon?”

“No. The Dungeons are like pocket realms, so housing a Broadcast Nest inside one would prevent it from doing its job properly... I think.”

“What about the Weaponlution Event?”

“That was a unique scenario... I think.”

“I guess we’ll just have to see.”

A *pop* sounded from where Bee was sitting cross-legged, while solving the two puzzle boxes. Her hair and fuzzy fur was covered in rainbow-colored glitter.

She frowned, looking at the open box in her hand.

“You good?”

“I thought it would be something worthwhile inside... instead they glitter-bombed me.”

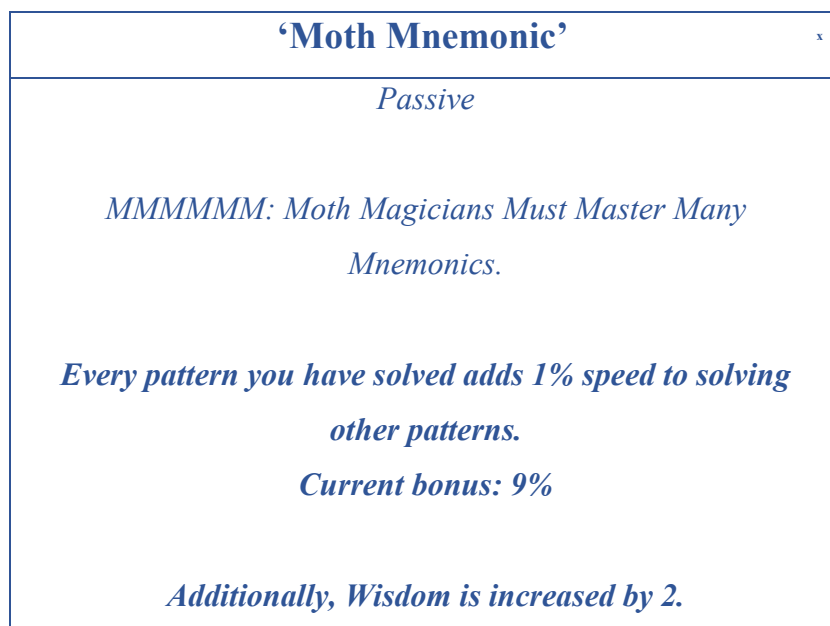
She threw away the opened box and began working on the other one.

“Why are you still going?” Panda asked her.

“Solving the pattern unlocks a new Verse for Moth Mania, and I just need one more for my next spell.”

“That was fast,” Panda remarked.

“It’s also adding towards the new Passive I got from the Unicorn we defeated,” she added, sharing the tooltip with me, as she began to slide around the segments of the wooden box in her hand.



“Hm, I wish I had abilities like that. They’re always the kind that end up the most busted by the end.”

Panda sighed loudly.

While we watched Bee solve the second box, Lordie began to wriggle around atop my head.

“Are you hungry?” I asked him.

“*Meow!*”

“You know, I’ll never get over that voice,” Panda remarked.

I pulled out a bag of Twizzlers and handed it to Lordie, who immediately grabbed it and jumped down onto the stone floor next to the silver throne and its masked occupant.

Loud slurping followed, as the hand-spider gorged itself.

After he was done, I brought up his stats:

'Lordie'	
MATURITY	8%
HUNGER	Satisfied
FAVORITE FOODS	
'Twizzlers'	
'Canned Cat Food'	

“This maturity thing will take forever...” I groaned.

A *pop* sounded from where Bee sat, as the lid of the box flew off. Nothing happened for a second, before the foulest smell imaginable filled the air.

WARNING!

You have been infected with '*Eau de Tonsil-Stone Eye-Bleach*'!

Time remaining:

N/A

“Oh my God, my eyes!” I screamed, covering my face, while the smell just dug itself into every pore on my body. I collapsed to my knees, but the sensation just wouldn't stop.

“I'm a plushie and even I can smell it!? Why!?” Panda exclaimed, rubbing the eyes of his sewn-on face rigorously.

“Shut the lid, quick!” I told her.

“*Brock's gonna hurl!!*”

Bee fumbled around on the floor for the lid that'd popped off, blinded by the direct assault of the box's contents.

I'd lost the ability to see, but I heard the moment that the lid was popped back on.

And then, bliss.

“Holy shit, I think I might’ve unalived myself if you hadn’t closed that lid,” I said, relief washing over me.

“I’ll hold on to the box,” she replied.

“I’m pretty sure its contents break several Geneva Conventions on warfare and chemical weaponry,” I commented.

“It reminds me of my last visit to the Dentist. Anyway, look, I got a new skill out of it.”

‘Mind Trap’ <small>x</small>
<p><i>Ability</i></p> <p><i>Your mind is a palace and each door represents your memories and thoughts and ideas. But I have the key and I have locked you in!</i></p> <p><i>Target a sentient entity and, if their Wisdom is lower than yours, lock them inside their own mind, forcing them to solve a puzzle to escape the spell.</i></p> <p><i>Any damage to the target will interrupt the Mind Trap.</i></p> <p><i>Cooldown: 10 minutes</i></p>

“Look at you with all your utility,” I remarked, slightly jealous.

“I wish I got more powerful spells like I was promised.”

“Maybe you have to collect special patterns for those,” Panda guessed.

An achievement suddenly appeared:

Congratulations! You have unlocked an achievement! <small>x</small>
<p><i>‘The Worst Smell Imaginable’</i></p> <p>Survived Eau de Tonsil-Stone Eye-Bleach.</p>

*Would you be surprised to know that this vile Perfume was
concocted by a **Demon Lord of Envy**?*

*More than 1 minute of exposure to this Perfume results in
permanent brain damage, and, as you might imagine, since
you just experienced it, it also goes by the name: ‘Eau de Oh
My God Please Kill Me!!!’*

Hats off to you for surviving this encounter.

Reward: 100x ‘Game Coins’

With this reward, I was now up to 1243 Coins. The plan was to save up as much as possible for when I got the Safe Zone Sphere to use on a vehicle.

The floor beneath us began to tremble and the mask on the seated skeleton popped off into two segments.

“Ah shit, we’ve gotta go!” I yelled, running for the opening to the hallway that led further underground. Bee zipped by me with a rapid flurry of her wings and I had to jump to get through the opening, before the room fully rotated and blocked it off again.

“That was close,” Bee said.

“They’ll be right behind us,” Panda remarked.

“We can ambush them up ahead,” I decided, pointing to the end of the hallway where it seemed to broaden out into a bigger room.

“I still think we should avoid open confrontation, but if it’s unavoidable, let’s not kill them.”

I put my left hand on her shoulder.

“Trying to avoid killing someone, who is 100% trying to kill you, is more danger than its worth. We can head for the boss, but if they catch up to us, then I’m putting an end to this chase.”

She nodded, seemingly accepting my decision. “We should get a move on then.”