

Chapter -103

DUNGEON ‘The Cultist Mansion’ CLEARED!

Recommended Player level: 12

Average Player level: 5

Player survivors: 7

Player deaths: 24

Enemies slain: 84

Bosses slain: 1

WARNING!

The Dungeon will close in 60 seconds!

You will be returned to your last known location outside the Dungeon perimeter!

We hurried to clear up the wisps and coins that’d dropped following the Red Scion’s spectacular death. Twine, the Knight, and the Healer had yet to appear, but they would probably jump us as soon as we all got dumped back outside the front gate of the Mansion. It also seemed that the two Players that’d helped us in the kitchen were still alive, judging by the announcement.

“It’s a shame you can’t use that again,” Panda commented. “Bonus loot *and* perma-death in one package? It would’ve made short work of Logan.”

“I’ve gotten lucky so far, but next time I’m sure it’ll land on one of the bad options. And the Announcer keeps hoping for the Demon Incursion.”

“That one is definitely not great,” he replied, as I scooped up another wisp. “After the third Event is usually when they bring those out. It’s basically a rift that connects one of the Demonic Realms with your world. Sometimes they involve a Rift Keeper that has to be killed, and other times they just last for a set period of time.”

Bee looked up from where she was looting and said, “Seriously, how do you know so much about past Games??”

WARNING!

The Dungeon will close in 30 seconds!

“Better hurry up and loot the rest!” he urged. “I’ll explain when we get outside.”

“He’s totally not going to,” she muttered, annoyed.

We moved around the exploded confetti remains of the Scion, grabbing the last bit of stuff. Our total haul was quite impressive, though we didn’t have time to inspect the items right now:

Leftovers of Boss ‘Red Scion’:

600x ‘*GAME Coins*’

2x ‘*Fusion Gum*’

‘*Silver Anointer Mask*’

‘*Queen’s Droplet*’

‘*Scion’s Claw*’

‘*unFake Plugin*’

There wasn’t anything that seemed to help us find the Mayor, but I hoped that we’d get such a thing from the Dungeon Clear achievement.

“Get ready,” I told Bee. “We’re about to be dumped right into the thick of it.”

She activated her wings and lifted into the air. Even though the top of one of them was clipped slightly, it didn’t affect her control at all.

I brought out my longboard as well and took a pose that would enable me to immediately kick off from the ground and take off.

“I’ve got my Mind Trap ready to incapacitate Matthew Twine,” she said.

I grinned. “Let’s do this.”

DUNGEON CLOSING!

Returning you to your last known location outside the dungeon perimeter!

Darkness washed over us, before we were placed right in front of the open Mansion gate, looking right up at its gravel path and well-kept lawns. The sky above was stained by the light of the setting sun.

I spun around and saw Raincoat Guy, the Knight, and the Healer right next to us, as well as the other two Players still in their cultist robes, though their hoods were pulled back to show that they weren't hostile.

With a push, I shot myself forward on the longboard, aiming to go back down the street we'd arrived from.

“Mind Trap!” I heard Bee say, while she flew backwards, positioned right above my head.

“Arena!” came the muffled and tinny voice of the Knight, and immediately a large oval wall broke up through the asphalted ground and surrounded all of us, stretching about twenty-five yards out in front of the Dungeon. Along with it came simple wooden bleachers upon which sat countless cardboard cutouts of peasants, which bobbed up-and-down as though part of the crowd of a PS1 game. A stock sound of cheering also came from the stands.

I stepped on the back of my board and spun back around, aiming the index of my yellow balloon gauntlet at the Knight.

“*.interrupt()*!”

The walls and bleachers immediately disintegrated, and I spun back around, continuing unobstructed.

“You know, there's something I've been wanting to try,” I said, as Bee and I quickly put a lot of distance between us and them.

“Uh oh,” Panda muttered.

“Don't worry, it might not work.”

“I can't predict what you're about to do, and *that* worries me.”

“*I need a Bus!*” I said.

REQUEST RECEIVED!

Your current location has been added to the route of the nearest 'Bus'.

Please wait patiently for it to arrive.

“Oh you absolute moron!” he scolded me.

In the near distance, rumbling and crashing could suddenly be heard, before a familiar voice filled the air.

[NEXT STOP: YUMMY-YUMMY, A PLAYER WILL VOLUNTARILY ENTER MY TUMMY!]

“Go faster!” the plushie yelled. I chained an ollie into a ‘rail grind’ along the roof of a limo, getting a burst of speed.

[ENLIGHTENING!] said the mouth at the front of my board.

“It’s coming!” Bee said and then began laughing nervously, like a kid playing tag.

“That should make it hard for them to keep up!” I said, pretty pleased with my own ingenuity.

“What about the two people who were just trying to survive!? Did you stop to think about them??”

“... Woops?”

The plushie sighed. “Goddamnit, Gambit.”

“*Meow.*”

“No, we aren’t going to wait for the bus, Lordie.”

“*Meow..*”

“I don’t care if it’s rude to call it and then leave. It’s scary and it wants to eat us.”

A loud explosion came from a house a few doors down from us, as the Humanbus just rammed straight through it to take a shortcut to the street I’d summoned it to. The Healer in Twine’s party shouted in panic, while the Knight lifted up the incapacitated Raincoat Angel. The other two Players had already made a run for it.

“Bee, did you see the names of the two that helped us in the kitchen?” I asked.

She floated down next to me, grabbing onto my shoulders, while I kept doing small tricks to further boost my speed.

“Their names were Martin and Raul, but I couldn’t see what Classes they had, because of the robes they were wearing. By the way, the Knight is called Joane and the priest-looking guy is Mark, their classes are Arena Contestant and Soother.”

“We should find a place for you two to heal up,” Panda interjected.

“Is the Bloodfiend Sickness still in effect?”

“It is.”

“You can’t tell?” Bee asked me. “It stings pretty bad, and I only got hit once.”

I shrugged, which was awkward, given that she was holding onto my shoulders.

[NEXT STOP: MY TUMMY-YUMMY!] came the sound of the bus as it crashed through the street, chasing after the Knight and Healer.

“Huh, your plan actually worked, somehow,” Panda remarked.

There followed a beat of silence.

“Ah fuck... I forgot my Benefactor wanted me to deal with the Broadcast Nest *below* the Mansion...”

Bee blinked.

Panda groaned.

I spun the board around and quickly regretted having summoned the bus to this place.