
Crushing the Competition with My Abysmal Stats, Useless Class, and Garbage Weapon!
BLADE SKILL ONLINE
Author
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Shimofuri (Laplacian)
01


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"Huh?!"
"How'd this happen to me?!"
"Wh-What's wrong?"
PLAYER CHARACTER
Yuri
PLAYER CHARACTER
Baldy


"I'm playing as a summoner, using the bow, and running a pure luck build—
the very choices you all believed were the weakest!
"Yuri, please, stop what you're doing! I'm begging you!
And now... I'm about to obliterate every last one of you!"
You're turning our first ever event into a Demon Lord raid!"
PLAYER ASSISTANT
Navi


“Whaa?!
No, please!
Don’t eat me!”
PLAYER CHARACTER
Korin

BLADE SKILL ONLINE 01

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Chapter 1 — The First Day

Just a few years after the development and proliferation of neural interface technology, the video game industry had finally succeeded at bringing us a genre of online games known as VRMMORPGs—virtual reality experiences powered by a total sensory immersion device known as the Full Dive System. And now, I was holding a copy of the most advanced of these games.

"It finally arrived! I've got *Blade Skill Online*!"

My heart leaped at the sight of the fantasy art on the game's case. This was my ticket to escaping from a life of misfortune!

From the moment I was born, I'd had the worst luck ever. Getting pooped on by a bird while walking to school was practically a given. Whenever I'd leave an umbrella outside a store, mine and mine alone would get swiped. I'd even come close to failing my high school entrance exam because of a sudden bout of diarrhea.

I'd tried to break the curse by praying at shrines, but no amount of clapping my hands and bowing before the gods had made the slightest difference. By the time I'd reached my second year of high school, I was ready to give up and accept that I'd always be plagued by bad luck.

That is, until I realized something: My bad luck wouldn't matter in a virtual world!

VR games were the pinnacle of modern technology. No matter how unlucky I was, it wasn't going to matter in a digital world governed by probabilities and computation.

What's more, *Blade Skill Online* actually determined luck using a player stat! Although the game's official launch was happening today, I'd already learned a lot about it by reading an online guide written during the beta test, so I knew that pouring all my points into the luck stat would guarantee me good fortune!

Oh! Looks like it's almost time for the servers to open!

I put the game's disc into my computer, put on my wired VR headset...and with that, I was all geared up and ready to enter the game world. This pricey little arrangement had set me back 100,000 yen—every yen of which I'd earned working myself half to death with part-time jobs in the run-up to *BSO*'s launch.

"Don't need to pee! And I'm hydrated! Let's do this... *Dive On!*"

The moment I spoke the keyword to start up the Full Dive System, everything faded to black.

♦ ◊ ♦

I opened my eyes and found myself in an empty white space, and a fairy fluttered into view.

"Hello and welcome! This is the character creation room!"

"Um, who are you?"

"Me? I'm Navi, the guide fairy! I was created to assist everyone with their adventures!"

Ooh! It understands me? Oh, that's right. The guide mentioned this.

BSO's NPCs could hold basic conversations because they were all powered by the latest in AI tech. But this was no time to marvel at the wonders of modern technology—now that I was in the game, I was ready to rise to its challenges. I was going to hit the ground running, and that meant getting character creation over with quickly!

"Let's start making my character, Navi."

"You got it! First off, please enter the name you'd like to use!"

A translucent keyboard appeared in front of me. *A username? Hmm... Well, my name's Yuri...*

"I'll stick with my real name!" I said as I typed.

"Yuri it is! Next, please choose your class, weapon, and skills!"

The keyboard vanished and three windows appeared in its place. The first was full of class options like "fighter" and "mage." The second was a list of weapons filled with dozens of options like one-handed sword, staff, and sickle and chain. It even listed scissors. *Who'd choose scissors? A hair stylist?*

Lastly, there was a skills window packed with over a hundred

options. *No way I'm reading through all this! There are way too many!*

"Is something wrong, Yuri? If you need some time to think, I don't mind waiting!"

"No need for that. I already decided what class and weapon to use when I read the online guide."

I had a carefree in-game life beyond the reach of bad luck awaiting me—I wasn't about to put it at risk by making dumb choices! I was going to play it safe with the weapon and class that had been most popular during the beta test. Together, they formed a combo that players largely agreed was best.

"For my class, gimme summoner, and I'll take the bow for my weapon!"

"Wowzers. Summoner and bow? Don't see that often! But all right!" Navi gave me a cute little salute.



Huh...? Isn't everyone using those?

According to the guide, summoner and bow had been all the rage during the beta test. Summoners had the power to bend fearsome monsters to their will, while the bow was a common favorite that could take down fighters from a distance. *Maybe the beta testers wanted to try out something new for the official launch...? That's probably all it is.*

"Now if you could state your skills please, Yuri! You can pick up to three!"

Oh, that's right. I should be thinking about my skills! I never settled on these... Well, if I'm gonna dump all my points into luck, then this, this, and this ought to work!

"Okay, Navi. Gimme Last Stand, Fatal Strike, and Luck Boost."

"You got it!"

My thinking was real simple. If my HP dropped to 0, Last Stand would give me a small chance to keep going with a sliver of health. Meanwhile, Fatal Strike would give me a small chance to deal double damage. And of course, those small chances would grow bigger the higher my luck stat was—which is where Luck Boost, which gave me ten percent extra luck, would swoop in and make me untouchable! These three were perfect choices for someone planning a pure luck build.

There's no stopping me now. Mwah ha ha!

"Okay, Yuri, next you've got 100 attribute points to—"

I didn't even let her finish. "Dump 'em all into luck!" *No doubt about it! My whole motivation for playing is to get a chance at a carefree life!*

Here's how my build turned out:

Name: Yuri

Level: 1

Class: Summoner

Weapon: Bow

Attributes: Strength: 0 *Defense: 0* Magic: 0 *Agility: 0* Luck: 100+10

Skills: Luck Boost, Last Stand, Fatal Strike

Just look at all those 0s next to that 110! This is peak min-maxing! Casuals are probably gonna put 20 points into each stat, so I'll be five times luckier than all of them! And there's no way anyone can catch me now since we only get 10 attribute points per level! I chuckled as I imagined the fun times ahead. *Heh heh heh. With these stats, I'm gonna be living that easy life I've been dreaming of.*

"Just one more step!" Navi said. "How would you like your character to look, Yuri? We have to use your real face as a base since that's what's best for players' mental states, but we can tweak it until you're barely recognizable!"

Oh, I get to change my looks?! I'd better make sure I get this right!

Hmm... My real face is a little feminine, but I could try reworking it into something manly! And I've gotta do something about my baggy eyes. Bad luck's got me looking dead inside!

"You could try your luck with the randomizer!" Navi suggested. "It still starts out from your real face, but you never know how it might change! It could even turn you into a total hunk!"

Ooh, a randomizer? That sounds fun! I'd never have taken a chance like this in real life, but now that I had five times the luck of the average man, there was nothing to hold me back.

"Hit me with the randomizer, Navi!"

"You got it! Look forward to seeing how it turns out when you get down into town! Well then, Yuri, please enjoy *Blade Skill Online*—a world of hope, dreams, and combat!"

For a moment, I saw Navi vigorously waving me goodbye, and then a blinding white light enveloped me.

♦ ◊ ♦

As the light died down, the town came into view. The streets were cobbled and lined with wooden buildings, just like in a fantasy world. I saw other players thronging the area and carrying equipment of all kinds, and I got a strong sense of being inside a

video game.

"Oh, I get it... This must be Starting Town!"

Modern VR games are insane! Not only did everything look real, everything from the hubbub of the town to the smell of good food in the air felt genuine. *I can't get over this level of quality! I bet I'd have a great time just strolling around!*

I was busy gawking at the scenery when a voice called out to me. "Hey there, miss! Hey, miss!"

Huh? Miss...? Well, he can't mean me.

I ignored the voice completely until I felt a hand grab my shoulder. Surprised, I turned around to find a muscular bald man with tanned skin looking right at me.

"Eek! A wild barbarian appeared?!"

Baldy looked offended. "I'm no barbarian! Little rude, doncha think, miss?!"

Why is he looking at me and saying, "miss"?! Uhh, hold on... My voice does *sound kinda high, and isn't that feeling on my back my hair reaching down to my waist? Don't tell me...*

"Hey, Baldy! What do I look like?!"

"Uh... You've got silver hair, red eyes, and I guess, in so many words...you look like a well-to-do young lady."

Pbbbt?! Whaaaaat?! I'm a lady*?!*

I ran to a nearby fountain and stared down at the water. The reflection looking back at me belonged to a beautiful girl, gorgeous in every way but her dead eyes. She was wearing a simple black dress that looked like a starting outfit, and it happened to suit her silver hair perfectly.

I nervously raised my hands and put them to my pale cheeks. Sure enough, the girl reflected on the water's surface made the same gesture.

"Huh?! How'd this happen to me?!" I screamed with a woman's voice.

Baldy leaped with fright at my sudden shouting. "Wh-What's wrong?"

A few minutes later...

"Bwah ha ha ha ha! So the randomizer turned you into a flawless silver-haired, red-eyed hottie?! You're hilarious, Yuri!"

"Well, I'm not laughing!" I tore at my pretty silver hair. "Gah! My bad luck never left me!"

Baldy wouldn't stop chortling like an idiot, and this current burst of laughter was just the latest in a long series.

After we'd gotten talking, I gave him a full recap while we sat on the edge of the fountain. First he'd laughed when I told him I was playing the game to escape my bad luck, then he'd laughed even harder when I'd told him that the randomizer had turned me into a girl. Once I'd told him I'd chosen the summoner class and the bow, he was in stitches.

What's with this guy? Does he get off on laughing at other people's misfortune?! "Yeah, get a good laugh, jerk! I don't see what's so funny about my class or weapon though. Sure, my avatar turned out weird, but summoner and bow is the best possible choice! The online guide said so!"

"Pffffft! Hate to break it to you, Yuri, but that's a lie spread by trolls."

"Huh?"

"That guide's a wiki. Anyone can put a bunch of lies on there. In reality, summoner's a weak class with no upsides, and the bow sucks 'cause it can't hit a damn thing."

"What...? Whaaaaaaaat?!"

No, no, no! This can't be right! Not only do I look like a girl, but my build totally sucks too?!

"Ha ha ha! Usually some Good Samaritan comes along to fix the vandalism, but it takes them a while to notice. You must have checked the site in the few minutes before it got fixed!"

"But th-that would be...the worst possible luck!" *Curse my unbelievable misfortune! It won't even let me enjoy video games! I checked that site a bunch of times, and it* always *recommended summoner and the bow! Don't tell me...the vandalism was always timed for exactly when I was looking at the site?! Gaaaaaaaaaah!*

As my shoulders slumped, Baldy placed his hand on my back in an apparent show of sympathy...except no, he was getting ready to

kick me while I was down! "As a former beta tester, let me share a little wisdom with you: A pure luck build...is pure garbage."

"Garbage?!"

"Now, now, hear me out. Your luck stat mostly affects how often your skills trigger and the drop rates for rare items. It does also help a little with critical hits, though. That's when you hit an enemy's head or heart and get a small chance to deal triple damage. The higher your luck, the more often you'll get that critical damage boost."

"Ooh. So if I focus-fire on enemy vitals, I'll be unstoppable, right? I know some shots might miss, but with these stats, I've gotta land a few lucky hits...right?"

"Nope. Hit rate is purely a matter of player skill. Speaking of which, here's a question for you, Yuri. Think you can hit anything with a bow? Have you had any archery training? And even if you have, remember, we're talking about moving targets here."

Wh-What?! This can't be happening! "There's no way I'll hit anything! I barely know how to hold a bow! Every shot's gonna fly a mile wide without aim assist!"

"Thought so. Any noob can swing a sword around and hit something, but a bow's useless unless you've got the skills. And that's why everyone calls the bow trash. Mind you, even if you were a pro archer, it wouldn't matter with those stats of yours. The more powerful the bow, the more rigid it is, and the more strength it takes to draw. With 0 strength, you're stuck with the starter bow, and that thing's a piece of junk!"

J-Junk?! My stats are garbage, and my weapon's worthless junk?! But what about my class? What's so wrong with being a summoner?!

"And then there's your class," Baldy continued. "Summoners are a sorry bunch."

"They are?!"

"Yep. The whole idea is that you get to control some friendly monsters, but you've gotta jump through some hoops beforehand. First, you've gotta tame a monster by defeating it entirely by yourself. If anyone helps you out, taming fails automatically. And then, even if you do somehow beat an enemy, taming rarely

succeeds. Then there's the arts system... Summoners don't get any arts for boosting damage output. If you'd picked, say, the fighter class with a bladed weapon, you could've dished out big damage with the Giga Slash art. But you're a summoner, so that means your arts are limited to buffing summoned monsters. What I'm trying to say is you're gonna be helpless with no party to back you up."

"Whaaaat? So to tame my first monster, I've gotta fight it solo using nothing but my nonexistent bow skills? And even then, it's gonna take a few tries?"

"Pretty much. With sensible stats and a decent weapon, you could've at least handled the rabbits hopping around the Starting Plain. Not that taming trash enemies is gonna get you anywhere. Not with that build."

This bald jerk sure wants me to know it's my own fault! Yeah, I get it! It's all 'cause I picked trash stats and a garbage weapon! And now those rabbits are gonna nibble me to death 'cause I've got 0 defense! I heaved a deep sigh. *I'm used to bad luck, but this takes the cake...*

"Cheer up, Yuri!" Baldy patted my shoulder. "You can just make a new character! Though it'll be a shame to lose the hot avatar. You're like a piece of fine art that only the AI could've made! Every inch of your body's fine-tuned, and yet none of it looks overworked or unnatural! And just look at those big, round boobies!"

"Like that's gonna do me any good! I'm just gonna get— Wait, why'd you start talking to me in the first place?"

"Huh? Oh, you know... I wanted to hit on you, obviously! You know the game's avatars are based on our real faces, right? Anyone with a hot avatar like yours ought to be a hot girl in real life! Why'd you have to go and be a dude?!"

I finally snapped. "Get over it, moron!" We came to blows, both knowing that we couldn't damage each other here in town. But that didn't stop us from trying!

♦ ◊ ♦

A few minutes after our pointless fight reached its conclusion,

we'd both cooled off. I was drenched in sweat and resting my hands on my knees, while Baldy lay defeated on the ground in front of me.

"Ugghh... Haaah... I almost had you! You're tougher than you look, Yuri!"

"Haah... Haah... That wasn't my first fight! Getting jumped by thugs outside the convenience store has been a daily thing for me for as long as I can remember!"

"How can anyone be that unlucky?!" Baldy bellowed. He looked like he still had some energy left in him, and not just because of his brawny avatar.

A win was a win, but I knew Baldy could've kicked my ass in an instant if he'd used skills or arts during our fight. I could guess he'd gone easy on me since he knew that I'd put all my points into luck and wasn't much stronger here than in real life.

I pinched the top of my sweat-soaked dress and fanned myself with it a little before extending my hand to help Baldy up. "You're not a bad guy," I told him. "You helped me let off some steam there."

"Heh. That's a funny thing to say to someone you just beat the crap out of. I figured it'd be unfair to buff my stats, but otherwise, I was giving that fight all I had." Baldy flashed me a manly smile as he reached for my hand.

As I pulled him to his feet, I suddenly realized that we'd drawn a crowd. *Hey, we're not putting on a show here!*

"Bwah ha ha ha. Yeah, the sight of a babe and a punk fighting's gonna draw a crowd, all right! So what are you gonna do now, Yuri? Gonna make a new character without falling for troll advice this time?"

"Hmmm... Nah. I'll roll with what I've got for now! You never know. I might find a way to make it work."

Baldy patted me on the back and roared with laughter. "Nice idea! Climb the ranks, then have the last laugh over those trolls!"

I was smiling as we parted ways. My next task would be to find a good hunting spot.

New achievement: Spend three minutes or more fighting with another player!
Skill acquired: Up Close and Personal!
Up Close and Personal: Gain a very small chance to deal ten percent extra damage when fighting at close range!

What?! I learned a new skill?!

[Finally!] General Discussion Thread 156 [The Official Launch Is Here!]

1. Impatient Adventurer
This thread is for general discussion.
Speak your mind freely, so long as you're not breaking the forum rules. However, if you want to recruit party members, rant, hate on the game, or start drama, please make your own thread.
A new thread will be created automatically when this one reaches the reply limit.
Previous thread: http://**********

281. Impatient Adventurer
lol that bald guy got into a fight in Starting Town

282. Impatient Adventurer
>> 281
I know him. He's the one who played like a mercenary, working with all the top guilds in the beta test.
Not that he looks like a soldier. More like barbarian vibes tbh...

283. Impatient Adventurer

>> 282

He might look like he’s been fighting for his life in the apocalypse, but he’s a good guy lol.

The girls all hate him for being a creep tho.

>> 281

So who was he fighting with?

290. Impatient Adventurer

>> 283

Some crazy hot girl with silver hair who looked like she might bite your head off. She knew how to fight lol

292. Impatient Adventurer

busts open door There’s a kick-ass babe playing???????

294. Impatient Adventurer

>> 290

Awwwwwwwwwwwwww yeah! Hot girl detected!

Knowing that bald guy, it probably started because he was hitting on her lmao

310. Impatient Adventurer

Everyone’s saying she’s a hot girl, but you don’t know how she looks irl. Do hot girls even play video games?

315. Impatient Adventurer

>> 310

You’re clueless! It’s not like in ancient MMOs! VR games base the avatar on your real face! That means she’s 100% hot in real life! Let me dream!

Here’s the clip if anyone wants it. I was there when it happened, so I recorded it. http://*******

333. Impatient Adventurer

>> 315

YEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEES!!! SHE’S ACTUALLY HOT!!!!!!!!!

lol wtf she made friends with the bald man after the fight is she recruiting gang members or something?

350. Impatient Adventurer

Aggro hot girls with silver hair...? YES PLEASE! MORE OF THIS!!!!

Chapter 2 — My First Win!

On a vast grassy plain, I materialized my bow in my hand. Then I drew my arrow and took aim at a rabbitlike creature a few dozen meters away known as a horned rabbit. When the creature stopped to nibble on some grass, showing me its defenseless back, I unleashed my arrow. *Ain't nothing personal, bunny!*

"Rabiii!" the creature snarled.

"Oh, crap! I didn't just miss, I gave myself away! Retreeeeat!"

I fled the moment the rabbit looked at me. I'd already taken one hit from another rabbit, and it'd knocked me down to half HP because my defense stat was 0! *Damn! These are supposed to be the weak monsters for practicing on, but I've had to run from them three times in a row now!*

Running at an ordinary pace with no speed boost from the game, I made a desperate attempt to escape the game's weakest monster.

♦ ◊ ♦

"Haah... This is no good. Summoner and bow with all points spent on luck... Nothing about it works."

Several hours after leaving town, I still hadn't defeated a single monster, and it was getting dark already. Since it was probably the middle of the night in the real world too, I decided it was about time I logged out. I sat down on a large boulder in the middle of a field and called up a menu window.

"Where's the log out button...? Oh, I should check my items first." *I should still have the Beginner's Arrows that came with the Beginner's Bow after character creation... Whoa! Only two left?!*

Unless I could retrieve my arrows, I'd only have two more shots. I sighed once again, realizing that this was yet another drawback of the bow.

“Buying more arrows in town is gonna cost money... But I’ve got none since I haven’t killed a single monster yet! And now it’s too dark to see what I’m shooting!”

I was at a total loss. My class was entirely geared toward controlling tamed monsters, with no arts to help me bring down the wild ones. On top of that, I’d screwed up big time when I’d put every point into luck. I couldn’t even take two hits without dying.

Landing a hit’s hard enough already! You’re telling me I’ve got limited tries?! What a joke!

“Gaaaaah, this is the worst luck! Baldy might have been a nice guy, but everything else about this game sucked! Fine! I’ll make a new character!”

I reached for the log out button, but just as I was about to tap on it, the earth in front of me bulged up, then exploded. A rusty sword burst out of the ground, and it was headed straight for me!

“Curse you!” it shrieked. “Curse you!”

“The hell is this thing?!”

The screeching was coming from the mysterious sword, but it didn’t even have a mouth. I was still trying to make sense of it all when some floating text appeared in front of me.

```
Rare Monster: Living Weapon
An abandoned starting weapon reanimated by feelings of
resentment toward its former owner.
```

Okay, that checks out. It’s a monster, obviously. Oh, and it is *nighttime, so I should’ve guessed there’d be a ghost or two. It says “rare monster” here, so I won’t encounter these too often.*

“Currrrssssss!”

“Ack?!” *I don’t have time to think about monster types!*

I rolled to the side to dodge the living weapon’s attack, then quickly materialized my bow. “Take this!”

I drew the string and loosed an arrow...but rather than hitting the small target afforded by my opponent’s slim body, it flew off into the distance. *Oh, crap! I only get one more shot!*

I was still reeling from the shock when I realized the living weapon was charging straight at me.

"Curse yooooooooooou!"

It's all or nothing! As the living weapon shot at me like a bullet, I clapped my hands together in front of my own face, and...I caught the blade! I'd pulled off a perfect blade catch! A shirahadori! I'd stopped the living weapon dead in its tracks.

"Curse...you...!"

"Guuuh... Ngh?!"

But this thing was determined. And with a strength stat of 0, it took everything I had to hold it back! With the blade still between my hands, I was pushed to the ground with its point nearing my face.

"Curse you! Curse yooooooou!"

I felt friction between my palms and the metal surface as the living weapon edged closer. The creature's cries of hatred for its former owner filled the night sky.

This thing might be ticked off...but it's not the only one! "Screw this! I just wanted a break from real life, and this is what I get?! First I fall headfirst for a cruel prank, then I die without achieving a single thing?! Screw that! I'm not gonna take it!" I whipped my head to the side so abruptly that I felt my neck might break, and at the same time, I let go of the living weapon. The blade grazed my cheek before plunging into the ground.

"Cursssssss?!"

I might have caught the monster off guard, but it was rising back up out of the soil in an instant. *Not if I've got anything to say about it!* I grabbed it tight by the hilt, then materialized my last arrow in my free hand. But I didn't nock this one in the bow.

"Eat this!"

Instead, I slammed my arrow right into the rusty body of the living weapon! My arm simply bounced back because of my low strength, but I wasn't going to give up easily. I gripped the arrow shaft firmly near the arrowhead to make sure it wouldn't break, then I slammed it into the living weapon again and again...and finally, I saw the fruits of my pure luck build!

Skill active: Up Close and Personal! Damage up!

Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage up!

Skill active: Up Close and Personal! Damage up!

Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage up!

Two of my low-proc-rate damage-boosting skills were triggering with almost every attack!

Up Close and Personal was the skill I'd learned after my fight with Baldy. Now I was truly grateful that I'd had the good fortune to meet him.

"Cursssssssss! Cuuuurse you!"

"Ngh?!"

The living weapon broke free from my grasp! In one smooth movement, it severed the arm that I was using to hold the arrow and followed an arcing flight path to put some distance between us. Then it came back toward me, rushing in at high speed to deliver the final blow!

"Hah. You got me good. I can't catch a blade with just one hand!"

But that was fine. I could see that my barrage of hits had left cracks along the living weapon's surface. We were both on our last legs...but I wasn't out of options yet.

"I'll just have to punch you head-on!" I balled my one remaining hand into a fist and rushed at the monster. In the brief moment it took the living weapon to close the distance, I'd had just enough time to draw my arm back then thrust my fist at its approaching blade point.

"Currrssssss!"

"Uhhraaggghh!"

Blade and fist collided under silver moonlight. The sword plunged deep into the flesh of my hand...but I didn't even care!

Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal damage!

Skill active: Up Close and Personal! Damage up!

Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage up!

Critical hit! Massive damage dealt to a weak point!

My absurd luck stat had made all my skills trigger at once! I was quite literally making a last stand, and the skill had made my bones tougher than steel—tough enough to crack the blade's point!

"Cursssssss?!"

"Drop dead already!"

I mustered up all my remaining energy and drove my fist forward, shattering the blade as my fist traveled all the way to the hilt and hit it hard enough to knock it flying a few dozen meters.

Next came the sound of fanfare!

You defeated a rare monster! Reached level 5!

You gained 40 attribute points!

New achievement: Defeat a monster higher level than yourself when slaying a monster for the first time, or defeat a monster higher level than yourself thirty times!

Skill acquired: Giant Killer!

Giant Killer: Gain a very small chance to deal 10 percent extra damage when fighting an opponent higher level than yourself.

Taming successful! A living weapon became your ally!

"Yes. Yeeeeeees! I did it!" I raised my fist high into the air as the fanfare continued. "Ha ha, I beat it! Woo-hoo— Ow, ow, ow, ow?!"

I had to cut my first victory celebration short when I felt a dull pain shoot down my remaining arm—that is, the only one that was left after the monster had cut my other one clean off. Although we couldn't feel much pain in the game, all this mutilation still kinda hurt and felt gross.

I quickly materialized a Beginner's Potion in my hand and poured

it over the wound. The HP gauge at the edge of my HUD rapidly refilled and a flash of light shone from my bloody shoulder as a new arm grew. If I'd been hurt this bad in real life, I'd have been laid up in hospital for a good while—it was a good thing healing here worked like in any other game.

My severed arm, meanwhile, had melted into goop and disappeared. I hoped it would be good nourishment for the grass.

"All right! My body's good as new. Now, where was I...?" I flexed my newly generated arm as I turned to look at the scene of the battle.

Didn't the message say I'd tamed the living weapon and it's my ally now? But I smashed it into pieces. What happens now? Do I have to put it back together to revive it? What a chore!

I folded my arms under my oversized breasts and began pondering my options. While I was thinking, a ball of black fog rose from the ground near where the living weapon's hilt had landed.

Uh-oh! Another enemy?! I snatched up the arrow from the ground and held it tight as I approached the menacing ball of fog. *Firing arrows out of a bow is old news! Geniuses like me know a sure way to make every attack hit! I just need to get in close and slam the arrow right into this thing!*

"Bring it on! I'm about to kick your ass!"

"You! No curse you!"

To my surprise, the foggy ball dropped to the ground and rolled over to show me its belly (or the closest thing it had to a belly).

What is this thing? It's like a cute little puppy! I was enjoying watching the mysterious puffball roll around when a message appeared in front of me.

```
The living weapon (soul) awaits your orders.
Please choose a new target for the living weapon (soul) to
possess. The item must be a weapon.
The monster will die if the weapon breaks.
```

Huh? Oh! It must be a soul that came out of that rusty old sword!

I threw the crappy bow away somewhere. The only weapon I've got is...

I held out the arrow in my hand. "Hey, Puffster. Can you possess this arrow?"

"Curssss!" Puffster—the living weapon—sank into the slim arrow, immediately shrouding it in a black miasma.

```
Your item, Beginner's Arrow, was possessed!
The monster's strength was added to your weapon's attack power!
```

That's what a pop-up message told me!

Ooh! Sounds like I've solved my strength problems! Now I'll be able to dish out the damage I need!

I gave the hazy arrow a good scritch and rubbed my cheek along its stem. "Coochie coochie coo! Let's do this, Puffster!"

"Curssss!" Puffster vibrated happily.

This little guy was floating in the air when he possessed the sword, wasn't he...? "Puffster, can you still fly while you're in that arrow?" I tried letting go of the arrow, and Puffster flew a perfect lap around me.

Oh... Oooooh! Does this mean I've solved the bow accuracy problem as well?! I picked my bow back up, then I aimed at a ball of fluff—most likely another horned rabbit—that I spotted a few dozen meters away. "All right... Go get it, Puffster!"

"Curssss!"

Let's see what happens!

Carried by the force from the bowstring, the murky arrow followed a meandering path before hitting the rabbit right in the head.

```
Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage up!
Critical hit! Massive damage dealt to a weak point!
You defeated a horned rabbit! Yuri and Puffster gained
experience!
```

The attack carried a stat boost from Puffster, and then a damage boost and a critical hit thanks to my high luck! It was enough to kill the horned rabbit in a single blow. And it got better...

"Currsss!" Puffster and his arrow came speeding back to me, screeching as if to say, "How'd I do, boss?"

Now I don't have to worry about running out of arrows either!



This was the moment I felt certain. “Summoner and bow, all points spent on luck... This combo actually works!” *I can do it! I can do it!*

I was still worried about defense, but I’d found a way to fight. I couldn’t wait to see the looks on the faces of all the beta testers who thought they could trick new players with their despicable lies! *Oh yeah! This combo’s taking me all the way to top player status!*

“Let’s go, Puffster. We’re gonna hunt the whole night through!”

“Currrssss!”

My accomplice and I both roared with enthusiasm as I ran across the field in search of new prey.

Chapter 3 — A Reunion with Baldy!

Since I had a few days off school, I had the perfect opportunity to spend all of the game's second day hunting.

I nocked the usual Puffster-charged, miasma-shrouded arrow and shot it at a silver wolf fifty meters away. Puffster handled the aiming, so all I had to do was pull hard on the bowstring!

"Puffster, go!"

"Curssss!"

Puffster sped off toward the wolf. He'd required careful handling when I'd met him (and no wonder, since he'd been a sharp blade), but he'd reformed into an exemplary underling once I'd broken him down with my fist. I was proud of my little rebel arrow!

"Woof, wo-wooof?!"

The stupid wolf saw Puffster coming, and now it was running away at incredible speed. But I wasn't going to let my prey escape! "Arts activate: Speed Burst!" Puffster's speed doubled instantaneously.

Buffing monsters was an ability exclusive to summoners. Once my art took effect on Puffster, he was able to close in on the wolf in no time and smash through the top of its skull!

"Arrrrrrrf?!"

```
Skill active: Giant Killer! Damage up!
Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage up!
Critical hit! Massive damage dealt to a weak point!

Rare monster defeated: silver wolf!
Yuri and Puffster gained experience!
Yuri reached level 10!
```

New achievement: Land ten consecutive critical hits or three hundred critical hits in total!

Skill acquired: Merciless Death God!

Merciless Death God: Deal an additional thirty percent damage when landing a critical hit!

Ooooooooh! That thing was rare?! Rare monsters gave good experience, and this one had pushed my level up to a nice round number.

Merciless Death God sounded like a nice new skill too. Baldy had said that critical hits only had a low chance of happening when an attack hit a vital point, but for someone with luck as high as mine, crits were a common thing—all the more so since Puffster generally went for the head or heart—so any critical hit-related skill was perfect for me.

"Cursss cursss!"

"Yeah, great work, Puffster! Nice dive bomb just now!"

Puffster came back to me with a look that said, "Weren't nothing, boss." I gave him a brief pet, then I took the attribute points I'd just earned from leveling up and dumped them all into luck! My build now looked like this:

Name: Yuri

Level: 10

Class: Summoner

Weapon: Bow

Attributes: Strength: 0 *Defense: 0* Agility: 0 / Luck: 190+19

Skills: Luck Boost, Last Stand, Fatal Strike, Up Close and Personal, Giant Killer, Merciless Death God

Equipment:

Head: Nothing

Body: Beginner's Dress (black)

Feet: Beginner's Boots

Weapon: Beginner’s Bow

Accessories: None

Awww yeah! Still a pure luck build! I just love looking at it! Other than Luck Boost, every skill had a random chance to trigger. It was a full set of luck-dependent skills!

But I wasn’t quite so hyped about my equipment. *Ugh. So weak!* “It’s all the same stuff I started with. It’s about time I went back to Starting Town to get some new gear! And I need to off-load the drops I got while farming monsters all night!”

I knew I’d make a killing selling it all. Then I’d use the money for a major gear upgrade, taking me one step closer to being a top player!

I began running toward town, my spirits lifted by fantasies of me striking back at any beta tester who’d laughed at bow-wielding summoners.

[BSO Is Out] General Discussion Thread 200 [And It’s Day 2]

1. Impatient Adventurer

This thread is for general discussion.

Speak your mind freely, so long as you’re not breaking the forum rules. However, if you want to recruit party members, rant, hate on the game, or start drama, please make your own thread.

A new thread will be created automatically when this one reaches the reply limit.

Previous thread: http://**********

281. Impatient Adventurer

Top players who’ve been going since the beta test are all close to level 20 now, right?

I’m still stuck on the Starting Plain trying to get to level

10.
The wall I’m hitting is the silver wolf encounters.

282. Impatient Adventurer
>> 281
Yeah, rare monsters are tough. And watch out for living weapons if you’re playing at night.
They’ve got low defense, but it’s hard to land any hits on a lone blade that’s flying around quickly. It’s pure hell if you’re using a bow.

283. Impatient Adventurer
>> 282
lmao ANY monster is pure hell with a bow
The slow ones might actually be worse. They’ve all got high defense, so you’ll be nervously watching your arrow supplies dwindle the whole time lol

290. Impatient Adventurer
>> 283
The bow’s basically the dollar store version of spell casting. Spells only have a range of about ten meters, but you can control their trajectory with your mind.
Bows might have much better range, but hitting from a distance is impossible anyway, and arrows run out too fast. Garbage in every aspect, basically.

292. Impatient Adventurer
>> 290
Fun fact: Since arrows count as weapons, you can hold one and stab an enemy with it!

294. Impatient Adventurer

>> 292

Getting up close and stabbing things is definitely one way to hit!

What a dumb idea though. You may as well use a sword in that case lmao. Playing like that would be total nonsense lol.

310. Impatient Adventurer

Weren't some beta testers putting fake info on the online guide saying "Bow is the best! Summoner is the best!"?

Did any of the noobs actually fall for it?

They're both terrible choices...

315. Impatient Adventurer

>> 310

The site always got fixed pretty quick, but someone has to have been unlucky enough to see it.

Another one doing the rounds lately is "Putting all your points into luck makes you overpowered!"

333. Impatient Adventurer

>> 315

A summoner with a bow who put all their points into luck wouldn't even be able to fight lol

That's pure evil!

350. Impatient Adventurer

I'd love to see someone dumb enough to try playing with a build like that lmao

Back in Starting Town, I stepped off the busy roads to explore the deserted back alleys. And with good reason! I wasn't going to find what I was looking for on a bustling main street. No, it was these dank and dingy parts of town that were sure to conceal the best craftsmen! Any minute now, I'd find some cranky old guy with no love for business but plenty of talent running a little store somewhere nearby!

You can't hide from me, craftsmen! Get out here and show me what you've got!

After several minutes of marching up and down the back alleys, I heard a voice call out from behind me. "Heh heh heh. Hey there, silver-haired sweetness. How's about you and me go have some fun?"

Ugh. Some creep's hitting on me! I get mistaken for a girl enough in real life already! I turned around, hoping I could get rid of them quickly. But instead...

"You again?!"

...it was Baldy. We both sighed in unison at the sight of each other.

♦ ◊ ♦

"Dangit! From the back, you looked like my ideal girl. But nope, it's my old brother-in-arms! What were you doing in a back alley anyhow, Yuri?"

"Isn't it obvious? I'm looking for a craftsman! Everyone knows the best ones keep a low profile!"

"That's some prejudice you've got!"

A few minutes after bumping into each other, Baldy and I were at an open-air café getting something to eat. A nice feature of VR games was it actually recreated the taste of the food. We chomped on a few hamburgers as we chatted about this and that.

"Hey, Baldy, there's food stuck to your face. No, not there... Jeez, hold still and let me get it."

"Thanks! So how'd your battles go, Yuri? Could you even fight with your abysmal stats, useless class, and garbage weapon?"

"I'm doing great! This build's gotten me to level 10 so far!"

"Seriously?! That's a little higher than the current average! You've got skills."

It was great to hear that I was keeping up with other players. I'd wasted hours chasing rabbits around when I first started, but everything had been a breeze since getting Puffster on my side and changing my tactics.

"But how can you fight when— Actually, sorry, I shouldn't ask. Good for you, though!"

"Thanks, Baldy. I wouldn't tell anyone else, but if you really wanna know, you can ask."

"Nah, I'd better not. It's only three days until the big PvP event! It'd be unfair if I knew your secrets."

Ooh! There's gonna be a big deathmatch event?! Oh, I remember hearing that somewhere. I recalled something about a special arena where everyone would fight until just a few players were left standing...but I doubted I'd do well in a brawl with zero defense. It was yet another reason to find someone who'd craft me some armor.

"You'll be there, right?" Baldy asked. "It'll be a perfect chance to get one over on the trolls who tricked you!"

"You bet! But first, I need some advice. You know players that are good at crafting? I kinda want new armor. I'm thinking of getting a cool-looking full-body set!"

"Huh? Yeah, I know a few...but you can give up on full armor right now. The heavier the gear, the more strength you need before you can wear it."

Wh-Whaaaaaaaaaat?! That's how it works?! But my strength's zero! That means I'll never wear armor ever! And here I was hoping I could hide my weird avatar... I couldn't help but hang my head in disappointment.

Baldy patted me on the shoulder and laughed. "Bwah ha ha ha! Cheer up, Yuri! I know a crafter who'll make you some high-spec clothing instead! Making clothes is tough and takes a ton of practice, kinda like using the bow, but I know someone good!"

"Seriously?! Hook me up, Baldy!"

"Sure thing! This crafter's nuts, just like you. I'll let them know

you're coming." Baldy brought up a map in a display window and pointed to it. "Go visit this building. It's their store."

Wow! Someone with their own store on day two of the official launch? That's amazing! "Thanks, brother! I'll head over right away!"

"No prob. See you, Yuri!"

I threw enough money onto the table for both of our hamburgers as a show of appreciation, then I hurried off. *All right! I'm gonna get a manly set of clothes made!*

♦ ◊ ♦

"Oooh! So this is what a crafter's store looks like."

A few minutes after getting the recommendation from Baldy, I was standing in front of a stately brick building on the main street. An array of stylish clothes were on display in the ground floor window, and customers were entering in droves.

Wow! It's a whole three stories tall! This place is exactly what I'm looking for, I just know it! Which idiot said all the best craftsmen keep a low profile? If they're good at what they do, they'll set up shop right on the main street and make a killing! Duh!

"Here goes! Excuse me! I was sent here by...uh...Baldy!" *I really ought to learn that guy's name*, I told myself as I stepped into the store.

A blonde girl who'd been seeing to other customers hurried over to me. Or more accurately, she sprinted right at me! "Ahhh, aaaaaahhhhh!" she screeched. "At long last, I've found you! The model of my dreams!" The girl grabbed both of my hands and squeezed them tight.

"Wait, what?!"

Chapter 4 — Strats and New Gear

Françoise elegantly bowed her head. “Forgive me for not introducing myself. My name is Françoise! My goal is to be this world’s greatest crafter!”

She’d led me to a private room on the third floor and was showing me some fine hospitality. I was offered a seat on a comfy couch with a table full of cakes and other treats in arm’s reach.

“Mgh, mgh, gulp. Whew. Best in the world? That’s some ambition you’ve got,” I replied while munching on the snacks. “I’m Yuri. I’m aiming to be a top player despite having the worst build ever!”

“Oh ho ho,” Françoise laughed. “Yes, Baldy told me as much. You’re just as forthright as he said you’d be. Now, I hear you’re in need of an outfit you can wear while limited to zero strength, and I must insist that you let me create it for you! I love nothing more than making cute dresses for cute clients!”

Say what now?! C-Cute dresses?!

“A badass manly outfit is more what I had in mind!” I explained.

“Oh, but that won’t do! No way no how! Not at all!” Françoise was leaning in uncomfortably close as she spoke. “You lost the right to wear anything but dresses the moment you gained that divine avatar! Nothing else will do! You’re destined to be my model! This is an opportunity to obtain equipment handmade by me—the top crafter from the days of the beta test—so you hardly have room to complain!”

I finally cracked. “F-Fine! I’ll leave the design to you, Françoise!” If I really was going to reach the top with a terrible build, I couldn’t afford any compromises when it came to my gear. Her offer was too good to turn down. “Give me something with good stats, and I won’t care how I look. All that matters is finding those lying beta testers and beating them senseless!”

“Oh ho. Then it’s settled... But defeating beta testers isn’t going

to be easy. The beta lasted a full month, and the players were allowed to carry over all the money they'd made. I used mine to buy this store, but I would assume most spent it on powerful weapons."

That explained how Françoise had her own store only two days into the game. *So everyone but the crafters used their cash to gain an advantage in firepower? Yeah, that'll make life tough. But all the same...* "Heh. No one's hungrier for the win than the downtrodden underdog! The more they've got going for 'em, the more humiliated they'll be when I crush them!"

"Oh my... It's just as Baldy said. There really is a boy behind that avatar. Very well. I'll do all I can to support you! Would you mind showing me your item box, Yuri? I'm afraid I can't simply create your new clothes as an act of goodwill, but if you have any items I can use for crafting, I may be able to make do with them as payment."

"Sure. Here it is." I opened up the contents of my item box in a menu window.

Françoise's expression turned to one of pure shock. "Oh my goodness! A Cursed Soul Fragment from a living weapon?! That's a rare drop from a rare encounter! And a Silver Wolf Spirit Claw?! Silver wolves barely ever drop those! You have countless rare drops tucked away in here! Is this the power of a pure luck build?!"

"What do you say, Françoise? Think you can make some good gear with this stuff?"

"Only some of the finest gear our world has seen thus far! Just allow me one day! I'll have fabulous items ready for you tomorrow!" There was a fire burning in her eyes. She might have looked like some aristocrat's daughter, but I could feel her deep-seated passion for crafting.

"All right! I'll leave it to you, Françoise! Now I just need to figure out my weapon."

"I promise I won't disappoint you, Yuri! Oh, but if you're looking for a bow you can use with zero strength, I think your only option is going to be the starting bow..."

"Yeah, I know that." I'd checked out an NPC's shop on the way and found that every other bow was so rigid it needed a high strength stat just to draw it. I'd already given up on replacing the

one I had, but that didn't mean I couldn't make it stronger!

"I'm gonna farm some living weapons! Then I'm gonna make them all possess arrows and shoot a bunch at once!"

"Whaaaaat?!"

I said goodbye to Françoise while she was still in shock and leaped out of the store. *All right! I'll head for the Tomb of the Death God! That dungeon's full of ghost-type monsters! I'm gonna make a whole gang of living weapons with Puffster keeping 'em all in line!*

♦ ◊ ♦

The online guide told me I'd find the Tomb of the Death God beneath the ground in a remote corner of the Starting Plain. It said the tomb would be filled with monsters far higher in level than in the surrounding region.

The plan had been to defeat a ton of living weapons there, but I started having major problems after getting a little way into the place.

"Gugguurgh!"

"Whoa?! Zombies are spawning right outta the ground! Puffster, get back here!" I'd just shot Puffster at an enemy some distance away, but I needed him back by my side, and fast!

I was left vulnerable to the monsters randomly popping out of the dungeon's floor whenever Puffster wasn't near—using my only means of attack was leaving me totally defenseless. But my situation was about to get a whole lot worse.

"Gugguurgh! Dieeeee!"

"Eek?!"

```
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
```

A single scratch from a zombie was enough to reduce me from full health down to just 1 HP. Without Last Stand, I would've been one-shotted.

I leaped back as Puffster came rushing in and caved in the

monster's skull! But it wasn't enough.

"Guhgugh?! Guguurgh...!"

"H-How's it still alive?!"

Even with my pure luck build, not every shot was a critical hit with a bunch of damage boosts, and that was a problem. My base firepower was way too low for a basic arrow with Puffster's strength behind it to deal with tougher enemies—my skills needed to trigger, or else.

Put simply, my stats weren't cutting it. Brute force had carried me through the Starting Plain, but getting through this dungeon with a pure luck build was virtually impossible.

"Guhguurrgh!"

"Kiiiiilll!"

"Guhguurgh!"

Uh-oh! I'm gonna get swarmed by these things! "Gah! Puffster, let's go! We've gotta get out of here now!"

Seeing no hope of victory, I sprinted for the exit. But of course, agility was yet another thing I lacked. I was just barely capable of shaking off the slowest zombies in the dungeon.

♦ ◊ ♦

I sat by the tomb's entrance and took a deep breath. "Whew... What a mess I got myself into."

It was easy to take out enemies one by one from a distance here on the open plain, but when monsters emerged from the ground in the tomb's narrow corridors, I couldn't avoid getting surrounded. Unless I somehow got lucky with constant one-hit kills, I'd quickly get overwhelmed.

"I didn't beat a single living weapon. All I did was kill a few zombies... It was enough to gain two levels, but still..."

I'd earned 20 more attribute points, and I had to decide what to do with them.

Guess I'd better start spending them on strength and agility, I decided. *Once my stats are higher, it'll fix all my problems. I'll be able to run faster, my arrows will hit harder... I'll be better off all*

around.

It was a shame to give up on the pure luck build, but I was still going to prove that summoner and bow were a viable combo. The last thing I wanted was to have people telling me, "Yeah, but you never made it past the Starting Plain."

"Hnnnngh..." I stared at my stats in the menu window, my teeth gritted and my thoughts racing. Then I felt a rush of determination. "Nnnnnghhaaaarrghh! A man's gotta have guts! Sticking with all three joke options is gonna be way cooler!" I faced the status menu like a man and dumped every single point into luck! No settling for half measures here! *Whew! That felt good!*

"All right! I'm sticking to this play style no matter what! But I still need a plan for clearing this tomb. It's looking hopeless right now..."

I racked my brain while staring at the menu window, and then something occurred to me. I'd gotten some items that weren't crafting materials while fighting my way through the zombies, but I hadn't had time to look at them.

I opened up the item menu and I saw two new accessories: Cursed Ring and Evil God's Covenant Necklace. I materialized them both in my hands and examined them closely. "These look so eerie! I bet some punk would love them! The names are creepy too. But what do they— What the heck?!"

Their effects were both so dumb I couldn't believe it!

```
Accessory: Cursed Ring
Drop rate: low
• Sets wearer's HP to 1.

Accessory: Evil God's Covenant Necklace
Drop rate: very low
• Triples the wearer's luck while at 1 HP.
```

"Who'd wear this crap?! A ring that sets HP to 1 is obviously junk, and who needs a necklace that only boosts luck?! You'd obviously want more strength and agility in situations where you're down to 1

HP!”

I really couldn’t be unluckier. If I’m gonna get rare drops, I’d rather get more crafting materials. What am I supposed to do with these? I could only wear three accessories at a time, and the common advice was not to waste those precious slots on anything but straightforward accessories that provided constant stat boosts.

Unless you’re totally twisted, wearing this junk would be...

Hey, hold on a second. A single hit wipes out all my HP anyhow, so I may as well have 1 HP... And triple luck’s gonna make Last Stand trigger more! Won’t these actually make me tougher?! And not just that—if my luck’s way higher, it’ll help my damage boost skills trigger. I’ll be more destructive than ever before!

“Awwww yeah! I think I can work with this! I might actually clear the tomb with a pure luck build!”

Since there’s no time like the present, I equipped both items immediately. My HP was stuck at 1, but it pushed my luck above 600! (With all other stats still at 0, naturally!) “Let’s give it a shot! Watch out, zombies and living weapons! I’m about to drive your kind extinct!”

It felt great to have the answers to all my problems. I charged back into the tomb exhilarated, ready for a rematch!

♦ ◊ ♦

“Raaagh! Eat dirt, undead scum! Arts activate: Speed Burst, Power Burst!”

“Guhguurgh?!”

I used my summoner abilities to power up Puffster, then I set him loose to eradicate the zombie scourge. Clad in his umbral haze, Puffster’s arrow traced an erratic path through the air as it skewered one zombie after another.

```
Skill active: Giant Killer! Damage up!
Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage up!
Critical hit! Massive damage dealt to a weak point!
```

Skill active: Merciless Death God! Your critical hit damage was boosted further!

You defeated 8 murder zombies! Yuri and Puffster gained experience!

Yuri reached level 15!

Nice! My skills are triggering a bunch, and I leveled up again! These dumb accessories really turned the tide! They might be stupid, but I'm so smart that my intelligence cancels out their dumbness, turning them into normal accessories! Bwah ha ha ha! Plus and minus make zero!

"Currssss...!"

"Huh? What's that, Puffster?"

For some reason, Puffster flew through the air tracing out "− × −."

What's that meant to be? One times one? I don't get it! I had to laugh at my cute underling's adorable antics. But I wouldn't be laughing for long—the ground beside me suddenly bulged up, and then two zombies sprung out!

"Guhgurgh!"

"Kiiiilll..."

Both zombies lunged at me with drool pouring from their open mouths! Puffster had gotten too far away while messing around, leaving me dangerously exposed. "Last Stand! Hnnngh!"

Just as I hoped, Last Stand triggered the instant they attacked me. I'd already been at 1 HP, so I'd more or less survived unscathed! Next came the counterattack. "Puff 2! Puff 3! You're both up!"

"Currrssssss!" cried the murky arrows that appeared in either of my hands. I dual wielded them to slash at the throats of both zombies, and thanks to getting critical hits and some damage boosts, I killed both with a single attack.

"Got 'em! Nice work on your first assignment, you two!"

"Curssss!" The two arrows gave me a lively shriek, as if to say, "We couldn't have done it without your leadership, Miss Chairman!" These two were both living weapons that I'd found while rampaging

through the Tomb of the Death God. I'd just happened to find them wandering side by side, and I'd defeated and tamed them both at once!

It came as a surprise because I hadn't tamed any monsters since Puffster, despite having defeated hoards of them. It seemed there was some system where monsters were more easily tamed if defeated with a monster of the same type.

If I can confirm it, maybe I'll add that info to the online guide...

"Let's keep going! Soon I'll have this tomb utterly conquered! And with a few more living weapons on my side, I'll have a rebel gang at my command!"

"Curssss!" Puffster and the two newcomers were raring to go, so I headed deeper into the tomb alongside my floating underlings.

[Cleared] General Discussion Thread 205 [Any Dungeons?]

1. Impatient Adventurer

This thread is for general discussion.
Speak your mind freely, so long as you're not breaking the forum rules. However, if you want to recruit party members, rant, hate on the game, or start drama, please make your own thread.
A new thread will be created automatically when this one reaches the reply limit.
Previous thread: http://**********

281. Impatient Adventurer

What's the game's story, and what are you supposed to be doing? I don't know anything. I only bought it because it's the most advanced VR game.

282. Impatient Adventurer

>> 281

A Demon Lord filled the world with dungeons, and it’s like you’ve gotta kill the boss in each one to bring about world peace or something.
But obviously the bosses come back every time because it’s a game lol.

283. Impatient Adventurer

>> 282
Didn’t they announce the name of the first player to kill each boss during the beta test?
The new server’s been up for two days now. Have the top players really not cleared any dungeons yet?
Tomb of the Death God is supposedly doable at around level 15.

290. Impatient Adventurer

>> 283
The undead monsters are a pain in the ass!
Try to fight at close range, and you’ll take a ton of damage because they keep coming at you even after you cut their arms and legs off.
They pop out from the ground too, so even rear party members can’t catch a break.
The theory during the beta test was that you’re meant to get to about level 30 then blast them all away at once with big attacks.

292. Impatient Adventurer

>> 290
If you’re looking for a level 15 dungeon, the Goblin Fortress to the north or the Underwater Temple to the south are better options.

Both take a long time to get to from the Starting Plain, but anything's better than the Tomb of Pain lol

294. Impatient Adventurer

>> 292
lmao the noobs always see it and say "wow, we've found a dungeon already!"
then they charge in and get their asses kicked every damn time lol
it's like the devs put it there to troll us lmao

310. Impatient Adventurer

Speaking of the zombies, what's the point of the Cursed Ring they drop?
All it does is set your HP to 1...

315. Impatient Adventurer

>> 310
Dropping to 1 HP can force some of your skills to trigger.
e.g., Hysterical Strength triples your strength when you're at 1 HP.
That said, I doubt anyone's gonna get through the whole game on the verge of death lol. You'd have to be twisted to think that's a good idea lol.

333. Impatient Adventurer

>> 315
You can just learn Last Stand! Then spend every single point on luck so it always triggers! Flawless strategy!

350. Impatient Adventurer

>> 333
lmao! Hysterical Strength won’t do anything if your base strength is 0 idiot.
It’s more of a joke item. Anyone who wears it when they’re taking the game seriously would have to be twisted lol.

Chapter 5 — Showdown: Living Armor Knight vs Twisted Player!

"Ooh, these doors are huge."

I'd been rampaging through the Tomb of the Death God for a good few hours and had just reached level 19 when I turned a corner and noticed a massive doorway.

"This has to be a boss room. The guide said there's a big zombie in here called the Zombie King."

Now I had to make a choice: fight or walk away. The safe option was to come back tomorrow with my new clothes from Françoise. Last Stand wasn't guaranteed to trigger every time, and a death would cost me twenty percent of my experience, so there was a good chance I'd regret taking on the boss before I was ready.

"All right, I've already done a ton of fighting today. No need to get reckless. A real man knows when to walk away."

But just as I was turning around, a beep followed by a message appearing in the corner of my vision caught me off guard. "World News! Zansword, Airin, Aid, and Reinhard von Edelfelt's party was first to defeat the Goblin King! The race to clear the Goblin Fortress has concluded!"

Wh-Whaaat?! If you're the first to beat a boss, they announce your name to the whole world?! You gotta be kidding! If I'd known that... "Aww yeah! I can't stop now! It's my turn to take on a boss!" *A real man never backs down from a trial that lies ahead! Next it's gonna be my name announced to everyone!* "Puffster, Puff 2, Puff 3, Puff 4, Puff 5! Let's do this!"

"Curssss!" My underlings gave a lively shriek as if to say, "We hear you, Miss Chairman!"

Soon after Puffs 2 and 3 had joined the squad, we'd bumped into a couple more living weapons who'd agreed to sign up after taking a

good beating. My rebel gang was finally taking shape.

I'd also managed to tame a zombie now that my luck was through the roof, but with no sense of pain and a badly decayed brain, all it could do was stumble into fights while ignoring my commands. Zomster's time had been short, and his resting place was somewhere nearby.

I'll avenge you, Zomster! (Even if it was your own fault for picking fights.) This boss must pay! "Watch my back!"

"Curssss!"

The massive doors opened, and we entered the boss room.

♦ ◊ ♦

"Why's there no light in here?"

Beyond the door was a sort of hall, but it was so dark I could hardly see anything.

Hmmm. There'd better not be anything lurking in here ready to jump at me, I thought as I took a few more steps inside.

"A challenger?" A deep, muffled voice echoed through the darkness...and then a series of wall-mounted torches burst aflame one after another, illuminating its owner.

Huh...? Who's this guy?!

"You who would oppose the Demon Lord, your journey shall end by my hand!"

A knight clad in a full set of pure black armor had been waiting in the darkness. Looking closer, I saw a name tag reading "Boss Monster: Living Armor Knight."

Wasn't this meant to be the Zombie King?! It must've changed since the beta!

"If you won't step forth, then I shall!" The armored knight pulled two swords from out of nowhere, then rushed at me.

"Huh?!" *He's fast!*

In an instant, he was right in front of me, his blades crossing over each other as he swung them both into me, and the impact sent me flying backward. "Ghhaaarrgh?!"

Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP!

Damn. He almost killed me already!

I was quick to get up and ready my bow, but he threw both of the swords at me before I could attack! "Hey, that's not fair!" I rolled to the side, dodging just in time. *Damn, how was I meant to predict that?! What kind of swordsman throws his sword?!* "Urgh... Okay, take two...!"

I was still getting over the shock of his surprise attacks as I tried once more to mount a counterattack, but the boss still had more tricks up his sleeve...

"Currsssss! Curse you!" The two swords he'd thrown shrieked at me and flew back toward me for another attack!

"What?!" *They can't be...living weapons?! The boss has monsters for weapons?!*

It had been one surprise after another, and yet he still hadn't shown the full extent of his power. "Your demise is nigh, challenger!" the armored knight yelled. "Art activate: Evil Sword Summoning!" Three new swords appeared around him then came flying right at me, along with the two he'd already thrown!

As the five swords closed in, I was laughing under my breath. "Ha... Ha ha... This is getting silly." *There's no way you're meant to fight this boss solo. I'd need a party of players and decent strategy just to stand a chance. Taking it on alone with a joke build makes no sense at all. My chances of winning on the first try are practically zero. But...* "That's what makes this a fight worth fighting!" I nocked five arrows at once and fired them all at the approaching swarm of swords! "Arts activate: Speed Burst! Power Burst!"

Puffster and the gang zoomed across the battlefield in a flurry of misty arrows, shattering each of the boss's swords before skewering the armored knight himself!

"Arrrgh?!" The armored knight cried out in surprise. "H-How?! How did your puny arrows make such short work of my living weapons?!" As you might expect, the holes in his armor revealed that there was nothing inside.

“Isn’t it obvious?” I replied as I called Puffster and friends back to me. “My arrows are possessed by living weapons too. And my Puffster arrows are stronger than any average living weapon in the wild because they’ve been leveling up since joining me. Add in a few buffs from a summoner, and your living weapons don’t stand a chance!”

“How dare you enslave my brethren, wretch!” He used his arts once more, causing the air around him to shimmer as six more swords appeared. Needless to say, they were all living weapons. “Fall before my numbers! Forward!”

The living weapons flew at me at the armored knight’s command. *Oh, I get it. He summoned more than I can block at a time with just five Puffster arrows. Only problem with that idea is...*

“Take them out, gang!” I sent out six living weapons of my own, all buffed by my arts, to destroy every one of his swords. If only his AI hadn’t been so advanced, he wouldn’t have stopped for a few seconds to listen to my reply, and I wouldn’t have had time to register a new familiar!

“N-No... You can’t have...”

“Yep. Sorry, Armor Knight, but one of the first three minions you summoned works for me now!” With a grin, I called out two more living weapons that I’d just turned into allies. This was the power of a summoner. If a boss called on minions, I could turn them against their master. Making those minions into allies required some luck, but I had a pure luck build!

“Twisted fiend... To think anyone would use such bizarre tactics!”

“I’m fighting smart, and you know it. The true battle begins now, Armor Knight!” I deployed eight glowing arrows around me, then aimed my bow. “Eat this!”

“Crumble before me!”

My duel to the death with the Living Armor Knight had begun in earnest. Eight blades coated in black haze emerged from another dimension and came rushing at me as I unleashed an equal number of my own murky arrows. My newest summons, Puffs 6, 7, and 8, crashed to the ground after colliding with their opponents, but Puffster and Puffs 2 through 5 succeeded in breaking through the

bullet hell the boss had created and were closing in on the Armor Knight.

"Urgh... Fall by my blade!" A greatsword appeared in his hand, and with a mighty swing, he knocked Puffster and the others away. Then he fixed his gaze on me and began closing in with speed I never would have expected from someone in full armor.

"Ha," I laughed. "Your bullet hell didn't cut it, so now you wanna fight at close range? Fine by me!" I materialized three arrows and gripped them tight. Naturally, they were all living weapons.

I'd just gained Puffs 9 through 11 as allies from among the eight swords I'd just shot down. I was close to reaching the limit of summoned monsters—I could never have more than twelve because the maximum party size was thirteen members.

A party of thirteen was what the online guide called a raid group. A party of about five or six was usually considered ideal because larger gatherings ran a huge risk of friendly fire, and a boss's HP got higher the more players were in the boss room. Another problem with large parties was that any experience earned was shared between all members.

But none of that mattered to me! I was a summoner! The game was designed so that tamed monsters got as much experience as their master, and they counted as familiars rather than players, so I got the best of both worlds by having my own party while being treated as a solo adventurer. Whenever I fought a boss, its HP would remain at its base value—and that wasn't all I had going for me...

"You think I can't handle you up close? Never underestimate a bow wielder!"

I tossed my bow aside and charged forward with three arrows tight in my grasp! The Armor Knight sent his greatsword hurtling down at me, but I leaped forward and slammed my arrows into it.

"Twisted freak. What kind of bow wielder casts aside their bow?!"

"That's rich coming from someone who throws swords!"

The air filled with sparks as his blade met my arrowheads...but the contest between our weapons lasted only a few moments before I was thrown backward with so much momentum that I slid back several meters. It was an obvious outcome since I had zero

strength. However...

"Ngh?! How?!" Armor Knight froze in confusion when he noticed the notch in his blade where I'd struck it. "I drove her back with ease, yet my greatsword is cracked?!"

I'm such a genius—my idea worked perfectly! Turns out the Parable of Three Arrows is true after all! "It's not complicated," I explained. "Living weapons add their attack strength to the arrows they possess. And unlike swords, they're narrow enough for me to hold a bunch at once. I had three of them sticking together in a bundle, so it counted as three hits. You might call it the power of friendship!"

"Whaaat?! That hardly explains why a bow wielder would be foolish enough to cast aside their bow! Moreover, those puny arrows should have splintered under your grip alone—they could not have possibly withstood my blade!"

"Nope. Beginner's Arrows never break because they're starting items. They might look like weak trash, but their upside is infinite durability!"

"Wh-Whaaaat?!"

While Armor Knight was coming to grips with the power of my projectiles, I picked up the bow from the ground and showered him with possessed arrows, launching each one the moment it came back to me.

You guys can take on this foe with no fear of death! The devastating weakness of most monsters is that, unlike players, they won't respawn after dying, but you're all different.

"Sure, they're only possessing starting items, and yeah, my strength's at rock bottom. Anyone with ordinary stats would be better off with a high-tier bow and arrows, but that's where the power of friendship comes in to compensate! Fly, my Puffs! Riddle this boss with holes!"

"Cursssssss!" The rebel gang of black glowing arrows rushed at Armor Knight.

To make doubly sure, I used my summoner arts. "Arts activate: Hyper Speed Burst! Hyper Power Burst!" My arrows transformed, raining down on the boss like obsidian meteorites.

The arts I'd just used were improved versions of Speed Burst and Power Burst that I'd learned while leveling up in the tomb. While I could double my familiars' stats every thirty seconds with the standard versions, these improved versions had a three-minute cooldown in exchange for briefly multiplying their stats fivefold.

"Curssss!" With the added force from their rapid acceleration, all eleven arrows pierced straight through Armor Knight.

"Th-This cannot be!!!"

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Skill active: Giant Killer! Damage up!
Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage up!
```

To top it all off, my damage boost skills triggered. It was enough to shatter Armor Knight's entire body into pieces!

"Grrgghaaaaaaah?! Die, worm!" He might have been blown apart, but he wasn't done yet. One of his gauntlets—the only part of him that hadn't shattered—came flying at me, crying out for vengeance. "Diiiiiie!"

"Heh. Aren't you a tough one! But I'm not done either!" I threw my bow aside once more and rushed forward. As the distance between us shrank, I used another art that I'd learned while leveling up. "Summon Return! Puffster, to me!"

Puffster warped through time and space to return to my hand in an instant. This art was probably designed to defend players who'd fallen prey to a surprise attack while their summoned monsters were busy elsewhere, but I was using it offensively.

With the arrowhead protruding from between the fingers of my clenched fist, I aimed a punch at Armor Knight! "You're finished!"



My fist and his gauntlet collided with a thunderous roar!

It was me, with Puffster gripped tightly in my fist, who came out of the collision on top. Last Stand had negated all of his damage, but he had nothing to stop his gauntlet from cracking.

"Twisted vermin! Impossible... This cannot beeee!" Armor Knight howled as he crumbled into tiny fragments. Then his voice was replaced by the sound of exploding firecrackers echoing through the room.

Congratulations! You successfully soloed the Living Armor Knight dungeon boss!
Yuri, Puffster, and all summoned monsters gained copious experience! Yuri reached level 20!

New achievement: Defeat a boss using a starter weapon!
Skill acquired: Absolute Zero!
Absolute Zero: Gain a very small chance to deal double damage with starting equipment.

New achievement: Defeat a boss with your HP at 1!
Skill acquired: Against All Odds
Against All Odds: All stats are doubled while at 1 HP.

New bow-user achievement: Drop your bow several times while fighting a boss!
Skill acquired: Hello? Forgetting Something?!
Hello? Forgetting Something?: Dropped bows return themselves to you.

New bow-user achievement: Defeat a boss in close-range combat while specializing in the bow and with no bow equipped!
Learned new skill: Twisted

Twisted: Deal double damage in close-range combat for three seconds after dropping your bow.

Taming Successful! The Living Armor Knight boss monster (soul fragment) is now your ally!
You can now summon this boss with its level reduced to 1!

Yeaaaahh! Huh?! Hey, I learned a bunch of skills! Against All Odds looks awesome! I was planning on staying at 1 HP anyway, so now my luck's always doubled! It just broke 1,200 while my other stats are still zero! Bwah ha ha!

"Absolute Zero looks nice too. High luck should push up the activation rate, and I'm already limited to starting gear anyhow. As for Twisted... The effect's nice, but what's with that name? If someone throws a punch at me, I throw one right back! It's what any man would do! There's nothing twisted about it!"

It also felt great to have Armor Knight as an underling, even if he was in a weakened form.

With a bunch of new arts and skills to get my head around, plus a fully assembled Puffster army with updated stats, I made a mental note to sit down and look over everything carefully with Françoise after getting my new clothes from her.

No sooner than I was done deciding my plan of action, a beep echoed through the boss room. "World news! Yuri, fighting solo, was first to defeat the Living Armor Knight! The race to clear the Tomb of the Death God has concluded!"

The message was broadcast to every player. No one besides Baldy and Françoise would ever guess how I did it, but I'd just solo cleared a dungeon with the unholy trinity: a summoner class, bow, and pure luck build!

"All right! If this keeps up, I'll wreak havoc at that battle event three days from now!"

Together with my Puffster squad, I returned to town triumphant.

Clear]

1. Impatient Adventurer

This thread is for general discussion.
Speak your mind freely, so long as you're not breaking the forum rules. However, if you want to recruit party members, rant, hate on the game, or start drama, please make your own thread.
A new thread will be created automatically when this one reaches the reply limit.
Previous thread: http://**********

100. Impatient Adventurer

Hey, beginner here. Is it all right if I ask a couple questions?
My HP and MP increase a little with each level up, but we can only spend our attribute points on strength, luck, *etc.*
Is there a way to build up HP and MP besides leveling?

101. Impatient Adventurer

>> 100
Nope, none. But gain enough levels and you can start compensating with the basic arts. Keep at it!

102. Impatient Adventurer

>> 101
Lmao are you a liar or just an idiot?
Yes, there's a way. You can increase HP and MP with the right gear. Here's a couple examples of what NPCs sell:
"Iron Armor (Requirements: 10 Strength. HP +10, Defense +10)"
"Magic Robe (Requirements: 10 Magic. MP +15, Defense +5)"

In general, HP boosts require strength, and MP boosts require magic. Exceptions do exist, of course.
Sometimes you'll find gear with no stat requirements at all, but those are basically just cosplay outfits. Don't try wearing them out in the field.

103 Impatient Adventurer

>> 102
Ackshually...you CAN get equipment with decent stat boosts and zero stat requirements. You just have to hand over enough rare drops to a player crafter who can set the values manually.
Thing is though, you'll burn through rare drops so fast it's painful lol. Better to go with the highest requirements you can handle so the boosts are cheaper lol.
It's not like anyone's enough of a freak to play with zero strength and zero magic anyway lmao.

104. Impatient Adventurer

>> 103
lol how would you even fight with no strength or magic?
if you put no points into either, you'd wouldn't do any damage when your attacks hit lol

105. Impatient Adventurer

>> 104
Easy! Just play as a summoner and let your familiars attack for you!
Ha ha

106. Impatient Adventurer

>> 105

Whoa, hold up. How are you gonna get a familiar in the first place if you can’t deal any damage? Lol
I tried playing summoner in the beta thinking it’d be fluffy pet paradise, but have you seen how low taming success rates are? No joke, I had to kill about three hundred rabbits before I got my first familiar. And as if that didn’t suck enough already, every fight dragged out because summoners don’t have combat arts.
I did have some better luck after that. I got my second tamed rabbit after killing another hundred or so. But anyway, when the official launch came around, I decided I’d had enough and chose fighter class instead.

107. Impatient Adventurer
>> 106
lol what? Were you playing with zero luck?
Why didn’t you just spend every point on luck to get your taming rate higher? Lmao
Then you can fix your trash DPS at the same time by spamming damage boost skills lol.
It works even better if you choose the bow and fight from a safe distance. Ha ha

108. Impatient Adventurer
>> 107
God no. A summoner with a pure luck build using a bow? Lol that’s the worst possible build. It sounds like pure hell. You’d be stuck with starting weapons forever with a pure luck build. Literal trash.
Maybe someone could try it as a challenge run...just don’t ask to join my party lol. Find someone else to carry you!

109. Impatient Adventurer

“World news! Zansword, Airin, Aid, and Reinhard von Edelfelt’s party was first to defeat the Goblin King! The race to clear the Goblin Fortress has concluded!”

It’s happening!!!!!!

130. Impatient Adventurer

Someone finally did it!!!

So Zansword’s party is first to clear a dungeon? No surprises there. He made a name for himself as a sword wielder during the beta test.

151. Impatient Adventurer

>> 130

Airin and Aid are well-known too. One’s a powerful wind mage, the other’s a healer.

Not sure about the dude with the super long name though lol.

173. Impatient Adventurer

lol finally! This thread’s popping off lol

180. Impatient Adventurer

>> 109

Reinhard von what now?

I just know he’s gonna look like some suave noble rofl

240. Impatient Adventurer

>> 180

Gotta be. He couldn’t be a bald meathead with a name like that...right? Lol

Anyhow, the top beta testers clearly haven’t lost their edge. Two days in and they’ve already got a dungeon down.
Gonna give it a shot myself once I’ve gained a couple more levels. What size party’s recommended these days? Is boss HP scaling still ridiculous for big parties?

294. Impatient Adventurer

>> 240
If you follow Zansword’s example and take 4 to 6 people, that’s ideal.
In theory, you could do it solo once your level’s high enough, but you’d be overwhelmed by trash mobs before you reached the boss. So I’d say get to level 20 and forget about solo clears because they’re imposs—
“World news! Yuri, fighting solo, was first to defeat the Living Armor Knight! The race to clear the Tomb of the Death God has concluded!”
Wait, what???????

310. Impatient Adventurer

>> 294
Wtfffffffff?! Lol

315. Impatient Adventurer

>> 294
Uh? How the f—... SOLO???

333. Impatient Adventurer

>> 294
WHAT IS EVEN HAPPENING?!
Yuri? Who even is that? And wasn’t the Tomb boss supposed to be

the Zombie King?! What gear and level did they beat it with?!
Gaaaaaaaaaaaah! I've got too many questions!!!!!
lol

350. \ Fastest Dungeon Clearer! /

>> 294
Just got back from clearing the goblin dungeon for the first time with Zansword's party. Bow down before me. Lol
...is what I was gonna post, but what just happened?!
My old brother-in-arms just solo cleared a dungeon?!
Yuri swooped in and stole our thunder just like that?!

388. Impatient Adventurer

>> 350
You know Yuri? Is he (she?) a friend of yours?!
You gotta tell us about their gear, class, and stats! What do they look like?! What sort of person are they?!

400. \ Fastest Dungeon Clearer (;ω;)!!! /

>> 388
As if! I'm not gonna give away someone's stats without asking them first!
But Yuri looks like my perfect woman. He's honest and open in a way that puts me at ease.
Like when we had a burger together, the look on his face when he tasted it was... Wait, I'm not here to talk about my brother-in-arms!
Please! Let my party talk about the dungeon we just cleared! (;ω;)

437. Impatient Adventurer

>> 400

Sounds like this guy’s down bad for Yuri! Goddammit!

Chapter 6 — Massacre Idol Yuri Is Born! ☆

Three days into the game's official launch, I was visiting Françoise's clothing store. "Françoise! I'm here for my new gear!"

"Oh! Yuri! I heard it all from the global announcement! You cleared a dungeon solo! Congratulations!"

Fighting in the tomb had been a ton of fun. Although things had started off pretty hairy, it'd become a breeze with the dumb accessory that set my HP to 1. And now I was about to get new gear that would make me even stronger!

"Oh ho," Françoise chuckled. "I was flabbergasted when Baldy said, 'There's a guy heading your way who's attempting dungeons with a joke build,' but here you are having done it. It's a joy to create equipment for such an interesting player!"

"Yeah! And I'm gonna follow it up by raising hell at the PvP event two days from now! Don't worry, I'll make sure everyone knows who hooked me up with the best gear. Speaking of which, is it ready?"

"But of course!" Françoise replied with a smile.

```
A gift from Françoise has appeared in your item box.
```

Just as the message said, I'd been given a full set of clothes: something for my head, body, and feet. I wasted no time before tapping each one in the menu. Light enveloped me, and then...

"Whoa?! I thought I was ready for it, but this dress is super girly! It kinda feels like...an idol outfit?!"

The simple outfit I'd been wearing had been replaced with a gothic dress with a black-and-white color scheme. It left my shoulders and armpits totally exposed, and the skirt was long with multiple frilly layers. It was sure to turn heads.

I only felt more embarrassed as Françoise described it to me alongside some heavy breathing. “Oh ho ho ho ho ho ho! You noticed, Yuri! Yes, I took inspiration from outfits worn by idols onstage!” She was squirming with delight and talking rapidly. “I chose a gothic color scheme to suit your beautiful long silver hair, which you can now wear in a side ponytail with the black scrunchie! And to emphasize those enviably large breasts of yours, I used white fabric for the chest and black for the rest of the bodice!”



"All right! All right, already!" I decided I'd better put the brakes on Françoise so I could turn my attention to the outfit's stats. *Let's see...*

```
Head: Death God Hair Tie (Requirements: None. MP +30, Luck +30)
Body: Death God Dress (Requirements: None. MP +30, Luck +30)
Feet: Death God Boots (Requirements: None. MP +30, Luck +30)
```

"Ooh! The luck increase was a given, but the MP boost's a nice surprise!" *Now I can boost Team Puffster with my arts a whole lot more! A summoner's power is in their monsters. The more I can buff them, the stronger I'll be!*

"Oh ho ho. I take it you're pleased. I did consider boosting your HP and defense, but I thought it'd be a waste with your pure luck build. Whatever resilience I might have given you, I'm sure you'll agree that it would have paled in comparison to that of other players, so I decided to focus on your forte."

"Good thinking, Françoise! In fact, I've been keeping an accessory equipped that sets my HP to 1 anyway!"

"Pbbfft?! You mean you cleared a dungeon with just 1 HP and all stats at zero besides luck?! That truly is a twisted—I mean, a unique play style!"

Bwah ha ha! A real man plays by his own rules! I broke into a cocky grin.

Françoise suddenly looked concerned.

"What's up?" I asked her.

"Oh, nothing... It's just...I assume you've found a way to deal damage, but what about your agility? Not only will you have to spend a lot of time traveling, you'll soon be contending with monsters that move at superhuman speeds."

She had a good point. The late game would be full of vast dungeons built for fast-moving players, and I just knew it was going to be a pain in the butt. I'd already resigned myself to total dependency on Last Stand for defense, but a speed boost was still something I sorely needed.

Oh, I've got it! "Come on out, Mor!"

At my command, a ball of black haze appeared from out nowhere. "Hrrrr! Hrr!"

Françoise leaped in fright at the sight of it. "Eek! What is that thing?!"

"This is Mor! I just summoned him. He's the boss I beat yesterday—the Living Armor Knight. He's my ally now."

"What? You can have bosses in your party?! I never heard of that during the beta test."

"Yep. He's leveled down and doesn't seem to talk anymore, but he's a tamed boss. It probably helped that my luck stat is over 1,200."

"1,200?!" Françoise cried in alarm. "How is that even possible?!"

I didn't answer because my attention was focused on Mor. *If living weapons can add their attack strength to arrows, then maybe...* "Hey, Mor. Possess my boots, would you?"

"Hrrr?!"

"What? You don't wanna? You'd rather be in my dress?" I waved my skirt in his direction.

"Hrrr?!" Mor was suddenly in an awful hurry to get into my boots. It was as if he were saying, "Uh, I, um, errr, I'm fine with the boots!" It was just the reaction I'd expected.

```
Your item, Death God Boots, was possessed!
When wearing a possessed item on your feet, the monster's
agility contributes to your movement speed!
```

"Ooh! Just as I thought! Now I'll get faster as Mor levels up. This should make it easier to get around!" Given that Armor Knight had been quick on his feet, he felt like the perfect choice.

With my equipment overhaul complete, here's how my stats looked.

Name: Yuri

Level: 20

Class: Summoner

Weapon: Bow

Attributes: Strength: 0 *Defense: 0* Magic: 0 *Agility: 0* Luck: 290 × 3 × 2 + 29 + 90 = 1,859

Skills: Luck Boost, Last Stand, Fatal Strike, Up Close and Personal, Giant Killer, Merciless Death God, Absolute Zero, Hello? Forgetting Something?, Against All Odds (doubles all attributes while HP is 1), Twisted

Equipment:

Head: Death God Hair Tie (Minimum requirements: None. MP +30, Luck +30)

Body: Death God Dress (Minimum requirements: None. MP +30, Luck +30)

Feet: Death God Boots (Minimum requirements: None. MP +30, Luck +30. Possessed by Mor)

Weapon: Beginner's Bow

Accessories: Cursed Ring (limits HP to 1), Dark God's Covenant Necklace (triples luck when HP is 1)

Whoa...

"Looks like I lied, Françoise. My luck isn't 1,200 after all."

"I knew that couldn't be right! How could it be? Most players would be proud simply to raise a stat to 300, even with skills to boost it, so raising something to 1,200, even in a pure build, would be—"

"It's over 1,800."

"Over 1,800?!" Françoise screamed.

Hey, settle down—I'm shocked too! I wasn't expecting this when I went to check my stats!

"All right! Let's see if I can get it to 2,000 by the end of today!"

"Wait a moment! No! What are you thinking?! You've raised it quite high enough already! A rampage through the open fields with such an absurdly high luck stat would lead to a veritable rare item

buffet! You'll unbalance the entire game!"

"Sorry, Françoise, but people have been looking down on pure luck builds for too long. Someone has to put things right. Even if it means becoming the villain."

"No one has to be a villain! Oh, people of the world, I beg you, reconsider pure luck builds before it's too late! Curse the fool who thought it wise to give luck-boosting equipment to a luck monster in the making! Oh wait... That fool was meeeee!"

While Françoise was still turning red, going pale, and throwing fits, I said my goodbyes and dashed out of her store.

"They'll see. All of those evil beta testers who tricked me, they'll all see! You think you can talk trash about summoners, the bow, and luck builds?! Well, this combo's about to outdo every last one of you!"

With the battle event just two days away, I wanted to level up Mor and the Puffster family. I also wanted another dungeon under my belt. *So many things to do! Ha ha ha ha ha!*

Chapter 7 — Showdown: Dragonplant!

"World news! Spearo, Magicko, and Wacko's party was first to defeat the Jumbo Merman! The race to clear the Beach Cavern dungeon has concluded!"

"World news! Zansword, Airin, Aid, and Jolt's party was first to defeat the Wolf King! The race to clear the Den of Wolves dungeon has concluded!"

"World news! Reinhard von Edelfelt, fighting solo, was first to defeat the Macho Gorilla! The race to clear the Muscle Forest dungeon has concluded!"

"Ooh. Now that we're on day three, the world news just keeps on coming! And it sounds like that Reinhard guy's soloing dungeons too! I can't let him outdo me!"

While the announcements were coming in, I was deep inside a dungeon known as the Bug Eater God's Forest firing Puffster arrows like crazy. It was swarming with man-eating caterpillars, massive wasps, and insectivorous beasts, and a bunch of them—at least thirty-four total—had me surrounded. But I wasn't beaten.

"Back to me! Summon Return! And... Blam! Blam! Blam! Blam!"

"Gweeeeee?!"

I unleashed a volley of eleven blackened arrows, recalled them to my grasp, then unleashed them once again. I could keep this up until I'd completely eradicated the bugs around me. It was a great way to train. Shooting three or four arrows at once was starting to feel totally natural.

With just 1 HP, multiple weak enemies posed more of a threat than a single strong enemy—despite my luck, I couldn't count on Last Stand triggering every single time, after all. But I could compensate for that disadvantage with an increased rate of attack!

“Gwee gweeee!” A giant bug was attempting a surprise attack from above!

“Huh?!”

Puffster pierced clean through the monster he’d been targeting, U-turned, and came rushing back to me. Before the bug could land on my head, Puffster nailed it to a nearby tree trunk with a level of intensity that screamed, “Keep them filthy feelers off the boss, chump!”

And that’s why Puffster leads the attack squad!

And yet, the bug still lived. “Gwepee!”

“Ugh... This thing’s only half dead. Looks like my damage boost skills really don’t trigger unless the attack comes directly from me.”

I’d experienced this same issue before. Puffster could target enemies by his own free will, just not as quickly as when fired from the bow—it was a living weapon skill known as Navigation. The problem was, if he chose his own target or decided to hit a second monster after I’d fired him at another, none of my damage-boosting skills got applied, presumably because it didn’t count as my attack.

No matter how much Puffster leveled up, his own attacks would always lack firepower because he was possessing the most basic arrow—the Beginner’s Arrow. I was faced with a new source of weakness.

“Well, anyhow, I’d better finish it off. Eat this!” I threw down my bow, then kicked the giant caterpillar pinned to the tree. All my damage boost skills triggered at once, including Twisted since I’d just thrown away the bow.

The bug gave out one last “Gwepeee!” of despair.

Bwah ha ha! Justice prevails!

```
Defeated 38 murderous caterpillars!
Yuri and all summoned monsters gained experience!
Puffster reached level 24!
Something’s happening to Puffster!
```

“Oh! Something’s happening?! What’s that mean?!” *What a tease!*

This message knows how to make me curious!

Puffster had started out with a higher level than me, and now that I was level 22, he was still a little ahead. Soon he'd hit level 25, which would be an ideal point for some sort of transformation.

"No way! Puffster's gonna evolve?!"

"Currss!" Puffster was vibrating like he was filled with joy, as if he were about to say, "I... I dunno, boss! But I got this feelin'...like I'm gonna be a bigger man than I ever was!" Puffs 2 through 11 surrounded him and began vibrating too, as if to congratulate him.

It was such a beautiful scene, but this emotional moment between my hazy arrows amid the dense trees was soon interrupted by a scream coming from the forest's depths.

"Noooooooooo! Somebody heeeelp!"

It was a girl's voice. I rushed toward it as fast I could.

♦ ◊ ♦

"Arghhh! I'm gonna die!!!"

As I hurried onto the scene, I couldn't believe what I was seeing. A small girl with cat ears, wearing a traditional Japanese outfit complete with a short skirt, was bound by countless vines that had ensnared all four of her limbs. She was crying and screaming as she tried to cut herself free with the tanto dagger in her hand, but her wrists were bound too tightly to afford any chance of escape.

"Uggrraaaggh!" The creature holding the girl in the air was a plant monster that looked like a cross between a dragon and a flower. Phlegm dripped from its gaping maw as it brought the girl closer. It was about to eat her!

"Whaa?! No, please! Don't eat me!"

Uh-oh. She's in big trouble!

I quickly nocked four arrows and shot them at the vines squeezing her limbs. Each one hit its mark, tearing through the vines and freeing her.

I rushed and caught her just before she hit the ground. "I've got you. Are you all right?"

"Yes. Thank you!"

Nngh... I can barely hold her for a few seconds with zero strength...

I put the bewildered girl down on the ground before gazing up at the plantlike dragon, causing a monster description to appear at the edge of my vision.

```
Rare creature: Dragonplant.
A plant monster that once consumed a dead dragon to absorb its
powers.
```

Seemingly enraged at me for interrupting its dinner, the dragonplant roared and fired out numerous vines. "Uggrraaagh!"

"Ahh!" the girl in the Japanese clothes shrieked. "We're not safe here! We should run!"

"Stand back and watch. Let's go, gang!"

"Currrrssss!" The Puffster family shot out at high speed, sending each approaching vine crashing to the ground.

To finish, I unleashed Puffster himself, sending him deep into the dragon's head!

```
Skill active: Giant Killer! Damage up!
Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage up!
Skill active: Absolute Zero! Damage doubled!
Critical hit! Massive damage dealt to a weak point!
Skill active: Merciless Death God! Critical damage boosted!
```

"Uggrrraaaaahhh?!" The dragonplant howled as my multitude of damage boosts triggered all at once.

The girl who'd been trembling behind me just a minute ago was yelling excitedly as she watched the whole thing.
"Huuuuuuuuuuuuh?! Everyone knows arrows always miss! How are you hitting every single vine?! And how'd you hit the dragonplant for massive damage with just one shot?! You gotta tell me what bow you're using! Wait...is that a Beginner's Bow?! What are you using

that for?!”

“Yeah. ’Cause it’s the only one I can use with zero strength.”

“‘Zero strength’?!” The catgirl in traditional dress was practically screaming at me.

I gathered my Puffster force together in preparation to deal the final blow to the dragonplant. “Get ready, guys! Power Burst, Speed Burst, Hyper Power Burst, Hyper Speed Burst!” Just to make sure, I used my newly enhanced MP pool to buff them with a heap of arts.

The arrows were glowing black and cracking with energy as I drew my bow.

“You’re going down!” I unleashed every arrow at once.

“Uggrraaagghh?!”

The fully buffed Puffster squad was so powerful they blew the dragonplant’s head clean off, leaving its massive body to collapse to the ground. The mighty crash was still echoing through the forest when a message appeared in front of me.

```
Rare monster defeated: dragonplant!

Yuri, all summoned monsters, and Korin gained experience!
```

Korin...? Oh, that must be the tiny girl in the traditional getup. If she’d dealt a little damage before I showed up, then I guess she gets some credit for the battle.

I looked over my shoulder and saw her trembling at the sight of the vanishing dragonplant.

“Whaaaa...? Uh?! No way! You just took down a high-level monster with the Beginner’s Bow?! And what even was that just now?! Since when did archers have an art that makes their arrows crackle and glow black and shoot out like lasers?!”

“I’m a summoner, actually, not an archer.”

“A s-summoner?! You mean the class that everyone avoids because catching monsters is a pain in the butt and summoning them takes up party slots so you’re better off just picking something else and then teaming with other players?!” Korin was panting with excitement and talking at incredible speed. I got the impression she

already knew a lot about the game.

"Korin, were you a beta tester...? This might sound like a weird question, but did you ever put anything up on the online guide that was meant to trick newbies?"

"Huh? Yes, I was a beta tester, but I don't recall doing anything like that..."

"It wasn't you, then! Sorry for asking out of the blue. If you can figure out who it was, tell me so I can kill them."

"You'll kill them?! What'd they do to make you so mad?!" Korin's ears twitched.

Oh, wow! Those ears aren't just accessories! They're part of her!

"I don't mean to be rude, Korin, but could I touch your ears just for—"

"Of course you can't!" Korin cowered with her hands covering her head. "They're way more sensitive than real-life ears!"

Bah. I knew she'd say no.

"I've got a whole bunch of questions for you, Yuri, but first I'd better say thank you. I almost died just now."

I crouched a little with my hands on my knees to get on her eye level. "No worries. But what are you doing out here alone? Where's your party?"

Her big eyes lit up. "Heh heh heh! Need you ask? I'm trying to solo clear this dungeon! As I'm sure you've heard, there's a player named Yuri who got a fastest dungeon clear while playing solo yesterday! Well, as a beta tester, I figured I'd be next to— Hold on a second! D-D-D-D-D-Don't tell me you're *that* Yuri?!"

"The one and only."

"Whaaaaaa?! You're telling me you're solo clearing while playing as a summoner with a bow and zero strength?!"

"Yup! Actually, all my stats besides luck are at zero!"

"You mean you've got a pure luck build?! Y-You're telling me the build I'm racing to keep up with is total nonsense? Whaaaaa?!"

Then it was as if something inside Korin suddenly snapped. She turned deathly pale and stopped moving.

Hey! Don't die on me.

♦ ◊ ♦

After running into Korin, the traditional-clothes-wearing ex-beta-tester catgirl, we fought alongside each other as we made our way toward the dungeon boss. Although she'd get really loud whenever she got excited, it was pretty cool how she switched to calm and focused mode (complete with dead eyes) to take on enemies.

Tanto in hand, she just sliced her way through dozens of approaching giant caterpillars. As bugs lunged at her, she moved with incredible speed—too fast to follow with the naked eye—and didn't get bitten even once.

"Heh heh. How'd you like that, Yuri? Here's what happens when you combine a small body with a speed-focused build! Since I don't get hit often, I don't need many healing potions and I get to keep most of my money, which makes it a really efficient play style! I get around fast too!"

"Sounds like you're a real rational thinker, Korin. By the way, there's one still alive behind you."

"Huh? Arrghhh?!"

A caterpillar made a dying effort to bite Korin in her moment of unguarded smugness, but I threw down my bow and drop-kicked it before it got the chance. With a final cry of "Gwepeee!" the caterpillar met its end.

"There's lots of enemies in this place. Keep your wits about you, okay?"

"Th-Thank you! Ugh... I thought I'd killed it, but I guess that's the downside of putting points into agility instead of strength. But wait, how are you pulling it off, Yuri?! I know I'm not supposed to ask, but what's your trick for dealing damage with zero strength?! And why'd you drop-kick it instead of using your bow?! And why'd it look so natural?!"

"If a monster's right next to you, it's quicker to kick than draw a bow, right? And I make it look natural 'cause getting into fights with thugs is a regular thing for me."

“Uhh... Then why choose a bow...?” Korin muttered to herself as she followed me deeper into the forest.

Some time later, we found what we were looking for.

“Aha. Here it is. The boss’s lair.”

Among the roots of a massive tree was a similarly massive door. I had no doubt we’d find the boss inside. *Much as I hate to invade your home, I gotta do what I gotta do to be a top player.*

“Um, I’m sorry, Yuri! I know this is awfully rude of me, but would you mind if I try it first?! I really wanna be first to clear a dungeon so my name gets announced to every player like yours did!”

“Ah, it sure feels good when that happens. All right! Go give it a shot!”

“I will! Thank you! I’ll send you a DM when the battle’s over! You don’t mind if I add you as a friend, do you?”

“No problem!” I replied. “You can be my newest brother-in-arms!”

“Sure! We’re brothers-in-arms!”

After we’d traded friend requests via our menu windows, Korin headed into the boss room with a smile on her face.

While Korin was off fighting, I used the time to look over my items and my latest monster allies.

It’s nice to get a few rare items like these Fine Murderous Caterpillar Filaments, but what does the game expect me to do with hundreds of tamed jumbo worms when I can only summon twelve monsters at once? Can I sell these things somewhere? I’d better keep my eyes open for a bug collector...

My thoughts were interrupted by a beeping sound.

Message from Korin:

GAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAHH! I LOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOST! STUPID BOSS USED CHEATS! (;ω;)

“Whoa?!” It felt like Korin was screaming at me through the message that popped up.

Already?! She didn’t even last three minutes! How’d the Bug Eater God beat speedy little Korin that quickly?

"I figured the Bug Eater God's Forest was worth checking out since it's a new dungeon that wasn't here during the beta test... I wasn't expecting a tough boss..."

The caterpillars were all so weak that I'd been assuming the whole dungeon was doable at about level 15.

Welp, I won't learn anything by thinking about it. I gripped my bow tight and headed through the door.

♦ ◊ ♦

Beyond the door was an open space surrounded by trees. It felt tranquil here as I watched butterflies flutter through the air with soft beats of their wings.

"It's a boss area all right, but it's the total opposite of the battle arena I found in the tomb dungeon. Now where's the boss?"

I was still scanning my eyes over the area when a mighty rumble shook the surroundings and the ground before me exploded!

"Whoa?!"

Amid a cloud of dirt, another dragonplant made its appearance from the surface of the ground. "Grrrgrraaaaaaaaaaaagh!"

```
Encountered a boss monster: Gigantic Dragonplant.
Recommended level: 35.
```

I'm supposed to be level 35?! How am I gonna get through this at level 22?! And what even is this thing?

The creature's head sprouted up from the ground like a morning glory, and then its body emerged. Then more of its body appeared. Then some more...

How tall's it gonna get?!

The ordinary dragonplant had been massive at about ten meters tall, but this thing would have towered over it. I was rooted to the spot in astonishment as the Gigantic Dragonplant went on rising until it loomed high above the surrounding trees.

It's gotta be over a hundred meters tall!

"Grrrgragragrraaah!" As its head far above roared, the Gigantic

Dragonplant's body unleashed numerous tentacles, each broader than my entire body!

"Let's go, Puffster squad! Power Burst! Speed Burst!"

I began rapidly shooting misty arrows at the approaching tentacles. Buffed by my arts, they shot out like obsidian lasers, knocking tentacles out of the air one after another. One tentacle fell, then another, and the number kept on decreasing until...

"Grrgaaaaaah!"

I'd failed to take out every last one! Puffs six through eleven weren't as experienced as the others. They'd leveled up enough to pierce the thick flesh of the tentacles, but not enough to deal a finishing blow.

I tried to leap back, but I was too late. Four of the tentacles wrapped themselves around me and began crushing my whole body.

"Argh!"

```
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
```

Countless skill activation messages filled my head. *Oh crap, oh crap, oh crap, oh crap!*

No matter how high my luck, Last Stand wasn't guaranteed to trigger every time. The probability was around ninety-nine percent, but the one percent of times when it failed would mean game over. I was beginning to panic as purple blotches began to dot my skin under the crushing pressure.

“Currrrsssss!” Help finally arrived. All my arrows rushed back to me to begin attacking the tentacles stringing me up. They formed a ring around the tentacle binding one of my arms, then they all span in a circle, slicing through it like a saw! None of my damage-boosting skills could trigger while they were acting independently like this, but when they worked together, their combined power was enough to cut through the tentacle in just ten seconds.

I’m not beaten yet! I grabbed Puffster with my liberated arm, then swung him like a sword, slicing through the remaining tentacles. With my many damage-boosting skills triggering, I was free in no time.

“Grrgahgaaah!” The Gigantic Dragonplant sent its tentacles flying at me once more.

I wasn’t about to fall for the same trick twice. I briefly touched my boot and gave an order to the Living Armor Knight that dwelled within. “Mor, your Flash skill!”

“Hrrr!”

I ran clear of the oncoming vines, my body moving like the wind. In no time at all, I’d dodged the swarm of tentacles and was firing a volley of arrows from a safe distance.

This was the Living Armor Knight’s Flash skill. It let me move at ten times my normal speed for five seconds.

Mor couldn’t use his Evil Sword Summoning skill to call up a swarm of living weapons now that he was leveled down, but as long as he could use Flash, I was more than glad to have him on my side.

“Now’s our chance! Hyper Power Burst, Hyper Speed Burst!”

With a major boost from my arts, my underlings accelerated wildly and smashed into the face of the dragonplant a hundred meters above us, dealing critical damage!

```
Skill active: Giant Killer! Damage boosted ten percent!
Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage doubled!
Skill active: Absolute Zero! Damage doubled!
Critical hit! Triple damage dealt to a weak point!
Skill active: Merciless Death God! Critical damage boosted by a
```

`further thirty percent!`

This collection of damage boost skills gave me over twelve times standard damage. It had the Gigantic Dragonplant howling in agony.

"There's more where that came from! Arts activate: Summon Return!"

I just have to keep this up and I've got this, I told myself as I called my Puffster army back to me and prepared to fire them from the bow once more.

But it wasn't going to be that easy. A massive, writhing tentacle sprouted from the dragonplant's back, then a flower bloomed at its tip with petals spread so wide that it looked like the sun.

Now what?

I wasn't left wondering for long. "Grrrrrrrrrrrrrgaaaaah!" The flower's petals shone with bright light, then it fired a huge laser beam!

"What the heck?!"

The beam flew straight at me with ten times the speed of the tentacle attack, giving me no time to activate Flash. I was completely helpless as blinding white light filled my vision!

"Urgh?!"

`Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal damage!`

Even as the shock wave sent me flying backward, I felt strangely safe.

Few players could have withstood this attack. They'd be beaten instantly, leaving them just as angry as Korin. But luckily for me, my play style was based around Last Stand. The continuous damage dealt by the tentacles had been a far greater threat than a beam designed to melt players with a single shot.

My idol outfit exposed my shoulders and armpits at the best of times, but now the badly burned dress was even more revealing. Still, I was back on my feet and ready to counterattack.

But then I noticed something was very wrong.

```
You entered Scorched Earth's damage zone! You'll take 1% of
your max HP as damage every second!
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Last Stand! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
```

"Wh-What?!" Looking down at my feet, I realized that the boss's laser beam had turned the ground to molten rock.

Wait...so that attack turns everything it hits into a damage-dealing zone?! The boss arena isn't that wide! If it starts spamming this attack, I'm done! Korin had been right—this boss was basically cheating.

I rolled clear of the scorched earth, drew my bow, then took aim. But the sight before me was the stuff of nightmares.

"Grrrrrrgaaaaaah!" Six more of the same flower had already blossomed from the dragon's massive back! They all lit up at once and fired their beams at the ground where I was standing.

"Huh?!" I could only conclude one thing: *I've already lost.*

I could handle the beams themselves, but not the damage zones they'd leave behind. With seven of them firing at once, the Scorched Earth effect would consume the entire area. As I waited for the light to engulf me, I gave up.

“Hrrrrrrrrrrr!”

```
Skill active: Flash! Movement speed increased dramatically!
```

I hadn’t triggered any skills, but there it was. And not just that, my legs were moving by themselves, sending me charging forward! In the blink of an eye, I’d slipped under the beams and was fast approaching the base of the Gigantic Dragonplant.

“Mor...? Are you forcing me to move through my boots?! And you can trigger skills by yourself?!”

“Hrrr.” He responded with a self-satisfied grunt, as if to say, “Hmph. You surmise correctly.”

This is crazy. I knew I’d be able to react much faster if I didn’t have to pause to activate the skill myself. But I had to wonder about the multitude of problems caused by monsters taking control of their master’s body. *What if a monster doesn’t get along with its master...? The summoner system has all the craziest features! It’s unpopular enough already. Once everyone finds out that familiars can hijack your body, no one’s gonna play the class at all! Though in my case...*

“Mor, I believe in you. We forged our bond through our fists! You’re my brother!”

“Hrrr...!”

Our friendship had started with us trading blows, so I knew beyond a doubt that I could trust my body to Mor. I relaxed my legs, leaving my lower body completely under his control, then threw aside my bow and gripped all eleven arrows tight with both hands.

“You made the right choice, Mor! If we get in close, it can’t hit us with its laser beams. That is why you’re getting up close, right?!”

“Hrr...hrrr!” Mor grunted as if to tell me, “Hmph... Quite so! Fear not, wretch. I shall be the one to defeat you. But until that fateful day, my strength is yours.”

Mor and I leaped at the Gigantic Dragonplant as one!

“Don’t let me down, Mor! Arts activate: Hyper Speed Burst!”

Mor was already under the speed-up effect of Flash, so when I

had him further accelerate with a speed boost art, I felt myself breaking the sound barrier. Not even gravity could hold us back. We were running straight up the towering body of the dragonplant!

"Uhrooooh!" I cried.

"Grrrrgaaaaah?!" The dragonplant roared in surprise and whipped its countless tentacles about in an attempt to knock me off, but while my brother was lending me his strength, I was unstoppable. As each tentacle got near, I swung the arrows in my hands to cut through. They didn't even slow us down.

Running vertically up a wall should have been impossible, even with Mor's power. But he wasn't the only one helping. Every one of my Puffster minions was using their Navigation skill. It wasn't enough to lift a player into the air, but it was enough to let me run against gravity for a time. I had to hand it to them.

"Nice work, guys. Now let's do this!"

Mor drove us upward with a powerful leap that sent us sailing over a hundred meters into the air. We were even higher than the head of the Gigantic Dragonplant!

"Grrh...gahgahgahgaaah?!" A screech came from the dragonplant's open mouth. And no wonder. This guy was over a hundred meters tall. It had to be the first time it had ever looked *up* at an opponent.

The surprised look on its face made me grin as I raised my eleven arrows. "Let's see you survive this!" With my bundle of miasma-soaked arrows held tight in both hands, I sank my fists into its face!

```
Skill active: Up Close and Personal! Close range damage boosted
ten percent!
Skill active: Giant Killer! Damage up ten percent!
Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage doubled!
Skill active: Absolute Zero! Damage doubled!
Critical hit! Triple damage dealt to a weak point!
Skill active: Merciless Death God! Critical hit damage
increased by a further thirty percent!
```

I’d dealt eighteen times damage in total! And that multiplier got applied to all eleven arrows!

“Grrrh, graaaaaaaaagh?!” The dragonplant howled as the hit for 198 times damage sent it crashing to the ground with enough intensity to shake the whole boss area.

Chapter 8 — Got Myself a Boss Monster!

The Gigantic Dragonplant hit the ground with a great *ka-blam*, leaving it down and crying out in agony...but it wasn't finished yet! It sprouted countless broad tentacles and whipped them all toward me while I was still falling! I was powerless to dodge in midair.

However... "To me, Bow!"

The moment I spoke the words, my Beginner's Bow came flying back to me, spinning like a boomerang until I caught it. Thanks to my Hello? Forgetting Something? skill, I could throw it away at any time without worrying—and now, with a series of rapid movements, I began nocking and shooting Puffster arrows.

"Currsss!"

"Grrgaaah?!"

The hazy arrows zoomed out like lasers, breaking through the swarm of tentacles and plunging straight into the massive treelike dragon's face directly below me. It shrieked and lost control of its tentacles.

Now for the final blow. I threw away my bow midair—it had done its work—which activated my Twisted skill. For the next three seconds, I'd be dealing double damage to enemies at close range!

"Urooooooh!" I felt a surge of power as I hurtled toward the Gigantic Dragonplant's face with my fist clenched tight!

"Grrgahgaaah?!"

"Take this!"

Thanks to the concentrated force of a hundred-meter fall, my limited strength was irrelevant this time. A shock wave ripped through the arena as my fist smashed right into the dragonplant's kisser!

For me, Last Stand negated the fall damage, but for the Gigantic

Dragonplant, it was fatal.

Congratulations! You successfully soloed the Gigantic Dragonplant dungeon boss!
Yuri, Puffster, and all summoned monsters gained copious experience! Puffster reached level 27! Yuri reached level 25!
Puffster has surpassed level 25 and is ready to evolve!
Yuri has reached level 25 and is ready for a class upgrade!

"All riiiiight!" I shouted victoriously atop the dragonplant's remains. The explosions of firecrackers resounded all around me as the Puffster crew was vibrating once again to congratulate me on my victory.

So Puffster really is gonna evolve?! And me too?! I've never even heard of a class upgrade!

I was still busy being equal parts happy and surprised when another message popped up.

New achievement: Use your fist to deal a finishing blow to a boss monster 10 levels higher than yourself!
Skill acquired: God-Killing Fist!
God-Killing Fist: Triggers automatically when attacking with a fist. For one second, your hand, from your fingertips to your wrist, becomes invulnerable. This region is immune to all kinds of damage, knockback, and status effects for the full duration.

New achievement: Use the Last Stand skill 100 times or more!
Your Last Stand skill evolved into Relentless!
Relentless: Gain a low chance to survive with 1 HP after taking fatal damage. Your next attack on an enemy will deal double damage.

New achievement: Solo kill a boss monster 10 levels higher than yourself!

Your Giant Killer skill evolved into Genocide Killer!

Genocide Killer: Gain a very low chance to deal double damage to an enemy, or triple damage if the enemy is higher level.

"Oh... Ooooooooh!" *Two of my skills evolved now! Is today evolution day or something?!*

Last Stand had gained a damage boost effect, and Giant Killer had turned into a deadly skill that worked on monsters of any level! And the boost had gone from ten percent to double or triple! God-Killing Fist sounded interesting too—I'd be able to punch a blade without taking any damage!

This is gonna make fistfights a whole lot easier. Now I'll be throwing my bow away even more often! Bwah ha ha!

"World news! Yuri, fighting solo, was first to defeat the Gigantic Dragonplant! The race to clear the Bug Eater God's Forest high-level dungeon has concluded!"

Oh! Here comes the world news! I hope all you evil beta testers who pranked me are listening! Same goes for anyone who said I can't fight with a pure luck build! I'm tearing through this game, and I'm gonna show you hell in that battle event two days from now! Just you wait!

"Okay, I'd better head back to town and try this evolution stuff," I said to myself while jumping down from the dragonplant. Then I realized something wasn't quite right. "Hold on. If the boss is dead, why's it still here?"

Monsters always disappeared within a few seconds once their HP hit zero, but somehow, this dragonplant was still lying on the ground.

What's going on? I prodded its face.

"Grr... Grrgaaah?!"

"What?! It's still alive?!" I leaped back and readied my bow...but the massive tree dragon merely groaned without moving an inch.

As I was trying to make sense of this weird phenomenon, a

message window popped up in front of me.

You found a hidden quest, limited to summoners only!
Your reward will vary depending on the Gigantic Dragonplant's fullness and satisfaction.
Tastes bad and I'm still hungry: The angered Gigantic Dragonplant will respond with a Genocide Seventh Laser attack.
Delicious but give me more / Tastes bad but that's plenty: The Gigantic Dragonplant won't be too mad. You'll receive an ultrarare item at random.
Delicious and I'm full!: The Gigantic Dragonplant will be fully satisfied! You'll receive a mystery reward!

Huh?! What even is this?! "You've gotta be kidding me! Since when was it my job to feed this thing?! It almost roasted me to death a few minutes ago!"

I would've left the dragonplant to find its own food, but then it gave me the saddest little groan as it lay there motionless.

What are you? A hundred-meter-tall baby? Hey! Get those tentacles away from me. Don't touch the breasts! Don't squeeze them! Nothing's gonna come out, far as I know...

Gaaah... Fine!


Urgh...
Urgh...
SMACK

I wondered whether I could head back to town to pick up some food items. The problem was, if I left the boss area, I'd probably have to fight the boss again when I got back. That was the last thing I wanted.

"Maybe I've got some food on me..."

As I opened up a menu window, a thought suddenly came to me. *Wait, wasn't this dungeon called the Bug Eater God's Forest? Then wouldn't that make this guy...?*

"Puffster squad, stand down! Jumbo worms, you're up!"

"Gweeeee!" A writhing mass of green giant caterpillars appeared on the ground. They were just a fraction of the hundred or so I'd tamed while rampaging through the forest.

Ha ha ha... There's no way I'm supposed to satisfy the boss with these...right? Any summoner with ordinary luck wouldn't be able to catch them. It'd be an all-around horrible answer to the quest.

But I was soon proven wrong when the dragonplant cried a joyful "Grr gaaaah?!" and grabbed the caterpillars in its tentacles. "Grr gah gah gah!"

"Gweee?!"

Mealtime was now underway. The dragonplant swallowed the caterpillars whole one after another, growing visibly more energetic in the process.

You really were *supposed to catch worms for the boss?!*

"Grr gaah?! Grr gah gah gah?!" the dragonplant cried out, as if to say, "Got any more of those?! You've gotta have more!"

I forced a smile as I handed over caterpillars one after another. The dragonplant happily devoured each one until, over a hundred jumbo worms later, it was finally full.

```
Hidden quest successful! You gained a giant boss, the Gigantic
Dragonplant, as an ally!
* Giant boss monsters can only be summoned once every ten
minutes for a maximum of ten seconds.
The giant boss does not count toward the summoned monster
count. The boss will be summoned with the same level as the
```

summoning player.

Uh, whaaaaat?! I've got you as an ally now?! Getting Armor Knight was already crazy, and he's human-sized. I never thought they'd let me have a hundred-meter-tall boss! This is totally nuts... But it looks like I just got some serious firepower before the PvP event!

"Nice to have you with us, Giganster!"

"Grr gah gah!" Like a baby reaching out for its mother, Giganster extended a few plump tentacles in my direction.

[The Clearing!] General Discussion Thread 220 [It Never Stops!]

1. Impatient Adventurer

This thread is for general discussion.
Speak your mind freely, so long as you're not breaking the forum rules. However, if you want to recruit party members, rant, hate on the game, or start drama, please make your own thread.
A new thread will be created automatically when this one reaches the reply limit.
Previous thread: http://**********

107. Impatient Adventurer

"World news! Spearo, Magicko, and Wacko's party was first to defeat the Jumbo Merman! The race to clear the Beach Cavern dungeon has concluded!"
"World news! Zansword, Airin, and Jolt's party was first to defeat the Wolf King! The race to clear the Den of Wolves dungeon has concluded!"
"World news! Reinhard von Edelfelt, fighting solo, was first to

defeat the Macho Gorilla! The race to clear the Muscle Forest dungeon has concluded!”
Announcements keep coming like crazy!
This Reinhard von Edelfelt guy (holy long name) is solo clearing too!
Also...lol what? Macho Gorilla? Muscle Forest? What?

108. Impatient Adventurer
>> 107
lol it’s obvious he’s pushing himself hard to keep up with Yuri.
Wasn’t there a guy in an earlier thread who said he was in the first party to clear a dungeon and he was a friend of Yuri’s? That had to be Reinhard von Edelfelt, right?
Given the name, I’m assuming he looks like some sort of noble knight...?

109. Impatient Adventurer
>> 108
He wouldn’t tell us Yuri’s stats, but I remember him saying she’s really hot.
He must be a good-looking guy himself if he’s spending time with her. At the very least, we can rule out the ripped bald guy!
“World news! Yuri, fighting solo, was first to defeat the Gigantic Dragonplant! The race to clear the Bug Eater God’s Forest high-level dungeon has concluded!”
What just happened?!?!?!?!

130. Impatient Adventurer
>> 109

Whaaaaaaaaaaaaaaat?!?!?!
This is getting ridiculous!

151. Impatient Adventurer
>> 109
You've gotta be kidding!

173. Impatient Adventurer
Yuri again?! How's she doing it?!

176. \ Fastest Dungeon Clearer & Solo Dungeon Clearer Reinhard Is Here! /
Bwah ha ha ha! You see that Yuri?! Now I've got you beat!
>> 109
Noooooooooooooo!!! (´; ω; `)

179. Impatient Adventurer
>> 176
lol owned. You had the lead for all of five seconds lmao!

Wait, I can't even laugh at this!

180. Impatient Adventurer
>> 109
Yuri's amazing!
But what's a high-level dungeon? Someone enlighten a non-beta-tester.

240 Impatient Adventurer
>> 180
They're dungeons that expect you to be at least level 35!

We had to try a bunch of different strats to clear them in the beta test. They're so hard it was over two weeks before anyone figured out a way.
I don't get how someone can do it solo already. Barely anyone pulled that off even after a month of beta testing!

294. Impatient Adventurer

>> 240
Pretty sus if she did it in three days then!
Isn't this obvious cheating? Has anyone reported it to the admins?

310. Impatient Adventurer

>> 294
I asked them about it right after it happened!
I got a fast response saying "We found no evidence that the player named Yuri has illegally modified their character."
She must have some sort of weapon-class-stat combo that's breaking the game lol. Soon as I learn what it is, I'm copying her build! lol

315. Impatient Adventurer

>> 109
Whaaaaaaaaa?! I thought that boss was straight up broken and unbeatable. Turns out Yuri was the broken one!
I'm genuinely impressed that she beat it.
>> 310
Um...I was there in the Bug Eater Forest with Yuri for a little while. Trust me, you do NOT want to copy her play style...

350. Impatient Adventurer

>> 315
Oooooh! Someone knows who Yuri is!
Every beta tester I've asked tells me "I've never heard of anyone called Yuri." I'd started thinking she might be a powerful NPC put in by the devs lol. Maybe she's supposed to build hype when we try to keep up with her?
Anyway, tell us more! At least tell us how Yuri looks and how she acts!
According to Mr. Fastest Dungeon Clearer & Solo Dungeon Clearer (lol), she's easygoing and good-looking, but I'm not sure what to believe. Can you back him up?

388. Impatient Adventurer
>> 350
Yes, she was really beautiful! Her looks together with the frilly gothic dress she had on made me think she was an idol!
Personality-wise...she was kinda crazy, but kind enough to save my life a few times without making a big deal of it. I liked her.
Only thing is...her eyes looked kinda dead. Or maybe it was more like she had a piercing stare...?
You know that "gone to the dark side" look? That's the closest example I can think of.

400. Impatient Adventurer
>> 388
She's a heroine turned evil?!?!?!?! Lol

412. Impatient Adventurer
>> 388
Gone to the dark side? Lmao I wonder what you mean by that.

Okay, now I’ve got to see Yuri for myself!

Here’s hoping she’ll be at the PVP event!

Chapter 9 — Fun Making Forbidden Life-Forms!

"Today's the day you're gonna evolve into a new species, Puffster!"

"Cuurrrsss!"

On the fourth day of the game's official launch, I was at Françoise the dressmaker's place with a menu window open. I'd gone back to wearing the plain black dress I'd started with because the goth idol outfit (is that the right name for it?) I'd gotten from her was nearly down to zero durability from the Gigantic Dragonplant's heat rays, so she was mending it for me.

Françoise looked like she'd seen a ghost when I told her I'd blown through my gear's durability in a single day fighting solo against a boss ten levels higher than me.

I kinda thought I heard her mumbling, "What were you thinking, taking on such an opponent? And how on earth did you win? There's something twisted about your approach to this game!" Hopefully it was just my imagination, because I'm not twisted at all!

"Oh, here it is." I'd just found an evolve option on Puffster's status screen. "So I just press this button?" I tapped on it, causing a new window to open.

```
Puffster (living weapon) is ready to evolve. Please select an
evolution path.
1. Living Dead
A skeleton cloaked in an aura of darkness. This is the form of
a living weapon that began to resemble a living creature after
longing for a body of its own.
Your monster will lose the ability to possess weapons, but will
```

have higher attack power than an ordinary zombie.
This monster will also regenerate HP quickly and won't die easily.

2. Shadow Weapon
A soul cloaked in a powerful aura of darkness. This is the form of a living weapon that began to resemble a death god after longing for the demise of its enemies.
Your monster will retain the ability to possess weapons and will gain the ability to create short-lived clones of itself with reduced attributes.
Your monster's HP will be based on the possessed weapon's durability, and it will die if the weapon is destroyed.

Okay, so I gotta choose between these two...

It seemed like an obvious choice since the living dead option looked like a downgrade. The description said Puffster would gain high attack power and regeneration, but he was already possessing a weapon with infinite durability, and his damage was usually boosted by my skills.

"I guess I'd better check with you first. What do you think, Puffster?"

"Currrss!" Puffster used the tip of his arrow head to tap the "Shadow Weapon" button without even hesitating.

There was a flash of bright light from Puffster's body, then the dark miasma that always surrounded him grew in intensity until it became an inferno of shadowy flames.

"Nice! Great choice, Puffster! If you started out as a vengeful soul, then you've gotta aim to be a death god! A man's gotta stick to his guns!"

"Currrss! Cursscurrrss!" It was like he was saying, "Heh. You don't gotta tell me, boss! I ain't turning into no stinking corpse. Ever since you and I went one-on-one, I'm only aiming for one thing—being the best weapon I can be. And you know I never miss." Puffster

Double Twin Mk II 2nd (I renamed him to commemorate his evolution, and it turned out pretty cool) was such an adorable little underling.

Now that I'd evolved Puffster (I was still calling him that for short), I figured I'd better do myself!

I reopened the same menu and tapped on the "class upgrade" option.

To upgrade your class from summoner, please choose an evolution path.

1. High Summoner
The peak of summoner orthodoxy. Monsters will gain the ability to teleport back to you without need for the Summon Return art. You'll also gain the ability to combine rare materials with monster parts to create forbidden chimeras that can be summoned later.
* Only one chimera can be summoned at a time. Chimeras do not count toward the summoned monster limit, but a chimera cannot be summoned while another is in play.
The chimera will have very low HP and will always die after five minutes have elapsed.
A chimera is always at the same level as its summoner.

2. Summon Tamer
A specialized summoner class. Gain taming abilities and a greatly increased chance to make monsters into allies.
Also gain new arts for restoring monster HP.

Whaaat?! High summoners can make chimeras?! That sounds totally awesome!

"I don't even have to think about it! High summoner, let's goooo!"

There was some fanfare, then a message popped up saying,

"Congratulations on upgrading your class! You are now a high summoner!"

Puffster got a new look when he evolved. I get nothing? What a letdown.

"Anyway, what really matters is the chimera crafting!"

I opened up a menu window to read more about it and saw that I could carry multiple chimeras with me, but the moment I summoned one, there'd be a countdown to its unavoidable death.

These poor creatures... But if I'm gonna be a champion of justice and take on evil players, I've no choice but to use them as one-shot munitions. Their deaths will be in support of the cause!

"Hmmm. So, if I use the rarest materials, I should get a chimera with higher stats. Good thing my pure luck build makes it easy to get rare items. And then the type of material determines the chimera's main stat."

I imagined that if I combined a 'Stone' with a 'Rabbit Steak,' I'd get a rabbit with stone skin for high defense, but it would probably come at the cost of the rabbit's naturally high agility. Not every combination would be a good one. Also, stone rabbits wouldn't be very cute.

"If these things are disposable, then I guess chimeras specializing as either damage sponges, status spammers, or kamikaze drones would be ideal. Now that that's decided, it's time to round up materials! And I wanna get Puffs 2 through 11 leveled up before the PvP event while we're at it. I'd better fight a few bosses!"

There wasn't enough time left to explore a high-level dungeon, but I could still visit the ones other players had already cleared. The online guide would even tell me where to find the boss areas.

Let's get right to it! As soon as I get my gear back from Françoise, I'm gonna rampage through every dungeon!

Chapter 10 — Go for the Boss Monsters!

It was time for a boss monster hunt in preparation for the PvP event! I needed their body parts to make my chimeras, and I figured it would be cool to have more bosses as allies alongside the Living Armor Knight and the Gigantic Dragonplant.

My first stop was the Goblin Fortress. The guide said level 15 was enough, so at level 25, I was more than ready.

I mowed down monkey-like goblins as I charged toward the boss area, then I knocked down the Goblin King with a punch! "Drop dead, goblin scum!"

"Gob gob gobuuh?!"

While the Goblin King was sent flying by my fist, I followed up with a volley of Puffster arrows, leaving the boss full of holes and ending the battle.

```
Congratulations! You successfully soloed the Goblin King
dungeon boss!
Yuri, Puffster Double Twin Mk II 2nd, and all summoned monsters
gained copious experience.
You got an ultrarare item: Marbled Goblin King Meat!
Taming successful! The Goblin Ex-King boss is now your ally!
You can now summon this boss with its level reduced to 1!
```

Nice! Got some Goblin King meat! Goblins were hardy creatures, so if I blended the meat with an iron item, it would hopefully turn into a chimera specializing in defense. *You're gonna be my disposable shield!*

"World news! Yuri, fighting solo, defeated the Goblin King! The

race to solo clear the Goblin Fortress has concluded!"

Ooh, the first solo clear gets an announcement too! Now I'm really gonna make a name for myself before tomorrow's PvP event. Then when we're in the arena, I'll show them the truth: that the summoner, bow, and pure luck builds they've been laughing at are actually the strongest options!

"Gob gob, gobubuh!"

"Huh?"

The hulking Goblin King had once stood twice as tall as any human, but now he was hunched over and grovelling at my feet. I had to feel bad for him after the game had renamed him Goblin Ex-King upon losing the fight.

His in-game description said "A goblin who's lost his pride. In defeat, he's little more than an oversized monkey. You'd better teach him some tricks to perform." Now I really felt sorry for him.

I patted the ex-king on his shoulder. "There, there, Gobster. You work for me now. You know you'll get your strength back when I level you up a little, right? And then we'll raise hell together!"

"Gob gob? Gob buh buh!" The Goblin Ex-King sounded happy as he disappeared into thin air.

Okay, on to the next. I don't have much time, so I gotta keep moving!

The second dungeon on my list was the Den of Wolves. It was a cavern packed full of wolf-type monsters, much like the name suggested, designed to be cleared at level 20.

Not only were the wolves quick, they came leaping out from countless tiny passageways in the walls of the cavern. Getting through this dungeon would've been a pain...except I had a plan.

"All right, let's sprint to the finish! Time to spam Flash!"

"Hrrrr!"

With the speedy Armor Knight boss possessing my boots, I had no trouble shaking off all the wolves. Mor had recently surpassed level 20, making him even faster than when I'd first fought him. Aided by his power, I reached the boss area in no time at all.

The Wolf King was insanely fast, but my Puffster arrows kept up with him with their homing abilities. When he was almost finished,

he charged at me, covered in blood, as part of a last-ditch effort to bite me, but I finished him off with a punch.

```
Congratulations! You successfully soloed the Wolf King dungeon
boss!
Yuri, Puffster Double Twin Mk II 2nd, and all summoned monsters
gained copious experience!
You got an ultrarare item: Marbled Wolf King Meat.
Taming successful! The Wolf Ex-King is now your ally!
You can now summon this boss with its level reduced to 1!
```

Nice! I got Wolf King meat!

The plan was to use an item from a fast enemy in combination with an item that caused paralysis to get a devastating chimera that darted around while rendering my opponents motionless.

"Awwwwwn!" When the Wolf King rolled over to show me his belly, the name tag floating over him said "Wolf Ex-King," proving he was now level 1.

The in-game description read, "In defeat, it is no more than an oversized dog yielding to a master with superior strength. It's so utterly stripped of its royal dignity that you may as well put a collar on it and take it for a walk."

Did sadists make this game?

"Wolfster, you work for me from now on. Actually, you're more like my pet. Um...wanna go for walkies?"

"Woof! Woof!" The Wolf King got excited.

You're really okay with it? Well, all right...

I mounted my new pet, then we galloped over the fields toward the final dungeon on my list.

♦ ◊ ♦

With a dog and a monkey now in my service, my last stop was the Phoenix Mountain Range dungeon. It was a seemingly ordinary mountainous region with a recommended level of 25, where the only

thing to do was head for higher ground and aim for the boss at the peak of the tallest mountain.

As I climbed, I had to fend off a ceaseless onslaught of flame-covered bird monsters that breathed fire at me from overhead. It would have been game over for a player limited to close-range attacks, but for a bow wielder like me, bird monsters were easy prey. I aimed into the sky and launched a Puffster barrage straight up!

"Fly, my eleven Puffs!"

"Currscurrscurrrs!"

My underlings got right to it. Their Navigation skills meant that no matter how high up an enemy was, they could still strike them with deadly force. The birds had been confident in their dominion of the sky, but that confidence soon turned to shock as they fell one after another.

```
Puff 11 reached level 25 and is ready to evolve!
```

"Ooh. Puff 11 can finally evolve! Soon you'll all be shadow weapons!"

"Currss!" Puff 11 shrieked happily.

Puffster and Puffs 2 through 10 gathered around him to vibrate in celebration, like siblings praising their little brother.

I'm glad he made it before the PvP event.

After climbing a little farther up the mountain with my dependable underlings in tow, I found an area that was shrouded in a dense fog near the peak.

Oh, I get it. Rather than stepping through a door, I enter the boss area through the fog.

Needless to say, turning back didn't even cross my mind. I plunged into the fog without ever slowing down.

♦ ◊ ♦

Having finally reached the mountain's peak, I found a massive bird with a bright red body waiting for me. "Pikwaaaaw!"

"Whoa! What a cool-looking boss!"

Its name was Vanishing Firebird. According to the guide, it was always airborne, making it the toughest out of all the level 25 bosses.

With its tail feathers fanned out like a peacock, it looked truly majestic. *I've absolutely gotta catch this one!*

"Let's go, firebird!" I took aim with my bow.

"Piiiii!"

As the boss rose higher into the air with a powerful beat of its wings, it lobbed countless fireballs at me from its tail feathers. There had to be over a hundred of them! Although each was small, for someone limited to 1 HP, nothing was more dangerous than this sort of scattershot attack.

But I didn't even flinch. "They're not getting through my evolved Puffster army! Go get 'em!"

"Currrssss!"

Eleven murky black arrows shot into the sky one after another. The firebird looked down unimpressed, like it considered my efforts futile...but a moment later, its beak was agape with shock. Each miasma-cloaked arrow split into ten in midair, creating a total of 110 arrows that destroyed every single one of the firebird's bullets before embedding themselves in its body!

"Pikwaaawk?!"

"Heh." I looked up at the suffering bird and grinned. "How d'you like that? Now that they've evolved into shadow weapons, they've got this skill called Shade Clone!"

Just as the name suggested, Shade Clone could create nine copies of a shadow weapon. Each copy only had half the stats of the original and could only exist for just ten seconds, but it was more than useful when applied to arrows.

My damage boost skills were triggering as each arrow hit its target, leaving the firebird screeching in pain. Next, I relied on a special perk I'd gained as a high summoner.

"Back to me, all of you." All eleven arrows teleported to me without costing me any MP.

I never had to worry about keeping some arrows in reserve. As an ordinary summoner, I'd had to recall my arrows one by one using

Summon Return, but now they were coming back automatically. I effectively had infinite ammo, not to mention each one could split into ten.

"Pii, piiii!"

"Sorry, firebird, but I'm going to keep this up for as long as it takes to finish you."

As a bow wielder, a massive bird was little more than easy prey. I aimed my weapon proudly as I loosed successive arrows at the panicking firebird.

```
Skill active: Genocide Killer! Damage doubled!
Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage doubled!
Skill active: Absolute Zero! Damage doubled!
Critical hit! Triple damage dealt to a weak point!
Skill active: Merciless Death God! Critical damage boosted by a
further thirty percent!
```

With multiple damage-boosting skills triggering every time, my arrows were hitting the firebird for over 24 times their base damage.

Before long, the boss began to fall, too weak to continue flying. "Piii... Pikwaaa...!" But the firebird wasn't giving up that easily. With its last ounce of strength, it beat its wings to direct its descent straight for me.

Nice, a dive-bomb attack! What kind of man would I be if I didn't take this head-on?! I threw my bow aside and balled my fist.

"Pikwaaaaw!"

"Yeah! Bring it on, firebird! Let's settle this once and for all!" I threw my fist at the massive bird's sharp beak.

```
Skill active: Twisted! Deal triple damage at close range for
three seconds after throwing your bow away!
Skill active: Up Close and Personal! Deal ten percent extra
damage at close range!
Skill active: God-Killing Fist! Your hand is invincible from
```

the wrist to the fingertips while throwing a punch! All forms of damage, knockback, and status effects are negated!

My fist took on the entire brunt of the massive bird's power. A thunderous crash followed by a shock wave swept across the mountain top, rippling my hair in the resulting wind.

"Pikwa...awk!" The firebird slammed into the ground, its beak cracked—this battle was over.

Congratulations! You successfully soloed the Vanishing Firebird dungeon boss!
Yuri, Puffster Double Twin Mk II 2nd, and all summoned monsters gained copious experience!
You gained an ultrarare item: Firebird Drumstick!
Taming successful! The Vanishing Firechirper boss monster became your ally!
You can now summon this boss with its level reduced to 1!

"I win this one, firebird." *I even got some meat out of it.*

Given that its strategy had involved firing wide-ranging attacks from the above, I expected to get a chimera capable of air strikes if I combined the meat with something explosive. I could even make it finish with a kamikaze attack.

"Pii pii!" The firebird gave me a cute squeak. The sorry thing had been renamed to Vanishing Firechirper now that its level had been reduced to 1.

"Huh?" *What's a firechirper, anyhow?*

The description read, "A defeated bird, knocked to the ground and turned into an oversized chicken. Maybe it's tasty." *I don't wanna find out.*

I took a look at the tamed boss's status and saw it had the Navigation skill, just like a living weapon, but there was also a note about its flight being limited to flying a short time below a particular height. Sadly, I couldn't just ride it for some easy fast travel.

"All right. You're pet number 2 from now on. Welcome to the family, Chirpster."

"Piiiwaa!"

When I petted Chirpster's fluffy feathers, he spread his wings wide in delight.

Now that I had all the materials I needed, I figured there was no reason not to get a few chimeras ready in preparation for the event the next day. *I don't even know what sort of battle it's gonna be, but whatever it is, I'm gonna win it!*

[Get Ready] General Discussion Thread 231 [For PvP!]

1. Impatient Adventurer

This thread is for general discussion.
Speak your mind freely, but please stick to the forum rules. If you want to recruit party members, rant, hate on the game, or start drama, please start a dedicated thread.
A new thread will be created automatically when this thread reaches the reply limit.
Previous thread: http://**********

107. Impatient Adventurer

I give up. I just can't solo the Armor Knight!
He summons a ton of living weapons, he moves fast, and his swordplay's deadly. It's a nightmare.
How'd Yuri beat it on day 2?

108. Impatient Adventurer

>> 107
I had a go at Bug Eater God's Forest. Picking a high-level dungeon was a bad idea.
The monsters there are surprisingly weak. It's slow going

because of sheer numbers, but it just takes a bit of effort. I had such an easy time it started to feel like a letdown.
Until I reached the boss, that is! The Gigantic Dragonplant is totally overpowered!
Regret set in the second I saw its hundred-meter body spring up. Then it grabbed me with a bunch of tentacles and started firing death beams.
The worst part is that it broke my entire armor set...

109. Impatient Adventurer

>> 108
lol I tried to solo it with exactly the same outcome.
Pretty obvious it's a raid boss...and a total mismatch from the dungeon's trash mobs.
Given that the dungeon's called "Bug Eater God's Forest," maybe it's all part of its carnivorous plant lore. Like, all those weak monsters are there to lure players into the boss room where they turn into easy prey?
Wouldn't surprise me since even the monster and item descriptions are evil at times. I'm already convinced the devs are sadists.

130. Impatient Adventurer

>> 109
You KNOW the devs are evil because a summoner's monsters are lost if they die.

151. Impatient Adventurer

>> 109
I tried the dragonplant with a party and we still got wiped out.

If Yuri beat it solo, I wouldn’t want to mess with her. We know who to watch out for at the PvP event tomorrow...

173. Impatient Adventurer

>> 151

I’m convinced it’s going to be a battle royale. A tournament would take too long.

I don’t know much about Yuri, but she’s just going to get swarmed by beta testers. The second we see a beautiful woman named Yuri, we’ll all focus on her!

She basically dug her own grave by drawing too much attention before the event lol.

“World news! Yuri, fighting solo, defeated the Goblin King! The race to solo clear the Goblin Fortress has concluded!”

lol there she goes solo clearing a level 15 dungeon.

She’s STILL drawing more attention to herself lol.

240. Impatient Adventurer

>> 173

lol we should definitely take her out first.

“World news! Yuri, fighting solo, defeated the Wolf King! The race to solo clear the Den of Wolves dungeon has concluded!”

Lol what? That’s a level 20 dungeon. How’d she keep up with the Wolf King? It’s stupidly quick.

I guess she’s just as fast? Not that it’s going to help when she’s getting attacked from all sides lol. Am I right?

294. Impatient Adventurer

>> 240

Exactly lol. She’s not gonna hold out against superior numbers.

“World news! Yuri, fighting solo, defeated the Vanishing Firebird! The race to solo clear the Phoenix Mountain Range dungeon has concluded!”
So...she beat the hardest of the level 25 dungeons...the one with the boss that throws hundreds of firebombs at you...but we’ve got this...right?! Right?! We can take her down if we all work together, right?!

310. Impatient Adventurer
>> 294
Uhh... *gives up*
You know...I just realized how unfair it is for everyone to gang up on one player! Sorry! I’m out!

315. Impatient Adventurer
>> 294
I’ve decided. I’m not attacking Yuri, I’m her fan now!

350. Impatient Adventurer
>> 294
Lay a hand on my sis and I’ll beat your ass!
Let ’em have it, sis!

388. Impatient Adventurer
>> 310 >> 315 >> 350
Do you guys have no pride?!
Whatever. I’ll take down Yuri even if I have to do it by myself!

400. Impatient Adventurer
>> 388

I’ll be right there with you lol. Don’t worry.
Keep some popcorn ready for the PvP event tomorrow! We’re turning it into a demon hunt!

412. Impatient Adventurer

>> 400
Hell yeah! She’s gonna get slain!

Chapter 11 — The Battle Royale Begins!

On the fifth day of the game's official launch, I logged in a little before the event's scheduled opening of 10 a.m. to find Starting Town thronged with players, all checking their status windows and gearing up for a fight.

"All right, guess I'll do the same." *Let's see those stats!*

Name: Yuri

Level: 30

Class: High Summoner

Weapon: Bow

Attributes: Strength: 0 *Defense: 0* Magic: 0 *Agility: 0* Luck: 390 × 3 × 2 + 39 + 90 = 2,469

Skills: Luck Boost, Relentless, Fatal Strike, Up Close and Personal, Genocide Killer, Merciless Death God, Absolute Zero, Hello? Forgetting Something?, Against All Odds (doubles all attributes while HP is 1), God-Killing Fist, Twisted

Equipment:

Head: Death God Hair Tie

(Minimum requirements: none. MP +30, Luck +30)

Body: Death God Dress

(Minimum requirements: none. MP +30, Luck +30)

Feet: Death God Boots

(Minimum requirements: none. MP +30, Luck +30. Possessed by Mor)

Equipped Weapon: Beginner's Bow

Accessories: Cursed Ring (limits HP to 1), Dark God's Covenant Necklace (triples luck when HP is 1)

"Hmmm... Yep, that's a pure luck build all right!"

This combo of skills and gear was pushing my luck over 2,500. Other level 30 players claimed to have gotten their specialized stats up to about 400, making mine six times as high. *Awesome!*

I was still grinning at my fast-growing luck stat when another player, equally absorbed in their own status window, bumped into me from behind. I would have tripped, but someone with a manly arm reached out and caught me by the shoulder.

"Are you all right, little miss in the beautiful dress? You could get hurt in a crowded place like this. How about you and I go someplace more quiet?"

Yuck. I'd just been about to thank him for catching me, but it was clear the second he opened his mouth that he'd only had one thing on his mind. That said, I did still owe him a little gratitude. I figured I'd quickly acknowledge him then get out of there, but...

"You again?!" We looked at each other and both sighed in unison.

It was the same bald barbarian as before. This was the third time he'd tried to hit on me.

♦ ◊ ♦

"Dang. Just when I thought it had to be fate! Why's this keep happening, Yuri?!"

"I wanna ask you the same question, Baldy!"

We were sitting on the edge of a fountain complaining. It was actually a lot like the day I'd started the game.

While lamenting how troublesome Baldy could be, I took a sip of some juice that I'd bought on a whim while passing by a store. *Huh?!* "Ugh! Ack! It's like a lemon, grapefruit, and kiwi blend?! Who'd put those together?! It's so sour I can't even drink it!"

"Bwah ha ha! This game sometimes has weird flavors on sale. Want me to finish it for you?"

"It's all yours."

I passed the super sour drink to Baldy, who drank it dry with one big, noisy slurp. For better or worse, he did everything like a man.

As he was finishing the juice, I heard a few complaints from the crowd. "How'd that muscled barbarian get a girl like her?"

"Wish he'd just explode!"

"I'll be going in for the kill the second I see him in battle!"

Wow, Baldy's sure drawing a lot of attention. He's not doing anything besides sitting here chatting to me, but everyone's out for his head.

"Hey, Baldy, you been making enemies?"

"Huh? Not that I know of."

"I guess not. You're a good guy. Speaking of which, got any accessories to give away? I'll take anything. I've got three accessory slots here, but I've only got two equipped."

"That's a waste of a slot. Do you want this Poison Resistance Ring? I can easily buy another from the NPCs around here, so I don't mind giving it up." He handed me a ring that would make me a little less likely to get poisoned.

"Wow, thanks."

The gift only gave the players around us more to complain about. "He's giving her a ring as a gift in front of everyone?!"

"Gaaaaaaah! Drop dead already!"

"I'm definitely gonna kill that meathead!"

Oooh! It's like we're surrounded by bloodthirsty carnivores! Everyone's raring to go!

"Let's both give it our best today, Baldy!"

"You got it, brother. I'm not letting you beat me!"

We bumped fists together.

Suddenly we heard the lively sound of trumpets, and multicolored confetti began raining down from above.

Ooh, looks like the event's starting.

A voice came from someplace high in the sky. "Combatants! I see many of you have assembled here today!" A huge image of an old man with a crown and a huge beard had appeared in the air. He looked like a king.

The old man went on speaking as tens of thousands of players

stared up at him. “I am Odin, the ruler of the Gladsheim Kingdom you stand in today. I have gathered you all here for a single reason: As we ready ourselves to do battle against the Demon Lord—the dark ruler responsible for making monsters appear throughout the world—I desire to witness your power. To that end, I am hosting a battle royale event where every player can compete!”

A huge cheer filled Starting Town. I was just as excited as everyone else. The game had over fifty thousand active players, so an event that had everyone battling it out was sure to be a huge spectacle.

“Mwuh huh huh. Allow me to explain. I’m sure there are combatants among us with other things to do today. That’s why I will be holding five battle royales between now and midnight with one-hour breaks in between. The first will take place from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., the second from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., the third from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., the fourth from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., then the fifth and final battle royale will take place from 10 p.m. until midnight. Take part in as many as you like. I promise you an incredible reward awaits anyone who survives until the end!”

When the old man finished speaking, a new menu window opened in front of me listing a set of detailed rules. *Let’s see...*

Five battle royale contests are about to commence!
Each contest will take place in a special-purpose arena that’s identical to Starting Town, with each contestant beginning in a random location.
All contestants will receive 20 Event Recovery Potions from event management. These powerful potions will fully restore either your HP or MP. No other healing items can be used during the contest.
You are free to participate in as many contests as you wish. Alternatively, you may choose to spectate.
A live video feed will be displayed in the sky above Starting Town, where minigames will be provided and players may bet on

how long individual contestants will survive using in-game currency. I hope everyone will find a way to enjoy the event. There will, of course, be rewards for those who perform well! Players who are part of the final ten percent of contestants left alive will receive a rare item. Players who are part of the final one hundred contestants left alive will receive an ultrarare item. Players who are part of the final ten contestants left alive receive an item of even greater rarity. And for the final player left alive when all others have fallen, I, Odin, will present you with a special reward. There are also additional rewards that can be earned by defeating higher numbers of players. Please use your most devastating attacks without holding back!
* Since footage of the battle royale will be broadcast on our website to promote the game, we'd really prefer it if players refrained from camping in a corner until the end of the contest. - Event Management

"Okay, I see, I see. In other words, I'm good to raise hell."

The little request at the end made it sound like the devs were new to this sort of thing, but the rest of the rules made perfect sense.

I wouldn't be a man if I didn't compete in all five contests. I'm gonna win every single one!

My brother-in-arms was still by my side. I poked his shoulder. "Hey, Baldy, I probably don't have to ask, but are you gonna join the first contest?"

"You bet. Any contest you're joining, I'm joining."

"Well, that means all of them. Me and you are gonna spend the whole day fighting." It was nice to know Baldy was just as fired up.

We both grinned as we each hit the "YES" button where our screens said "Do you wish to participate in the first battle royale event?" and then we were each bathed in a pale blue light.

As countless people around us also registered for the event, Odin spoke in a booming voice. “Now begins a lawless battle royale! Contestants, show me the full extent of your might!” It was the last thing I heard before I was spirited away by the brightening light.

♦ ◊ ♦

When I opened my eyes, I found I’d been transported to a back alley somewhere in Starting Town—or more precisely, into a special arena made to look exactly like Starting Town. I couldn’t hear any of the usual NPC hawkers in this version of the town, and the sky above it was crimson red.

While I was looking around and trying to get my bearings, I heard a voice from somewhere overhead. “Here we go! It’s the PvP event you’ve all been waiting for! From here on out, you can count on me, Navi the guide fairy, to provide the commentary! Hello to all players! We haven’t seen each other since character creation!”

“Oh, it’s Navi. That’s a name I haven’t heard in a while.” I thought back to when the little fairy had helped me out at the start of the game. Now that they had her doing commentary, it was like she was trying to be the game’s mascot character.

“I’ve got a little extra info for all you contestants currently in the arena! Hopefully, you can all see the number 30,036 at the edge of your vision! That’s how many players are left alive! As time passes, the arena boundary is going to shrink! You can’t leave the boundary, so all contestants need to keep moving toward the center of the town throughout the battle. Make sure to check your position on the map, otherwise you’ll find yourself saying, ‘Oh man! The boundary’s right on me and I’ve got nowhere to run!’”

I took Navi’s advice and checked my map. I was in the center of town near the edge of a familiar fountain. *They’ve put me right in the middle?! I’m gonna have players coming at me from all sides!*

“That’s all the info I can give you for now! Battle royale contestants, try to conserve your recovery potions, and good luck!” Navi then shifted her focus to building some excitement among the gambling spectators. “Now to everyone watching, I see a lot of you

made bets on the ultimate winner already! Looks like Zansword's the current favorite!"

Navi sure hasn't lost any of her energy.

"It's time I got moving." I figured I'd walk straight out onto the plaza since camping in a back alley the whole time wasn't my idea of fun...but I only managed a few steps before a hooded player in a mage outfit appeared between me and the exit. They spotted me and gave me a contemptuous grin. "Oh, nice! I was just gonna hide in here, but it looks like you're nearly dead! I don't know who you ran from, but I'm glad I found you first!"

"Nearly dead?" I replied. "You can see my HP?"

"Yeah. I've got a rare skill called Lifeforce Perception that gives me a rough idea. Your HP bar's empty save for a tiny dot. Time to take you out before you get a chance to heal!" The mage aimed their staff at me and launched a firebomb. Trapped between the walls of the narrow alley, I had no way to dodge to the left or right.

"Gah ha ha!" the mage laughed. "Die!" He was confident he'd already won.

I quickly wiped the smile off his face. "Hup." With a backhanded fist, I swatted away the incoming firebomb, erasing it completely. The God-Killing Fist skill had made my hand invincible on impact.

The mage was stunned—he'd never seen anything like it. "H-H-How you'd do that?!"

"Wouldn't you like to know? Let's go, Mor!"

"Hrrr!"

Next I relied on my familiar's skill, Flash, to close in on the confused mage at the speed of sound and channel my speed into an uppercut!

"Ghhfuuuggh?!" the mage cried as he rose into the air.

Before he could hit the ground, I materialized my bow and hit him with a hazy arrow. The shot pierced his heart, and a bunch of my damage-boosting skills triggered thanks to my focus on the luck stat.

```
Skill active: Genocide Killer! Damage doubled!
```

Skill active: Fatal Strike! Damage doubled!

Skill active: Absolute Zero! Damage doubled!

Critical hit! Triple damage dealt to a weak point!

Skill active: Merciless Death God! Critical damage boosted a further thirty percent!

You defeated a player: Magio! You gained experience!

Yuri gained +1 event point!

"All right! That's one down." I smiled, feeling I was off to a great start.

Apparently, the kill had earned me an event point. I assumed I'd be able to trade my points in for more rare items the more I got. "I'd better keep racking up points by racking up kills."

I stepped out into the plaza to find there were already several players there, gathered around the fountain and glaring at each other.

Oh, hey, Korin's with them! I waved at her. I hadn't seen my petite ninja friend in quite a while. "Yo, Korin, how's it going?"

"Huh? Whaaa?! Wh-Wh-Wh-Whaa?! N-No way! Why'd I have to run into you right at the start?!" Korin was trembling for some reason. It was almost like she'd come down with a stomachache.

I was about to hurry over and check if she was all right, but three other players moved to stand between us. They took one look at my Beginner's Bow and then their faces relaxed.

"Heh heh, check this out. This noob's playing with starting equipment."

"The worst starting equipment at that! Everyone knows you can't hit anything with those bows."

"She's basically a free kill. How about we stop fighting each other for a second and decide which one of us should do the honors?"

The players all readied their weapons and started to approach.

I knew it, people are still looking down on the starting gear.

Korin tried to warn them. "Wait! You can't underestimate her! That's Yu—"

"Shut up! Aww yeah! The hunt's on!" They all charged at me at once.

Big mistake, guys. The bow might be weak, but you haven't seen my arrows yet, have you?

I gripped several Puffster arrows at once then shot them at the players. "Arts activate: Power Burst! Speed Burst!" With some extra support from me, the hazy arrows became like ebon thunderbolts that skewered the players in an instant, taking all three of their lives at once.

"Ngggggggh?"

"What the hell was that?!"

"Y-You gotta be kidding! I lost all my HP from one—"

As they spoke their last words, they all faded away.

Nice! Things are finally getting moving!

"Come on, Korin! Let's fight! The fun starts now!"

"Eeeek! You really thought I'd wanna go toe-to-toe with the most overpowered player in the game?! No thanks! I'm out of here!" Korin turned and ran. She sure had a lot of agility—before I knew it, she was disappearing into the distance.

Sorry, Korin, but if I'm gonna show everyone the power of the supposed joke options, I have to win this event hands down. None may live once I've laid eyes on them.

I felt my heart race as I created a huge magic circle at my feet. "As long as there's no one else around, I may as well try out something flashy!"

Everything shook as if the earth itself were responding to my wishes, then the ground loudly cracked apart as the face of a massive dragonplant emerged from somewhere far below.

"Show yourself, Gigantic Dragonplant!"

"Grrgaaaaaaah!" The giant monster gave a mighty roar as it rose to tower a hundred meters above the center of Starting Town. It was my cute underling Giganster.

Perched atop his shoulder, I grinned and ordered, "Giganster...burn everything in sight!"

"Gaaaaaaaaah!"

No sooner than I'd spoken, seven glorious flowers bloomed along

Giganster's back, each of their massive petals glowing with intensifying light as piercing as the sun's itself. The moment the petals fully saturated, each blossom unleashed a murderous laser beam!

This was the Gigantic Dragonplant's ultimate attack, Genocide Seventh Laser. It combined extreme firepower, extensive range, and a devastating ground-melting aftereffect.

"Urrraaaggggh?!" Countless screams came from everywhere the lasers touched down. What's more, Giganster rotated his body, sweeping his lasers along a circular path that incinerated the surrounding town and escalated the ruination!



You defeated a player: Korin! You defeated a player: Shiru! You defeated a player: Spearo! You defeated a player: Zansword! You defeated a player: Wacko! Cannot process Cannot proc...

You defeated 7,082 players! You gained experience! Yuri reached level 38!
Yuri gained +7,082 event points!

"Whew! What a rush! Defeating monsters feels good, but there's nothing quite like taking out other players!"

I wiped the sweat from my brow, exhilarated as I surveyed the smoldering wasteland around me. I'd just gained a boatload of event points and jumped 8 levels at the same time.

It's a good thing Giganster joined us! I'd never have been able to kill enough players to make the UI bug out without him! I stopped Korin from getting away and roasted a ton of other players in the process! "Thanks, Giganster!"

"Grrgaah!" Giganster sounded like a puppy lapping up the attention. His undulating tentacles reached for me, but then he

started to fade away. We'd reached the ten-second limit for giant monster summoning.

When my perch disappeared, I was left hurtling toward the ground.

"So, who's up next?"

I was falling from a hundred meters up. Below me was molten rock full of players who'd been knocked off their feet by the blast wave, as well as other players who'd been left near death with broken armor by the Scorched Earth effect. They were all hopelessly confused by the unfolding situation.

I smiled ear to ear at the sight. "This looks like a good opportunity to level up my new companions!"

As I neared the ground, I conjured a summoning circle that the Vanishing Firebird boss monster burst out from. His monster type might have changed to Vanishing Firechirper when he'd dropped to level 1, but for a few moments, he would go back to being a proud boss monster.

"Piiiiwaaa!"

"You're up, Chirpster!"

Although he couldn't compare to Giganster, he was still a massive bird that dwarfed any player.

I landed safely on the soft red plumage of Chirpster's back then headed straight for the Scorched Earth zone where numerous players lay near death. I had us fly directly over them, then I gave my cute steed a boost.

"No need to hold back, Chirpster! Arts activate: Hyper Magic Burst!"

"Piiiiwaaaaaaaaa!" Chirpster opened his wings wide and spread his tail feathers like a peacock as flames burst from his plumage. Thanks to my art, his magic was five times more potent than normal.

Chirpster glared at the prey lying beneath him, then with a ferocious squawk, he launched well over a hundred firebombs.

"F-Flames from the sky! Flames!"

"What hell has befallen us?!"

"First a dragonplant appears in the middle of town, now there's a

firebird?!”

Players were screaming once again. They’d been scrambling to recover from Giganster’s massacre beam, leaving them unable to react to Chirpster’s aerial bombing.

Flames rapidly engulfed the players below. Hundreds of them cried out at once as their lives abruptly ended.

“Nice, nice, nice! Let’s keep it up! They’ll learn to fear summoners!”

I flew Chirpster across the Scorched Earth zone and continued the bombing campaign as I conjured two more massive summoning circles. Out leaped the Goblin King and the Wolf King, both ready for action! With howls of joy, they plummeted down at the players below and began to attack!

“Gohbuuuuuuuh!” Gobster brought his club down on players as he hit the ground.

“Arrrrrrggghhh?!” Players who’d been desperately trying to escape the flames were instantly reduced to bloody stains in the dirt.

“Grrrr!”

“Wh-Wh-Wh-What’s a boss monster doing here?!”

There was no chance of escape as Wolfster nimbly caught up with the players fleeing from the Scorch Earth zone and lunged at them from behind. His level increased rapidly with each kill until even the fastest players had no chance of outrunning him.

```
You defeated 877 players! You gained experience! Yuri reached
level 40!
Yuri gained +877 event points!
You’ve reached level 40! The high summoner special art,
Boundless Calamity Summon, is now available!

Special art, Boundless Calamity Summon: Costs 500 MP. Cooldown
of 600 seconds. Instant cast. Gain the power to summon an
unlimited number of monsters for 30 seconds.
```

“Oh ho! I get to summon an infinite number of monsters?!” *Now that really* is *a special art!*

I could only use it once every ten minutes, and the MP cost was ten times as high as arts like Hyper Power Burst, but it was just what I expected from a high-power spell—something so amazing it would use up all of my MP!

I drank a recovery potion to fully restore my MP while directing Chirpster toward the center of the plaza. Unsurprisingly, I found it packed full of players who’d been driven into the area by the flaming regions around it. They all looked worn out and pale in the face, and they weren’t even trying to fight each other, instead focusing on gulping down recovery potions.

I drew nearer and decided to offer them a few words of sympathy before my final attack. “Sorry, everyone. Victory in this first battle royale belongs to me and me alone.”

The players looked up in shock when they heard my voice. The sight of someone riding a boss monster filled them with confusion.

“Wh-Where’d the beautiful girl come from?!”

“How’s she riding a boss like it’s her pet?! Hold up... Is that a Beginner’s Bow?!”

“I-Is this part of the event?! Who are you supposed to be?!”

Some players were yelling at me, while others cowered in fear.

“She must be an event boss!” cried one.

“Are you the Demon Lord?!” another asked me.

Both had it all wrong. If anything, I was the hero.

“My name is Yuri. I’m playing as a summoner, using a bow, and running a pure luck build—the very choices you all believed were the weakest! And now...I’m about to obliterate every last one of you!” I raised my hands to the sky and activated my Boundless Calamity Summon.

The crimson sky above the town instantly filled with over a hundred summoning circles, out of which poured an overwhelming number of monsters! Wolves, goblins, firebirds, worms, and numerous other species that I’d encountered on my travels were raining down on the players!

“Grrr!”

“Gobgobgobuuuuh!”

“Piiiiiwaaaaa!”

“Pikwaaaawk!”

The air was filled with the monsters’ cries as they readied themselves for the onslaught.

The players bearing witness all cried out at once, “Wha...? What the heck is this?!” Shortly after, their dying screams echoed through the streets of Starting Town.

[The Battle Royale] General Discussion Thread 279 [Finally Started!]

1. Impatient Adventurer

This thread is for general discussion.
Speak your mind freely, but please stick to the forum rules. If you want to recruit party members, rant, hate on the game, or start drama, please start a dedicated thread.
A new thread will be created automatically when this thread reaches the reply limit.
Previous thread: http://**********

107. Impatient Adventurer

The PvP event’s finally happening! I’ll be spectating from the plaza!
Has everyone bet on the final survivor?

108. Impatient Adventurer

>> 107
It’ll probably be Zansword or Spearo. They’re both strong and consistent players.
Or maybe Wacko. She’s kinda weird and only ever says “yuh yuh,” but she’s been one to watch since the days of the beta.

109. Impatient Adventurer

>> 108

It has to be one of them. If everyone’s going to target Yuri, then I guess she’s got no chance?

Identifying her isn’t going to be easy since the game lets multiple players use the same name and players’ names don’t show above their heads, but apparently, there’s going to be someone acting as a scout. They’ll be using Name Divination and Sense Power Level to reveal players’ names and levels, then when they find a high-level player called Yuri, a group’s going to gang up on her.

According to a buddy of mine, there’ll be a group of about thirty players hunting her.

130. Impatient Adventurer

>> 109

Isn’t that kinda unfair? Lol

Though I guess the rules didn’t say anything about teaming...

151. Impatient Adventurer

>> 109

I don’t know whether Yuri reads this message board, but either way, she must have known that clearing dungeons like crazy was going to get her a lot of attention. Both good and bad.

My guess is that she’ll hide for most of the event.

173. Impatient Adventurer

>> 151

That would be the safe option. Given that healing items are limited and there are thirty thousand opponents, trying

anything flashy at the start would be a sure way to get killed.
So how’s the first event going... Huh?

Whoa whoa whoa whoa whoa. How’d that Gigantic Dragonplant get into the middle of the plaza?!
Is it some sort of event gimmick? No one mentioned it!
Uh... Whaaaaaaaat?! That thing’s firing death rays everywhere!!!

179. Impatient Adventurer
I can’t believe what I’m seeing! Everyone’s dead?! They’re all dead?!
Zansword, Wacko, Spearo... And I know Korin was one of the weakest beta testers, but it was always cute to see her trying so hard, and she’s dead too! They all went down easy!

180. Impatient Adventurer
Wooooooooooooow. Just look at the survivor count. Almost 8,000 players all died at once!

What’s even happening? Why is a Vanishing Firebird in there bombing players from above?!

240. Impatient Adventurer
>> 180
Huuuuh?! Lmao this is nuts.
Now there’s even a Goblin King and Wolf King running around lol. Everyone keeps dying lol.
Should I even be laughing about this? Someone explain it to me!!!

294. Impatient Adventurer

>> 240

We regret to inform you that today’s scheduled battle royale event has been replaced by a massacre event at the hands of monsters.

310. Impatient Adventurer

>> 294

It’s not even an event anymore!

Are you guys seeing this right now? Is someone riding on top of the firebird?!

315. Impatient Adventurer

>> 310

You’re right! Someone is riding it! And she’s so hot it’s kinda scary!

Oh, that firebird’s heading right for the plaza where all the players are gathered.

Don’t tell me this beautiful woman’s the Demon Lord and this was planned to give her a memorable introduction? Was the whole event just a setup for the final boss to swoop in and cause chaos?!

350. Impatient Adventurer

>> 315

Looks like she’s talking to the players.

Oh, hold on, let me type it out for anyone who’s out and can’t watch the video...

“My name is Yuri. I’m playing as a summoner, using a bow, and running a pure luck build—the very choices you all believed were the weakest! And now...I’m about to obliterate every last

one of you!”
What?! This can’t be right! This silver-haired beauty was the Yuri we’ve all been talking about?!
She actually does have a dead look in her eyes. Or maybe more like a piercing stare? I get the “gone to the dark side” thing now!

388. Impatient Adventurer
>> 350
Is she serious?! There’s no way she could fight as a summoner with a bow and a pure luck build!
Wait...were all those monsters in the arena actually her summons?!
I’ve never heard of anyone taming a boss monster, but maybe it’s doable with a pure luck build?
Come to think of it, Yuri was fighting all the bosses solo. And the requirement for taming a monster is...“defeat the monster without any assistance from another player”!

400. Impatient Adventurer
>> 388
That’s crazy talk. How would you even fight a boss solo using a bow?! She’d never get this far with that kind of twisted play style!
But I’m gonna have to think about this later! Right now I’m too distracted by all those summoning circles appearing behind her...
Whooooa?! She’s raining monsters down on them?!?!?!

412. Impatient Adventurer
>> 400

Wow... She’s killing players in droves!

Who (or what) is Yuri really? Regular players don’t fight like this!

It’s more like...she’s the final boss!

Chapter 12 — Facing My Brother! Battle Royale Showdown!

"Y-Yuri's massacre shows no sign of letting up! Yuri, please, stop what you're doing! I'm begging you! You're turning our first ever event into a Demon Lord raid!"

I didn't get what Navi was trying to tell me, but whatever it was, I was going to ignore it. As a champion of justice, I had to take out every single player. It was the only way to restore the reputation of summoners, bow wielders, and pure luck builds.

The ridicule ends now! A peaceful society free from discrimination is best built by force!

The moment my Unbounded Calamity summon special art finished wreaking havoc, I resumed my firebird bombing run, which I coupled with countless Shade-Clone-enhanced Puffster arrows to deluge the arena with a ceaseless rain of damage.

"Do you see now?! Do you see that these three choices are the strongest?!"

"We're sorry! We're sorry, Yuri! Our plan to gang up on you was a mistake!"

"We'll never joke about the three weakest choices ever again! Spare us!"

Players were weeping as they tried to flee, but for the sake of future summoners, bow wielders, and pure luck build users, I could show no mercy.

They say that justice often demands the sacrifice of one life to save ten. Well, since I'm bringing justice by slaughtering tens of thousands of players, that must mean I'm saving hundreds of thousands! Probably!

The Goblin King and Wolf King had both leveled up so rapidly from all the player kills that I felt confident leaving them to chase

down anyone trying to flee.

Then, when ten minutes had passed since I'd summoned the Gigantic Dragonplant, I summoned him again to roast everything around me once more. Thousands of players who'd run from the plaza in terror met their demise.

And then, enough time had passed for me to use my Unbounded Calamity Summon again. Players who'd run from the burning edges of the town were now gathered right where I was dropping all of my monsters.

It was around that time that a message with a ton of text appeared in the corner of my vision.

You've defeated 18,260 players!
Players at level 40 and above are considered adept players. The experience adepts gain from defeating lower-level players is reduced based on the difference between their levels.
Many of the defeated players were ten or more levels below you and therefore did not yield any experience.

Yuri reached level 44. Yuri gained +18,260 event points...!

* The processing backlog has cleared.

New achievement: Kill 10 players!
Skill acquired: Frenzied Demon!
Frenzied Demon: Knockback dealt to other players slightly increases in intensity (making it easier to knock players over).

New achievement: Kill 100 players!
Your Frenzied Demon skill evolved into Killing Frenzy!
Killing Frenzy: Knockback dealt to other players increases in intensity (making it easier to knock players over).

New achievement: Kill 1,000 players!
Your Killing Frenzy skill evolved into Demonic Shock Wave!
Demonic Shock Wave: Knockback dealt to all enemies increases in intensity (making it easier to knock opponents over).

New achievement: Kill 10,000 players!
Your Demonic Shock Wave skill evolved into Demon Lord Shock Wave!
Demon Lord Shock Wave: Knockback dealt to all enemies increases considerably (making it easier to knock opponents over).

"Oooh! Nice!"

My rampage had netted me a bunch of rare skills. Frenzied Demon had become Demon Lord Shock Wave, and that wasn't the only skill that'd rapidly evolved. Because the number of player kills by my summoned monsters had reached ten thousand, I was given a summoner-only skill known as Demon Lord Kin, and because I'd killed a thousand players with projectile attacks, I was given a skill known as Demonic Archery. Demon Lord Kin was a highly effective passive skill that constantly boosted the stats of all summoned monsters by a factor of 1.3. Meanwhile, the Demonic Archery skill applied a homing ability to any projectile that I launched or threw...which was completely useless to me. The plan was to keep relying on Puffster and crew as always.

"Pikwooooh..." It seemed Chirpster was limited to just twenty minutes of flying with a player on his back.

"Oh? Getting tired, Chirpster? Thanks for all your hard work." I stroked the soft feathers on his back before sending him back to the alternate dimension.

With my ride gone, I touched down on the ruined plaza. No longer did the arena look like a peaceful copy of Starting Town. It was a city of death, full of rubble where buildings once stood and with fires burning throughout.

I could see the survivor counter in the corner of my vision still steadily ticking down, but there were no signs of life around me.

"Hey, Navi, did I win?"

"Hold on just a minute there, Yuri! I mean, Lord Yuri! We're not done processing the data... Oh?! There are still ten players left!" For some reason, Navi sounded so happy she might cry. "This battle's not over yet!"

If she'd been looking forward to giving commentary and didn't want the battle to end too quickly, then I knew how she felt. "You can relax, Navi! If it helps everyone wake up to the power of these three choices, I'll make sure the suffering of those survivors lasts as long as possible!"

"Nothing you just said makes me want to relax! Ahhhh! Can no one stand up to this heretical airhead of a hot babe turned Demon Lord?!"

Uh, excuse me? Surely, she meant to say "wise, handsome saint turned genius hero." Let's see whether she keeps up the slanderous commentary when she's surrounded by a gang of angry Puffster arrows vibrating menacingly...

But before I could teach Navi a lesson, some sort of explosion sent a mountain of debris behind me flying in all directions.

"Ha... Ha ha!" someone laughed.

I saw a figure emerge from the rubble and dust—a man covered in blood from head to toe. It was a sight that made me smile. He limped toward me, and as we locked eyes with one another, he chuckled. "Heh heh. That all you got, Yuri? You really thought you'd kill me that easily?!"

"No, I knew *you'd* pull through! Let's go, Baldy!"

I knew my brother-in-arms wouldn't let me down! He's the best! We'd agreed to duke it out like men, and as a man of his word, Baldy was here to face me.

Suddenly there was a rapturous cheer. The voices of the spectators were reaching us through Navi's microphone.

"S-Someone's still alive! And it's one of our toughest players! I thought Demon Lord Yuri's victory was certain after the defeat of our strongest contender, Zansword, but now, rising from the ashes,

another of our leading players, Reinhard von Edelfelt, has made his appearance!" Even Navi was cheering as she gave her commentary. Also, apparently my title was Demon Lord now.

Whoa, hold up... "Hey, Baldy, that name doesn't exactly match your avatar, does it? I would've bet money your name was Hrothgar."

"Who're you calling Hrothgar?! That reminds me, you've been calling me a barbarian since the day we met... All right, that does it. If I win, you have to do everything I say for an entire day! I'm gonna have you clearing out monsters, farming items, everything! You'll be begging for mercy the whole night!"

"Ha! Then if I win, you'll be my slave. I'll be dragging you around with me from morning until night!"

"Fine by me! Sounds like we've got a deal!"

We each took a moment to gulp down a recovery potion. My MP was maxed out once more, and likewise, the strength returned to Baldy's body as all his wounds vanished. Then we both threw down our empty potion bottles, and the instant they smashed on the ground...

"I'm not losing to the likes of you!" we both cried as we charged at each other with our fists clenched tight! "Urrrrrrggghhh!"

Baldy and I began our fight amid the blazing ruins of the town. I charged full speed at him and met his fist with my own. "Gonna knock you flying, Baldy!"

"What?!"

Right away, I'd gotten the upper hand. God Killer Fist negated all the force he threw at me, and then came Demon Lord Shock Wave—the skill I'd learned by killing over ten thousand players. Even with zero strength behind it, my punch sent Baldy flying backward.

Baldy somehow landed on his feet, then he skidded for several meters before coming to a stop. He held his fist while giving me a crooked smile. "Man, that hurt my arm! Hey, Yuri, how'd you hit so hard?! I'm playing the power grappler class. No one should be able to knock *me* back. Were you lying about being at zero strength this whole time?!"

"Nope! It's 'cause I just learned a skill called Demon Lord Shock Wave. Weird name for it since I'm playing the hero here."

"Some hero you'd make!" With that rather rude comeback, Baldy came charging at me again. His fists were emitting some strange aura that had to be part of a power grappler skill.

Interesting. In that case, I'll fight like a summoner! "Get out here, Gobster, Wolfster, Chirpster!"

"Goh buh!"

"Woof!"

"Pikwaaaw!"

My three boss monsters sprang out from summoning circles around me with ripples of malevolent black miasma pulsing from their bodies. The Demon Lord Kin skill was constantly elevating the stats of each boss.

As intimidating as they looked already, I wasn't done. "Arts activate! Hyper Power Burst! Hyper Defense Burst! Hyper Magic Burst! Hyper Luck Burst! Hyper Speed Burst!"

"Grrgaaah!" My powered-up familiars each gave a wild snarl as their stats tripled. Then they all rushed at Baldy to strike with their club, fangs, and flaming wings.

"Sh-She's showing no mercy at all!" Navi screeched. "Demon Lord Yuri is about to put a stop to our hero's miraculous comeback with an instant kill! Wah! The Demon Lord really is trying to shut down our event!"

I'm not the Demon Lord! That tiny fairy's getting a noogie from my fingertip once this is all over, mark my word... But for now, I had to focus on Baldy.

Baldy gave me a worried smile. "Oh man. You've got boss monsters working for you? You really are a Demon Lord, Yuri. Looks like it's time I got serious. I'm going all out! I'm gonna draw on every drop of blood in my body to take you down!" There was a burst of red light from his body, and then his exposed muscles began turning crimson and spitting sparks like red-hot swords. "Art activate! Death Wish!"

The moment his foot touched the ground, Baldy darted toward me like a crimson lightning bolt! Moving at supersonic speed, he got up close to the Goblin King and hit him with a powerful uppercut that sent him soaring into the air to collide with the firebird. He'd

taken out both monsters with a single blow.

All the while, Baldy had never let his guard down. The Wolf King had tried to seize the opportunity to lunge at Baldy's back, but without even turning around, Baldy hit him with a back-handed first, sending the boss monster flying dozens of meters away.

Wow, Baldy...since when'd you get so strong? I noticed that a pair of horns had sprouted from his head.

Navi noticed it too and gasped. "Wh-What incredible power! Reinhard von...that's too long, so I'm just gonna call him Baldy! Baldy took out all of Demon Lord Yuri's familiars in no time at all! But it certainly cost him. The Death Wish skill is a double-edged sword! It doubles the user's stats, but it steadily drains their HP! And judging by those horns, he's using another rare skill called Divine Oni Transfiguration that triples the user's power and speed while guaranteeing they'll die after a minute passes! Once triggered, there's no way to cancel it!"

Navi's words had me stunned. Baldy was literally bleeding himself dry for the sake of our fight. There were other survivors besides us, so even if he won this fight, he had little chance of winning the battle royale.

"Do you mind, fairy girl?" Baldy complained. "You're giving away all my secrets, you little imp... Though I guess it'd be kinda anticlimactic if I dropped dead mid-fight and no one knew why. I get it, you gotta keep the crowd hyped. Well, there you have it, Yuri. Gonna spend the next minute running and hiding now that she's given the game away?" Baldy was laying my options bare...but I could see a sense of trust burning in his eyes.

Oh ho...nice! I've got no choice but to take this like a man! "Ha! Me, run? Bring it on, Baldy. Whatever you throw me, I'll be right here to catch it!"

"Bwah ha ha! I knew you'd say that! Let's go, Yuri! I'm coming at you with all I've got!" I caught a glimpse of a crazed grin on his face, then he rushed at me with supersonic speed.

I tried to fend him off with my fist, but it proved futile. He was so fast that he struck me while I was still winding up my punch. When his punch slammed into my chest, it sent me hurtling backward for

hundreds of meters.

"Nggh?! Gah?!"

I smashed through many of the houses dotted around Starting Town, my HP being wiped out again and again. Relentless triggered every time as I died over and over.

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Skill active: Relentless! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Relentless! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Relentless! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Relentless! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
Skill active: Relentless! Survived with 1 HP after taking fatal
damage!
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Crap! I'm in trouble!

I punched through a building behind me to activate God-Killing Fist. The skill negated the damage of each impact, but I still smashed through more than thirty buildings before coming to a stop.

I landed safely, but I couldn't relax long. I noticed a strange shadow looming over me, then looked up to see Baldy holding a massive tower in his hands! *What in the world?!*

"Bwah ha ha ha ha! When my HP drops below half, I get a boost from my Frantic Strength skill! Now I can do some real damage!" With his strength boosted to some ridiculous new high, he threw the tower down at me like a slam dunk!

That's the last thing I need! If I get crushed under that, I won't survive the constant damage! I've got no choice but to use...
"Forbidden summoning! Chimeratic Machine Goblin!"

An ominous dark summoning circle appeared in front of me, followed by the creaking of rusted gears as an artificial Goblin King emerged. This monster was born from a fusion of Goblin King meat

and a rare item known as Broken Mechanism from an Advanced Ancient Civilization. Its stats were all close to zero with the exception of its high defense. The creature was born to die as my shield.

"I'm counting on you! Die for me!"

"Gob gih gah!" Gas vented from pipes along the machine goblin's entire body as it caught the tower. The ground at its feet immediately cracked, and sparks flew from its many gears, but the mechanical goblin held its ground with a mighty show of spirit and resilience as I took refuge behind it.

Now I'd better make a good showing of my own. As the machine goblin was breaking down, I leaped onto its back, then began running up the side of the tower. "I'm coming for you, Baldy!"

At the tower's peak, Baldy looked down at me in shock. "Wh-What?! You can run up walls?! Do rules not apply to you?!"

I could never have pulled off this stunt alone. From within my boots, Armor Knight was making sure my feet found the tiny imperfections in the tower's surface to give me enough purchase.

"Goh gih... Guh... Go... Master go!" I heard the machine goblin cheering me on, followed by the sound of it being crushed under the tower's weight.

Meanwhile, I was conjuring another dark summoning circle. "Forbidden summoning! Chimeratic Lightning Wolf, come forth!"

"Awooooooooooo!" With a bold howl, an artificial wolf king with a body coated in white electricity shot out like a bullet. This monster was born from a fusion of Wolf King meat with a rare item called Divine Lightning Ore. Similarly to the machine goblin, its stats were all close to zero, save for its high agility. It was an electrified missile made for a single purpose.

The lightning wolf fully understood its role as it ran up the tower then leaped at Baldy with literal lightning speed.

"Gah! Get away from me, runt!" Baldy stopped the wolf with an uppercut just as it tried to bite him...but the wolf had carried out its duty perfectly. In the same instant that I heard its neck break, a current ran through Baldy's body. "Nghgahgahgahgahgah?!" Baldy fell from the top of the tower, twitching and with smoke rising from his charred skin.

This was the lightning wolf's power. Any enemy that touched it was inflicted with the paralysis status. This was exactly what I'd envisioned when creating it.

When I at long last reached the top of the tower, I summoned another chimera to send after Baldy. "Forbidden summoning! Chimeratic Genocide Bird, come forth!"

A summoning circle appeared, ushering forth a nightmarish firebird with a body bathed in black flame. This monster was born out of a fusion between firebird meat and a rare item known as Hellfire Ore. Its main stat was magic, and it was even more foolproof than the wolf chimera.

"Genocide bird, dive down after him!"

"Pikraaaaaaaaaaw!" Its one and only attack was a fireburst so powerful it would roast itself upon using it.

I still wasn't done. As I leaped from the tower with bow in hand, I shot Puffster arrows down at Baldy. The power of Shade Clone meant that my eleven arrows became 110.

Navi gasped once more. "Wh-Whaaaat?! Showing no mercy is one thing, but this is something else! Demon Lord Yuri hasn't just thrown a self-destructing chimera into the fray, she's combining monster-possession with the bow to create an arrow hailstorm! And it's all closing in on Baldy while he's still paralyzed!"

The genocide bird and the Puffster force surged ahead, intent on destroying their target. I had Baldy in an impossible position.

But just as this devastating barrage was about to hit him, life returned to his eyes. The red aura given off by his entire body grew in intensity, and he broke free of the paralysis. "Bwah ha ha ha ha! I'm under thirty percent HP and inflicted with an ailment! That's the trigger condition I needed! Skill activate! Self-Annihilation in the Face of Death!" Then Baldy exploded! Or more accurately, he flew upward, propelled by a blast of blood and gas shooting out of his back.

Oh, I remember seeing this one on the online guide.

Self-Annihilation in the Face of Death was a skill that could only be used while below thirty percent HP and inflicted with a status ailment. Once activated, it cured all ailments and made the player

rush toward their enemy while their HP declined by one percent per second. It was designed for dying players who wanted to take an enemy down with them.

"Urrrrrgggggghhh!"

"Pikraaaaaaa?!"

With every ounce of his life force weaponized, Baldy was unstoppable. He grabbed the approaching genocide bird by the beak and used a judo throw to send it hurtling downward at supersonic speed. The unfortunate bird exploded so spectacularly upon hitting the ground that the last few surviving players—who'd all been too scared to join in the fight—were caught up in the blast. The player count in the corner of my vision dropped to two, confirming that there was only me and Baldy left.

"Ora ora ora ora ora ora ora!"

"Currsscurrsscurrsss?!"

Baldy remained unstoppable. His punches came at supersonic speed as he knocked aside the Puffster arrows and continued flying toward me. With Death Wish still draining his HP, he couldn't have had more than ten seconds left to live.

Then let's not waste time... "Come at me, Baldy! I'll finish you with a single punch!"

"You wish, Yuri! It's gonna be *my* fist that puts an end to this!"

I threw my bow aside and we collided midair. Even though my fist met his, the jet propulsion from Baldy's back was so strong that my Demon Lord Shock Wave couldn't stop him. We traded blows again and again as we hurtled toward our deaths.

"I'm winning this one!" Every time Baldy's fist hit me, my HP dropped to zero.

"No, you're not beating me!" Every time I landed a blow, Baldy's inevitable demise drew closer.

We were utterly focused on one another. We thought of nothing but throwing and enduring each punch.

"Yuriiiiiii!"

"Baldyyyy!"

Then came the final exchange. I ducked under Baldy's fist and delivered a crushing blow to his abdomen!

"Nghgaaaah?!" Baldy wheezed, and blood spurted from his mouth.

I can't waste this moment! I drew back my arm to deliver a final blow. "Now it's over!" My fist slammed hard into Baldy's face, sending him smashing into the ground.

I heard fanfare the moment he hit the dirt, and it was closely followed by a message window.



Congratulations, Yuri!

You defeated the final player! You are the winner of the first battle royale!

"Haah... Haah... I...did it...!"

In the closing moments of the contest, I was the last one left alive.

But I was utterly spent. I would have roared in celebration, but I was too mentally drained even for that. Instead of summoning a familiar to catch me, I let myself crash into Baldy's body on the ground.

The instant I collided with his chest...

Skill...failed to activate.

Your HP was reduced to zero.

What a time for Relentless to fail. I was dead before I could celebrate my victory.

As the two of us began to fade, I heard Baldy's familiar laugh beneath me. "You're gonna die on my corpse just like that? Wait...don't tell me I would've had you if I'd just gotten one more punch in?"

"Ha. You never stood a chance. But if you really think you could've won, then I'm always up for a rematch."

"You'd better be. We're doing this again, Yuri!"

My brother and I both laughed as our bodies grew fainter. All the while, we heard Navi and the spectators celebrating.

"Those two were incredible!"

"That fight got so intense!"

"I'm playing as a summoner from now on!"

I also heard one strange jeer of "I hope you explode, Baldy!" It was a little late for that since his back had already exploded a moment ago, though...

And so the battle royale ended with the crowd completely enthralled.

“I’ll be seeing you in the next four battle royales! I’ll be fighting in every single one,” I told Baldy.

“Demon Lord Yuri, please no!” the spectators all cried at once. I had no idea what they meant.

Chapter 13 — Kicked Out

Whew. Dying's a new experience.

After coming back to life in a place known as the Temple of Revival, I'd made my way to an open area where the spectators were all gathered.

By the way, if you're wondering how I got my bow back after throwing it away in the arena, it had spun like a boomerang with enough intensity to smash through the interdimensional barrier and make it back to me. Impressive stuff.

The plaza was suddenly full of energy when the tens of thousands of spectators saw me arrive. Some cheered "Ahhh! It's the Demon Lord!" while others screamed "Arrrgh! It's the Demon Lord!"

"Whoa, you're stunning up close!" someone told me. "W-Would you mind if I took a screenshot...?"

"Stay back!" warned someone else. "Don't be fooled by the pretty face! She's ruthless! I should know! I was in the arena with her!"

"I couldn't believe it. I always thought bows were worthless trash once an enemy gets up close, but I never thought I'd see someone throw their bow away like *literal* trash to start using their fists instead! Who'd have thought a ranged weapon user would be so eager to throw a punch?!"

"It looked like she was more comfortable throwing punches than drawing the bow... Combine that with her glamorous looks, and it's like she's a crime boss!"

The players were all keeping their eyes glued on me while giving me a wide berth.

Heh heh heh. Feels good to be famous. Now I ought to give my fans what they want! "Thank you, thank you! Since you all enjoyed watching my first battle royale so much, rejoice! I plan to join the second one!"

"Demon Lord Yuri, please no!" everyone cried.

Why are they trying to stop me?! I don't get it! Well, I'm joining, whatever they say!

For a short while things were hectic. Players I'd killed in the first match were getting mad at me, while other summoners and bow wielders were coming over to thank me, saying "We're going to give it another shot!"

Before long, I noticed a bright light coming from behind me and turned around to see Odin himself had teleported to us! His unannounced arrival had me and everyone else shocked.

"Is this a surprise attack?!" I said. "If it's another battle, then I'm up for it! Let's do this!"

"Hold on a moment!" Odin replied. "You're the one person I'd rather not fight!"

"You sure? Today taught me how fun it is to beat people up."

"Eek. We've created a monster!" For a second, the old man genuinely looked terrified, but then he composed himself and cleared his throat. "Ah, ahem! I am here for but one reason! As the winner of the first battle royale, you have earned my praise! I believe we all owe this brave warrior a hearty round of applause!"

The crowd erupted into a storm of clapping, and everyone's cheers once again filled the plaza. Well, there were a few players I'd defeated (such as Korin) who remained quiet and pale, but even they relented when I showed them my friendly side. "Hopefully I'll run into some of you out in the field," I told them, just to let them know I was up for some cooperative play. They all reacted by twitching, then trembling, and finally clapping like broken toys with tears in their eyes. *What a weird bunch!*

Once the applause had died down a little, the old guy continued. "There's something I'd like to say not just to Yuri, but to every brave fighter here. The event points you've just earned may be exchanged for limited items and limited skills! And since event points have no expiration date, you may hold on to them indefinitely, should you prefer. I anticipate that the number of items available for exchange will increase in the future."

Ooh! Limited items and skills! I like the sound of that! The 30,000

points I got in the first battle ought to be enough to buy whatever I want. And there's still four more battle royales to go! I'm only just getting started! Mwah ha ha ha!

"And for our victors, I have a very special reward! Each winner of a battle royale will be granted the right to establish their own guild home!"

The old man's announcement caused a stir among all the players, me included. "A guild home...?!"

A guild was an organization formed by a group of players. Some games called them clans. *Oh, yeah... I remember hearing that* Blade Skill Online *was supposed to have guilds...*

"Mwuh huh huh," Odin laughed. "Quite the shock, I'm sure! Let me make the announcement official here and now! Following a software update due the day after tomorrow, there will be a guild system! There are also plans for special events and quests specifically for guilds! I do hope you'll all enjoy!"

The old man's announcement was met with a huge cheer.

That really does sound fun. If you've got to be in a guild to take part, then maybe it'll be a guild war! A war sure sounds nice. I'd love to be caught up in one! It'll be just like those old yakuza movies my grandpa used to show me! I've always wanted to experience something like that!

"A lone man risking it all to storm rival headquarters and take out an old enemy," I said to myself. "That's the kind of action I'm looking for."

"Wh-What a disturbing thing for our victor to say! I shall pretend I didn't hear it!" Odin continued his announcement. "You can also look forward to more story quests, a video streaming feature, and even more after a short break for maintenance. Oh, and...there will of course be some tweaks to several skills and classes for the sake of balance..."

For some reason, everyone was looking at me.

I dunno what they're looking at me for. I'm using a summoner, bow, and pure luck build—the weakest options. No one's going to nerf good old Yuri!

Oh, maybe they're gonna make me stronger?! I can't wait!

My excitement was growing as Odin continued his speech.

"And finally... Well... I was just in an impromptu meeting with the rest of the staff and— Uh, no, I mean, I convened my ministers for a council, and the following resolution was passed! Yuri, in recognition of the incredible power you've shown me during the first battle royale, I see fit to bestow upon you the title of Renowned Player!"

"R-Renowned?!" *Oh, wow! What does that even mean?! Maybe the title comes with cool items! Whatever it is, I just know it'll be awesome!*

"As a Renowned Player, you have earned the right to sit in the commentary booth and share your thoughts on each upcoming battle royale! To everyone else, let me assure you, Demon Lord Yuri will be sitting out of the subsequent battles. You may participate without fear!"

"Thank God!" everyone cried at once.

Hey, hold on a second! Who said I wanted to do commentary?! My rampage is just getting started! No!!! Why?!

A message had just appeared in front of me saying "Congratulations! You have been chosen as a guest commentator! (You may not participate for the remainder of the event.)"

"And now I must disappear! Goodbye!"

"Thanks, King Odin!" everyone shouted.

"Hey, Odin, you can't leave!" I cried. "Let me fight some more! I wanna kill more people! I was just gearing up to go nuts!"

Odin quickly teleported like he was trying to get away from me.

My plan to assume the role of hero and make everyone think twice about bad-mouthing summoners, bows, and pure luck builds had been a huge success, but in the process, I'd fallen victim to an evil ploy by the devs. They'd kicked me out of the event!

This isn't over, devs... I'll be out for vengeance again, and you'll be my new target! This sucks!

[The Event Is Over] General Discussion Thread 300 [Nice Fighting!]

1. Impatient Adventurer

This thread is for general discussion.
Speak your mind freely, but please stick to the forum rules. If you want to recruit party members, rant, hate on the game, or start drama, please start a dedicated thread.
A new thread will be created automatically when this thread reaches the reply limit.
Previous thread: http://**********

107. Impatient Adventurer

Yesterday's PvP was a blast!
I say we should all kick back and share our thoughts.

108. Impatient Adventurer

>> 107
Seconded!
The way Zansword pulled off his win in the second royale was amazing.
He repelled a ton of spells with sword slashes while closing in superfast to use Continuous Beheading!
He sure showed us how to make use of the samurai master class's speed attacks.

109. Impatient Adventurer

>> 108
Wacko's win in the third royale was nice as well.
Players were trying to hide in buildings, but they had no chance when she used Three-Dimensional Drive to hunt them from the walls and ceilings.
Those enhanced movement skills really make beast riser the best class when you're fighting indoors.

130. Impatient Adventurer

>> 109

While Spearo can be pretty weird, his win in the fourth royale was kinda...dull.

A highlight was when he showed up all full of confidence and told everyone, “The hero has arrived!” After that though, he used normal spear attacks, hid when he was in trouble, took out the occasional enemy with a ranged spear, and just generally played it safe until he was the only one left. Honestly, it was so basic I barely remember any of it lol. But I guess that’s the correct way to make use of the brave lancer class’s versatility.

151. Impatient Adventurer

>> 130

The best part for me was seeing Baldy finally get a win in the fifth royale!

I suppose it’s just part of how battle royales work, but it was always hard for someone strong like him to stay alive with everyone ganging up on him. You could tell he was determined by the fifth royale, though. It’s even more impressive when you consider that the power grappler class is all about sacrificing HP for short-term stat boosts.

173. Impatient Adventurer

>> 151

Speaking of Baldy, I know what my favorite moment was!

His fight with Demon Lord Yuri in that first royale was legendary! I don’t know why no one else is talking about it.

176. Impatient Adventurer

>> 173

Noooooooooooooooo! Demon Lord Yuri! I’m sorry! I’m sorry! I’m sorry! I’m sorry! I’m sorry!

I’m sorry for laughing at the bow and the summoner class! And I’m sorry for lying about them being overpowered (lol!) on the online guide! Forgive meeeeee!

179. Impatient Adventurer

>> 176

We don’t speak that name around here! I’m still traumatized from that massacre in the first royale, and I’m far from the only one!

Ahhh! I can see the lasers right now! Oh no, the gang of boss monsters is coming for me! Please, not the rain of obsidian arrows! Why do they land critical hits every time when that’s supposed to be rare?! Whyyyyyyy????

180. Impatient Adventurer

Noooooooooooooooooooo!

240. Impatient Adventurer

And people are going crazy again... You guys need your heads checked out. Personally, I’m in love with her! Yuri turned the game into a whole different genre, mowing down every player in her way with unrivaled power! And she was just as deadly bare-handed!

She truly is our Demon Lord! Starting tomorrow, she’s my role model!

294. Impatient Adventurer

>> 240
Uh-oh! We've woken up her deranged followers!
Yeah...these guys show up every time someone mentions her name, hence we tend to avoid saying it. But since we're already on the topic, as someone who gave the summoner class a genuine go, I'm glad to see Yuri get the Renowned Player title.
Taming bosses and rare monsters seems impossible based on how much skill you'd need AND how much luck you'd need, but I've been inspired to give it a go!

310. Impatient Adventurer
>> 294
I feel you. As a bow user myself, I was half jealous, half proud to see her win lol.
Turns out you can rain countless arrows down on enemies if you get monsters to possess them. I went for an orthodox combination of bow as weapon and archer class, which gets you a bunch of bow arts, but I couldn't believe it when I saw what I was missing out on. Archer arts don't even compare to what she can do.
That said, the homing ability looks kinda broken.

315. Impatient Adventurer
>> 310
Everyone talks about the boss rush she created, but arrows possessed by living weapons are the real cheat lol.
Apparently, she tamed rare monsters by putting all her points into luck, as dumb as that sounds. I don't know how she even got started with zero strength and no good weapon or equipment...
Living weapons are fast, and they can fly, but to get where she

is, she had to have beat one while solo and with a weak build. She’s obviously tough.
Actually, I can’t even imagine how she could even hit a quick little monster that gets in close. You’d never hit it with the bow... Player skill has to have been a big part of it.

350. Impatient Adventurer
>> 315
Lol yeah, it sounds impossible.
Some players have tried summoner, bow, and pure luck as a sort of challenge run, but I doubt any went out at night when the monsters are stronger, stayed alive long enough to find a monster as rare as a living weapon, and then defeated it. And if they did, even with high luck, taming it is still a matter of RNG...
Lmao what a pain. No wonder no one except Yuri pulled it off lol.
I was in a play-testing group of sorts during the beta, but I never predicted that you could combine the weakest class, weapon, and stat configuration, then surpass some ridiculous hurdles to get the strongest build in the game...
We only had a month, which wasn’t enough time for the trial and error you’d need to find weird combos like this one.

388. Impatient Adventurer
>> 350
Sounds tough, but I get the gist of how she did it. I keep thinking I should make a new character and try it myself. But then I remind myself that it’ll just be nerfed after the update lol.
Yuri’s fight with Baldy made it obvious just how broken Last

Stand is lmao.
I could see her HP bar with Lifeforce Perception, and no matter how many hits she took, her HP was always at 1. Since we know she specialized in luck, I'll bet she had Last Stand or an upgraded version of the same skill and was spamming it the whole time.

400. Impatient Adventurer
>> 388
That's pure cheese lmao. It'll get nerfed for sure.
That's really going to suck for her.
I actually spoke with her a little and she's friendlier than you'd expect. She's a super cute girl with natural good looks, and yet she's really down-to-earth at the same time. It was like talking to another boy at school.
Also I loved how she kept insisting on rejoining the event after she got kicked out. Navi would ask her something like "Um... What do you think of that player, Lord Yuri?" and he'd always reply something like "This battle's getting intense! Okay, that's it, I'm jumping in so I can fight that guy myself!"

412. Impatient Adventurer
>> 400
All her monsters had silly names like Puffster and Wolfster lol. She might be an aggressive demon lord, but she's got a cute side.
Whenever the battles got heated, she'd be banging on the desk in tears, shouting things like "Whoa! Let me get in there! Why are the devs so cruel?! They're crushing my soul here!" or "This is discrimination and I'm gonna make sure the devs

apologize for it!” It was fun to watch lol.

Though I’m not sure the devs went far enough to be honest. They should have excluded Renowned Players from the total event point ranking...

417. Impatient Adventurer

>> 412

Yeah, it’s a total joke lol.

It’s basically a kill ranking since every point represents one kill. Here’s how it looks:

#1 Yuri (29,998 points)

#2 Zansword (1,976 points)

#3 Baldy (1,760 points)

#4 Jolt (912 points)

#5 Wacko (713 points)

430. Impatient Adventurer

>> 417

Lmao that gap between first and second...

440. Impatient Adventurer

>> 417

Yuri’s a total monster lol.

And the funniest part is, she got all those points in a single royale. No wonder she got kicked.

454. Impatient Adventurer

>> 417

It’s proof of how crazy she is lol.

There’s videos of all five royales up on a streaming site. That

legendary first royale has way more comments than the others lol.
People are commenting things like “Is this a hack and slash?!” “Is this a giant monster movie?” and “Anyone else reminded of the part in a video game where the Demon Lord shows up?”
There’s even a bunch of overseas bros saying things like “Who’s the crazy hot girl with the silver hair?!” and “That bald guy gave his life to stop that girl after the darkness consumed her. What a good guy!”
It’ll be #1 trending on the site for sure lol.

470. Impatient Adventurer
>> 454
Holy... That is some good promotion lol. Bet the devs are pleased.
Just think how many new players there’ll be after maintenance is done and the server is back up.
Wait a second... If they’re all coming to us after seeing Demon Lord Yuri’s cheat build and Hero Baldy’s go-on-a-rampage-and-die play style, are we gonna get a ton of clones?!

480. Impatient Adventurer
>> 470
That. Would. Be. Hell.
Devs, if you’re reading, please rebalance the game!

Side Story 1 — Yuri the Big-Boobed Thuggish Demon Lord Maid!

"Die, Baldy! Take this! And this!"

"I'm about to end you, Yuri! Eat this!"

The day after the event, I had Baldy following my orders for a whole day, as per the deal we'd made before our fight. But we only knew how to communicate through our fists! And so, we were on the Starting Plain, where the monsters wouldn't disturb us, beating the crap out of each other.

Oops! A shock wave had just knocked over the ten or so players watching us fight. *Sorry, guys!*

"Bah. You've turned into a real battle freak too, Yuri. Well, now what?" Baldy asked while coming at me with a supersonic flying kick. "Are we gonna keep hitting each other till someone collapses of exhaustion? I'd be all for it."

"Hmm... I wonder... That sounds a little lackluster to me. Don't suppose you've got any other ideas?" I replied while shielding myself with Chimeric Machine Goblin #2 (oh, and the impact caused a quake that knocked the spectators over again).

"Let me think... Okay, Yuri, how about you help me out in that case? Truth is, I've found a quest for an item I really want, but only female players can accept it. It wouldn't be an issue except that pretty much every girl in this game hates me for some reason... How about you take it on and I'll back you up?"

"They hate you 'cause you look like a thug and hit on every girl you see," I said while firing 110 arrows from my bow. "Anyway, I'm not a girl either, so... Oh, that's right. I'm technically female inside the game, aren't I?" I'd stopped caring about how I looked and had completely forgotten about it.

Baldy laughed aloud while punching the arrows out of the air.

"How could you forget a thing like that?! Haven't I told you you're the most beautiful woman I've ever seen?" (Meanwhile, the players watching us all got skewered by the arrows he'd knocked off course.)

"You moron. Haven't I told you I couldn't care less?" I said while summoning a Gigantic Dragonplant that towered over the surrounding landscape and scorched the earth around us with powerful death lasers. "Anyhow, what's this quest about?"

Baldy grinned as he jumped into the air to dodge. "It's every man's favorite! A maid café!"

"The hell are you even talking about?!"

I found the look of excitement forming on my brother-in-arms's face unnerving as I leaped into the air and buried my fist into it, knocking him flying.

♦ ◊ ♦

Starting Town-Exclusive Quest ☆ Transform yourself into a maid queen!

That was the ridiculous name of the quest I was accepting. *This is so stupid.*

The idea was that players would work in a maid café on the edge of town. Other players could then visit and pay an extra fee to make their favorite maid do things like spoon-feeding them...which sounded really seedy to me.

To clear the quest, I would have to make a certain size contribution to the café. In other words, I had to bring in enough money. *I hope they get exposed for this...*

According to Baldy, a lot of girls wanted to try the quest since it was some easy work experience and the maid outfits were really cute. He also warned that it could get nasty if multiple maids did the quest at the same time and got competitive with each other. As much as I loved a good fight, that sort of battle sounded less than appealing.

In any case, this quest was going to be easy for me because the conditions for clearing it contained a loophole a mile wide.

My partner in crime was sitting in front of a mountain of food. "Hey, little maid, if I buy the café's priciest drink, you'll sit here and pour it for me, won't you?" he said while trying to put an arm around my shoulders.

I fended him off with a sharp elbow. "Pour your own drinks, jerk!"

That's right. Anyone with a rich friend willing to play the role of customer could finish this quest in no time.

As one of the game's top players, Baldy had built up tons of wealth slaughtering monsters. Requesting me by name then ordering everything on the menu was easy for him. After just half an hour, I was close to finishing the quest.

Though I was getting an easy ride, I still had a major gripe with the whole arrangement. "I don't see why the quest makes me wear this maid outfit the whole time. This little skirt barely hides my thighs at all, and it's embarrassing!"

"Bwah ha ha. That's just how it is! Hold up though, you normally wear that idol dress, don't you? It's not like you're showing any more skin than usual."

"Nnngh?! D-Don't say things that'll make me self-conscious!" I grabbed my skirt and did my best to cover up my exposed thighs. *Ugh... This is humiliating... Why does it feel like I lost a bet? I won that battle royale, not him.*

I turned my head away and caught sight of us reflected in the window glass—a brawny thug being waited on by a silver-haired maid with the light gone from her eyes. It felt like I was looking at a crime scene.

I heard one customer whisper, "Shouldn't we report him to somebody...?" Then another replied, "Don't you know who they are? That's Demon Lord Yuri! And they say the bald guy's dating her. They're probably both getting off on this."

Where'd they get that crazy idea?! Gah, I just wanna get out of here! I love being the center of attention, but not when I'm making a fool of myself!

"Nnnnnnnnngh... Tell me, my rotten master, what's this amazing item I'm gonna get when I'm done serving your dumb ass? And how can something limited to girls be something you want so bad?"

Baldy suddenly went from being rowdy to a barely audible mumble. “Oh, about that... Sorry but...” he began. Then he roared, “I never wanted the item! I was kidding about the whole thing! I thought I’d get a good reaction out of you; I never thought you’d say yes! Man, that maid outfit’s cute! You’re the sweetest, Yuri!” Then he started howling with laughter.



"Whaaaaaat?!" *This jerk's gone too far this time!* "I'm gonna kill you again!"

"Aaaaargggghh?! Wait, not here in the café! L-Let's talk this through! Calm down!"

"You expect me to be calm?!" I threw my rotten master to the ground, got on top of him, and began throwing punches.

"Hey I didn't order any rough stuff!" he joked.

I responded by pouring a bowl of hot soup over him.

"Ughblub blub blub?! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! Oh, I can see your panties."

"You're not sorry at all, are you?!"

No wonder he can't get a girlfriend! Since my brother-in-arms clearly hadn't learned anything, I finished him off with a headbutt.

Several days later, I heard that a bunch of customers at the café were asking for the same thing: "Give us an option to get beaten up by the maids!" Apparently, the café went so far as to introduce some aggressive maid NPCs to meet the demand.

How'd that trend start?!

Side Story 2 — Fate Brings Two Girls Together

"Noooooooooo! Somebody help meeeeeee!"

"Ora ora ora ora! Stop resisting and let Lady Shiru hunt you down! Oraaaaa!"

A day after the battle royale, Korin—the little ninja who'd been roasted to death by Yuri's giant monster—had gone hunting in the forest. As she was doing her best to raise her level, and venting her frustrations on any monster she encountered all the while, she was constantly daydreaming of someday overthrowing the beautiful yet aggressive Demon Lord. Her training session was cut short, however, when a red-haired girl with a huge sword rushed at her without warning.

Korin had immediately sensed she was in danger and had dodged the attack, but the mysterious assailant hadn't let up. The fight had quickly turned into a game of cat and mouse that had them running through the forest.

"Eek! Wh-What's wrong with you?! Just when I'd almost killed enough monsters to get over the way Yuri killed me!"

"Hah?! Then that makes two of us! Killing players is the only way I can get over dying to that harebrained Demon Lord!"

"Wh-Why players?!"

Korin knew this type of player as a "PKer," that is, a player killer—someone who spent their in-game time hunting other players rather than monsters.

To an efficiency geek like Korin, PKers were a total mystery. Although points had been awarded for every kill at the PvP event, *Blade Skill Online* didn't usually encourage players to attack each other. Player kills did offer experience, but it wasn't possible to take the victim's items afterward. Meanwhile, defeating monsters would

yield both experience and items, making it more efficient.

"Wh-Wh-Why are you hunting players?! Did you say your name was Shiru? If you're angry, just take it out on monsters like I do!"

"Don't be a fool. When I punish a monster, the only screams I hear are artificial! If I'm going to play a virtual reality game, I at least want to hear the screams of real humans!"

"Eeeeeek! You're insane!" Korin realized that the player pursuing her was more dangerous than she'd first thought. She sprinted at full speed as her tears raced down her cheeks...but her pursuer was evidently well practiced at chasing people. She always took the shortest route between the trees, managing to get close enough to Korin to slash at her back, grazing her with the point of her sword several times.

In the Full Dive System, players moved using their senses rather than a controller, which had some unusual consequences. With her higher agility stat, Korin should have been faster, but her pursuer was a professional man hunter. And not just that, the dull pain in Korin's back and her instinctive fear of hostile people both slowed her pace, allowing the PKer to gradually close the distance. Korin felt like screaming at the game's creators, "You didn't have to make this part realistic!"

"Ah!" The chase came to an end when Korin tripped over a tree root. There was no coming back from her mistake—she didn't even attempt to break her fall as their life-and-death struggle approached its natural conclusion.

The PKer slowly approached Korin as she groaned in pain. "Well, you really made that difficult for me, didn't you?" She pointed her sword at Korin, tracing her blade's tip along the perimeter of Korin's torso as if marking out "cut here" lines for her head and limbs.

"Eeeek?! Let me go and I'll do anything! If it's money you want, you can have it!"

"I don't want your money. Heh, heh. Since you gave me so much trouble...I think I'll cut you into tiny little pieces while your HP gradually dwindles to nothing!"

"But why?!"

The killer wore a sadistic smile as Korin could only tremble and

cry.

Their world was only a game. No matter what injuries players had, they'd only ever feel very slight pain, and there'd be no damage to their real-life bodies. Korin fully understood that, but...even with that knowledge, who could remain calm at the prospect of being dismembered?

It was all too much for Korin to bear. She was facing such intense malice for the first time in her life that she felt overwhelmed with fear.

Korin's reaction only added to the girl's—to Shiru's—excitement. With a warped smile on her face, she raised her greatsword high and prepared to bring it down on her victim. "Ah ha ha! Let's start with your feet!"

"Aaaaah?!" Korin's scream echoed through the dim forest as the blade swung down.

"Hold it right there!" said a gallant voice moving fast toward them. It belonged to a woman wearing a dress and holding an umbrella like a blade. She'd used it to block Shiru's sword swing.

"Who do you think you are?" Shiru demanded.

"My name is Françoise. As much as I hate to ruin your fun, I feel I must interject!"

Françoise and the PKer stood in front of Korin glowering at each other. From where she sat, Korin could sense a fierce struggle between one player's desire to kill and the other's sense of justice.

"Pah... There's no fun in a serious fight." It was Shiru who stood down. She effortlessly leaped into the air and landed on a broad tree branch.

"My oh my. Are you running away?"

"Laugh while you still can. The little one might have escaped me, but you... You'll come to regret obstructing Lady Shiru's hunt. This isn't over—I know your name and face. Next time we meet, I'll have countless followers behind me." Shiru scowled as she turned and left.

Her parting words had sounded so much like a generic evil speech that, in other circumstances, Korin might have laughed...but with this girl, she felt sure that someone so sadistic really might be

spiteful enough to come back with a gang behind her.

Françoise must have been thinking the same thing. She sighed while throwing back her blonde hair. "Whew. Never have I seen someone so stereotypically evil. I know a certain Demon Lord who can be a little aggressive at times, but if he's delinquent material, that girl's fit to lead a biker gang." Françoise then muttered to herself, "I do wonder what would happen were the two of them to meet."

"But...!" Korin couldn't help but cry out. "Françoise, was it? How can you be so relaxed?! Now you're a target and all because of me. She could come for you at any time!"

"Oh ho ho. I'll cross that bridge when I come to it. And you mustn't forget that this is merely a game. We should consider encounters with peculiar characters as events of sorts and try to find some enjoyment in them."

"But...!"

Although Françoise had a point, Korin couldn't easily accept it after being faced with such barefaced malice. With the Full Dive System making everything feel like reality, Korin couldn't ignore it when an opponent genuinely wished her harm. She didn't want to go through the same experience a second time, nor could she stand the idea of someone else suffering in her place.

Just as Korin was about to start crying again, Françoise placed a gentle hand on her head. "Thank you for worrying about me. But I'll be quite all right. I'm a better fighter than you might guess, and if I were in real trouble, I have a smooth-headed friend who's stronger than I, albeit a little perverted. I could even seek help from a beautiful woman with the heart of a fearless demon lord."

It pained Korin just to look at Françoise's kind smile. *She must be so much stronger than me. All I can do is cry.*

It was as though Françoise was concealing considerable strength. In that respect, she wasn't so different from the aggressive girl who'd succeeded in becoming the strongest player with the least probable build, though it might have been strength of a different kind.

"I'll... I'll get stronger. Then if a PKer targets me again, I won't

cry about it!" Korin promised herself she'd gain the strength to enjoy *Blade Skill Online* to the fullest, just like Yuri and the girl in front of her.

"That sounds like a wonderful idea," Françoise replied, warmly approving of her determination.

A few days later, a thread appeared on the message board, replete with screenshots, titled "[Important Announcement!] Gorgeous Girl and Petite Cutie Sighted in Loving Embrace During Forest Hunt [Yuri News!]." Korin was so furious she vowed to find and PK whoever made the thread!

Afterword


HAAH
HAAH
FLASH

A beautiful author has arrived to grace you with her presence!

If this is our first meeting, then it's nice to meet you! I'm Mazi!

I'm a beautiful virtual twitterer who puts her face and voice on full display, so look me up!

@mazomanzi ← This is my Twitter account! Yay!

Much like in another book of mine released recently, I've got barely any time to write the afterword, so I'm just going to write a bunch of stuff really fast with a ton of exclamation points to pad out the character count!!!!!! In fact, it'll be mostly copy and paste!!!!!!! Ooooh my!

How did you like *Blade Skill Online*?!!!

It's a story about a protagonist who hates losing doing what he can using a combination of all the weakest possible trash!!!! Henderson!!!

Okay, this afterword's about to get pretty rough because I've a backlog of work to do for two other series, including *The Bottom-Tier Baron's Accidental Rise to the Top*, which, like this series, is published by Overlap!

Speaking of which, a **manga adaptation and an overseas release** for *Bottom-Tier Baron* both got announced recently! Yay! Maybe it'll happen for *BSO* too, depending on the sales figures!!!!

To everyone who read the web novel then bought the light novel as well, thank you so much!!!!!! To everyone who hadn't heard of the series but got drawn in by the title or cover, fate has brought us together!!! I'm a J-cup catgirl maid virtual babe on Twitter, so post a picture of your purchased book there and I'll say "弟くんっ♡"!!!!!! *[TL Note: This reads "otouto-kun" and is an affectionate way to address a younger brother.]* Please, please, please, please tell friends, family members, acquaintances, local elementary schoolers, and total strangers on internet forum threads that they should check out *BSO* because it grants access to a **beautiful maid girl with big boobies**!!!!!! I appreciate your help!!!! Tweet about it and I will react!!!

And another thing! I'd like to use this space to thank everyone who gave me illustrations over Twitter or bought me some food from

my Am*zon wish list to keep me going (my list of **food I want to try before I die**)!!!!!!

[TL Note: The original afterword lists over 150 usernames and pseudonyms of private individuals. As these are heavily stylized and do not have official English spellings, we have chosen to preserve these names as is in the following paragraph rather than approximate.]

高千穂絵麻 (たかてぃ)-sama, 皇夏奈-chan, 磊(こいし)なぎ-chan (gave me lube), おののきももやす-sama, まさみゃ～-san, 破談の男-san (**gave me a nipple vibrator and regularly gives me donations!**), たわしの人雛田黒-san, ぽんきち-san, 無限堂ハルノ-san, 明太子まみれ-sensei (**drew the illustration at the start of the afterword!**), がふ-sensei, イワチグ-sensei, ふにゃこ (ポアンポアン)-sensei, 朝霧陽月-san, セレニィ-chan, リオン書店員-san, さんます-san, Haruka-san, 黒毛和牛-san, るぷす笹-san, 味酬味林檎-san, 不良将校-san, №8-san, 走れ害悪の地雷源-san (gave me the first Christmas present of my life!), ノベリスト鬼雨-san, パス公-chan! (gave me tons of artwork!), ハイレン-san, 蘿蔔(すずしろ)だりあ-san, そきん-san, 織侍紗(おささ)-chan (**gave me 8 kg of Koshihikari rice**), 狐瓜和花。-san (the first person ever to give me fan art!), 鐘成-san, 手嶋柊。-san (gave me a ton of artwork + a **Gundam Barbatos**), りすく-chan (**gave me cash!**), いづみ上総-san (**gave me cash!**), 蒼弐彩-chan (**gave me cash!!!!**), ナイカナ・シュタンガシャンナ-chan (**gave me cash!!!**), 上ケ見さわ-chan (**gave me cash and made maid banner for me!**), なつき-chan (**gave me cash and various donations!**)!!!!!, 武雅-sama (**gave me cash and various donations!**)!!!!!, エルフの森のふぁる村長 (**elf VTuber sex friend who gave me cash!**), ベリーナイスメル-san, 二コネコ-chan (sent me a d*ck illustration), 瀬口恭介-kun (sent me a d*ck illustration), 矢護える-san (gave me a dumb obnoxious flag), 王海みずち-san (gave me a dumb obnoxious flag), 中卯月-chan (gave me a dumb obnoxious flag), ASTER-san, グリモア猟兵と化したランケ-san (**sent me protein and workout equipment**), かへんてーこー-san (**gave me a pink vibrator and coil**), ぉ拓さんちの高城-san, コユウダラ-san (**sent art of me being punched**), 方言音声サークル・なないろ小町-sama (**puts out sexy CDs**), 飴谷

きなこ-sama, 気紛屋進士-san, 奥山河川-sensay (**will be my illustrator some day**), ふーみん-san, ちびだいず-chan (gave me a Kamen Rider Transformation item), 紅月潦-san, 虚陽炎-san, ガミオ/ミオ姫-san, 本屋の猫-chan, 秦明-san, ANZ-san, tetra-san, まとめな-chan (**author VTuber! Naro authors are taking over!**), T-REX@木村竜史-sama, 無気力ウツロ-sama (tons of gyudon!!!), 雨宮みくる-chan, 猫田@にゃぷしぃまん-san, ドルフロ・艦これを始めた北極狐-sama, 大豆の木っ端軍師, かみやん-san, 神望喜利彦山人-dono, あらにわ (新庭紺)-sama, 雛風-san, 浜田カヅエ-san, 綾部ヨシアキ-san, 玉露-san (**made an image with info about my books!**), 幽焼け-san (**YouTube reviewer who made videos introducing my works! Look them up, everyone!**), レフィ・ライト-chan, あひる-chan (**gave me a maid-style microbikini**), 猫乱次郎 (**gave me artwork of me dead, laying eggs, *etc.***), つっきー-chan! (**blocked nose**), 一ノ瀬瑠奈-chan!, かつ-san!, 赤城雄蔵-san!, 大道俊徳-san (**gave food and alcohol as an offering to my grave**), ドブロッキィ-sensei (**gave me art of me with a d*ck**), 葵・悠陽-chan, かなた-chan (**gave me nothing but said they wanted to be in the list**), イルカのカイル-chan (**gave me nothing but said they wanted to be in the list**), みなはらつかさ-chan (**parakeet**), なご-chan, dia-chan, このたろー-chan, 颯華-chan, 谷瓜丸-kun, ゆっくり生きる-chan, 秋野霞音-chan, 逢坂蒼-chan, 廃おじ-san, ラナ・ケナー４歳-kun, 朝倉ぷらす-chan (**girlfriend haver who made me in PowerPoint**), あきらーめん-san (congratulations on the new baby), そうたそ-kun!, 透明-chan, 貼りマグロ-chan, 荒谷生命科学研究所-sama, 西守アジサイ-sama, シエル-chan, 主露-san, 零切唯衣-kun-chan, 豚足-chan, はなむけ-chan (**gave me a duck**), 藤巻健介-san, Ssg.蒼野-san, 電誅萬刃-san!, 水谷輝人-san!, あきなかつきみ-san, まゆみ-chan (**gave me Matsusaka beef and stuff**), 中の人-chan!, hake-san!, あおに-chan (**has a management role in the Dark Duelist group the Council of Five Elders and controls the world of *Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Links* through fear**), 八神-chan, 22世紀のスキッツォイドマン-chan, マッチ棒-chan!, kt60-san (?!), 珍-san!, あつし-saan!, 晩花作子-san!, 能登川メイ-chan (**sent me dog food**), きを-chan, 天元-chan (provided the illustration in *Bottom-Tier Baron's* afterword), の@-chan (fellow enjoyer of the

Silverio Saga games!), ひなび-chan, dokumu-san, マリィちゃんのマリモ-chan, 伺見聞士-san, 本和歌-chan, 柳瀬彰-san, 田辺ユカイ-chan, まさみティー/里井ぐれも-chan (**my kohai from Overlap!**), 常陸之介寛浩-sensei (**my senpai from Overlap!** (´; ω; `)), ゴキブリのフレンズ-chan (**made a *Smash Bros.* stage featuring me doing an ahegao and double peace signs**), いる-chan, 腐った豆腐! 幻夜んん-chan, 歌華@梅村-chan (**gave me artwork of me doing sex work**), 三島由貴彦 (**drew fan art of me as an older sister with brother**), イラストレーター・ファルまろ-sensei (**someone I'm having an affair with within the same company**), イラストレーター・ひさまくまこ-sensei (**someone I'm having an affair with at Ichijinsha**), 白夜いくと-chan, 言葉遊人-san, 教祖-chan, 可換環-san (**made my music**), 佳穂一二三-sensei!, しののめ-chan, 闇音やみ-shan (**gave me art of me trying to give p**zuri**), suwa狐-san!, 朝凪周-san, ガッチャ-san, 結城彩咲-chan, amy-chan, ブウ公式-san!, 安房桜梢-san, ふき-chan!, ちじん-chan, シロノクマ-chan, 亞悠-san (**sent a recording of their infant daughter saying my name over and over**), やっさいま♡-chan, 赤津ナギ-chan, 白神天稀-san, ディーノ-san, KURO-san, 獅子露-san, まんじ先生１００日チャレンジ-san (an account that was supposed to draw me every day for 100 days but **stopped on day 8**), 爆散芋-chan, 松本まつすけ-chan, 卯-chan, 加密列-san, のんのん-chan, 亀岡たわ太-san!, 真本優-chan, ぽにみゅら-chan, 焼魚あまね/仮名芝りん-chan, 異世界GMすめらぎ-chan, 西村西-sensay, オフトゥン教徒-sama (assassin from *Lazy Dungeon Master*, published by Overlap), kazu-kun, 釜井晃尚-san, うまみ棒-sama, 小鳥遊-san, ATワイト-chan (Wight thinks so too), 海鼠腸-chan! (**their name's read as Konowata**), 棗-chan! (**their name's read as Natsume**), 東西南(きたなし)アカリ-chan (**what a stylish name!**).

A huge thank you to all of you! I'd also like to mention the many more people who keep up with my work and help spread it around, but I've reached a limit! Soooooorry, thaaaaaanks, and I hope to see you all again!!! (´; ω; `)

And for my final thoughts, I'd like to finish by thanking Shimofuri-san for the wonderful illustrations, and my editor, Haruta Higuchi-sama, and the many people involved in the making of this book for

helping me out when I was like a fish out of water. But above all, I'd like to finish by giving a special thanks to everyone who bought this book! Seriously, thank yooooooooou! Send me fan mail too!

For my final final thoughts, look out for *The Bottom-Tier Baron's Accidental Rise*, which should be on sale around the same time as this book! Adieu!

Oh, and for my final final final thoughts, below is a link to my page on Naro. Please add me to your favorites! I'll do anything!!! (´; ω; `)

You can read various novels that I've written there for free!!! (If you don't feel like typing in the whole url, just search for "なろう 馬路まんじ" and it'll come up!)

→ https://mypage.syosetu.com/1339258/

Yaaaaaay!



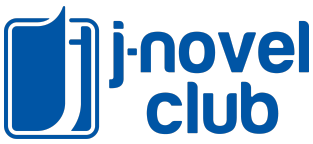












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Blade Skill Online: Crushing the Competition with My Abysmal Stats, Useless Class, and Garbage Weapon! Volume 1
by Manzi Mazi

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