

You Were Told to Lose Money By Making Games, and You Actually Did It?

Chapter 43: Something's Wrong

Yang Chen looked at the mouse and keyboard, which had barely even had time to warm up.

Then he looked at Wolf, who had just revived on the screen.

He still hadn't figured out what had just happened.

Where had his huge health bar gone?

The ordinary soldiers had only hacked at him four or five times...

...and he was dead?

Was it a bug?

And why did this game only use autosaves?

There wasn't even a manual save or load function?

Filled with confusion, Yang Chen controlled his revived character and charged toward the soldiers once again.

This time, however, he didn't fight back.

He simply stood there and let the enemies slash him.

As blood sprayed across the screen, Yang Chen finally confirmed one thing.

These damn regular soldiers really did hit that hard.

His seemingly healthy health bar could only withstand four or five attacks.

After reviving again, Yang Chen had learned his lesson.

Instead of recklessly charging in like before, he proceeded much more cautiously.

Surprisingly, taking things slowly made the combat much easier.

By the time he cleared all the soldiers along the road, he had only lost about one-third of his health.

He eventually reached what he assumed was the game's first boss:

Leader Yamauchi Shigenori.

With slow reactions, clumsy hands, and zero experience with this kind of game...

Yang Chen had practically every possible debuff stacked against him.

As expected, within three exchanges, Yamauchi Shigenori cut him down.

"But isn't the game called Shadows Die Twice?"

"And in the trailers, I remember seeing the player revive once after dying."

"So why did I just die outright?"

Yang Chen stared at his revived character in confusion.

Was this another bug?

Or was the second resurrection actually a skill he hadn't unlocked yet?

Scratching his head, he continued onward.

This time, however, he discovered something interesting.

The boss could actually be skipped.

To the boss's right was a narrow side path.

The first time he'd arrived, his attention had been completely drawn to the boss.

Combined with the massive castle gate behind him, Yang Chen had instinctively assumed this was a gatekeeper boss that had to be defeated.

"I get it now!"

"The player is a ninja."

"Of course the game wants me to sneak around."

"The tutorial already taught me stealth, crawling through holes, eavesdropping, and climbing walls."

"The game was hinting at this all along."

"That's actually pretty impressive."

"You can either sneak past the boss or choose to fight him head-on."

Yang Chen felt he'd uncovered the truth.

Continuing his exploration, he followed the narrow path beneath the bridge and found the secret passage the Divine Heir had mentioned.

After blowing the whistle and triggering the cutscene, he proceeded through the tunnel.

Soon he emerged into the reeds outside Ashina Castle.

White pampas grass swayed in the wind.

A full moon hung high in the night sky.

Standing beneath the moonlight, with a bow on his back and a sword at his waist, was a lone samurai facing away from Wolf and the Divine Heir.

"I knew it."

"It's a scripted loss."

"There's no way they'd make you fight such an overpowered boss right at the beginning."

After being effortlessly defeated by Genichiro Ashina, watching the Divine Heir get taken away, and seeing the game transition into another cinematic, Yang Chen nodded in satisfaction.

He might be bad at games, but that didn't mean he lacked gaming intuition.

Wolf later awakened inside the Dilapidated Temple.

A mysterious Sculptor fitted him with a Shinobi Prosthetic.

Through dialogue, Yang Chen learned that future prosthetic tools could be installed through him.

Outside the temple stood Emma—the same woman who had delivered the letter earlier.

She could increase the number of Healing Gourd uses by accepting Gourd Seeds.

Behind the temple was an undying warrior who allowed players to practice the game's combat techniques.

It was obviously a training NPC.

After exploring a little and finding a few Coin Purses and Healing Pellets, Yang Chen had a pretty good understanding of the area.

It was obvious that this ruined temple served as the game's safe hub.

After all, it had Emma, the NPC who upgraded healing items. The Sculptor, who upgraded equipment, and the training NPC for practicing combat.

After finishing his exploration, Yang Chen continued onward.

"Huh?"

"Are these shadows left behind by other players?"

Upon reaching a broken bridge, Yang Chen noticed numerous ghostly silhouettes on the ground.

He touched one.

It displayed two words:

"Place of Death."

After activating it, he watched a phantom player run straight toward the broken bridge...

...and leap directly off the cliff.

What an idiot!

The game had literally just displayed a tutorial telling players to use the grappling hook.

It even showed a picture indicating exactly where to grapple.

How was someone still managing to jump off a cliff?

Yang Chen mercilessly mocked the unfortunate player in his mind.

Naturally, he did not participate in such a foolish act.

Using the grappling hook instead, he safely continued through the level.

"This game..."

"You don't have to fight the bosses."

"You don't even have to fight the regular enemies."

"Why does it almost feel like a sightseeing game?"

Swinging effortlessly through the level with his grappling hook and activating two Sculptor's Idols along the way, Yang Chen continued his journey.

Yang Chen couldn't make sense of it.

Along the way, he encountered the game's second boss:

General Kwarada Naomori, a samurai general wielding a massive sword.

As expected, he was once again cut down without mercy.

This time, however, he finally unlocked one of the game's signature mechanics.

After dying once, he could revive on the spot with half of his health restored.

It added a lot more room for error during combat.

Of course, most bosses in the game also had two health bars of their own.

He tried fighting the general a couple of times.

Unfortunately, for someone hopeless at action games like Yang Chen, he couldn't even take away the boss's first health bar.

Still, he noticed something.

Just like the previous boss, this one could also be bypassed.

Using the grappling hook, he could swing from the watchtower and simply leap over the encounter.

But unlike the excitement he had felt when discovering he could skip the first boss, this time, something felt off.

So far, he'd encountered exactly three bosses.

The first one could be skipped.

The second one was a scripted, unwinnable fight.

And now, the third one could also be skipped?

He wasn't exactly a hardcore gamer, but he had played his fair share of games.

At this moment, his instincts told him that something about Sekiro wasn't quite right.

After bypassing the samurai general, Yang Chen immediately sensed that the next area was... different.

Just looking ahead was enough.

Riflemen positioned on rooftops and elevated platforms.

Patrolling samurai soldiers.

A giant, over two meters tall, carrying an enormous hammer.

Combined with the narrow terrain...

Having already experienced what it felt like to be mobbed by multiple enemies during the very first battle, Yang Chen didn't even want to imagine how horrifying it would be to fight this entire group head-on.

So, faced with the scene before him, he decisively chose a single strategy:

Run.

He jumped.

Wherever he saw a grappling point, he grappled.

Past the riflemen.

Past the giant hammer-wielding brute.

Past the cannon soldiers atop the fortress.

Past an enormous black rooster.

Only after reaching the Sculptor's Idol at Tiger's Mouth Stairway did he finally slow down.

Yet the uneasy feeling in his heart only grew stronger.

Continuing forward, he killed the two soldiers chatting beside a campfire.

One of them, a straw-hat soldier wearing a rain cape, was surprisingly skilled.

He actually deflected Yang Chen's attacks.

Caught off guard, Yang Chen even took a hit.

But by then, he no longer cared.

Because waiting for him at the top of the stairs was a red-eyed monster, chained to a wooden post.

The large gate ahead was tightly shut.

The opening on the second floor was sealed by a thick wall of mist.

Having played plenty of games before...

Yang Chen had only one thought.

—Oh no.