

Chapter -94

Although we stuck to rooftops and I used my enhanced physique to leap across roof-after-roof, our progress was heavily slowed down without my longboard.

“Should I just use the Time Save to get my board back?” I asked Panda, who was back to sitting on my shoulder.

“Don’t be an idiot... That thing has a 24 hours cooldown and your board will be available again in 17 minutes.”

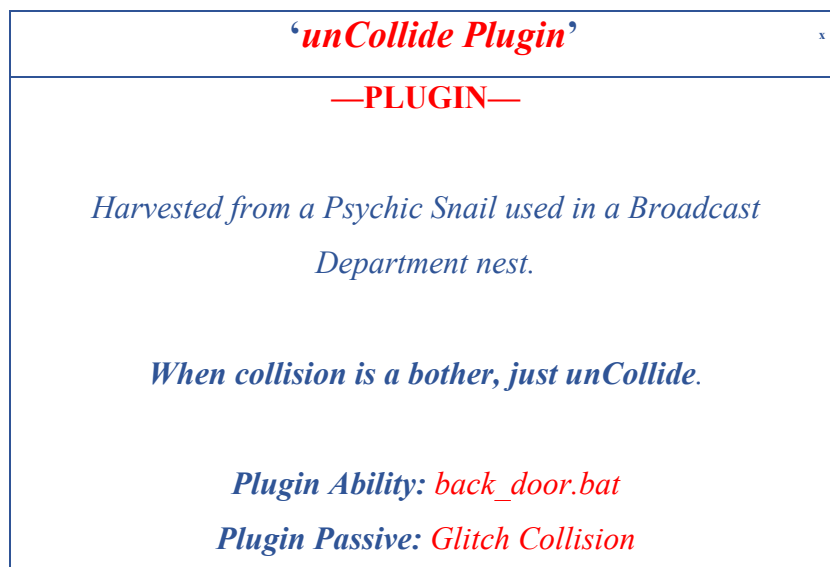
“Maybe I can use my remaining Fusion Gum to make Time Save better,” I wondered, ignoring his advice.

“It might end up making it less useful,” he replied. “And it might also be worth saving the Gum for something good later.”

I skidded to a halt on the roof of an apartment building. Bee noticed and circled around, then descended from the air and landed next to me.

“You okay?” she asked.

“I’m going to try something,” I told her and pulled my unCollide Plugin out of my inventory. Because of my Evolution, all the plugins had become floppy disks, even the ones that weren’t installed during the transformation. Turning from metal cylinders into disks had also dropped their weight dramatically.



Weight: 2.4151518 Pandas

“What are you doing?” Panda asked.

I pulled out unHaunt and slotted in unCollide.

PLUGIN UNINSTALLED.

‘unHaunt’ protocol no longer in effect!

PLUGIN INSTALLED.

‘unCollide’ protocol now in effect!

I put the unHaunt Plugin back in my inventory and pulled out my Fusion Gum, then tossed it in my mouth and began chewing on it.

‘Fusion Gum’ x
<i>Guess what flavor it has! That’s right, it is the famous 7-course-meal flavor, all in a single piece of gum! Truly a marvel of science!</i>
<i>Chewing this gum allows you to combine two skills into one, producing very powerful results.</i>
Weight: N/A

The taste of vanilla-banana ice-cream filled my mouth, which was better than the synthetic grape I was used to, but still a disappointment, as I’d hoped to be able to taste the full-course meal it advertised. Particularly since I’d been able to taste the Sea Urchin thanks to the All-Mother altering my tastebuds.

ACTIVATING SKILL FUSION!

Choose two Abilities or Passives to combine:

“Gambit, don’t do it,” Panda warned.

“Combine ‘*back_door.bat*’ with ‘*Glitch*’.”

The plugin disk vanished from the slot in my chest, becoming glowing red particles that dissipated into the air in front of me. I tried to desperately gather the particles in my hands, but to no avail.

“Oh thank the Gods,” the plushie said with a sigh of relief.

COMBINING SKILLS!

One moment...

...

...

...

New fusion skill created!

Congratulations!

You have unlocked the new Ability:

‘*Rootkit*’

‘<i>Rootkit</i>’	x
<i>Ability</i>	
<p><i>Moth System Technicians make great use of this ancient System spell to secretly monitor, infiltrate, and control the Agencies from the shadows, particularly when they go against their interpretations of the System. The Moths are feared by the Agencies because of this power, and now it is in your incapable hands...</i></p>	
<p>Mark a target and gain the following options:</p>	
<p><i>.monitor()</i> — <i>See through their eyes</i></p>	
<p><i>.infiltrate()</i> — <i>Teleport to their location</i></p>	
<p><i>.control()</i> — <i>Force them to make an action</i></p>	

*Using **.infiltrate()** or **.control()** will put the ability on cooldown, but changing targets or using **.monitor()** does not trigger the cooldown.*

*If the target’s Perception is higher than yours, they will notice the **Rootkit** as it is installed and it will immediately be put on cooldown.*

WARNING!

*Possession of this Ability is **prohibited!**
Utilizing this Ability constitutes major **System Subversion!**
Counter-Spell Enforcers and Glitch Hunters will take notice of you, if you use this Ability!*

Cooldown: 4 hours

Panda whistled, although I wasn’t sure how, since he didn’t have any lips.

“Well that’s a significant upgrade,” he said. “I’m glad you didn’t screw with ‘Time Save’. Had me worried there for a second.”

“It destroyed my plugin,” I muttered, a bit disappointed. I pulled out unHaunt and put it back into the available slot.

PLUGIN INSTALLED.

‘unHaunt’ protocol now in effect!

“Bee, let me test it on you,” I said, after sharing the description with her.

“Will it hurt?”

“Probably his Perception is so low that it’ll immediately go on cooldown,” Panda remarked.

“It’ll be fine,” I replied and pointed my hand at her. “**Rootkit!**”

“What about the Enforcers and Hunters?” Bee asked, waiting until after I used the skill to point out that it could get me in trouble...

A black screen with boot-up text appeared in the center of my vision, looking like a command prompt. I was starting to feel like a true Hackerman!

Immediately, text began to scroll across the black screen as the ability started its effect.

```
Rootkit initiating!  
...  
...Evading firewall...  
...  
...Generating backdoor...  
...  
...Playing ‘im_in.mp3’ through speakers...  
...  
Success!  
Rootkit installed on Player Target: ‘Bee’
```

“How do you feel?”

“Did it work?” she asked, clearly having no idea that it was successful.

“It did. Let me try something. `Rootkit.monitor()`.”

The air in front of me flickered, before the command prompt was replaced by a Windows Vista-looking webcam screen. It showed a low-quality view of the world through Bee’s eyes, with a massive delay and a generous amount of pixel artifacts. Despite all of this, I knew it had plenty of utility.

“That’s creepy as hell,” Panda commented.

“Maybe I can mark a new target through the monitor screen,” I considered. “The Infiltrate function is basically like the original Back Door ability. Not sure about forcing someone to perform an action, but—”

A shout from the street below cut me off, followed by the echoing *clops* of hooves, which filled the air. Then another scream sounded.

We both went to the edge of the roof and looked down.

As soon as we saw the source, Bee squealed excitedly and jumped off the ledge, engaging her wings. The equine creature below immediately galloped away, as though sensing the Moth Magician hunting it from the sky. As it took off, it left behind two gored Players, one who was already dead and the other bleeding out from a gaping hole in her torso.

“Bee! Come back!” I yelled.

I managed to quickly pull out my Looking Glass and appraise the creature through the broken lens, just as it rounded the corner at the end of the street and disappeared from sight.

Level 25	'Unicorn'	World Boss ^x
<p data-bbox="667 533 927 566"><i>“*Unicorn noises*”</i></p> <p data-bbox="296 618 1294 651"><i>Ah yes, the unicorn. Graceful. Majestic. The epitome of fantasy dreamscapes.</i></p> <p data-bbox="301 703 1289 779"><i>However, their horns grow inwards... Yeah... It's a problem. These guys are hemorrhaging brain cells faster than the BPM of a hummingbird's wings.</i></p> <p data-bbox="277 831 1313 992"><i>They're as much a danger to themselves as they are to you, and odds are if you don't finish it off, it'll do the job for you. But watch out, because Unicorns are capable of casting illusion magic! ...though usually they just confuse themselves before running into a wall or off a steep incline.</i></p> <p data-bbox="319 1043 1272 1117"><i>That being said, anyone who kills it can score themselves quite a powerful reward!</i></p> <p data-bbox="448 1169 1142 1202"><i>Truly the prime example of 'Never meet your heroes'.</i></p>		