

## BIOLOGICAL 49

Chapter 49: Outside the barrier (4)

[HOSTILE INDIVIDUAL KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[0%...1%...5%...30%...70%...100%]

[MANA SUCCESSFULLY ABSORBED, STARTING CONVERTING PROCEDURE.]

[3...2...1...0]

[MANA SUCCESSFULLY CONVERTED INTO EXPERIENCE. 996 EXPERIENCE POINTS AWARDED TO THE HOST.]

[LEVEL UP]

[LEVEL UP]

<AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA>

Erik's laughter echoed maniacally as he reveled in the unexpected windfall of his level-ups. The sudden advancement to level seven was a welcome surprise, presenting him with the opportunity to enhance his energy.

Yet, he couldn't afford to indulge in this immediately; the Lomalins were rapidly closing in, their menacing presence a pressing threat.

His immediate concern was to dispatch the Thaid. They were obstacles in his path, impediments to his goal of dealing with Logan. The motherfucker escaped, leaving Orson behind.

<He truly is a coward, > But these weren't Erik's only thoughts. A flicker of hope lingered in the back of his mind that Logan hadn't found an escape route through the barrier.

As one of the Lomalins loomed before him, another window materialized in his field of vision. His focus remained sharp despite the disturbance, his demeanor reflecting the wild, unhinged determination of a man on the brink, driven by a single-minded purpose.

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<Emergency quest: Survival. >

-Rewards for completion: 300 experience points and 100 DNA points.

-Failure Penalty: Death.

(Kill the three Lomalins.)

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<It looks like this is my lucky day, > Erik thought as a second quest materialized in his vision. It gave much less experience than killing Orson and Conal, but it was understandable since the Lomalins were weak and easy to deal after understanding how to kill them.

While Surveying the trio of Lomalins advancing towards him, he noted that his recent level-ups had fully replenished his mana. However, he observed the mana veil around his sharpened tree branch beginning to fade. Resolved to enhance his weapon further, Erik channeled his power once again, raising its sharpness.

Aware of the Lomalins' robust exoskeletons and the potential inadequacy of his current abilities against their brain crystal power, Erik poured half his mana into the branch. The weapon responded, forming an additional layer of mana that became razor sharp under his command.

Confident in his weapon's enhanced lethality, Erik recognized the risk posed by his half empty mana reserves. He couldn't afford to use any other powers now.

Erik reflected on his mana capacity, which was modest compared to Conal and Orson, who had 25 and 24 energy points, respectively. This estimation was based on the System's analysis of their brain crystals.

He acknowledged that his victory over the two kids was because of the element of surprise, and the fact they battled against the Lomalins earlier without having received proper training and without knowing how to deal with their exoskeletons.

Without this, Erik realized he would have been outmatched by their superior energy. The training he had undergone with Professor McAllister, and that he had already fought life or death battles before, had proved crucial, allowing him to dodge Orson's attacks and proving the difference between life and death in this deadly encounter.

As the Lomalins closed in, they lunged to bite Erik's legs. He deftly jumped back, evading their snapping jaws. The creatures persisted, however, doggedly following him as he continued to retreat.

While holding the tree branch, Erik found himself at an advantage. The extended reach of his makeshift weapon enabled him to strike the Lomalins without exposing himself to danger. This was the opposite of Orson's and Conal's powers, which resulted in close-quarters combat against the thaids.

With a forceful swing, Erik brought the branch down on one of the Lomalins, carving a deep gash in its exoskeleton. The creature responded by increasing the hardness of its exoskeleton, attempting to form an additional protective layer.

However, its status as a weak thaid became clear when Erik's next strike landed. The additional mana it had funneled into its exoskeleton to harden it was insufficient against Erik's powerful blow. The slash penetrated the creature's defenses with lethal precision, bringing an end to the thaid's life.

[HOSTILE CREATURE KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[0%...1%....5%...30%...70%...100%]

[MANA SUCCESSFULLY ABSORBED, STARTING CONVERTING PROCEDURE.]

[3...2...1...0]

[MANA SUCCESSFULLY CONVERTED INTO EXPERIENCE. 49 EXPERIENCE POINTS AWARDED TO THE HOST.]

<49? What is this creature's energy level? >

Erik then turned to look at one of the two Lomalins and said, "Analysis," and a small window appeared in front of his eyes.

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- Species: Lomalin.

- Brain crystal power: Mana Hardened Exoskeleton.

-Dimension: Approximately 70 centimeters tall and 50 long.

-Description: The beast resembles a thick with many legs. It has a black head and a hardened exoskeleton. The host is advised not to be bitten by the creature since it appears it is its principal weapon and the bite is nasty.

-Power Level: 11

-Approximate Strength: 5

-Approximate Intelligence: 1

-Approximate Dexterity: 3

-Approximate Energy: 12

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<Interesting, > Erik mused internally. But he couldn't afford to dwell on this thought as the remaining two Lomalins lunged at him once more.

Erik leaped backward, dodging the snapping jaws of the creatures. They attacked him relentlessly, yet he maintained a safe distance with each retreat, ensuring he stayed out of their reach.

The young man then attacked again, targeting one of the Lomalins that had already fortified itself with a mana-hardened exoskeleton. To his luck, it took only two slashes for Erik to defeat the creature.

<Their power must not be that efficient if I can take them down despite them having half their mana, > he contemplated.

Thanks to a hit-and-run strategy, Erik wasted little time in dealing with the last two Lomalins. His methodical approach, coupled with his weapon's reach, allowed him to dispatch the creatures efficiently and with minimal risk to himself.

[MULTIPLE HOSTILE CREATURES KILLED: MANA ABSORBING PROCESS STARTING.]

[0%...1%....5%...30%...70%...100%]

[MANA SUCCESSFULLY ABSORBED, STARTING CONVERTING PROCEDURE.]

[3...2...1...0]

[MANA SUCCESSFULLY CONVERTED INTO EXPERIENCE. 98 EXPERIENCE POINTS AWARDED TO THE HOST.]

[EMERGENCY QUEST COMPLETE.]

<No level up this time, huh? >

Erik reflected on his recent actions. While vanquishing monsters might be deemed acceptable, taking human lives was another matter. Yet, to Erik, eliminating Orson and Conal felt no different from dispatching a thaid. The act brought a sense of fulfillment, almost a rewarding feeling.

He then turned to search for Logan, only to find him missing. "DAMN!" Erik realized that Logan was already very far from here.

However, the prick had left a trail. Erik set off in pursuit, surmising that Logan was likely seeking the breach in the barrier to return to the city. Fortunately, Erik was aware of its location and noticed Logan was headed in the correct direction.

"System, allocate five attribute points to each statistic!"

This would enable Erik to channel more mana through his brain crystal, increasing his speed to catch up with Logan. He sprinted alongside the barrier, following the tracks Logan had left behind.

[UNDERSTOOD. ALLOCATING 5 STAT POINTS TO EACH STATISTIC.]

A profound transformation began within him. The moment the system acknowledged his request, an intense surge of energy coursed through his body. This wave of power was like a sudden thunderstorm erupting within him, unleashing a torrent of raw, unbridled energy that flooded every fiber of his being.

This newfound energy revitalized Erik, invigorating his muscles and sharpening his mind. His senses heightened. He perceived the world around him with increased clarity and focus. The rush of mana through his brain crystal was like a raging river breaking through a dam, powerful and uncontainable.

Empowered by this sudden influx of energy, Erik's strides became longer and more forceful. He felt as if he were a cheetah in full sprint, each step propelling him forward with enhanced speed and agility. The world around him seemed to slow down, his perception heightened to a level he had never experienced before.

While approaching the breach, Erik spotted Logan in the distance, who appeared weary, likely from the lack of training compared to Erik's regimen.

Thanks to his newly enhanced strength, physical exertion was less taxing for Erik. The mana infusion from his recent level-ups had rejuvenated him, leaving him less fatigued than Logan.

Closing the distance to just ten meters from Logan, who was already at the breach, Erik relished the prospect of exacting his revenge. While killing Conal and Orson had been satisfying, he expected that eliminating Logan, the ringleader, would be even more gratifying.

Now mere meters apart, both halted their run. For a few tense seconds, they stood in silence, locked in a mutual gaze. It was then that Logan broke the silence.

"WHO THE FUCK ARE YOU?!" Logan's voice echoed with confusion and fear.

"What? You didn't recognize me? I must say, I'm somewhat offended!" Erik said, his tone laced with mock hurt.

"How could I? You're hiding behind that ridiculous mask!" Logan said in frustration.

"I would have thought my power would be a dead giveaway, but it seems you're too stupid to make the connection!" Erik taunted. He then brought his hands to his face, slowly peeling off the mask that had concealed his identity.

As Erik's features became visible, free from their masked shroud, recognition dawned on Logan's face, transforming into an expression of sheer horror, then morphing to rage.

"ERIK!" The name escaped his lips in a mix of shock and realization.