

BIOLOGICAL 63

Chapter 63: Farming Experience

Erik strolled through the school corridors alongside Amber, Floyd, and Gwen, the quartet chatting amicably as they exited the building.

"So, Erik," Floyd turned to him, "Want to hang out a little after lunch?" he asked.

Erik appreciated the invitation but had prior commitments. "Sorry, I can't today. Need to work," he said.

"No worries," Floyd said.

Amber jumped in with a question. "I never asked, but what is exactly your job?"

Erik hesitated, feeling a twinge of embarrassment. His job wasn't exactly glamorous, especially compared to his friends' affluent backgrounds. Amber, Floyd, and Gwen came from wealthy families, with Amber being particularly well-off. He pondered how best to answer, his hesitation clear.

However, Amber, perceptive as always, offered him an out. "Erik, if you'd rather not say, that's totally fine..."

"No, it's okay," Erik said. "I work on a farm. My powers come in handy there."

Floyd nodded. "You can speed up plant growth, right?"

"Yeah, that's the gist of it," Erik said. "The plants end up stronger and more nutritious, too."

Amber commented, "Sounds like a useful ability for farming." At the same time, Gwen looked at him suspiciously. Erik didn't understand why.

Erik nodded. "It is, but since I don't own the place, I earn little."

Floyd, curious, inquired further, "What's your pay like?"

Erik shifted uncomfortably. "Well, I recently got a raise, but before that, it was about twenty new dollars a day... Now it's fifty..."

"Twenty new dollars?" Floyd said. "That is basically robbing!"

The conversation soon shifted to the earnings of Gwen's, Floyd's, and Amber's families. Erik listened, astonished, as Amber revealed her father was the CEO of a corporation linked to the Stone family, one of the most affluent in the nation.

Erik knew her family was related to the Stone family, but he didn't know everything, as he didn't really care about these things, and Amber didn't particularly like talking about it.

After the discussion, the group dispersed. Erik made his way to the train station, embarking on a peaceful journey to the Northern district.

His true aim, though, was not immediately heading to Mister Fox's farm. He planned to hunt thaids first. His enhanced power had altered Mister Fox's attitude towards him, making Erik confident a slight delay wouldn't cause any issues.

Besides, with his new fake identity, and the system investing money continuously, he was making a ton of money. He went to Mister Fox's farm just for the sake of appearance. He had to justify his money somehow. After all, theoretically, he couldn't survive without a job, so he needed one as a cover.

Stepping into the wheat field, Erik's mind buzzed with anticipation about the thaids he might encounter and the powers he could gain from them. He was also prompted by the fact that the system gave him a new quest. He had to hunt 5 Lomalins.

The reward for accomplishing that would be 250 experience points for Erik. Although it may not seem like much, the System had a specific motive for requesting him to undertake that quest.

The reason behind it was that the biological supercomputer wanted him to gain the skill of battling multiple monsters concurrently, thus it served as a training exercise.

Despite the challenging circumstances, he attempted to remain composed and level-headed, recognizing that excessive confidence might jeopardize his life.

Another thing he had to do was to absorb the Lomalin's brain crystal power later that night, prompting him to hasten his pace and leave the field behind.

Reaching the breach, Erik delved into the forest, immersed in its untamed beauty. Birds sang from the treetops, their melodies echoing as the dense canopy cast sprawling shadows on the forest floor, veiling everything beneath in partial darkness.

For ten minutes, Erik's search yielded no signs of thaids, pushing him to venture deeper, skirting the barrier. His exploration led him to a small clearing enclosed by dense undergrowth and towering grass, a secluded haven in the heart of the wild forest.

In the clearing's heart, an ancient tree stood tall, its trunk enshrouded in a thick blanket of moss. It seemed to belong more to the pages of a fantasy novel than the real world.

Next to this tree, a large rock, four to six meters wide, rose upright from the earth. It seemed deliberately placed, standing out in stark contrast to its natural surroundings.

Encircling this monolith were several smaller rocks, arranged in a precise formation. Nestled among them, purple lilies bloomed, adding a splash of color amidst the lush green foliage.

As Erik surveyed the area, his eyes landed on a group of five Lomalins. Their featureless, round black heads, devoid of eyes or ears, sent a chill down his spine. His revulsion only intensified upon seeing their sharp mandibles.

"Ugh," Erik muttered, shivering in disgust. Despite his past encounters and consumption of their brain crystals, he still found these creatures repulsive.

Realizing it was time to test his newly gained powers, Erik contemplated his strategy. Logan's power, allowing for long-range attacks, was useful, but Erik's aim needed improvement. He would have to get closer to thin out their numbers, minimizing the risk to himself.

He also had to find out if he had the ability to penetrate their defenses. Since Logan's strength and mana were not always sufficient, Erik found himself in the need to experiment with his newfound increased strength and mana to find out if he could achieve that.

Besides, things also depended on how strong the thaids were. If they were weaker than the last time, he would kill them easily, but if they were stronger, things would get complicated.

In general, killing three Lomalins was within his capabilities, but facing five at the same time presented an unknown challenge.

Erik's dilemma lay in approaching them undetected as the clearing offered no cover for stealth. Resigned yet determined, he crawled across the ground, hoping to close the distance without alerting the Lomalins.

"Shit, this uniform was clean!" the young man said.

He then analysed the thaids. Better safe than sorry.

- 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: 18

-Approximate Strength: 7

-Approximate Intelligence: 2

-Approximate Dexterity:6

-Approximate Energy: 20

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...

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<These are stronger than the ones from the other time...>

Erik began his stealthy advance, channeling mana to conjure two mana darts. At the same time, he used Orson's power to make a bone spike jut out of his hand, using his sharpening power to transform it into an improvised weapon.

This ability to weaponise things was fitting, considering the mockery he had endured for his plant-growing ability. Now that he could effectively weaponise them, he could use anything as a weapon, even the plants he made. But today was not the case. He wanted something stronger than plants.

Erik persisted, inching closer to the unsuspecting thaids. They were just enough for him to complete the quest.

With each careful step, Erik drew nearer, his breathing growing heavier because of apprehension. He took a moment to steady himself, focusing on one of the creatures. Then, with a calculated movement, he launched one of the mana darts at his target.

With every ounce of his strength, Erik seized the opportunity as the Lomalin had not yet activated its mana exoskeleton, making it easy for him to break through its defenses.

However, he knew it wouldn't be the same with the others. The moment they laid eyes on him, their immediate response would be to heighten their defenses.

The dart whistled through the air, striking with a sharp 'SWUUMP' and a metallic 'TIIIIING' upon impact. Something he found strangely weird.

The Lomalin emitted a piercing shriek, "AAAAAAAAAAAAACK!!!!", as the dart's poison began coursing through its body. The creature writhed in agony on the forest floor, but the potent toxin left no room for survival. Within seconds, the Lomalin lay motionless, overcome by the lethal venom of Erik's carefully crafted dart.

[HOSTILE LOMALIN 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. 39 EXPERIENCE POINTS AWARDED TO THE HOST.]

<They are stronger but give less experience. I wonder why this happens. >

The remaining four Lomalins reacted in haste, manifesting their mana exoskeleton, encasing themselves in a thick, mana-fortified armor.

"Fuck..." Erik said, he curse under his breath. "Luckily, they have not spotted me yet..." To avoid the dart being reflected by the mana exoskeleton, he used his sharpening power to enhance his darts to breach even the sturdiest of their mana armors. He sharpened its tip to increase its piercing capabilities.

He took aim once more, his focus unerring. The next dart flew true, slicing through the mana armor of one of the Lomalins, leaving the other three in a state of confusion.

The targeted beast writhed in agony as the poison coursed through its veins, and then succumbing to the lethal concoction.

Seizing the moment of chaos, Erik launched his attack. Gripping his mana-infused, ultra-sharpened bone, he charged at the bewildered Lomalins with a flurry of relentless strikes. He needed to learn how to take advantage of all his powers.

One by one, the creatures fell before his relentless assault. Each defeat of a Lomalin triggered a notification in Erik's mind, accompanied by a surge of exhilaration. It wasn't long before the final Lomalin collapsed, lifeless. Overcome with a victorious euphoria, Erik let out a resounding, triumphant laugh.

[MULTIPLE HOSTILE LOMALINS 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. 156 EXPERIENCE POINTS AWARDED TO THE HOST.]

[QUEST COMPLETE. 250 EXPERIENCE POINTS AND 30 DNA POINTS AWARDED.]

"Fuck. I'm so close to get another level up!"¹