

BIOLOGICAL 81

Chapter 81: Odd encounter (1)

The group concluded their analysis of the tournament participants. As they recognized it was time to part ways, Erik, realizing he had work commitments, requested Amber to drop him off at the train station.

While Amber offered to drive him to the northern district, Erik, not wanting to take advantage, declined her offer.

But that wasn't the only reason. Erik had another motive in mind. He planned to venture into the breach for Taid hunting. A successful hunt might increase his level, granting him a crucial edge in the forthcoming matches of the tournament.

His match against Zakir had been a wake up call. The fight had been a grueling test of his abilities, revealing the urgent need for further training. He needed to increase his statistics and make as many neural links as possible.

Amber's driver ferried Erik to the train station. Despite it being late afternoon, a sizable crowd bustled around the station, indicative of the city's ever-active life.

While Erik awaited the train's arrival, his thoughts lingered on his recent battle.

<I can't lose... not yet, at least. I need to reach the top 22 if I want to join the Red Palace... >

Determined and focused, the young man reminded himself of his goal. He already won two matches, he just needed two more, and he would be done.

Moreover, he was more than halfway through his weekly quest, but was lagging in the monthly one.

The young man used his money a little. He didn't have financial problems anymore thanks to the system, and he bought some candies. Sugars were going to give him some more energy for what he had to do.

Then, while eating a chocolate bar, he noticed the train's arrival and boarded it. The journey offered him a rare moment of tranquility, allowing him to rest before his planned hunt.

As the train neared the northern district, Erik observed the evolving landscape. The city had started construction projects near the station, signaling a modernization effort.

The new structures, likely intended for offices and shops, would enhance accessibility to essential services for residents of the area.

Upon exiting the station, Erik set off along the unrefined path leading to Mister Fox's farm. However, his route deviated as he veered right into a wheat field, navigating towards the breach before going to the farm.

While approaching the immense breach, Erik traversed it with no sign of hesitation, searching for suitable Thaidis to hunt. With awareness of the potential dangers, he delved deeper into the forest, taking each step with care and vigilance.

The forest exuded an enchanting aura; birds chirped melodiously, bees hummed as they flitted among blossoms, and a myriad of flowers added a splash of color to the verdant landscape. Along his journey, Erik encountered trees laden with berries of various hues. He took one he was sure was not deadly and ate it.

As Erik ventured further, he stumbled upon occasional remnants of slain thaidis. Such sightings were not uncommon in these parts, yet they did little to ease Erik's alertness. He couldn't get their blood as they appeared to be already decaying, and drinking the blood, if any was present, could be dangerous.

However, his abilities were enough to fight the monsters lurking around the area. Unless something weird happened, he had not that much to fear.

Deeper into the forest and farther from the breach, the sight of many half-consumed carcasses increased. The abundance of such gruesome scenes showed an unusual disturbance in the forest. Something weird was going on inside the forest.

"Fuck." Another corpse was in front of him, and that scared him. For that reason, he left the place in haste.

"AH... AH... AH..." Erik panted. "I wasted half an hour..." However, something caught his attention. He swore he saw a silhouette among the trees.

A sense of urgency overtook him, and he muttered curses under his breath as he pivoted and sprinted towards the breach with renewed haste.

[illegible]

The stillness of the forest was shattered by a thunderous howl echoing through the trees. The primal sound reverberated, sending a chill down Erik's spine as he realized the gravity of the situation he had stumbled upon.

Erik's face drained of color at the sound of the howl. Thanks to the information he injected with the help of the biological supercomputer, he knew such howling creatures near New Alexandria shouldn't exist.

High-level creatures, known for their howls, were eradicated by the military near the city borders. Yet, as he fled, a quadrupedal beast, large as a substantial dog, chased him.

"FUCK!"

The creature's swift approach suggested strength, surpassing Erik's own. He pressed on, unable to identify the thaid from his position. However, he surmised it was the source of the scattered thaids' remains he had found earlier.

[illegible]

The howl pierced the air once more.

"SHIT! SHIT! SHIT! SHIT! SHIT! SHIT!"

Erik got a clear view of the pursuing beast as he glanced back.

"WHAT THE FUCK IS THAT DOING HERE?!"

His memory clicked, recognizing it as a Leylarhad cub. Leylarhads, wolf-like thaids with two tails and prominent vampiric tusks, were known for their speed, agility, and cunning. Among the low levelled Thaids, they were at the top of the food chain, as their mana was unusually high. However, such a beast shouldn't have been there.

Although uncertain of the cub's exact strength, its size and velocity showed it was far from weak. Erik didn't know how much, so he had to resort to the system to find that out.

"ANALYSIS!" The familiar information window to materialize before him.

-Species: Leylarhad

-Brain Crystal Power: Astral Wolf Bite

-Size: Stands at an imposing height of 1.1 meters, weighing in at a robust 176 kilograms.

-Description: Leylarhads are renowned for their intelligence and strength, typically hunting in coordinated packs. This individual, identified as a cub, likely wandered away from its group. However, caution is advised; the cub's mother is likely nearby, given Leylarhads' well-documented strong maternal instincts.

Despite its youth, this Leylarhad cub possesses formidable capabilities and should not be underestimated.

-Power Level: 60

-Approximate Strength: 29

-Approximate Intelligence: 5

-Approximate Dexterity: 20

-Approximate Energy: 104

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"WHAT THE FUCK?! POWER LEVEL 60 WITH 104 ENERGY POINTS?! IS THIS A JOKE?!" It was then that another notification appeared in Erik's vision.

<Emergency quest: AGAINST ALL ODDS>

-Rewards for completion: 5000 experience points and 2000 DNA points for killing the thaid.

-Penalty: Death.

-Quest description: Congratulations! You've been selected for the—Thrilling Thriller of Thrills—challenge. Your mission, should you choose to accept it (and let's be honest, you have little of a choice), is to defeat the fearsome Leylarhad cub. This pint-sized powerhouse may look like a fluffy oversized puppy, but don't let its adorable exterior fool you.

It's a walking, growling calamity with a penchant for wolfish mischief.

Victory brings you a whopping 5000 experience points, enough to level up and maybe finally impress that crush of yours. Plus, 2000 DNA points—think of all the shopping you can do in the DNA store! A wait, there is none?!

Oh, I almost forgot! Upon completion, your Biological Supercomputer will go on a much-needed vacation, leaving your quest-less and alone for a whole ten days. So, stock up on survival skills and maybe learn to make a fire or something. Good luck, you're going to need it!

<What the fuck is wrong with the system?! >

Erik dashed through the dense forest, desperation fueling his every step. He had no intention of facing the monstrous Leylarhad cub head-on.

He maneuvered past trees and thickets, covering at least 200 meters, yet the cub showed no signs of fatigue. In fact, it was gaining on him, drawing close.

As he realized he was too far from the breach for a quick escape, Erik knew he had to act fast. The chance of the beast pursuing him even into human territory loomed large in his mind, eliminating any hope of refuge.

"What a shitty luck I have!"

He sprinted over the carcass of a two-meter thaid, likely a victim of the relentless cub.

"No doubt about it. This cub is a killer."

Erik glanced back and saw the Leylarhad cub closing in, its shadowy form looming larger with each passing second.

"Come on, think, Erik! Is there something I can do that would grant me victory?" He felt the weight of his rapid breathing, his lungs straining with each gasp.

Erik could hear his own breathing. His lungs felt heavy, and he was panting hard. In a split-second decision, Erik channeled his mana. He formed a mana dart, conserving half of his reserves for a backup plan. The Leylarhad was now just meters away, its hot breath almost palpable. Erik readied himself, prepared to make his move.

As the Leylarhad cub launched itself into the air, aiming to strike down its prey, Erik also leapt and turned backward in a swift motion. He spun around 180 degrees and hurled the mana dart towards the airborne creature.

Erik's face went pale as he watched the dart arc through the air, knowing that missing his target would mean certain death.

The Leylarhad, in mid-leap, sensed the mana in the dart, but was helpless to evade it, already committed to its attack. The dart struck true, piercing the creature's skin and unleashing its toxic mana.

The cub hit the ground, writhing in agony, letting out pained whimpers. Erik, however, didn't linger there. He turned and dashed away, seeking to put as much distance between himself and the wounded thaid as possible.

But the situation escalated. Despite its pain, the Leylarhad cub was not deterred. It regained its footing and resumed the pursuit, chasing Erik through the forest with renewed determination.