

Chapter 7: The Skills Of A Dryad

As I logged back, I was greeted by the adorable Acorn who actually waited for me. It seemed that real time also happened here when I was logged out! This really made me internally worried... What if something bad happened when I was not even here? I sighed.

He decided to guide me where the mushrooms were located, so I decided to follow his lead while we decided to talk about anything that came up on our heads with the guide spirit.

As we walked down the tree, the Squirrel-folk were like squirrels themselves, so they were able to climb and go down trees with incredible ease.

And I did as well! It wasn't so hard after I got used to it, so I easily moved down and got into the forest floor once more. I had not realized it, but this avatar was barefoot, but the forest floor didn't hurt my feet, and it felt nice to touch the fresh soil beneath me.

"Hmm, it is getting late already, let's go pick the mushrooms and then let's return to rest until tomorrow, lady Planta," said Acorn. "If we wander too much at night, we might get attacked by stronger monsters that show up..."

"I see, then let's hurry so we can come back here, I will cook something for you if you got some ingredients as well... Do you people eat meat?" I wondered. "Rabbit meat?"

"Oh yeah, we mostly eat seeds, but meat is also alright," said Acorn. "Did you catch a horned rabbit?"

"Yeah, I plan to make a nice stew with it," I said. "It will be nutritious for you when you're still growing up."

"Ah, it's been a while since someone cooked for me... I can barely cook on my own..." he sighed.

"You're a pretty good alchemist but you don't know how to cook?" I wondered. "Isn't alchemy like cooking?"

"K-Kind of... but not the same!" said Acorn.

As Acorn guided me, I began to talk with the guide spirit. It seems that when I spoke to him, the NPC didn't notice me, and they also were completely unaware of his existence, as if he were invisible to them.

"I wonder what I will do if something happens here while I am out... I am working part time through the week after all, in two different places, so I cannot really have enough time for playing, probably only before bed..." I sighed. "I will have to manage my time well... Or quit my job? But is making money out of this game even that sustainable?"

"Hm, well, you'll have to deal with it. One of the features of this game is that the world keeps moving forward even without you being there, if something happens, we'll deal with it together," said the guide spirit. "But you shouldn't prioritize the game over your real life... And about money? The company itself does incentivize real money commerce, as they ask for a small tax fee, so they earn from any transaction."

"Oooh! So we can earn money! C-Can you help me make some big money so I can quit my jobs?" I asked. "Pretty please?"

"Erm... Well, I cannot do that, I don't have any idea about that stuff." sighed the guide spirit. "I can help you with the most basic stuff like finding places or researching the prices of things. But you'll have to figure out stuff yourself. I think there might be ways to join a guild that sells stuff and work for them depending on your job... As a farmer you could technically do a lot of production-based things..."

"Eeehh... I-I see... That seems a bit boring... Well, I will just do what I can. I don't have to get too involved in the story then, if things go awry, I have to deal with it... I-It is just a game after all... I guess..." I sighed. "Yeah..."

"Hm... Well, maybe you could find some special items around here and sell them off, although I don't know what's valuable or not, but this is certainly a rare spawn area and people cannot teleport from one way to another so traveling to different places is difficult, item is valued depending in their scarcity and if they're needed." said the guide Spirit. "This forest seems like a place that has been barely visited by many players, there could be a lot of secret events, items, and resources you could find and sell for real money eventually, as long as they're required by people."

"Ooh! That sounds like fun! Perhaps I could even build a big farm with endemic plants and cattle animals from here and sell daily products that everyone needs." I said. "How about that?!"

"Well... everyone sells food in the game; it is one of the things that everyone needs to keep their satiation meter high," said the guide spirit. "It is nothing too crazy unless... well, unless the products you make are of extremely high quality- Actually, you're a Dryad... maybe it is possible..."

"Oh? You're giving me such hopes... Well, we'll see what happens when it happens, for now, I prefer to go one step at a time," I said. "Acorn, are we close?"

"Yes, right there..."

Acorn pointed me to a place inside the forest. It seemed like small clearings that were decorated with giant mushrooms, so huge that looked like one could even step over them.

The beautiful and tall mushrooms were colorful, there were orange, red, purple, and even green-colored, and were as tall as five meters—no, even more.

What a fantastical sight... It left me a bit speechless.

"Uwah, what is this place? Oh... Mushroom Field?" I wondered. Atop my head appeared a holographic sign that said: "Mushroom Field (Lv3 ~ 10)".

Did this mean this place had monsters of Level 3 and above?! But I was only level 1! How could I survive a high-level monster like that—Ah, I killed that one high level monster, the Dark Beast...

But that was out of luck... And I... Ugh, am I forced to kill more monsters? Poor little things...

However, if I were to kill them and it granted me the opportunity to save these squirrel people... I have to do it.

"Here, this place is called the mushroom fields... This place has a special monster named Walking Spiky Purple Mushroom. It's a Level 2 or 3 monster that has a poisonous spore attack... This is why it is hard to handle unless we

kill it with long-ranged blows," said Acorn. "Let's go, this place of the forest is pretty big and it has a whole different ecosystem atop the mushroom caps."

"Atop them?" I asked. "Can it really support our weight?"

"Yeah, you're very light, Lady Plata, you should be able to get up here," said Acorn.

He began to easily climb the mushroom around, reaching the cap of it. I didn't know if I could do it as dexterously as he did, so I decided to climb the little mushrooms instead, going one at a time all the way up.

They were indeed very strong and capable of supporting my weight. When I reached the biggest mushroom caps atop the sky, we reached a whole new level named "Mushroom Fields Canopy",

Immediately after, we saw several little mushrooms walking?!

Yes, they were of all sorts of colors, and had tiny legs they used to walk. They were adorable and I wanted to pet them!

"Guide, can I tame them and make them my friends?" I asked.

"Eh? Not currently, you need a Tame Skill to tame monsters... You can learn it with Skill Points through the Farmer Job." said the guide spirit. "The farmer job really has a lot of useful stuff, but it doesn't truly specialize in anything other than boosting plant growth and taking care of cattle..."

"I see..."

"T-Those are a lot of mushrooms..." said Acorn, as he hid behind me.

"Eh? Aren't you going to fight? I checked your status and you were pretty strong!" I said. "Can't you shoot acorns?"

"I-I can but they're weak!" said Acorn. "Also, Lady Dryad, you promised you were going to protect my back..."

"Right. I did promise that... V-Very well then... Erm, my Mana is around a hundred and thirty..." I said to myself. "Wait, are the mushrooms not attacking us?"

"They're far away and seem to not be aggressive unless you get very close to them, or you attack them first." said the guide spirit.

"I see... Erm, let's see my status, I want to figure out ways to fight better if I am going to really kill these little and adorable things..."

I quickly decided to check my Status, there were several Skills I didn't know much about, and I wanted to figure out what they were all about.

[Spirit of the Forest: Lv1]

As the spirit of the Forest, you have several natural abilities, resistances, and also weaknesses.

You're able to adapt to any terrain within the forest.

Your HP and MP Recovery are increased by +50% while being inside a forest.

Any NPC within the forest that is Good aligned will recognize you as a figure of authority and trust you unconditionally.

You can "feel" the forest's health and its problems by concentrating your mind into it.

You can see through trees and plants.

You can naturally communicate with any animal and plant within the forests.

The forests are your domain, you deal +20% more damage to any monster in the forest and can drain +10% of the damage you deal.

You take X4 damage from Fire and Ice.

You take X2 damage from Metal, Dark, and Poison.

Damage from Earth, Nature, Life, Wind, Water, and Death is halved.

You can naturally guide yourself in the forest and never get lost.

The forest is naturally mapped inside of your mind as you explore it, you will always recall any place you've visited.

Any monster or plant you raise will receive a X5 boost to their growth inside the forest.

You can manipulate and shapeshift your plant-like body into various forms based on other existing plants within the world by spending Mana in varied quantities.

Any plant you raise will have an enhanced quality to their rank.

W-What is this?! It has so many effects!

"Guide spirit, why does this thing have so many effects?" I asked. "Is it bugged?"

"No, all Races have this special Skill that they can level up as they evolve." said the guide. "Each race has this many effects on their racial skill, it determines what they're good at and what they're bad at... It often comes with a bunch of bonuses that makes your race unique amongst others, it also comes with your natural weaknesses. Dryads get a lot of boosts inside forests, but outside of one... well, they lose almost all of them."

"I-I see... So I am overpowered inside a forest... Makes sense. Well, I am not planning on leaving any time anyways!" I said.

I quickly checked the other Skills.

[Photosynthesis: Lv1]

As a plant-type race, you're able to draw energy from sunlight and water and produce your own food, your satiation will automatically recover as you bathe in the sun, and all your Stats are increased temporarily while bathing in the sun by +20% with each level, your recovery of HP and MP also increases by +50% while photosynthesizing.

Oh, this was why I didn't feel so hungry in the game. I guess my satiation bar was still quite high, it's around... only 80? And it has been almost a whole day, I really did recover satiation just by receiving the sunlight! That was incredible.

[Green Magic: Lv1]

The Magic that only those connected to Nature to the point they're part of it can conjure. You can learn new Spells as the Level of this Skill increases.

Available Spells:

Level 1: [Plant Manipulation], [Verdant Recovery Light], [Accelerated Growth]

Oh, this one was interesting, I unlocked new Spells with each Level... I see... I knew that Plant Manipulation allowed me to manipulate plants, but what was Verdant Recovery Light and Accelerated Growth?

"Green Magic is unique to a very few races, Dryads, Ents, and Brownies, nobody else can use it, and all of these Races are very rare and not many players pick them..." said the guide. "It has interesting effects."