

Hunter 114

Chapter 114: Tutorial Rewards: Getting stuff

Jake began with the movement skill One Step Mile. Everything about it he liked and the description sounded just straight-up cool.

[One Step Mile (Ancient)] – A single step is sometimes enough to cross vast distances. It is said that the very space between the user and their foes shrinks with every footfall. By drawing on the concept of space, this skill allows the user to cross far longer distances with every step than otherwise. Note that there must be a clear path between you and your target. Grants a noticeable bonus to the effectiveness of endurance and agility when using One Step Mile.

Price: 2.200.000.000

The skill was straightforward in principle. It would allow Jake to move further with every step and be able to travel far more effortlessly. In combat, it would, undoubtedly, also prove valuable to dodge and create distance between him and his opponent.

The thing about drawing on the concept of space only made it even more interesting. It would literally allow Jake to warp space, or maybe warp himself through space. Either way, anything dealing with manipulating space itself couldn't be bad in his eyes.

He was fully aware that despite the name saying One Step Mile, he wouldn't be able to cross an entire mile with every step. At least he seriously doubted he could, and if he could somehow manage to do it, it had to cost an obscene amount of stamina to do so. Or mana. He wasn't sure exactly what resource the skill would require.

The last part of the skill was the price. While steep, it was still only 10% of his total, showing once more how obscenely many points he had managed to acquire. It was even one of the more expensive ones.

He was pretty much settled on picking the skill as he moved on to the next two. Both perception-based skills and both legendary, he expected a lot from both of them. And the first one didn't disappoint.

[All-Seeing Eye of Oras (Legendary)] – Eyes that pierce the veil of obscurity. Allows the hunter to see through most illusions and other effects that obscure the senses. Allows the hunter to project his vision in all directions around himself. Allows the hunter to project his vision to any place within his line of sight, acting like another visual organ. With practice, may your eyes observe all of existence with a single glance. All effects of the skill are based on perception.

Price: 16.145.000.000

The All-Seeing Eye of Oras was just straight up nutty in his opinion. It appeared not only to give what his Sphere of Perception already had but also a whole lot of other things attached. Projected vision, ignoring illusions, etc. If he had this skill during the sewer dungeon, he doubted the dark mana would have had any effect on him at all.

Without a doubt, the skill had many moving parts and several aspects to it. It felt more like three or four skills than one cohesive skill. While that wasn't a bad thing, it did seem to have many uses Jake doubted he would make much use of. It was also a utility skill for the most part.

The most obviously useful part of it in combat was the spherical vision part of it. But quite honestly... Jake had a feeling that he was better than whatever the skill offered. He knew that he hadn't practiced anywhere close to as much as he should with his bloodline abilities, and he would prefer to do that over picking a potentially worse skill.

Projecting his vision had to be the most exciting part of it. It would allow him to scout way further ahead and enable him to see things he otherwise couldn't. It, coupled with the ability to see through obscuration effects, had to make the skill extremely overpowered when scouting.

Thing is... Jake didn't feel like he needed to get that much better at scouting. He felt like his extreme intuition, and his already high perception would be able to spot most enemies far ahead of time. And those he couldn't detect would likely be able to whip his ass anyway.

Overall evaluation of the skill was strong; he just didn't feel like it suited him. The price tag of 16 billion was also an excellent deterrent. He would instead pick a more suitable ancient skill if it came down to it.

There was a chance that his bloodline would create shenanigans, but he didn't want to risk it with a legendary skill...

Based on the final skill... risking it didn't seem necessary either.

[Gaze of the Apex Predator (Legendary)] – A single glance, a fallen prey. The Apex Predator has grown to where their foes cower in fear as it lays its eyes upon them. A glance that penetrates into the very soul of its prey, the gaze of the Apex Predator can immobilize or even kill any it sees. Gives the hunter the ability to paralyze, knock out, and even kill his prey through visual contact. This skill directly targets the soul of the target, ignoring distance, physical defense, and most magical defenses. All effects of Gaze of the Apex Predator are determined by perception.

Cost: 18.457.000.000

Reading the skill, he couldn't help but remember the attack from the King of the Forest that had knocked him out and nearly spelled his doom. It had been an attack that had directly hit him just by the creature looking at him, though there were some differences.

The King had released pulses of energy that had hit him like a sledgehammer directly to his brain. This skill was likely different, but the effects very much the same. He would be able to potentially knock out and even kill just by looking at people. He had to admit that some juvenile part of him couldn't help grinning at the thought of Killing Eyes.

Taking a more realistic view of things, he could see so much potential. The part about ignoring distance was exciting. He could already imagine standing far away from his enemy as he channeled Infused Powershot and then freeze the target with Gaze of the Apex Predator as the arrow was about to hit.

Comparing it to the All-Seeing Eye of Oras, it was also clear that this skill was far more cohesive. It did one thing and one thing only. It was a skill that appealed to him in every way. If he could do just a bit of whatever that attack the King used could, it would instantly become an invaluable skill.

As he thought of the skill, another thought struck him.

"By using the Custom option, is it possible to merge skills?" he asked the Guide.

"Yes, provided the skills hold any compatibility, to begin with, and that you meet the minimum base requirements to do so."

"Can you merge the Gaze of the Apex Predator and my Hunters Sight?"

“Negative. You do not possess the Gaze of the Apex Predator skill.”

.... Fuck you.

Annoyed, he did some quick math to see if he could afford all the skills he wanted. It was a bit tight. Honestly... the Gaze would cost him nearly all his points alone, showing exactly how costly it was.

If he bought the two cauldrons, Gaze, and One Step Mile, he would be left with around 150 million points - a substantial amount for sure and hopefully enough to merge his two skills. If not... well, there were other skills available.

Having decided, he started out by buying the Gaze of the Apex Predator.

If the price for merging is too high, I can skip one of the cauldrons, I guess...

Confirming his purchase, he felt the knowledge enter his brain... followed by a burning sensation in his eyes. It wasn't the warm, comfortable feeling he usually got upon getting a skill, but it felt more like someone had put hot iron directly onto his pupils.

Letting out a surprised yelp, he put both his hands to his eyes as he fell backward. The pain was comparable to the time he nearly got eroded from his legs up during the challenge dungeon. Perhaps because what was currently happening to his eyes was very reminiscent of that.

In his pain, he picked up how his eyes underwent a cycle of destruction and regeneration as they were fundamentally rebuilt. His eyes would no longer be like those of a human but closer to those of a beast. If one day he died, his eyes would be considered great material for many crafters.

It felt like hours but only took a few minutes. Now lying on the floor, Jake slowly opened his eyes. The white color that covered the room looked no different than before, and upon sitting up and gazing about, he noticed nothing different. His eyesight remained unchanged.

What had changed, however, was what he felt like his eyes could now do. He didn't have any target, but he instinctually knew that his gaze now held power.

Getting an idea, he tried to activate Hunter's Sight. His sight sharpened initially, but soon everything turned blurry as his eyes started burning again.

Oh, for fu...

Congratulations, Gaze of the Apex Predator and Hunters Sight have merged into Gaze of the Apex Hunter

... ck... fuck yeah,

As his sentiment underwent a sudden drastic change, he couldn't help smiling. It turns out that having two skills, both directly affecting the eyes, are easily mergeable if you try....

The new description had just straight-up merged the skills, with only minimal changes to both.

[Gaze of the Apex Hunter (Legendary)] – A hunter who has seen his gaze reflected in the eyes of the Apex Predator and now stares back with equal zeal. A glance that penetrates into the very soul of its prey, the gaze of the Apex Hunter can immobilize or even kill any it sees. Gives the hunter the ability to paralyze, knock out, and even kill his prey through visual contact. This skill directly targets the soul of the target, ignoring distance, physical defense, and most magical defenses. Passively enhances the hunter's eyes, increasing the effect of perception while also making weak-points easier to spot. All effects of Gaze of the Apex Hunter are determined by perception.

As the description reflected, the changes were minor. But the one that was there mattered a lot... Hunter's Sight was now just a passive. Opening his eyes, he, of course, instantly noticed how everything appeared sharper.

Even before, he often had the skill active for long durations of the fight, but he had started neglecting it towards the end. He didn't really need to be able to see the big boar he was already stabbing better, and it highlighting weak-points didn't do much either. It just instinctually made him aware of where his target was weaker, which so far had been rather apparent places. Big surprise that eyes, hearts, and brains were weak points.

Feeling very happy, he quickly picked up the two cauldrons on the list he wanted. The two cauldrons appeared on the table before him, one of them incredibly beautiful and ornate, and the other one just looking like a big ball of metal with a lid.

The pretty one was the Cauldron of Myriad Essences. It was marked with figures of flames burning and a wave-pattern running all along with it. All of them carried and pushed by the wind as they struck the carvings of earth. It was quite honestly a work of art. Its size was only around 30 centimeters across, and it was nearly perfectly round except for four stumpy legs below it.

The other cauldron, the Altmar Cauldron of Supreme Simplicity, was, despite being superior, rather cheap-looking and unimpressive. It also had four stumpy legs, and its size was also roughly the same. And while he didn't notice anything else surprising about it, he did feel the differences upon laying his hand on it.

It felt like he was a part of the cauldron like it was an extension of his body. He nearly wanted to stop and do alchemy right there and then. Shaking his head, the Altmar Cauldron was put in his storage. It was already bound to him as it was Soulbound. After that, he bound the other cauldron and put that in his storage.

Next, he went into the Skills: Class menu and picked up the One Step Mile skill. Surprisingly, nothing impressive happened upon him doing so, as he just felt the knowledge enter his head of how to use it. He had expected a bit more after the whole incident with Gaze and didn't know if he should be disappointed or happy.

He didn't have space in the room to practice the skill and instead decided to look for something else. He had 136.552.142 points remaining, a significant number for sure, but it felt like so little compared to his nearly 22 billion he started with.

Going through the lists, he ended up settling on something relatively simple in the end.

[Omnitool (Rare)] – A favorite for nearly all professions. This tool is made of a liquid metal that can take on any pre-programmed shape that the user desires. While unsuitable for combat, it has incredible application when it comes to performing nearly any recreational task. Enchantments: Self-Repair.

Cost: 1.900.000

If it did what was on the tin, it would be a useful tool in the future. Jake had to remember that he was returning to earth once more, and having access to tools would likely be limited. He didn't even have any idea how the planet he returned to would look like, so having the overpowered equivalent of a swiss army knife available wouldn't hurt.

The other thing he took notice of was the low cost of it. It was roughly the same price as other rare weapons and smaller armor pieces, and compared to all the other things he had gotten; it was peanuts. Then again, he had to consider that others would have access to a similar store, and far from everyone would have accumulated billions, or heck, even millions of points.

He remembered the Aspiring Blade of Nature he had fought what felt like ages ago. He had gotten a bit less than 800.000 tutorial points from that guy, and he had been nearly E-grade and relatively competent. As he had gained half the points off him, it meant he only had around one and a half million, which wasn't even enough for the Omnitool. With that logic, was the store actually rather stingy?

Jake spent a bit more time going through all the menus but couldn't find anything more interesting. None of the skills or special items he could find spoke to him, and he was too lacking in imagination to come up with some custom stuff. He did consider if he could get an item to find his family or something, but he felt like he would instead just ask the Viper about it.

Finally buying the damn tool, he saw a small orb appear on the table in front of him. He was at first taken aback, afraid he had purchased a tool for a gnome or midget. Upon picking it up and injecting

mana into it, however, he discovered that it was just highly condensed metal, and at his command, could expand to a size several times bigger.

He couldn't hold himself back from testing a bit, transforming it into a shovel, a hammer, and even an umbrella just for the hell of it.

This thing may just be my favorite, he thought as he continued transforming it into different shapes. Sadly he couldn't make it into any weapons, except a knife, and even then, he could feel that it wasn't made for fighting but cooking or maybe sharpening sticks or something.

Getting bored quickly of playing around, he put it away. A few seconds passed as he just stood there, staring into space. The store window was gone, the guide silent, and the room was still as empty as always.

So... what now?