

## Hunter 16

### Chapter 16: A bit of hunting

The arrow whistled through the air towards the unaware boar. It penetrated deep into the chest of the beast as it whimpered and walked only a couple of meters before collapsing. The second beast wasn't any luckier as an arrow hit it first in its snout, followed by another to the eye shortly after, ending its life nearly instantly.

The final overgrown pig managed only to get hit by a single arrow before it finally saw the attacker. A rather unimpressive man stood on a small hill overlooking the clearing. Brown hair and eyes, a mediocre face, donning a cloak with a color palette a mix between brown and dried blood.

It charged at the man, and with its head kept low, managed to avoid any fatal hits. However, it helped it little as the archer dodged the boar just before it hit him and proceeded to stab his dagger into the side of the beast.

Squealing in pain, it tried to hit him with its tusks, only to once more be evaded and have yet another dagger plunged in its throat. It barely managed to gurgle out a few noises before it, too, collapsed.

Jake smiled to himself as he ripped his knives out of the beast, cleaned them on his cloak, and put them back in the two sheathes he had in his belt. He was starting to enjoy having two melee weapons, having kept the one he took from one of Richards archers.

He even considered getting the dual-wielding skill at some point, but that was for when he got his next skill selection. And speaking of levels, he took a brief look at his notification, noticing none had been gained yet. Then again, it was only the first group of beasts he had killed since burning Nicholas.

\*You have slain [Boar – lvl 5] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level. 16 TP earned\*

\*You have slain [Boar – lvl 6] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level. 32 TP earned\*

\*You have slain [Boar – lvl 8] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level. 128 TP earned\*

The one thing he did get out of it was to confirm his temporary theory that each level of the beasts doubled the amount of TP earned. He still severely doubted that it would work like that all the way, as the multiplication would just get silly at some point.

He also took notice of the part about bonus experience. His current level in his class was 7, yet he was counted as at a lower level. The only explanation he could find was that level was based on his Race Level and not his class level.

It did seem a bit imbalanced working like that, though. For him to kill a beast at his own level was incredibly easy. Even if one ignored his bloodline, he believed that even someone as untalented in combat as Jacob could manage a beast with an equal race-level as his own. Were humans simply favored by the system?

He had also noticed that the levels of enemies did indeed increase as he moved further and further into the forest. The place was huge, and he looked forward to knowing what was at the center of this whole tutorial area. In the beginning, the tutorial announcement had mentioned beast lords or something, so perhaps those were there.

Not that it mattered at the current time. What mattered now was levels. He felt free for the first time since entering the tutorial. Like the entire world was open for him to explore. Well, the entire world currently being this tutorial area.

Jake, however, quickly noticed a problem. The number of beasts in this area was severely lacking. So, to find more, he kept running inwards towards the center of the tutorial area. After only half an hour, where all he encountered was a group of low level badgers, he finally came to a big clearing with a waterhole in the middle.

Around the water, he counted five deer and what looked like a stag. It had a huge crown of antlers and seemed to be teeming with power. The antlers themselves were unnatural, to say the least, literally glowing with dim light that he saw reflected on the surface of the water.

Jake quickly used identify on it and was pleasantly surprised.

[? – lvl 13]

Higher level than the boar. Even before using Identify, he could feel that it was stronger. And the antlers also made him believe that the beast had some kind of magical ability. Jake himself was only level 7, and he was a bit unsure if trying to take on this particular group was a wise move.

The five other deer around the stag were also all level 8 or 9. He was confident that he could kill a couple of them before they managed to reach him if he used good positioning, but if they did catch up to him... yeah, he was not going to outrun them. Four legs are better than two and all that.

The boar had also only been level 10, and it took him all his arrows, and that didn't even kill it. While he doubted that the stag was as resilient as the boar despite its higher level, the fact that it likely had magic was enough of a deterrent.

He thus decided to ignore them for now. After another level in his class, his race would also level, granting him quite a bit more power. By then, he could consider giving it a shot. Though waiting for his level 10 skill would probably be wiser.

He quickly backed away from the clearing and went on his way to look for other prey. It did not take him long to come upon another group of beasts.

This group consisted of what looked like a mix of giant chickens and ostriches. A type of flightless bird, based on the fact that their wings were way too small and their build way too bulky. From their long legs, he also assumed they could run at quite a high speed.

They had long necks extending up to a tiny head. What made them remind him of chickens was the fact that he could hear them clucking. They, however, did not peck at plants or for insects but instead at a dead badger.

Are there really only carnivores in this damn place? he thought. It just felt like a kind of fucked up and unoptimized eco-system that, quite frankly, made no sense. There were plants and trees everywhere, and yet not a single animal ate them. Or maybe the docile birds did. Damn those weird-ass birds.

He had attempted to shoot one down on several occasions, but whenever he tried, they just dodged the arrow like it was nothing. He could not identify them, so he had no idea if they were secretly overpowered super-beasts. But whatever they were, they seemed to have no concerns aside from increasing the ambiance in the forest with their chirping.

But back to the ostriches, which he had decided to just call them. He used Identify on them one by one, finding all three to be level 8.

They were good prey. Their necks were incredibly exposed if hard targets as they moved constantly while eating.

With no hesitation, he raised his bow and fired an arrow, already drawing another before the first one hit. It hit one of the ostriches and penetrated straight through its neck, hitting a tree behind it. The beasts that hadn't been hit raised their heads from the badger they had been pecking at and spotted Jake as another arrow came. The one that had been hit only made gurgling noises as it spasmed on the ground.

Disappointingly his next arrow missed as the giant birds managed to avoid it. Not really intentionally, though, as they were just shifting their legs to get into a better posture to attack.

As with all other beasts, the ostriches charged over at Jake the second they spotted him. He managed to shoot another arrow, hitting one of them in the chest, only doing insignificant damage based on it barely reacting. They reached him in mere seconds, as he tossed the bow to the side and drew both his daggers.

The ostriches fighting style revolved around quick pecks with their beaks, reminiscent of a snake trying to bite, and powerful kicks. Without his danger sense, he would have been pecked to death within seconds.

The flaw in the ostriches fighting style was how exposed their necks were when they snapped forward. With a backhanded blow, he managed to plunge his dagger into the neck of the one he had wounded

earlier. This, however, left him open as the other kicked him. He barely managed to raise his other arm to block as the heavy force of the foot hit him.

The impact made him fly several meters through the air as he felt his shoulder dislocate. He barely managed to get up and roll to the side as the beast was once more upon him.

He had lost both his daggers at this point, as he had dropped the one not currently stuck in an ostrich's neck when he got kicked. He knew where it was due to his sphere, but the beast didn't look like it wanted to give him time to pick it up. It didn't help that it was pretty much standing on it either.

The beast attacked again, and Jake dodged it once more, biting through the pain from his shoulder as his arm hung uselessly to his side. Dodging was easy enough with only one enemy left and his forever-present bloodline ability. The ostrich finally managed to slip up as it attempted to peck him but ended up smashing its head into a tree instead.

Jake was once more reminded of the power of the peck when he saw it penetrate its beak into the tree. The power working against it this time as it was unable to pull it out from the tough bark again, leaving it stuck. Jake quickly pulled an arrow from his quiver and stabbed it through the exposed and immobile neck.

The beast struggled for a bit before it, too, finally fell dead from the blood-loss. He quickly checked his notification but was quickly disappointed by the lack of any levels.

\*You have slain [Ostrich – lvl 8] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level. 128 TP earned\*

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He was still completely unsure how the hell the system decided on the names of these beasts. Most of them seemed just to be 'generic animal' even if they weren't completely equivalent to that animal. Then there was also the big piggie that, for some reason, was called an Irontusk boar. The tusks weren't even made of iron!

Shaking his head, he once more questioned why he wasted so much time pondering on meaningless questions, which in itself was a meaningless question.

Looking at his side, he inspected the shoulder that was clearly dislocated, and while he knew that you could 'snap' it into place, it was not something he had ever done or tried. He had seen some videos on the internet of it done, and it seemed easy enough...

What followed was Jake spending a bit over half an hour positioning his arm in weird ways, slamming his shoulder into trees, and doing weird movements trying to snap it back in place. The pain was excruciating as he cursed himself for not just drinking a healing potion or something.

Decided to take a break from his self-inflicted torture, he sat down on a stone as his shoulder sent waves of pain throughout his body. As he wondered how the hell to fix it, he suddenly felt his arm shift slightly as it snapped into place.

It turns out that his body would heal something like a dislocated shoulder by itself if he just gave it a bit of time. The wonders of vitality, it seems. So, spending thirty minutes turned out to just be an incredible act of masochism for no damn reason. He was even pretty sure he saw one of those damn birds throw a condescending glance at him.

Jake once more cursed himself as he collected his things. He picked up the bow he had dropped earlier as well as both daggers. He had to get his annoyance out on something and quickly found another group of ostriches, only two of them this time: one level 8 and one level 9.

This fight, however, went way easier as he picked the level 9 one off right away and managed to injure the level 8 one with two arrows before it even reached him.

Instead of trying to dance around evading it, he baited it into pecking a tree, followed by a quick decapitation in one swift swipe of his knife.

\*You have slain [Ostrich – lvl 9] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level. 256 TP earned\*

\*You have slain [Ostrich – lvl 8] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level. 128 TP earned\*

\*'DING!' Class: [Archer] has reached level 8 - Stat points allocated, +1 free point\*

\*'DING!' Race: [Human (G)] has reached level 4 - Stat points allocated, +1 free point\*



This fight netted him the levels he wanted. He briefly considered going back for the stag now but decided against it. The ostriches had reminded him that a beast could easily take you by surprise, and it would be quite stupid to suddenly get insta-killed by some mega magic antler-beam.

He instead proceeded to hunt down more beasts in the area. He mainly found lower-leveled deer and badgers, but any kill was worth it. He got a couple of scratches here and there, the worst being when he engaged a group of four low-level badgers, all not above level 4.

It, however, quickly turned out that there were not only four badgers. Instead, another seven were hidden in the nearby bushes, and they all ran at him simultaneously. The following fight turned out to be grueling. He managed to kill three of them before they reached him but had to bring out his daggers for the remaining eight.

None of them were above level 5, but he took a lot of damage as he cut them down one by one. His sphere of perception in concert with his instincts and danger perception allowed him to minimize the damage he took, but avoiding all attacks was impossible.

He ended the fight with only 56 health remaining. His cloak once more blood-soaked, now also filled with holes and tears. The worst part was that the whole thing did not even give him a damn level.

And to make a shitty situation even shittier, then the entire horde only gave him a measly 62 TP. Most of them had been level 2 and 3, with only one at level 5, making the points given abysmal. He quickly told himself that he would not waste time on beasts too far below his level anymore.

He quickly drank a healing potion, refilling his health pool completely—the potion restoring nearly 300 HP.

Add another question to the list: How much does an inferior-rank healing potion heal?

He sighed as he got up, looking at the carnage around him. Only a couple of hours had passed since he last cleaned himself, and he was now once again covered in blood from head to toe.

While he had to admit he was thoroughly enjoying himself in the forest, he did kind of miss the ability to take a nice warm shower. He would have to bring that up with the manager of the tutorial at an opportune time.