

Hunter 163

Chapter 163: Helping Friends

The two hawks sat within the protective sphere while the one Jake had named 'Hawkie' helped its mate with the ritual. Its mate, the Mystsong Hawk, was still skeptical but had agreed to the modifications anyway.

Hawkie needed to stabilize the entire formation while the Mystsong Hawk redrew the markings on the ground carefully. It was intricate work that took a lot of concentration from both of them for something they weren't even sure would have any point.

If the human failed to kill the elemental or didn't want to give the Orb, it would all amount to nothing.

Now, why would the hawks make this large formation and spend more than 1½ month feeding it energy as their egg slowly grew? The answer was simple: Records.

They wanted their chick to start out with as large an advantage as possible, hopefully even getting a powerful race. As a Galesong Hawk and a Mystsong Hawk, the race of their chick was already unpredictable to begin with, and while this entire ritual would make it even more so, it could only lead to positives.

As a D-grade, the Mystsong Hawk was already placed highly on the planet's hierarchy, and they both also believed that the Galesong Hawk could reach D-grade... but to reach C-grade or above was a massive uncertainty.

As beasts, their natural instincts were, of course, for both themselves and their offspring to become as strong and healthy as possible. They had made this entire formation to make sure of that, collected hundreds of the cloud elemental orbs... but they needed more.

That is when that weird human suddenly appeared. At first, he was just a shitty flyer that the Galesong Hawk took pity on, and a few of its fatherly instincts influenced it to give some pointers. It wasn't with any specific goal in mind; it just found the human amusing.

But then it saw the human fight. It saw the man annihilate the souls of an entire flock of birds with a look and for him to improve at a ridiculous speed as he hunted down beasts many levels above himself. It saw him kill beasts the Galesong Hawk wasn't confident in facing with a single arrow...

It saw him kill a D-grade that even its D-grade mate couldn't beat.

That is when the Galesong Hawk realized that it had met a monster.

To see him stand atop the Thunder Roc with a disappointed look in his eyes was what made the Galesong Hawk resolve itself and convince its mate to ask his assistance. The Mystsong was still reluctant but agreed nevertheless. It had tried to pressure the human with its aura but instead found itself suppressed.

22 hours after the human left, the Mystsong Hawk detected him within its projected aura.

A small hole in the barrier opened as the human flew inside, landing on the ground with far more grace than the Galesong had expected the human ever to be able to when it met him only a few weeks ago.

“Well, that was fucking annoying,” the human said as he suddenly began rambling. “Seriously, I kill the stupid elemental, and then everything just goes to shit and...”

However, both of them had already begun filtering out his rant on disrespectful thieving birds after hearing the first part. Besides, they didn’t fully understand his words, just the general sentiment behind them.

The Galesong Hawk made some noises towards him, and the human looked over. “Oh yeah, the orb is right here.”

He took out the Orb and displayed it to the two birds.

[Storm Elemental Orb (D-grade)] – Contains strong storm-affinity mana and the remnant Records of a Storm Elemental

The flight back had been rather relaxing. After recuperating a bit, Jake went to inspect the center of the cloud continent, aka the massive crystal tree. Upon further inspection... he was surprised to learn it wasn’t alive. Or at least it didn’t have a soul.

It was just a natural treasure. One that gathered and created lightning-affinity mana and likely also generated the clouds. Jake couldn’t do anything to it or move it. So he decided just to let it be... perhaps he could find a use for it in the future, and if he couldn’t, he was fine with it just spawning more D-grades to hunt down later. Even if he didn’t hunt them himself, the cloud was pretty close, so perhaps some people from his city could go in the future.

Back in the present time, Jake was still a bit annoyed as he entered the barrier but felt quite a bit better after ranting at the two birds. He had, of course, been attacked on the way back by a bunch of ignorant vultures that hadn't seen him earlier. He was happy that his hawk-buddy wasn't an asshole that just attacked him at first sight. These two hawks at least seemed somewhat polite, and he did consider Hawkie a friend of sorts, and treating your pal's girlfriend or wife decently was just common courtesy.

Yes, Jake was now 100% sure that Hawkie was the guy and the Mystsong Hawk, the girl. Speaking of Hawkie...

"So, what should I call you?" he thought, looking at the Mystsong Hawk. The bird looked back at him with confusion as Jake stood there, thinking deeply. "Well... you are a Mystsong Hawk, so... how about Mystie? Yeah, let's go with that. Hawkie and Mystie."

Now, Jake wasn't actually delusional enough to think that those names were in any way good, but quite frankly, he didn't care. Even if other people heard them, who would disrespect a level 97 hawk and its D-grade partner? Well, besides himself.

The bird didn't particularly mind either, perhaps finding the entire concept of naming things novel. Hawkie had already gotten used to the weird human long ago, so it just ignored the human's antics as it looked intently at the Storm Elemental Orb in his hand.

"Anyway, here is the Orb," Jake said as he tossed the Orb to Mystie, who easily caught it with some kind of magic as it levitated in mid-air. Telekinesis? It looks pretty weak, so likely not used in combat.

Jake saw the two birds continue working after both giving a thankful screech. The human wondered what to do as he looked at the magic circle being redrawn in new patterns. It didn't take a genius to figure out that it was to allow the use of the Storm Elemental Orb. But it did give him an idea...

“Can you also use the Beastcore?” he asked as he took out the core from the Thunder Roc.

The Mystsong looked at him and the orb for a bit before sadly shaking its small head.

“Is it because it isn’t just pure energy like the orbs?” he asked, pointing between the orbs and the core.

That one got him a nod.

“Say, what if I somehow mess with it a bit and make it more like an orb? Can it then be used?”

This time he got a confused look from Mystie. Hawkie made some bird noises that made the hawk look at him again with interest before screeching at him in response.

Yeah, I’m just going to take that as a solid ‘maybe.’

Now, what did Jake plan on doing? Something he had no idea if he could even do. A bit of a gamble, if you may.

Jake understood that in the eyes of many beasts and pretty much all humans on Earth, a D-grade Beastcore had to be a priceless treasure, but to Jake, it really wasn't. He would kill countless D-grades in the future, so to mess a bit with one for a mad experiment wasn't a waste at all in his eyes.

He wanted to see if he could somehow change the core into something useful. And what better way to do that but poison the hell out of it?

But... he wanted to do it in a bit of a unique way. So the cauldron he had taken out wasn't his usual one, but one he had yet to use.

[Cauldron of Myriad Essences (Epic)] – A cauldron made by infusing a vast array of essences within it, granting it the ability to far easier and more efficiently transform mana affinities. Allows the user to change affinities to elemental affinities the user doesn't possess himself. The cauldron has very high mana conductivity due to the material and the runes inscribed upon it, but it is somewhat fragile compared to many other types of cauldrons. Enchantments: Mana conductivity (Very High). Mana Transparency (Medium). Durability (Low). Myriad Essences.

Requirement: lvl 50+ in any alchemy-related profession.

He wasn't quite ready yet, though. While this was a mad experiment, he still needed at least some kind of plan or approach. Closing his eyes, he entered meditation as he dove into his inner self. More accurately, a small drop of blood within himself.

The drop contained Records of the Malefic Viper that Jake could dive into and explore with his Sagacity of the Malefic Viper. Naturally, it wasn't all the mighty god's Records but a mere fraction of a fragment, but that in itself was nearly boundless to an E-grade like him.

And while the knowledge was primarily related to alchemy... not all of it was. As he dove into it, he felt like he got some kind of response as he briefly felt the influence of Villy himself come down and give him a nudge in the direction he was going – his amusement apparent.

Jake found the knowledge wanted as he dove in. Knowledge about Records and, more importantly, the evolution of beasts and how to support them in their evolutions. He didn't look for a recipe or anything like that, but just an idea.

And an idea he got... but surprisingly, it wasn't from what was within the blood but the drop itself.

If the Viper can somehow implement Records into a drop of blood like this... can't I do something similar? Not the same way, but something similar...

Thinking about it – his Thoughtful Meditation on full display as he was entirely in his own little world - didn't every part of him already contain a part of his Records? Yeah, I'm giving it a go.

Still inspired by his thoughts, he opened the lid of the cauldron and, without any hesitation, poured in his own blood, infused with Blood of the Malefic Viper. Nonchalantly he threw in the Beastcore and began focusing everything he had on the cauldron.

The blood instantly tried to dig in and corrode the core, but Jake didn't allow it to. Instead, he began helping the core fight back. This was the reason why he used this cauldron. The mana he infused into the Beastcore was made to mimic the current mana within it, amplifying it instead of weakening it.

His blood surrounding the core tried to dig into it but instead found itself consumed by the lightning.

Lightning-affinity had the inherent ability to break down mana. Getting hit by lightning magic would also destroy the mana of what was within what it hit. This also meant that if you used lightning magic on a person, it would drain some of their mana along with their health if you managed to do damage.

What did this mean for his blood? It meant that the lightning from the Beastcore eliminated the mana in the blood around it. Draining its toxicity at a rapid pace as Jake allowed it to win out. He wasn't sure exactly how long it took, but soon the blood was entirely drained of all traces of toxicity and seemed almost inert.

But Jake knew it wasn't... because it still contained some elements of Jake that the lightning couldn't destroy. Because while the lightning could destroy all the mana-based poison, it failed to destroy the poison that was entirely based on vital energy.

Harkening back all the way to the time he consumed the amalgamation to pass the challenge dungeon where he encountered his first real vitality-based poison. During the Trial of Myriad Toxins, he had been inflicted with even more types of vitality-based toxins as well as countless other kinds. He had learned from it, and now parts of the poison within his blood were vitality-based.

He took control of this energy as he began forcing it into the Beastcore, meeting much resistance. With most other kinds of poison eliminated in the blood, it was far easier to isolate what was vitality-based and move it.

More time passed as Jake slowly infused this vital-energy into the Beastcore, careful not to break it. After he was done, he quickly emptied the entire cauldron and once more poured in new blood. He continued the process once more as slowly the Beastcore was affected.

Hawkie and Mystie, as this was apparently officially their names now, had been done redrawing the circle a few days earlier already. The human was still sitting there doing his weird ritual of sorts. Hawkie had already expressed that this was the same method he used to make the small bottles that restored resources or concocted deadly poisons, so Mystie was somewhat interested.

They looked on as he kept working, and on the fourth day, they saw a small smile grow on his lips. The two Hawks thought the human was about done, and just as they were trying to inspect closer... something happened. His hands began to glow a dark green color as he injected something into the entire concoction. A few seconds later... they felt a shift.

A presence suddenly appeared for but a fraction of a second, but it was enough to make them both completely freeze up and black out for a moment. Like the harbinger of death and destruction itself had appeared, a phantasmal scaled hand emerged from the void and touched the cauldron before disappearing just as fast.

They both knew it hadn't actually happened but was just a representation of a concept or power far beyond their understanding... but what they did know was that a supreme existence was associated with the human. Only affirming their decision even further.

Jake opened his eyes as he was close to finishing the crafting process. He activated Touch of the Malefic Viper for the final push, injecting the most concentrated poison he could. He tried to imitate the vitality-based poison he had made so long ago, and while it was only partially successful... it got the job done.

His inspiration faded as his smile grew.

The first thing that greeted him was a notification he hadn't seen in a very long time.

*DING! *: [Malefic Viper's Poison] has been activated! The transcendent power of the Malefic Viper has forcefully increased the rarity of your creation to Rare, increasing all effects substantially.

It was the kind of passive skill that you so easily forgot. Everything it did, it did behind the scenes. Especially the bonus effect that had just triggered. It was an effect that quite frankly seemed too strong for a mere rare skill... but then again, it barely ever triggered. But when it did, it led to something good.

You have successfully crafted [Malefic Beastorb (Rare)] – A new kind of creation has been made. Bonus experience earned

'DING!' Profession: [Prodigious Alchemist of the Malefic Viper] has reached level 72 - Stat points allocated, +5 free points

'DING!' Profession: [Prodigious Alchemist of the Malefic Viper] has reached level 73 - Stat points allocated, +5 free points

'DING!' Race: [Human (E)] has reached level 84 - Stat points allocated, +5 free points

Two levels may seem like a lot, but Jake had spent four entire days within his Thoughtful Meditation to make the item. It was still above his current average speed, but not by overly much. It wasn't really him that had crafted a rare item after all.

Jake knew that what he had created was a Beastorb, an item that beasts could consume much like how humans could consume elixirs. Instead, it often had a different kind of effect... sometimes it would help them with an affinity, sometimes it would increase a stat, but it would usually do nothing. Well, nothing isn't entirely accurate as it would marginally help the beast's Records, allowing it to potentially reach higher levels or evolutions than it otherwise would.

Looking at his specific creation, it didn't really look that impressive.

[Malefic Beastorb (Rare)] – A Beastcore of a Thunder Roc that has now been thoroughly infused with vital energy from an outside source and has been forcibly transformed into an orb. It contains the remnant Records of the Thunder Roc and fragmented Records of the alchemist that has crafted it. Unknown effects if consumed. Unknown uses in alchemy. Beneficial effects if consumed by a beast.

Jake took the Beastorb out of the cauldron and displayed it to the two birds gawking at him.

“Will this be of any use?”