

Hunter 198

Chapter 198: D-grade Class Selection

As he accepted the evolution, he was instantly greeted by five options – the maximum. This was, of course, expected as he had done plenty of things to warrant them. He had hunted down powerful foes and even slain the King of the Forest... even if his mask now carried an ominous message.

His confidence was growing, as he did the same as always and began going through the options one by one. The first of which was a direct upgrade to his Ambitious Hunter class.

Avaricious Hunter – A direct upgrade to the Ambitious Hunter class. Your ambition to always face a stronger foe has turned to avarice as you seek stronger and stronger challenges, your desire for danger on your journey only growing. A class focused on ranged combat, mainly using bow and arrow, coupled with light options for melee such as short swords and daggers. The class is fast and flexible, focusing on agility over strength. You persist on this precarious path, yet your resolve is strong, and your hunger for challenges persists. Just beware that your avarice does not consume you. Stat Bonuses per level: +18 Per, +16 Agi, +12 End, +12 Str, +10 Free Points

After Jake was done reading it – especially the stat gains – he was taken aback. As he had read, stats given for D-grade classes and professions would more-or-less triple, so why did the direct upgrade to Ambitious Hunter give way more than triple stats? It gave him 18 total, while this one gave 68 total... if the math of tripling was true, shouldn't it only give 54?

It wasn't that he thought the class sounded bad; in fact, he thought it was awesome. Sure, the whole thing about being consumed by your own avarice and all that was a bit on the darker side, but it did kind of fit him. Deciding to fight the King was nothing more than avarice, and his impatience to face bigger challenges was bordering – if not already – pretty damn sinful.

This made him think... he knew classes that had drawbacks offered more stats due to their drawbacks but didn't this one also have flaws? He had theorized from reading Jacob's booklet and a bit of independent research that his Ambitious Hunter had likely suffered from an innate experience-penalty from fighting equal or lower-leveled foes. This seemed even more likely to have drawbacks like that.

Well, he called it drawbacks, but ultimately, it wasn't anything that would affect him. Who would want to battle enemies weaker than yourself all the time? What was the point of that even? That just sounded boring as hell, even if it was a lot safer, which made sense as being safe automatically made it boring in his mind.

In conclusion: Great class... but only the first on the list of five, each option being higher "tiered" than the last. So with great expectations, Jake moved on to the second option – one directly rewarding his mana practice.

Prestigious Arcane Mage – A prodigy at magic, you have now begun forging your own path as you delve into the arcane. You are a prestigious figure in any circle of mages – a true caster worthy of respect. The Prestigious Arcane Mage is a class focused on magical combat, more accurately your own arcane mana built around the concepts of power, purity, and raw simplicity. The class is powerful and highly focused on magical combat, offering no physical stats. Your one-sided focus on magic shall be as pure as your arcane mana. May your path stay pure, your foundation stable, and your enemies destroyed as the power of your arcane descends. Stat Bonuses per level: +18 Int, +15 Per +14 Wis, 14+ Will, +12 Free Points WARNING: Skills pertaining to the Ambitious Hunter class may be lost or changed upon becoming a Prestigious Arcane Mage

If Avaricious Hunter were purely a physical combat class, this would be a purely magical combat class. Extra emphasis on the pure as that was what his arcane mana was all about. The stats were great and truly emphasized that having an arcane-affinity at E-grade was extraordinary, providing 73 per level total – 5 more than the Avaricious Hunter one.

While Jake would normally spend a lot of time going over pros and cons... Jake knew he wasn't a mage. Okay, maybe a part-time mage, but before a mage, he was a hunter. Heck, it was in his bloodline. Does

being an arcane-slinging badass sound cool, and did he enjoy his time summoning bolts and obliterating Cloud Elementals? Sure, but he still liked bows more.

It was also the only one that would result in lost or changed skills. Screw that; Jake liked those skills.

So he moved on to the next one... which was instantly quite a bump from the one below it.

Bestial Alpha Hunter – You stand before the beasts like their kin and show yourself the alpha. You do not need the finesse and techniques developed by the enlightened ones but are more than happy to rely on your instincts. A class focused primarily on melee combat, you prefer to use basic weaponry such as bows and the occasional dagger, if any weapon at all, relying on your high perception and reaction times to dominate the battle. Yet your desire does not end at simple dominating your peers; you want to stand at the apex. Your power shall grow as you stand before those more powerful than yourself as like a beast you adapt to your environment. Be careful not to lose that which makes you human. Stat Bonuses per level: +15 Per, +13 Str, +13 Agi, +10 End, +10 Vit, +10 Tough, +12 Free Points

Jake had to admit... this one sounded very metal, and if his bloodline had a dedicated class, this would be it without a doubt – short of having one just called The Primal Hunter, of course. The name was also fantastic and most certainly appealed to a more childish part of him. Who doesn't like to be called an Alpha Hunter?

The stats provided were an entire tier ahead of the two prior offered classes, giving an insane 83 stats total per level, putting it firmly in the absolute upper echelon of classes available. This was a top-tier class, no way around it, but it was also a bit - how can one say it - special.

All of the stats were in physical ones. This wasn't surprising, as the classes kind of called Jake stupid in the nicest way possible. It more or less told him that he had thrown away being smart and using proper

tactics and weapons, relying nearly solely on his instincts instead, and just because it's true, doesn't mean that it's right.

Upon reading it, the first thing that struck him was how much it would synergize with his bloodline. The last time he picked a skill with "bestial" in it, it had upgraded straight from rare to legendary-rarity. He had a feeling that feat could possibly repeat with quite a few skills offered by this class.

But the class also felt limited. It ignored Jake's more magical talents and didn't make use of his newly gained arcane-affinity at all. Even worse, he was pretty damn sure it was a melee-class, considering it mentioned how he didn't even need to use a weapon. Jake really, really liked his bow, and while he could still use it, he didn't want a class that wasn't significantly linked to using one. It would feel... wrong.

All in all: Awesome class, but Jake wanted something that would make more active use of his bowmanship and magic.

With all that in mind, he moved on to the second-to-last option.

Avaricious Arcane Hunter – Your path is pure, and your ambitions are ever-growing. You hunt for power through all the paths available to you, embracing any means that allows you to slay your foes, even embracing the arcane along your journey. Your perennial desire for progress has turned to avarice as you single-mindedly hunt down all those you wish to see dead. This class combines the pure path of the hunter with the pure path of arcane magic, driven by the endless avarice inherent to your being. The bow is your chosen weapon, amplified with arcane magic, but you also retain your abilities to face enemies in close combat, making all foes despair at your powerful – yet diverse - methods of attack. You will find yourself more powerful than ever as you stand before those stronger than yourself, and by decree of your path, you shall come out victorious. Stay true to yourself, strive for the top, and you shall reach the apex or face death, consumed by your own avarice. Stat Bonuses per level: +20 Per, +12 Agi, +12 Int, +10 Wis, +10 End, +6 Will, +6 Str, +10 Free points

See, now we're cooking! Jake thought with a big smile as he read the class. While it sounded less extreme and fancy than the Alpha Bestial Hunter, it felt far stronger. It also provided 86 stats per level in total. It was only 3 more, and they were far more spread out, but that was okay to him. His current stats were already very balanced, besides his ridiculously high perception, that is, and this class provided the most perception out of all of them, giving a massive 20 per level. Jake liked that a lot.

It was like a fusion between the first two classes, albeit heavily leaning towards the hunter side, which he was totally fine with. It retained the whole theme about avarice; one could even argue it had been turned up a bit, but that also wasn't an issue. In fact, he welcomed it. While he didn't like the low stats from his E-grade class, he liked the skills it offered.

Big Game Hunter made him noticeably stronger when fighting foes at a higher level. Mark of the Ambitious Hunter increased his damage done, made him aware of where his foe was, and even gave extra experience. Arrow of the Ambitious Hunter was just straight-up awesome, and the survival instinct that turned into Moment of the Primal Hunter also came from the class, so it wasn't like he couldn't get those if he didn't go with the Bestial Alpha Hunter class.

If Avaricious Hunter offered skills in the same vein as Ambitious Hunter, it would be great, so he was happy to retain that aspect of the class. The aspect of constantly wanting to fight stronger foes, even if it came with the possible penalty of receiving less or possibly no experience from equal or lower-leveled foes. Again, Jake didn't really see that as a penalty.

To also have the class make use of his arcane-affinity just made it all better. It would allow him to make better use of all his stats, especially the mental ones. Jake didn't carry any delusions towards what kind of profession he would get, and as he wanted to remain an alchemist, it was certain he would receive plenty of magical stats from that.

Overall, the class was damn great, but there was one option left. It was a class Jake had kind of expected but was still a bit surprised at seeing it be the bottom-most one offered, indicating it was the one with the highest tier.

Hunter-Champion of the Malefic Viper – In the realm of mortals, you are the instrument to carry out the will of the Malefic One. As his champion, you use his Legacy as your base and wield poison and corruption as your weapons of choice. You do not care for your equipment as long as it allows you to deliver death upon your foes, and you find yourself adept in most combat styles, even if you prefer the bow to be the harbinger of the Malefic One's foes. Your will and wisdom shall become the cornerstone of your path as you slaughter all who dare stand before you or your desire to carry out the will of your Patron. His will is yours. For as his champion, your path is as much the Malefic One's to define as it is your's to travel. May the will of the Malefic Viper be done. Stat Bonuses per level: +18 Will, +18 Wis, +10 Vit, +10 End, +12 Free Points, +20 Contingent Points distributed through communion with your Patron

There was a lot to unpackage with this one, but before he even began his usual analysis, his answer to it was already clear: a resounding "fuck no".

Jake knew the class was likely great, but it wasn't what he was looking for. The stats offered weren't what he wanted, and that part about Contingent Points just rubbed him in the wrong way. He didn't believe that Villy would actually make any decisions for Jake, but there was no fucking way he would ask every single time he had to distribute points.

Also, what if Villy didn't agree to throw every single point into perception? Jake didn't want to have that discussion.

Compared to Avaricious Arcane Hunter, it only offered 2 more stats per level, giving 88 total. This firmly placed the class in the absolute top-tier, and Jake couldn't help but wonder as he read it through... how much of it actually had to do with himself and not the Viper?

It barely mentioned Jake except for the Hunter-Champion part, but even that was still a bit generic. It was truly a class solely focused on being a mortal warrior for the Malefic Viper, and every single part of it emphasized that.

Jake wasn't, and would never be, the Champion of the Malefic Viper. He would never be his warrior in the mortal realm, carrying out his bidding. Would he do a favor for Villy if he asked? Sure, that's what friends do, but he didn't want to be his employee – or worse – a mere tool. He was also certain Villy didn't want that.

The fact that he would likely have been offered his class while barely doing anything emphasized that a True blessing of a god, even more so a Primordial, was kind of a big deal. It helped Jake sympathize with Miranda. From an outsider's perspective, the whole thing about the blessing looked like a lot more than it actually was. Heck, based on what the Viper had said, it was more like an investment, and if Jake did enough great things, the Viper would get a return on his True Blessing and then some.

Jake shook his head as he turned his attention back to the class before this one. Avaricious Arcane Hunter.

While it gave marginally fewer stats, it had nearly everything he wanted in a class. It also just vibed with him way more, and he liked it. Sure, it had a bit of negativity around it with the whole "don't be consumed by avarice"-thing going on. But hey, it could be worse, and dying in an epic battle with a superior foe didn't sound like a bad way to go out.

Without hesitating anymore, he picked Avaricious Arcane Hunter.

Congratulations, you have successfully evolved your Class

'DING!' Class: [Avaricious Arcane Hunter] has reached level 100 - Stat points allocated, +10 free points