

Hunter 212

Chapter 212: City/Monkey Management

Jake sat on the ground as he breathed in heavily, waiting for his left arm to regrow. His right eye was also still a bit blurry after being regenerated, as it turned out that taking a blast of force to the face resulted in quite a lot of it being funneled into the holes in the mask. He was lucky his head was tilted so he only lost one of them.

He was also, of course, half-naked from most of his armor being shredded or blown apart, a lot of the damage done by his own explosions of arcane mana. He had to be honest; he was close to having bitten off a bit more than he could chew here towards the end.

It was now only a bit over 22 hours away from the beginning of the World Congress, and Jake was still in the forest hunting monkeys. After the first Matriarch, the second one to move was the highest level one, but it had gone down quite easily. Mainly because Jake had the tactic down and more and better Hemotoxins than before.

You have slain [Tri-Lighttail Monkey Matriarch – lvl 147] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level

‘DING!’ Class: [Avaricious Arcane Hunter] has reached level 108 - Stat points allocated, +10 free points

‘DING!’ Race: [Human (D)] has reached level 105 - Stat points allocated, +15 free points

He regenerated to full with that one down and had then gone to pull another one of the Matriarchs, hoping to finish it off quickly. Oh boy, that hadn’t at all turned out as planned. Not at all.

When he shot an arrow on the third Matriarch, the fourth one had decided to join in too, with all the young monkeys being ushered into the buildings surrounding the ancient temple. Jake had already found out earlier they led to some small underground caves that were pretty much safety shelters.

Jake had no interest in going after the young ones. He was no sand-hating youngling-slayer, after all. Besides, he didn't have a lightsaber.

Anyway, Jake had pulled the third Matriarch, the fourth had decided to follow, and eventually, this had resulted in the majority of D-grade monkeys in the entire temple-area chasing him. The only lucky thing was that the Prima was still chilling within the center temple, not taking part. It appeared to honestly not give a shit what the rest of its tribe was doing, and all the other monkeys were just afraid of it from what Jake could tell.

All of this had resulted in Jake on the run from an entire fucking army of D-grade monkeys, including 2 Matriarchs, more than 20 Dervishes, even more Crushers, and a dozen or so Suppressors. The number of normal D-grades Tri-Lighttail Monkeys was above a hundred total. Very much not a good time.

The first hour had been the hardest by far, Jake trying to slow down and injure the horde as much as possible as he ran. He killed and ripped and poisoned with everything he had, with both his blades absolutely covered in blood towards the end.

He did discover that the health draining effect of his Scimitar of Cursed Hunger was extremely valuable against the normal D-grades. It meant he did not have to consume health potions as much but allowed him to regenerate by beheading monkeys.

With his sphere and Sense of the Malefic Viper sensing all the poisoned monkeys, he managed to never get surrounded and outnumbered too much, allowing him to always fight back or escape when things got a bit too spicy.

In the end, the entire ordeal had still taken more than an entire goddamn day - an entire day of running, fighting, killing, and slowly whittling down his foes. A few more monkeys even joined the hunt when they noticed what was going on, making Jake feel like he was facing a neverending tide of simians.

He had to chug down a potion every hour on the dot to keep himself at least a bit healthy, most of them stamina potions. Jake had to use Limit Break at 10% nearly the entire time but had towards the end activated it at 20% to finish off the final Matriarch.

Jake had discovered over the course of that god damn marathon of a fight that he could indeed still get tired. Not because he lacked stamina or mana or anything like that, it was just pure mental exhaustion. His mind wanted to rest; he needed to just not think or do anything intense for a while. Not even necessarily sleep, just at least not have to focus.

After reaching D-grade, you never had to sleep anymore. You barely had to at E-grade, needing only a few hours a week tops, most of it just being done with meditating anyway. But as he had discovered, that didn't mean rest was unnecessary.

Ultimately, this mental exhaustion hadn't had much effect except Jake maybe not fighting in an as tactical manner towards the end. He was lucky in the sense that he didn't have to truly focus when fighting; it was actually quite the opposite: the less he focused, the more he could just move instinctively.

Of course, that wasn't always optimal and worked best in melee. It also wasn't perfect either, far from it. Hence Jake's lack of an arm and newly- regenerated eye, and a massive amount of wounds on his

body. But it had helped him to never suffer any truly lethal blow... though he did have to trigger Moment of the Primal Hunter in the very end to finish off the last Matriarch.

So now, Jake just sat there, completely exhausted, his health, stamina, and mana all below 20%, and the negative after-effects of Limit Break taking their toll. Luckily, nothing was alive anywhere close to him, and the destroyed area and miasma of poison and stench of decayed and still-rotting corpses was sure to keep most anything away.

He felt tired as fuck, but also very accomplished as he went through his wall of notifications. The first of which was the many monkeys, but most importantly, the 2 Matriarchs. Though he did see that there were Dervishes all the way to 140 also mixed in.

You have slain [Tri-Lighttail Monkey Matriarch – lvl 142] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level

You have slain [Tri-Lighttail Monkey Matriarch – lvl 146] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level

And the best part: Levels.

'DING!' Class: [Avaricious Arcane Hunter] has reached level 109 - Stat points allocated, +10 free points

'DING!' Class: [Avaricious Arcane Hunter] has reached level 110 - Stat points allocated, +10 free points

'DING!' Race: [Human (D)] has reached level 106 - Stat points allocated, +15 free points

'DING!' Class: [Avaricious Arcane Hunter] has reached level 111 - Stat points allocated, +10 free points

'DING!' Class: [Avaricious Arcane Hunter] has reached level 112 - Stat points allocated, +10 free points

'DING!' Race: [Human (D)] has reached level 107 - Stat points allocated, +15 free points

Getting levels always just felt great. So, with great satisfaction, he lay down on the bloody grass, ignored the toxic miasma all around him, and fell asleep.

Usually, she would be a bit annoyed or even question where he was, but quite honestly, she had become immune to his whims and constant absence and just accepted to do things herself. It worked out fine that way anyway, and in the moments when it truly mattered, Jake would be there. There is no way he would miss the World Congress because he was too busy hunting, right? Yeah, definitely not. Definitely.

Miranda had just woken up from another journey to the Verdant Lagoon, where she had ended up spending most of the time going through paperwork and dealing with stuff through the system menus, making use of the time distortion to get work done. Creating new quests, taking stocks, and all that. The system even had interfaces for all that, and Lillian had recently unlocked a skill that allowed her to send and receive messages through the powers of the Pylon. This meant she could send it to anyone connected to it, such as Miranda, Phillip, Hank, or anyone else with an official position granted by Miranda or someone she had given the authority to grant positions to. A position-giving position, if you will.

This should also have worked for the owner, but Lillian had tried and found that it failed every time. It was like the skill couldn't find its destination. Miranda just wrote that up to him having some kind of skill to block it, or maybe he was just too strong. Both seemed like reasonable explanations.

They had a meeting earlier that day – they being herself and most of the people with positions of leadership in the city – and agreed on a few things concerning the World Congress. One of the largest subjects of discussion was related to immigration.

Through interaction with merchants and travelers from Sanctdomo, they had become aware that the other city was truly massive and that other far larger settlements also existed out there. Many of Haven's current citizens had family or friends elsewhere and were only in Haven right now because it was the only settlement they had come across that offered at least a modicum of safety.

Many guesses about what the World Congress was all about had been made, and the only real thing Miranda was certain of was that it would allow the different world leaders to interact – the quest making that quite clear.

Haven didn't intend to make themselves antagonistic to any forces, but she was damn sure that some other faction would try to cause strife or perhaps even attempt to lay claim and annex the city. Their population appeared to be a weakness, which is why another choice they had made seemed to not make a lot of sense – limit immigration.

Due to the city's geography, Haven would never become a metropolis unless they chose to abandon what made it special and ruin the entire atmosphere of the forest. Nobody wanted that, and Miranda was also fairly certain Jake would prefer not to have high-rises surrounding his valley.

At the Fort and the area surrounding the Fort, a proper city could be constructed, and Miranda was even working on having the area influenced by the Pylon extend to there. Once she reached D-grade, that should be possible.

No, they would keep Haven as an area more specialized and – as arrogant as it may seem – reserved for the “elite” and their immediate family. Nobody currently living there would be thrown out, but they would limit how many newcomers could become official citizens.

Haven was placed in the outer parts of a beast-filled forest, and just a few hundred meters outside the area influenced by the Pylon, one could run into beasts. If one delved further in, high level E-grades were aplenty, with D-grades eventually appearing. Miranda was pretty sure Jake was currently out fighting those.

The owner had even mentioned a nearby D-grade dungeon. It was currently closed off with warning signs still at the cave entrance, and Miranda had even placed down a small alarm spell around the cave to make sure no one entered. Jake clearly wanted to be the first to do the dungeon, and there was no way Miranda would deny him that right. It was also just safer to have someone scout it out and get some general information for subsequent parties. She knew no one better than him to do it.

There wasn't really any threat of others going to the dungeon currently, though. There was no other D-grade in the city than Jake and the birds. They just stayed in the valley most of the time, and while she knew beasts could enter and do dungeons, they apparently very rarely did. Besides them, no one was really even close to D-grade. Miranda herself was now the second-highest leveled individual with a race level of 86, with Neil and his party all sitting between 75-85 - Neil the one at 85. She was actually impressed by the continued zeal of the party to keep progressing. She did believe a part of it was due to what happened at the Fort, as the entire party appeared both ashamed and motivated after being utterly embarrassed by Jake and Mystsong Hawk.

Besides all those decisions, they had also discussed who should go to the World Congress. Based on what she could tell, only two additional people except for the City Owner and City Lord could enter the

Congress per Pylon. The wording was a bit weird, making her wonder if perhaps both she and the Owner could bring two people each, but she was now certain that wasn't true.

As for who they would bring? She wasn't sure yet. Maybe Phillip would be smart or perhaps Lillian due to how loyal she was and because she had already signed a system-enforced contract. Neil could also be a good idea as he was making rapid progress with making a functional teleportation circle. It would be good if he could meet other space-mages to maybe create a teleportation network – something Miranda had learned was quite commonplace on most other civilized planets.

Either way, it all came down to if Jake had any plans himself... assuming he would actually come. He said last time he would. Miranda felt a bit bad for doubting him; she knew she really shouldn't as she was his inferior in every way, but a small part of her still held doubt.

He still has half a day.

Jake awoke with a great yawn as he sat up and scratched his head. Actually, his body was itching quite a bit all over. It was probably the coagulated blood. Yep, definitely the blood. Who knew blood could be itchy? Jake sure knew now.

He got up and quickly took out a large barrel of water to clean himself up. He had a date with a monkey a bit later, so he would need to look presentable for that, wouldn't he?

After cleaning himself up, he did a bit of light stretching to get all his sore and newly-regenerated muscles up to speed. His entire body felt great, and his resources were maxed out once more. It was actually a bit funny because he found a bunch of empty potions on the ground, and he couldn't at all remember drinking those. Drinking in my sleep... am I becoming a potion-holic?

Checking the time, he still had more than 12 hours left until it was time for the World Congress. He had slept for a good 10 hours, and he felt fresh as a cucumber.

With everything ready, he began making his way back towards the temple. He noticed how he barely encountered any monkeys on the way, and those he did see were solitary regular D-grades and even a few still at E-grade.

Jake landed on top of a tree as he stared down at the temple grounds and saw how it was now entirely desolate. There was only a single living being atop the highest point of the ancient temple. Waiting, almost baiting, him.

[Penta-Lighttail Monkey Prima – lvl 134]

Grown three levels since last time I checked, Jake noted. Perhaps it had seen its interference in whatever Jake was doing as unnecessary as it progressed its own strength at a rapid pace.

Alright, pal... let's see what you can do, he thought as he focused on the monkey in the distance, an Arrow of the Ambitious Hunter slowly being summoned.