

## Hunter 266

### Chapter 266: Sultan Has Wares, If You Have Coin

Jake didn't know what to expect. He expected Sultan to have some good stuff considering his status as a D-grade merchant who had been around the place, but exactly how good he wasn't sure. This was the first real merchant he had ever encountered, after all. For the record, Jake hadn't looted anything off the two D-grade women. Their equipment wasn't actual gear, playing into his suspicion they were truly just there for show. Sultan no doubt kept all their stuff himself at usual times.

Smiling, Sultan answered his trade request: "My last visit to Sanctdomo wasn't only to sell my wares but also to seek out their experts. Knowing Haven would be my next stop, I made a number of commissions for things I specifically hoped would interest you. I do apologize if it is presumptuous of me to believe you do not already have better, but please take a look. As you are an alchemist, please let us start with a cauldron."

He waved his hand as a cauldron appeared. "This cauldron was created by a talented smith and alchemist working together to bring out its..."

Jake used Identify on it.

[Mithril Cauldron of Peerless Conductivity (Rare)] – A cauldron created by a talented smith with the-

"No thanks, I got better. Next," Jake said, not bothering with the rest of the description, besides just quickly checking the enchantments and seeing it was just a highly inferior version of his Altmar Cauldron of Supreme Simplicity. Neither the items nor Sultan's background information on it made it worth getting.

Meanwhile, Lillian and Miranda were also there, with Lillian noting down all the items as she also identified them. Possibly to look into if they wanted to buy any of the stuff Jake passed on.

Sultan didn't seem offended but smiled as he moved on. "Perhaps something for your archery then?"

The man summoned a bow and laid it on the table. It was made of some wood that looked almost to be red. It had some dark lines running through it like it had been burned, giving it an interesting look. The string was entirely black and was made of some material Jake didn't recognize, and at each end of the bow's body was a small red gemstone. It was a lot like his current bow in design overall, if a bit larger. It was nothing that would matter, and Jake found himself quite adaptable anyway.

"This bow is made by the strongest archer and bowyer of Sanctdomo. A woman named Maria, if you have heard of her. As far as I know, she was a part of the World Congress too, so you may have seen her. This one cost me a pretty penny for the materials alone, and I believe it came out splendidly."

Jake listened to the explanation before he identified the bow.

[Embered Bow of Scorching Plains (Epic)] – A bow made from an unknown type of wood that has been soaked in potent fire-affinity mana for a long period of time without being burned and then infused with a dozen of other valuable materials. All brought to life by an incredibly talented bowyer. The bow's structure is resilient yet flexible, the string near-unbreakable for anyone below C-grade. The two gemstones passively absorb and transform mana into that of the fire-affinity, making all arrows fired by this bow be imbued with fire mana and the concept of embers. The two gemstones can be emptied out of energy to release a large burst of fire-affinity mana in the form of a giant arrow that explodes on impact, scorching the plains below. Enchantments: Ember Arrows. Scorching Plains.

Requirements. Lvl 105+ in any humanoid Race

See now we're cooking! Jake thought. Shit, the bow was super fire-themed, so maybe he could actually cook just using the bow. He wasn't going to try, but it was a fun possibility. According to Sultan, he had gone all out with his bow, and Jake could see that. Those two gems alone had to be epic-rarity each, and he had no idea how many more items he put into it.

The one who had made it was also talented. This wasn't like Arnold's gloves with so much untapped potential. That Maria who made this bow knew what she was doing, and she had done a splendid job.

"For the record, the craftswoman was aware it was commissioned as a gift for you," Sultan said, adding on with a small chuckle. "I practically got the work-hours for free, and I am sure she also wanted to impress. She told me to put in a good word."

Jake nodded as he said. "This is some good stuff. And you said it's a gift?"

"Most certainly. Take it as a gift to cement our future working relationship."

Sultan's smile grew even more as Jake took the bow off the table and into his inventory. He gave Sultan a nod of approval. Jake had to admit, the bribery was working as he now found Sultan slightly more agreeable.

He was also very impressed that a bowyer was able to craft epic-rarity items of this quality already. Maria was her name? Maybe someone worth seeking out in the future. She was in Sanctdomo, so it wasn't an overly long trip.

Jake was already feeling pretty damn satisfied, but Sultan wasn't done.

"Now, the next item is a sword..."

Jake didn't need the sword, and it wasn't even better than the Nanoblade anyway. And that was before the current improvements Arnold was making to it. Lillian noted it down in case someone else could use it.

"These pants I got from a leatherworker and tailor pair in Skyggen, and..."

Jake's pants were better. They were noted down again. Neil commented on Eleanor maybe wanting them.

"I noticed you always wear a cloak, so this-"

Didn't need that one either. Miranda bought it as her cloak sucked, so at least that one was useful.

"Certainly a new mask could be-"

Just no. Lillian wanted it, though. Not really to hide her face, but due to its effect of allowing some kind of far-sight.

"How about a necklace..."

Jake liked having a spatial storage.

"Gloves..."

Way worse than his new ones.

Jake saw that Sultan was getting a bit nervous at this point due to the repeated rejection. Jake had taken the bow, but for everything else, he had passed, completely uninterested. The man had started with some of his best stuff, and many of the following items were 'only' uncommon-rarity.

Not to be misunderstood, it was some great things. It was just limited how good stuff Sultan could get – or anyone could, really – as Earth was still in its infancy as a planet of the multiverse. That there were people able to craft epic-rarity items was already incredibly impressive.

Sultan didn't give up, though. He seemed to want to go through the entire set of gear pieces available, and eventually, he summoned something that did interest Jake a lot. It was a deep brown chestpiece of leather that looked very well made, if a bit simple. Jake Identified it and was pleasantly surprised.

[Leather Chestguard of the Juvenile Bristleback (Uncommon)] – A chestplate made from the tough leather of a young Bristleback. Created by a talented leatherworker, the workmanship is simple but effective. Has been infused with a Beastcore, making this chestpiece even more durable and enhances the wearer's resilience. Enchantments: +200 Toughness, +75 Endurance, +50 Vitality.

Requirements: Lvl 100+ in any humanoid race

The merchant didn't think this gear piece had much hope from the looks of it, but he explained its properties anyway with enthusiasm:

"I must say this one was a gamble. A hunting team came in having slain a young Bristleback that had just reached D-grade. It was a large pig-like monster, and the leatherworker worked tirelessly to make something useful. Luckily they had the core too. The final project came out quite nicely, but it did take an entire bus-sized body," Sultan explained.

It was a massive upgrade. Jake mentally compared it to his old chest, and the difference was clear.

[Armor of the Nest Watcher (Rare)] – A chestpiece made from the cured leather of an unknown creature. Provides strong protection against both physical and energy attacks. The very lifeforce of the Nest Watcher runs through this armor, blessing the wielder with great vitality and toughness.  
Enchantments: Self-Repair. +75 Vitality, +50 Toughness.

Requirements: Lvl 55+ in any humanoid race.

Sure, it was a downgrade in rarity, but the level requirement was just that much higher, making it so much better.

"I'll take it; how much?" Jake said.

Sultan looked surprised but pleased. "Ah, normally I would charge 45.000 for a piece like this, but you can have it for 38.000, and I shouldn't take a loss."

"35.000 it is," Jake agreed.

"I do agree 37.000 is fair," Sultan countered.

"36.000."

"36.500."

"Alright, deal, Jake finally relented. He tried to put the chestpiece in his inventory but found himself unable to. This was when he noticed a faint bond of mana connecting Sultan and the armor, almost as if it was bound to him. He frowned and paid, and the moment he did, the weird bond disappeared, and he put it in his inventory.

"First time dealing with a merchant, I assume," Sultan chuckled. "It's just a simple skill to bind something during a deal. Simply protection against thieving, so people don't just swipe all your wares the moment they see them."

That... actually made a lot of sense. Jake totally got why that was a thing, and it was one of those practical skills that just had to exist. It was probably something every merchant or trading-related profession got with the profession.

As for why he haggled? Well, because that's just what you do. Sure, he had over 137 million Credits by now – actually having more now than right after the tutorial due to having sold so many potions. But that didn't mean he would waste them. Besides, maybe Sultan had other good stuff? Didn't wanna splurge for no reason.

"Now, how bout some new boots? I noticed yours look a little worn and is it not ample time for an upgrade?" Sultan said with renewed vigor after having just sold Jake the chestpiece.

"No," Jake curtly declined.

"Well, it can't be a winner every time. I am ashamed to say I don't have much else I believe would interest you in the equipment department besides one more item. Granted, this is assuming you are not looking for spears, halberds, heavy swords, crossbows, firearms, or pretty much most other weapon types. I assumed you are a one-handed weapon and bow kind of fighter," Sultan answered. The sum-up of how many different weapons he had was clearly more for Miranda and the others than Jake.

"True. So, the last item?"

"Ah, this one I have been saving. The best for last. You always gotta start out and end strong, do you not? This one is an item I am quite proud of having acquired. Originally it was bought at the Tutorial Store, but it was never used. I do not know the original intended use, but what I do know is that it isn't an item I have come across before. So please, have a look."

Sultan summoned a small token. It looked a lot like the tutorial upgrade tokens... because it was a lot like them, but at the same time very different.



[Token of Akashic Awakening (Epic)] – Infuse into a piece of equipment to attempt to awaken or amplify the Records within, upgrading the item to a maximum of Epic-rarity. If the item is already Epic-rarity, it will try to amplify existing effects through awakened Records. Overall effects may be unpredictable. WARNING: Touching directly upon the Records of an item may make others related to the associated Records aware.

Requirements: User must be below lvl 130.

"From rumors I have gathered, it is said that the Sword Saint used a similar – if far more powerful – item to awaken an old family heirloom to turn it into maybe the most potent weapon on the planet. This one can do something similar, but I would recommend using it on a piece of equipment already recognized as an item if you choose to buy it. My appraisal skills at least made me believe that would be for the best," Sultan explained as Jake picked up the token and inspected it inside and out.

"How much?" Jake asked. He already had plenty of ideas on what to use it on, but he would still want the item even if he didn't. The item was just too interesting, and he could see too many uses. Shit, he could use it to upgrade his boots or necklace, couldn't he?

"Ten million Credits," Sultan said without batting an eye.

"Quite the price increase, don't you think?" Jake asked with a frown.

"True, but this item honestly cannot be evaluated through normal means. It does something perhaps only a few extremely rare natural treasures can do if it's even possible for something found in the natural world. My Patron has told me that this item wouldn't sell for millions but billions if not more

outside our universe just because some powerhouse may want to research it. I am not trying to pull a fast one on you. This is simply the lowest I can go on an item like this... I am already reluctant to sell it as is, but I am a merchant at heart, and using such a valuable item myself would feel like a waste," Sultan explained with a sigh.

Jake kept frowning as he looked at it. Could he afford it? Well, yeah... but ten million wasn't nothing. It was nearly a tenth of his total wealth on what would just be another epic-rarity item... was it really worth it, unless he planned on just researching the item?

"Buy it and use it on the boots," Villy suddenly came in from the left-field and said.

Well, that was an easy way to settle it. "Fine, I'll take it," Jake said, not even haggling. From Villy's tone of voice, it was a good item. He assumed his godly pal knew more than he did, especially considering how he told him to use it on boots he had earned from Villy's dungeon. Likely the Viper knew the origin of those boots. Or maybe it was a gag. An expensive gag. He wouldn't put it past him.

"Pleasure doing business with you," Sultan said with a smile as they traded the item. Jake suddenly felt like the man in front of him had gotten a bit stronger, and his smile even grew wider. Jake noted his race-level had just increased by one too. Damn merchants and their completely legitimate leveling methods, Jake cursed internally.

The next hour or so was spent going through all the other knick-knacks Sultan had. And he had a lot. Miranda bought some, Neil some, Lillian noted down everything, and even nudged Miranda to buy some stuff for the city.

As for Jake? Jake bought three types of Rare-rarity herbs, two of which increased agility and one that increased perception by 3 upon consumption. Sultan had exactly ten of each and said he had bought

them specifically because he knew of Jake's profession and class-archetype. He wasn't wrong, and Jake appreciated it.

What Jake appreciated even more was the one epic-rarity natural treasure he brought Jake.

[Eye of the Libertas Eagle (Epic)] – An eye left behind by a slain Libertas Eagle, leaving all its Records within. The Libertas Eagle is especially known for its eyesight, which is said to allow the beast to spot its prey from nearly any distance. Looking into this eye is like staring into a far horizon. +25 Perception upon consumption.

It even had the best stat on it. Would Jake consume it? No, that would be gross. It was an eye. So he just had to avoid directly eating it. With these items, coupled with the time bananas and some other stuff, he knew his next objective.

Before the Treasure Hunt, he would craft some damn Elixirs.