

Hunter 274

Chapter 274: Beatdown

Sylphie hated herself. She was a really bad hawk and hadn't done as she was told. Her mom and dad had repeatedly told her to be careful around those things called natural treasures, but she couldn't hold herself back when she felt it. She hadn't listened... and it had gotten them all killed.

She even tried to run as they told her, but she couldn't even do that! Another of those big eagles came and hurt her and made her fly back to her parents. Their own small eagle was jeering at her the entire time, being really stupid and rude.

After mom and dad used their super move, Sylphie thought things would be fine. They defeated the big eagle that Sylphie couldn't beat on her own with a single hit and broke the barrier! She was sure the biggest eagle would be beaten too... but it had just fired a laser. It had sent mom falling down, and dad badly hurt.

Sylphie knew they needed help! She flew in and used her super talons, but it didn't work. She was struck, and everything began spinning and hurting really badly, and Sylphie didn't like it at all! A part of her knew she had to run, her parents wanted her to run, but she couldn't just leave them. She did feel bad about her not returning to help protect Uncle, but she couldn't just leave like that...

She cried a lot inside. She tried to get up and fight back. Dad attacked the biggest eagle but was hit another time. She got a really bad feeling and screeched for dad to get away, but he couldn't move... was... was dad going to die? Dad couldn't die... could he? He and mom were so strong... was the biggest eagle really so much stronger?

Her eyes opened wide, and she tried to get up as the big eagle was about to hit dad again. She knew it couldn't hit, but she couldn't get up...

And then the eagle just stopped, and everything got even worse as she felt Uncle. He appeared just a moment later and managed to catch the eagle by surprise, hitting it away.

Why? Why had Uncle come here? Mom and dad were so hurt already... dad wasn't even moving... not Uncle too...

No! He needed to run! She screamed to warn him to get away before the biggest eagle also decided to hurt Uncle! Sylphie couldn't protect him right now, and it wasn't fair that he also had to get hurt just because Sylphie had been bad... it wasn't fair.

Yet he just picked her up and made her drink one of his not-so-smelly drinks. It spread warmth throughout her body, and she felt a lot better super fast. Uncle had also given dad one, and they flew over and gave mom one too. Mom was still not awake, but Sylphie could tell she would be fine.

Uncle put her down and patted her on the head.

"Please just stay here," Uncle said. Sylphie didn't understand... why stay when they had to run? Mom and dad couldn't beat the bad guy yet; they had to get away before it came back.

"You did well, mate. Now let me handle the rest," Uncle then said to dad, and dad opening his eye and blinked slowly. Dad didn't seem scared? He just blinked with gratitude and seemed relieved. Happy.

She saw Uncle turn around... and he looked different from behind. The air around him was moving a bit weird, and he seemed very mad. Was he mad at Sylphie because she had been bad? No, he was mad at the biggest eagle...

Sylphie looked down towards the biggest eagle and was surprised. It looked back up at them, but it didn't move. It just sat there. Staring. It looked almost scared. Why would the biggest eagle be scared of Uncle?

Were dad and mom right? Was Uncle actually super-duper strong?

She got her answer when he summoned a stick. A string-shooty-stick.

Emotions were something Jake had been working on. Ever since the whole Abby-Donald-Incident, Jake had always been mindful about keeping his emotions under control. He didn't want to lose his cool or do something unintended in a moment where he got too emotional. His bloodline made it difficult, but he had managed to cope his entire life, and he could cope now.

But there were still moments where he failed to hold it back. Perhaps times where his emotions were more than well-placed. Moments where his unbridled rage was an acceptable response.

Today was one such day. A day where he didn't need to hold back. He didn't need to be mindful; he could release everything and have his target be the subject of that rage. Perhaps it was a cathartic and very healthy thing for Jake. He didn't know; he just knew that holding himself back even long enough to gather the birds and give them potions was a challenge. But now that they were safe?

Jake summoned the new bow he had gotten from Sultan and drew the string. The bow sent fire-mana down into the summoned arrow... and weakened it. He instantly detected the issues, but for now, it really wasn't something he bothered fixing. He dispelled the arrow he had summoned – an explosive one – and summoned a stable one instead. That one just rejected the fire mana, making the enchantment do nothing.

A bit of poison was sprinkled on the arrow as Jake bit his lip and spat some out onto it – a new trick he thought of just now. Mainly it was because he wasn't thinking much at all but just wanted to savage that shitface of a bird who dared hurt Sylphie, Hawkie, and Mystie.

He began channeling an Arcane Powershot, and that was when the Goldsun Eagle Prima below got out of its stupor. Of course, it was still under the influence of his presence. He didn't bother analyzing it right now; he just knew the bird was unnerved. Then again, it wasn't necessarily due to the presence; it could also just be that it was acutely aware.

Jake was stronger. From the moment his will appeared and his presence shrouded the valley, stopping not only the eagle's body with Gaze but even the magic through the presence, it became apparent.

The Goldsun Eagle Prima was around the same tier as the Monkey Prima. No... slightly lower. At level 144, it was 10 levels higher, but due to the difference in their tiers, it quite honestly wasn't that much stronger than the Monkey Prima had been back then. And even if it was a little stronger, then Jake was a lot stronger

.

When he killed the Monkey Prima, he had been level 107. Now he was nearly twenty levels higher at 126. He had gotten skill upgrades, improved his poisons a whole lot, consumed elixirs, gear upgrades, and overall just grown in every single way. So while the fight against the Monkey Prima had been very even... this one wouldn't be. It wouldn't even truly be a fight.

Jake released his Arcane Powershot as the entire side of the canyon he was standing on began collapsing. The Eagle Prima tried to dodge but was frozen by his Gaze once again. It erected a barrier that exploded when the arrow hit it, sending the huge bird tumbling back.

He didn't let up as he shot another arrow and then another. He rapid-fired arrows that all split and pierced through the stones the eagle tried to hide behind, many penetrating its body too. The Eagle Prima wasn't weak enough to only be able to run and hide, however.

Its entire body began burning brighter with radiant light as it lit up like the sun. It flew upwards and spread its wings wide as it sent out a massive flare, clearly aiming to blind Jake. He felt his eyes burn but didn't avert his gaze for even a moment. Compared to the pain the beast had subjected the hawks to, this was nothing.

Besides, it wasn't like he truly needed his eyes. His Mark of the Avaricious Hunter had been on the eagle from the very first stomp, so even without his vision, he could keep up his assault. Not that the eagle could even burn his eyes enough. Perception seemed to somehow make even his borderline melted eyes function without any issues.

The eagle above didn't only aim to blind him, however. Instead, it began lighting up, and a massive amount of mana began condensing. It was clearly disturbed, and it decided to go all-out from the start. It dove down towards him like a miniature sun, the very air around it vibrating from the heat.

Jake summoned his scales and fired a fast Arcane Powershot up towards the eagle. Perhaps the eagle had hoped to evaporate the magical arrow before it could hit... but Jake's stable arcane mana was far too, well, stable, for that.

Blood spurted as it was hit by the arrow that pierced straight through the eagle and out the other side. It did nothing to stop its charge, however.

The massive burning form crashed down onto Jake. His scales crackled from the heat, and he stopped breathing to not heat up his insides. He guessed the eagle didn't want to fight a ranged battle with him. While that was a good choice... it didn't make it a smart one.

Jake jumped and took a two-handed swing with all his might. The veins in his arms burned with energy as the eagle tried not to get its head caved in at the very last moment. It managed to adjust but was still hit on the right wing and sent smashing into the ground below like a meteor – burning crater and all.

He didn't let up but raised his foot. He stepped forward unto a mana platform not far from the eagle, and with one more step, he was just in front of it. Jake had a weapon in each hand now as he summoned the scimitar and threw the long staff into the other.

One had to remember he didn't even have his Nanoblade, as he hadn't gone to get it and didn't even know if it was ready. Of his regular weapons, he only had the scimitar... and a certain item he had become fond of after the Altmar Census Golem.

The Pillar of Encumbrance smashed down where the eagle's head had just been as the large bird transformed itself into a beam of light, much like Jake's Shadow Vault. He held out his hand, and in front of the retreating eagle, a barrier of stable arcane mana appeared nearly instantaneously.

Like with his Shadow Vault, it could break through a barrier and take some damage. At least it normally could. But Jake didn't allow it to as he focused his will on the barrier to stop the beast. It smashed into the wall and was sent reeling back from the impact, clearly confused at how robust the hastily constructed barrier was.

"You're not running," Jake said as he took another step forward and appeared before the Eagle Prima again. It fired a beam of sunlight down towards him, but he sidestepped and smashed it in the side with the Pillar. It tried to strike back with a talon swipe but ended up just getting a long and deep cut on its foot from the scimitar.

"Stop fighting," he said, kicking the beast many times larger than himself on the already damaged wing. "This isn't a fight. This is a beatdown."

The Eagle Prima looked down at him, afraid but still struggling. It knew it had fucked up. All it wanted to do was run... but there was no way in hell Jake would let that happen.

What following truly wasn't a fight. It was just Jake constantly running over the possibilities of the hawks dying in his head. He knew it was a risk. A constant one. It came with the territory of seeking more power, but that didn't mean Jake liked it. Not at all.

Was beating what most would consider a boss monster half to death a logical or even reasonable response? No. No, it wasn't. The world wasn't reasonable to begin with. The Eagle Prima had merely committed the sin of pissing Jake off by going after one of the few things he would gladly kill to protect.

Hawkie had managed to stand up as his body was still slowly healing. His mate had also come to, and after the initial confusion, she joined him. They both stood on each side of their daughter, who observed the valley deep below.

Sylphie's eyes were wide. She didn't blink a single time but just looked at what was going on below. It wasn't a battle that was unfolding. No, it was a slaughter - an utter display of dominance and power. Hawkie knew the human had stronger tools to defeat the eagle. He had used it in the beginning to initially wound it... but he didn't use it now.

No, he got close. He met it in melee as he wanted it to be personal. Hawkie could feel all this, Sylphie and Mystie too. The emotions of the human were projected into his presence and weighed down on them even from so far away. His anger, resentment, and even a faint trace of reluctance to accept what could have happened.

Hawkie shared a glance with his mate. They both knew it was clear... their idea to create a possible technique to fight the human wasn't needed. Not only because the man clearly had no intentions of causing them any harm, but also because it was obvious how meaningless it would be.

The two of them were weaker than the human when they initially met. Weaker, but not to the level of being utterly suppressed. When they both reached D-grade, they hoped to at least begin approaching his level, but it was now clear that the gap wasn't closing, only widening.

They were both surprised at his power. The Eagle Prima displayed magic technique after magical technique that would stump the both of them, but the human crushed everything and simply smashed or cut the eagle again. It tried to fight him in a physical bout, but that proved even more meaningless. Its power meant nothing, and from the looks of it, it couldn't even display its full might. It was scared and scrambling from the get-go. This is what surprised them the most. Not that he won, but that he dominated his foe so completely.

But the most surprised of them all was Sylphie. Hawkie and Mystie both knew their daughter had issues believing the human was powerful. It was understandable. No beast in their right mind would sit still for so long, doing nothing that seemed in any way related to growing more powerful. If it was absorbing energy from some natural treasure? Maybe. But he wasn't even doing that.

The human could sit for so long playing with what Hawkie had learned was called a cauldron. He could create magical liquids like the one that had saved his life today, as well as the accursed toxins that were running through the body of the Eagle Prima.

For Sylphie to believe he was not a fighter made sense. Most beasts that were good at creation weren't good at fighting or at least required fighting by using preparation and planning, not just face something in a straight-on battle. They had met plenty of such beasts and monsters on their path so far, so Sylphie had concluded the human was one of those. He had tried to tell her off, but she had never truly believed him. But after today... she would.

They kept watching for a while longer. For every hit, the eagle had a harder time getting up. For every blow, its radiance weakened. It stumbled and failed to move its right wing. It tried to attack with the other, but the human stepped under it, and his blade became encompassed by two powerful energies – one dark and one that powerful mana he used - as it cut upwards, severing the entire left wing.

The eagle fell to the ground, still alive but struggling. It looked up at the human with indignation, and the human just stared back as he spoke, not to it, but the three of them looking on from above.

"You guys come down here."

Hawkie was confused for a moment but then realized. From start to end, the human had not displayed any killing intent. He had never planned on landing a killing blow from the very beginning... because this wasn't his enemy, not truly - it was theirs.