

## Hunter 275

### Chapter 275: Teaching the Young

Jake felt a lot better as he stared at the downed Goldsun Eagle Prima before him. The eagle's one wing lay on the ground beside it, and its radiant feathers were now no longer glowing. He had called for the birds to come and finish it off, as quite frankly, Jake had no desire to.

He hadn't enjoyed the fight at all, only the purpose behind it. The Eagle Prima hadn't been powerful enough for him to feel challenged, and this was the kind of fight he would usually try to avoid or finish as fast as possible. However, he felt this wasn't his decision to make. It wasn't his kill to claim.

If Jake turned around and left now, the Eagle Prima would live. It was already slowly healing while under the sunlight, and he had purposefully not used a lot of poison. He wanted to leave the hawks an option – to kill the eagle or leave it alive. That's what he would have wanted himself - a chance to come back at a later date for a rematch.

However, he knew this mindset wasn't exactly considered normal, so he made it entirely possible for them to finish off the eagle if they so wished.

Hawkie and Mystie flew down from the cliff above, with Sylphie being a bit slower to react before she also dove down. They landed a bit behind Jake, still clearly a bit apprehensive towards the eagle. The eagle also threw a glance at them but just closed its eyes, resigned to its fate. It was not like it could do anything anymore.

"This isn't my hunt and not really my enemy. It's yours; you decide what to do. You can leave it here and come back later for a rematch, or you can finish it now. The choice is yours to make," Jake told the three hawks.

He stayed close in case the eagle tried to pull out another move. Well, it did a few times by trying to summon forth a bit of magic, but Jake suppressed it with his presence and Gaze of the Apex Hunter every time – the two of them were quite an effective combo and seemed to have completely broken the Eagle Prima's spirit.

The two hawks exchanged a look before swiftly pushing Sylphie forward. They gave her a stern look, almost as if telling her this was her job to do. She looked reluctant and looked up at Jake as if checking if it was okay. He gave her a nod, and she walked towards the Prima.

Jake could tell she wasn't in a good mood. He wanted to cheer her up, but another part of him also knew it was important for her to learn from today. Jake didn't need to be told Sylphie was the one who got them in trouble as he couldn't see Hawkie and Mystie enter an area so clearly marked by a powerful creature, and her generally ashamed demeanor made it even more obvious. Shit, he could feel the natural treasure from where he stood, and he knew she could too.

Sylphie slowly flew over to the Prima, and the eagle tried to get up and retaliate, but Jake froze it again and pressed down with his presence. It failed to resist as glowing talons penetrated it through the eye. It struggled, but Sylphie at least knew how to finish it quickly and as painlessly as possible. The eagle was too weak anyway, and once the brain took damage, it died nearly instantly

\*You have slain [Goldsun Eagle Prima – lvl 144] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level\*

The moment the giant eagle died, its body began glowing before turning into wisps of light that soared up into the sky. Jake was momentarily surprised until he remembered what kind of creature he was dealing with. It was a bit like the Monkey Prima in that the body disappeared, and like the monkey, two items remained in its stead.

Jake had no qualms about taking those. He walked closer and squatted down beside Sylphie. She looked down on the ground, not at all happy with the kill. She shouldn't be, as it wasn't truly hers either. It was just her taking responsibility.

Reaching over, he picked up the small golden metal fragment he recognized.

[Key Fragment of the Exalted Prima (Unique)] – A key fragment to the Seat of the Exalted Prima. Collect three fragments to form the Key of the Exalted Prima to gain access.

Oh yeah, those were a thing, Jake thought as he picked it up and threw it in his inventory. He had two of them now, though he still didn't know exactly what it was about. It did make him consider if he would have killed the Eagle Prima just for the fragment... probably not. Not before he knew what the fragments were truly for. He believed giving the choice between killing the eagle or a rematch was more important.

As for the second item, it was, of course, the Beastcore.

[Goldsun Eagle Prima Beastcore (D-grade)] – A Beastcore left behind by a D-grade Goldsun Eagle Prima, containing remnants of its Records within. Can be used as an alchemical ingredient for many types of creations but is most often found in Elixirs. Contains powerful energy related to the concept of the sun.

Jake also scooped that up as he actually needed it. None of the hawks complained either. He checked them all an extra time to make sure they were okay, and besides being battered and unable to do much besides light flying, they were fine. His healing potions weren't something to joke about.

He still decided just to let them rest there as he went to check out the natural treasure the Goldsun Eagle Prima had been guarding. There were no more threats, with the other Goldsun Eagle also dead off to the side. As for the juvenile eagle? Jake was aware of it but didn't do anything to it. If the hawks wanted it dead, they could kill it. It at least seemed smart enough not to attack him but just stayed hidden away. It wasn't that smart overall, though...

Leaving the hawks alone for a while, he went towards the treasure. It was still a bit away, and he noticed it was in a cave halfway up the side of a cliff. Jake flew up there and entered the cave. He felt the remnants of mana in the cave from what had likely been a defensive formation or barrier or something, no doubt gone after the death of the Eagle Prima.

The cave itself was only about fifty meters deep and opened up to a slightly larger cavern. The space was only barely large enough for the massive eagle to fit in, and in the middle of it all was a large glowing rock-like thing. It looked like a fallen meteor, and Jake felt his still-summoned scales crackle as he stood before it from the heat alone.

Jake used Identify on it and saw that while it was a natural treasure like the banana tree, it wasn't at all the same.

[Suncore Fragment (Ancient)] – A large Suncore Fragment containing an immense power of sun-affinity mana. The fragment is incredibly durable and near-indestructible for anyone below C-grade and gives off large amounts of heat. Unknown alchemical uses.

It was basically just a big rock with a lot of sun-affinity energy. The name surprised him a bit, though. Back in the dungeon, Jake had gotten a Mooncore Shard, while this was a Suncore Fragment. He couldn't help but believe the two were related.

There was one issue, though. The large fragment was circular and with a diameter of around two meters. Not overly large or too small, and it should be easy to transport, right? It really wasn't. Throwing it in his inventory was already out of the question due to its constant emanation of energy. Even if he could throw it in there, it would likely fuck up everything else within. Once again, that was assuming he could even put it in there, which he seriously doubted he could.

Picking it up also wasn't an option. Jake couldn't exactly just walk around with it as he was pretty much sure most living things would take intense damage just by being close to it. He was also pretty damn sure it would kill or severely hurt most of the people he knew to be close to it. Heck, even he was taking a bit of damage just standing there, and that was Limit Break still active at 20% and all that – he hadn't deactivated yet due to the period of weakness.

But Jake still wanted it. So he did the only logical thing one can do.

He ate it.

Jake spat out the eagle eye stored in his Palate stomach and put it in his inventory. With space opened up, he activated the skill and inhaled. He felt the Suncore resist, and Jake had to do a serious push to make it move. The damn thing was incredibly heavy, but luckily that didn't matter much when you had weird eating magic.

After nearly two minutes of wearing down the natural treasure's defenses, it relented and shrunk as it flew into his mouth.

"That fucking hurts," Jake muttered as he turned around. He felt the Suncore within, now no longer able to damage him. It had still burned his mouth as it entered, though. That kinda sucked.

It didn't take him long to make it back to the hawks again. All of them were chilling on the ground, and he did spot the juvenile eagle not far away, now cut in two by what looked like a blade of wind. Jake sighed. It wasn't something he necessarily agreed with, but such was the philosophy of most beasts. Perhaps it was a mercy as the young eagle would likely have been killed by another creature that came to claim the area. The young one had stayed in the area where its parent's killers were likely due to greed as it hoped to still keep the treasure. However, it was a bad choice as it potentially could have gotten away during Jake's pummeling of the Prima if it had been smarter.

Jake sat down with the two hawks as he deactivated his Limit Break and felt the weakness invade his entire body. He slumped a bit and laid back on the ground, relaxing. Sylphie looked worried and jumped over to him with concern. He just gave her a smile as he patted his chest, telling her to lay there.

She happily obliged as she sat on top of him.

"Sylphie," Jake said as he rubbed her head. "Do you know what you did wrong today?"

The bird on top of him froze as she looked embarrassed down at his chest. She raised her wings to hide her face, looking damn cute while doing it. But Jake wasn't going to fall for the cuteness today, even if she wasn't doing it on purpose. She was just a natural.

"It isn't even necessarily about invading the territory of a being more powerful than yourself... it's that you didn't do it properly. Scout it out a bit first, find out if you can take it, and then lay down a plan. You are small but incredibly fast and can do a lot of damage with your talons and wings with a sneak attack. What I am trying to say is to think more, okay?" Jake said to the small bird on top of him.

She peeked out from behind her wings to see if Jake looked angry or not. He didn't; he just looked back at her with a light smile as he relaxed his body. Sylphie stared for a bit before bopping her head in what he assumed was a nod.

Jake wasn't stupid or naïve enough to believe Sylphie would never be in trouble or fight again. He wouldn't ask that of her, just like he wouldn't accept if others asked him to give up fighting. It was simply life, and Sylphie had to do it. All he could do was give her advice and help her.

Hawkie and Mystie off to the side seemed to be approving of his message. They, too, wanted their daughter to grow powerful. Jake guessed that when Sylphie went through her level 100 transformation of sorts, she would be able to rival them to some extent. Possibly even exceed.

The group of four just stayed lying there for the next few hours as Jake decided to get a nap. Napping was the best way to recover after using Limit Break. He could ignore the weakness and relax. It was a pure win-win.

Hawkie, Sylphie, and Mystie also took this time to recover with him. The two parent-hawks closed their eyes as they focused on recovery, and Sylphie was the only one still awake and aware. She kept staring down at Jake for a while and seemed to have decided on something. She also closed her eyes as she focused on healing.

In the dark, another chain broke. Another spike ceased to be, and the stub was regrowing.

This was the second chain to break within that week.

996 remained.

He turned and inspected the fragment in his hand, turning it over and flipping it back around again. He felt an old kind of energy emanating from it, and he was looking forward to discovering the source. A sense of adventure lit up in his heart as he thought of this Seat of the Exalted Prima.

Alas, it would have to wait. For now, the most important thing was the Treasure Hunt. A bit less than two weeks remained, and they were close to ready. He himself had pushed himself further than before and taken down the strongest foe he had yet to face. A giant level 136 bull called a Prima. It had been a good match-up for him, for the beast was defensive and its hide tough, but at the sacrifice of speed and offensive prowess, something the blade of a Sword Saint did not care for.

His blade would cut through anything, and if it couldn't, he would do all he could to allow it to.

Miyamoto exited his abode as an old servant of the family greeted him. The man bowed and spoke.

"Master, the groups have gathered and are waiting for you in the western courtyard."

The Sword Saint nodded. "Thank you, and please, this is no longer necessary. There is no need to wait on me like this. Simply leave a message and focus on yourself. Our destinies are our's to seize, so claim yours, old friend."

"I do this by choice, not because it is a necessity, Master," the old man said, still bowing.



Miyamoto shook his head as he went towards the courtyard. It was ridiculous for a D-grade to act like that. The old mindset still dominated the clan, and it would take time to change. Some customs were to be kept, but the personal servants who didn't focus on self-improvement were not one of them. The man from before did not even have a related profession.

The western courtyard he was going to was filled with nearly a hundred people. Most of them grouped into parties of five, but some had come alone and others in smaller groups. Not that it was any of his concern. He himself had gone alone. When he entered, the entire room became silent, and the Sword Saint wasted no time.

"First of all, welcome to Saya to those who have not been here before," he said. Some of the people in the room were not from the city or even part of the clan. They were simply people who had joined them on a temporary basis.

All of them had come for one purpose.

A dungeon. A D-grade dungeon. One the Sword Saint had already cleared as the only one. One they were there to learn about.

"The dungeon will consist primarily of beasts of the canine and bovine variety. A natural equilibrium has been formed, and you shall enter as a disruptive force. The regular beasts have levels ranging from 105-110, but variants between 110-116 also appear in these groups. The most dangerous immediate threats are the alphas at around 125. The two most powerful entities in the dungeon are the werewolf and the Minotaur, both level 135. These two will fight, and you can choose to support either side or strike down both of them. I shall explain their skills shortly. However, be aware that-

The explanation continued as the entire room listened on.

This was not a unique scene throughout the multiverse. It was normal for the first to complete a dungeon to share their experience. The first divers were often the ones taking the most risk, as they were the ones who faced down the unknown. That was why the Dungeon Pioneer title existed.

Of course, it still happened that the first one to clear a dungeon would not share the experience with others or even give false information. Sometimes they also just forgot to share it or didn't see it was important.

But one would have to be rather forgetful or callous to do that.