

Hunter 56

Chapter 56: Metal Savant

For a mortal to meet a god was far from an ordinary occurrence throughout the multiverse. Only the most extraordinary ones had the chance to interact with divinity up close. And even then, it was rare.

The tutorial, however, was as far from ordinary as anything gets. It was an event that affected every single living being in the entire multiverse. Not the tutorial itself, but why it happened; it marked the start of a new era as the multiverse expanded with the introduction of yet another universe.

Gods, among all, were the entities of the multiverse most involved with the tutorials. It was one of the few times where they truly moved with greed and desire. It was a time to earn rewards otherwise unachievable for them - a chance to gain more power and influence.

The most significant way to get these rewards was through finding capable mortals among the new initiates. Finding them and making them into your follower. This was done through something like Jake's meeting with Malefic Viper in his realm. This also meant that Jake's experience of meeting a god wasn't unique. Casper had met one... and so had the Smith.

It was later than Jake, but he had shown great potential in smithing and was recognized by the system.

At least that is what the Smith was currently telling William. He told him of how he had met a god and had been granted a blessing along with guidance. Contrary to what William expected, he hadn't met Ferroras, however, but instead one of his fellow gods, one known as Camicus, the god of the forge.

“Sounds interesting and all, but what does this have to do with me?” William finally interrupted as he was getting tired of the long explanation.

“Ferroras, the god of iron, has taken quite a liking to you, kid,” the Smith chuckled. “But apparently you rejected him or something?”

“I don’t think I did?” he answered, actually being honest for once. He couldn’t remember ever turning down a god, unless...

“I was told you had a class offered. One related to the god of iron,” The Smith explained. “You just didn’t pick it.”

William did recall getting a class with Ferroras in the name. However, it was honestly not that good and provided far worse bonuses than his current Metal Savant one.

Looking at his old system messages, he went back a long ass time before he finally returned to when he had his class evolution.

Metal Savant, he naturally already knew as it was his current class.

Metal Savant – The Metal Savant stands among the top of geniuses when it comes to manipulating metals. Having shown extreme talent as a caster and as a manipulator of mana, you have started walking down a glorious path to power. The class is highly focused on metal manipulation and all magics related to metal. The class's nature is inherently offensive, leaving defenses up to the caster's skill, focusing on intelligence and wisdom. Your path has just begun, but you have shown yourself a true savant. Stat bonuses per level: +7 Int, +5 Wis, +4 Will, +2 Per, +6 Free Points

The class was excellent, in his opinion. It had made him superior to every other survivor he met except for that dark star Jake. The stat bonuses were a straight-up quadruple compared to what he had before the evolution, going from 6 per level to 24. Most of his free points had gone into intelligence, but he also started putting quite a bit in vitality after his run-in with Jake.

As for the Ferroras class, he passed over... it was quite honestly terrible compared to what he got.

Promising Mage of Ferroras – A mage of Ferroras showing great promise on his path to power. As a caster, you have made clear your ability to manipulate metal and mana itself, offering you a clear path to power. The class is highly focused on metal manipulation and general metal magics but is specialized in iron magic. The class's nature is balanced between defense and offense, making you a versatile fighter at both range and melee. Your future patron god Ferroras believes in your talent. Stat bonuses per level: +4 Int, +3 Wis, +2 Will, +2 Tough +1 Vit, +1 Per, +4 Free Points

Everything about it was just worse. The descriptions were similar to each other as both of them were metal mages, but this one was just so much less impressive. William wasn't promising, he was a god damn genius. And that last sentence about his "future patron god believing in him" just rubbed him the wrong way. Reminded him of what that damn psychologist kept telling him.

The class also gave way fewer stats, only providing 17 per level. That was more than an entire basic caster class's worth of difference. William would have genuinely been an idiot if he had picked that shitty class just because some equally shitty god had attached his name to it.

"Well, yeah, I did get it, but I chose another one that I liked more," William explained, not showing any signs of going into further detail.

“What’s done is done,” the Smith answered. “But you did pick up a skill with his name attached later on, didn’t ya?”

“I did. So what?”

“That is how you become attached to a god kid. At least partially,” The Smith explained as he continued. “Karma or something like that. Anyway, it means that the god is aware of your existence, and he wants to help you.”

“And why the hell would I become the follower of some god?” William asked dismissively. He had no interest in attaching himself to some wacky religion.

“Because you can’t win this shit alone, William,” the man answered. “Yet together, we can win this tutorial. I can craft things for you to make you far more powerful than before, and in turn, you can wipe out everyone else. Especially Richard.”

Suddenly William started paying far more attention. He knew how much of a difference strong equipment could make, and based on that isolating barrier; the Smith wasn’t entirely without talent when it came to crafting. Having his assistance would undoubtedly prove useful.

“Why Richard in particular?” William asked curiously. He wasn’t aware of any conflict between them.

“I didn’t enter this tutorial alone, you know? I came with my son and daughter in law,” The Smith said as his mood took a downward turn. “I promised to protect them. I tried to. We thought the nights were safe, but it turns out that was the time for the bottom feeders to come out. Richard and his folk

disagreed with us three just sticking together. They killed both of them while I was away hunting during the night..."

"That sucks," William said without even thinking. Wait; what? Why does that suck?

"Thanks," the Smith smiled. "You know, my son was only around your age. Too early to get married, but they claimed to be in love, and who was I to stop them?"

Wiping a tear away that had appeared in the corner of his eye, he continued. "That is why I want payback on that fucker. I can fight, but I have always been a smith and not a fighter. I can't win. But you can, William. My god has told me this is the way to fulfill my dream and guided me. I know you are far stronger than you let everyone know. Let me help you get even stronger."

William kept his solemn expression, even though he deep inside thought how stupid this was. That fucking trapper Casper all over again... yet he didn't think it was that stupid. He understood why the man wanted revenge for losing them... but he didn't know why. Even Casper had begun to appear less unreasonable... what?

"Okay. But what do you need me to do?" William asked as he was trying to understand why he had all these weird thoughts. He was experiencing thoughts he couldn't understand...

"I need you to find the resolve to do whatever is necessary. You have to be willing and able to kill. Not just beasts but humans too," The man said as he sighed. "I know it is unfair of me to ask of you, but I beg you."

The Smith's face was solemn as he looked at William with an apologetic gaze.

William looked a bit at him. He felt like agreeing, but he had an agreement with Richard already. By all accounts, the camp leader could offer him more benefits than the lone smith. Yet... he agreed.

"Fine... but how?"

"Come," the Smith answered as he stood up from the chair, "join me at the forge."

With that, the man waved his hand as the floor of the cabin split open, and a furnace appeared. He summoned a forge and a hammer, along with a bunch of different ingots of metal out of nothing.

"A storage skill," the man answered before William could ask, "only works with items related to smithing, but it gets the job done."

Standing tall, he looked William in the eyes. "Now, time for us to get you ready for the big battle."

Jake climbed the hill as he got higher and higher. He avoided all the beasts he could as he had no intention of getting into any melee brawl for now. Basic Stealth, while undoubtedly a skill he didn't notice often, still proving itself useful. With it being night, there were plenty of shadows around to activate his bracer's bonus effect.

Sneaking up, he soon found himself at a crevice. He called it a crevice, but it was more like an immense valley in between two mountains. He had to admit that he had underestimated the size of the inner area

by quite a bit. Sure, it was about the same size as the entire outside area in pure square kilometers, but the big difference was in verticality.

This area was filled with mountains, crevices, and valleys, the tallest mountain in the center of the area upwards of a kilometer tall. While that didn't sound like too much, one had to consider that the mountain had no top but looked more like volcanos. As in, it had a hole on top.

Something the three other mountains he could currently see also had in common. Hopefully, they weren't volcanos, though. He didn't see any smoke coming out of their tops, but then again, he was pretty sure that was just something that happened in movies and cartoons.

As for the type of beasts in this inner area... raptors. A whole lot of raptors. They seemed to be the primary enemy and came in all kinds of colors. A few other dinosaur-like beasts also roamed about, but the vast majority were raptors.

However, the raptors only occupied the open area on the mountains and sometimes between mountains, but they mainly appeared as 'filler' beasts. In the crevices, like the one Jake was currently overlooking, the biodiversity increased tremendously. The world below the cliff seemed like its own entire world.

Pulling out his bow as he observed the first beast he saw roaming about below. It looked like an evolved version of the badgers found outside in the forest from where he stood. His high perception allowed him to see the beast clear as day. Not to mention Hunter's Sight improving his eyesight significantly.

Another difference between this area and the outer one was the behavior of the beasts. Here they didn't go into that weird comatose state during the night but instead continued milling about. Nocturnal animals like the badger actually got even more active during the night.

Taking out an arrow, he grabbed the arrowhead with the palm of his hand as he channeled Blood of the Malefic Viper to turn his blood into a toxin. Allowing the arrow to cut into his hand, he thoroughly soaked it in his blood.

After the fight with the survivors, he was starting to run a bit low on poisons. He had started throwing them all around him during the battle, wasting most of them as they harmlessly broke against ground or trees. Heck, despite throwing so many, he only got a single kill as healers were present on the battlefield. Coupled with people seemingly being aware of his use of poisons. Thanks to that William fellow, no doubt.

Shaking his head, he got back to the matter at hand as he nocked the blood-soaked arrow. Drawing his bow, he started charging a Powershot as he traced the movement of the beast. After about 10 seconds, he released the string to an explosion of force as the arrow was released and flew towards the still unsuspecting badger.

The poor beast didn't know what had hit it before it suddenly got slammed by an arrow that completely disintegrated as it hit its back. The poison proved to be thoroughly unnecessary as the kinetic force behind the arrow alone smashed the beast's insides into an unrecognizable mess.

The beast was dead pretty much instantly, and what little vitality remained in it was quickly snuffed out by the poison that, together with the arrow disintegrating, had been spread all over the broken form of the beast.

The notification confirmed the death as he felt the level-up.

You have slain [Venomfang Badger – lvl 48] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level. 56000 TP earned

'DING!' Class: [Ambitious Hunter] has reached level 26 - Stat points allocated, +4 free point

A level 48 beast one-shot by him. He didn't know if he was overpowered or what, but it sure as hell seemed extreme. Then again, he didn't have others to really compare himself to. Though based on that spear attack from the fire caster, he too could likely reproduce the result. One also has to remember that the only reason why he could channel Powershot for so long was due to his high defensive stats.

Sitting down, he relaxed his numb arm as he allowed it to slowly recover. While he could kill a beast many levels above him in a single attack, it didn't come easy. His stamina expenditure was insane, and the strain on his arm also got bad enough that he even lost health points during the charging of the shot.

He knew ten seconds was too much, but he was still testing. He would improve it slowly and find the perfect balance. Between rotating stamina potions and firing arrows, his hunting speed should be extreme if his theory was correct. And whenever he did get too low on stamina, it would just mean a great chance to make a few more potions and maybe even a concoction of poison or two.

As he relaxed, he thought over his plans, as he also pondered other exciting parts of the tutorial.

The number of tutorial points per kill also seemed to go up two thousand per level for all beasts above level 25. Based on the raptors, the boar, and the badger that Jake had just killed, that is. He still had no idea what use exactly those points had. According to the description of the tutorial, they would likely show their worth whenever the tutorial ended.

Getting up, he exited his thoughts as he saw other badgers had started gathering around the corpse of their fallen comrade. Taking up his bow once more, he massaged his shoulder and cracked his neck as he prepared another poisoned arrow.

It was time to get this hunt started for real.