

Hunter 62

Chapter 62: Loot 2.0

Jake stared at the number of survivors as it kept going down until it finally stabilized. After twenty minutes, it still hadn't moved, but the number left was still chilling.

Tutorial Panel

Duration: 22 days & 21:49:53

Total Survivors Remaining: 49/1200

More than two hundred people dead.... something extremely major must have happened in the outer area.

He wanted to go back and check... but on the other hand, he didn't. What did he have to go back for? His only friends had betrayed him and even tried to kill him. Maybe they had done it under false pretenses, but they had nevertheless done so.

Jacob seemed like the only one not in on the plan... but Jake still blamed him. It was illogical, he knew that, but it didn't change the fact that he had trusted his former supervisor. His trust had turned into a weakness as Jake had nearly lost his life due to the error - an error he didn't want to repeat.

So Jake ignored it as he closed down the panel. It wasn't any of his business. Not anymore. Instead, he would do what he knew was his business. Getting stronger.

Standing up, he stretched his arms a bit as he confirmed them being fully healed. He decided to head back towards the cliff where he had hunted before being hunted by the small dinosaurs. It was a great vantage point, and he had a sneaking suspicion that something good had to be hidden down in the valley somewhere.

Thinking of this new world with a smudge of videogame-logic hadn't turned out to be that wrong yet. And if an area is closely guarded by many enemies in a videogame, chances are something worthwhile is to be found in that area.

Plus, he had already killed many beasts down there, so it would be a waste to not at least explore the area for herbs and such. He had already found quite a few on the mountainous paths between the valleys, but something more had to be hidden down there.

It took him less time to get back than he expected as he reached the cliff he had been on before after only a quarter of an hour. Turns out that running while not simultaneously fighting beasts was faster.

Standing at the crevice once more, he scanned the area below with Hunter's Sight. He saw several beasts still roaming about, but far less than when he started hunting them.

It was already well-known in the tutorial that the number of beasts was finite, which is why there barely remained any worth hunting in the world outside the barrier to the inner area.

The same rule seemed to hold true here. The beasts also didn't seem to migrate between the different valleys. Perhaps due to the excessive number of dinosaur-like creatures roaming in between said valleys.

Either way, it meant that Jake could, in theory, completely clear out one of these valleys if he had enough time. He didn't plan to do so, but killing the vast majority of them would surely make exploration far safer and faster.

Taking out his bow, he returned to his bread and butter technique of firing blood-soaked arrows with Powershot. But he would spice it up a bit this time.

He still placed his hand around the arrowhead as he let it cut into his palm while he channeled Blood of the Malefic Viper to turn it toxic. Next, he nocked the arrow as he started charging Powershot. But the difference from last time was that he didn't just let the skill do its own thing.

Instead, he closely monitored the flow of inner energy as it traveled throughout his body.

The path it traveled was as he expected, but as it reached his arms and shoulders, he noticed how it spread out in a weird pattern. The energy entered his muscles, but it was as if it did so in a set formation of sorts - a formation he quite honestly couldn't even begin to comprehend.

He felt that he could slightly influence how fast the energy moved, but not with this shot, as he was forced to release the built-up energy.

The arrow exploded out as it hit a few meters away from a badger that rightfully jumped up in fright before running off terrified.

Smirking slightly to himself for missing, he shook his head as he poisoned and nocked another arrow, aiming for another badger in another clearing. This time, he didn't focus intensively on the skill's inner workings but saved enough focus to actually hit his prey.

As predicted, the poor thing didn't even react as it met its end. This hunting method was a bit unsatisfying for Jake's desire to find challenges but very satisfying for the part of him that wanted to get levels fast.

He continued shooting arrows for the next few hours until he stood there for a good five minutes without being able to spot any beasts. He was sure many remained, hidden by trees or bushes, but he must have thinned them out plenty.

The buffalo he had killed the day prior had been the strongest beast in the area as he didn't spot anything even close to it in level and power.

He had gotten two more levels from the grind and decided to put the stat points into agility and strength. He knew the stats' value was lowered as he only had a 10% amplifier on those stats, but he still needed them pretty badly.

His class upgrade did start providing him quite a bit more in those two, so he would likely be able to invest in perception with more of his free points soon.

Bringing up his status menu, he smiled at his progress.

Status

Name: Jake Thayne

Race: [Human (E) – lvl 39]

Class: [Ambitious Hunter – lvl 32]

Profession: [Prodigious Alchemist of the Malefic Viper – lvl 46]

Health Points (HP): 3301/3390

Mana Points (MP): 3985/4070

Stamina: 458/1540

Stats

Strength: 190

Agility: 225

Endurance: 154

Vitality: 339

Toughness: 179

Wisdom: 407

Intelligence: 139

Perception: 342

Willpower: 211

Free points: 0

Titles: [Forerunner of the New World], [Bloodline Patriarch], [Holder of a Primordial's True Blessing], [Dungeoneer I], [Dungeon Pioneer I]

Class Skills:

[Basic One-Handed Weapon (Inferior)], [Basic Stealth (Inferior)], [Advanced Archery (Common)], [Hunter's Sight (Uncommon)], [Powershot (Uncommon)], [Basic Twin Fang Style (Uncommon)], [Basic Shadow Vault of Umbra (Uncommon)], [Splitting Arrow (Uncommon)], [Big Game Hunter (Rare)]

Profession Skills: [Herbology (Common)], [Brew Potion (Common)], [Concoct Poison (Common)], [Alchemist's Purification (Common)], [Alchemical Flame (Common)], [Toxicology (Uncommon)], [Cultivate Toxin (Uncommon)], [Malefic Viper's Poison (Rare)], [Palate of the Malefic Viper (Rare)], [Touch of the Malefic Viper (Rare)], [Sense of the Malefic Viper (Rare)], [Blood of the Malefic Viper (Epic)]

Blessing: [True Blessing of the Malefic Viper (Blessing - True)]

Race Skills: [Endless Tongues of the Myriad Races (Unique)], [Identify (Common)], [Meditate (Common)], [Shroud of the Primordial (Divine)]

Bloodline:[Bloodline of the Primal Hunter (Bloodline Ability - Unique)]

His physical stats had soared since he last checked. Something he could also clearly feel as he fought his enemies. His arrows got faster and more powerful, while his movements experienced the same growth.

He had no idea how much he could lift by now, but by the power of just a regular punch, he could likely bench the combined weight of several Olympic wrestlers without breaking a sweat.

Of course, the growth felt a bit weird as he also met stronger and stronger enemies. But if he compared what he could fight now to what he had faced back when first entering the tutorial, it was night and day.

A single one of the small raptors could have ripped the level 10 Stonetusk Boar to pieces in seconds. Meanwhile, Jake had required the help of his colleagues and his entire quiver worth of arrows to take down the beast.

Of course, if Jake himself faced that boar now, he could likely kill it with his bare hands and only a few punches. It was a bit surreal to imagine, but one could only say that the system and his mind did an excellent job adapting him to his rising strength.

Closing down his status menu once again, he took out a stamina potion and chugged it down. His stamina was only at around a fourth of his total, after all. The potions were still relatively weak, but it did give him a few hundred more points. Enough to fight almost anything he could meet below. If not, it would at least allow him to escape.

The drop to the valley below was tens of meters, but Jake didn't bother with a long climb as he simply took a step over the edge and let gravity do the work.

He quickly fell as he landed on the ground, not even having to properly soak the impact as he barely felt the reverberations in his legs, his toughness far too high for a drop like this to do him any harm.

From below, he could see into the forest. From this new vantage point, he did spot a few beasts that had been hidden below the trees' crowns before.

These beasts were all on the weaker side, making Jake not even bother with them. Unless they provoked him, he would just leave them be.

Walking into the forest, he didn't focus as much on his sight as he did his Sphere of Perception. He scanned everything within twenty meters or so as he walked, peeking into every small crevice, every fallen log, and every hollow tree.

After a few minutes, he finally found it.

Jackpot, Jake thought to himself as he saw the box within his sphere.

Making his way to it, he flipped over the log that kept it hidden in the small hole in the ground. Identifying it, it was precisely what he had expected to find.

[Magical Jeweled Lockbox (Uncommon)] – A system-created magical lockbox enchanted with the ability to block off all types of attempts to peek inside before opened

Identical to the one with my bracers,

he thought, as he prepared to open it.

A few seconds later, the box opened with a satisfying click as he saw the item inside.

It was another ring, one with a green gem embedded in it. It wasn't the shiny kind of rock, but the rough kind that didn't reflect any light. Honestly, it was more of a band than a ring, as it didn't have any protrusions but had a perfectly even surface.

Not waiting, he identified it.

[Ring of the Jade-eye Tiger (Uncommon)] – A ring created by embedding the crystalized eye of a Jade-eye Tiger into a band. The Records of the tiger powers the enchantment, granting some of the beast's might to its user. Enchantments: +20 Perception, +15 Agility, +15 Strength.

Requirements: Lvl 30 in any humanoid Race

With a whistle, Jake picked it up with delight.

By now, he was pretty sure that the system made items specifically for, or at least partly based on, whoever opened the box.

They were like loot-boxes in the gaming industry before the system, but actually good. Instead of getting shit items that nobody had any use for, it deliberately dropped something it judged the user could use.

At least he firmly believed that. Or maybe he had just gotten lucky so far. He based that theory on how all the items he had gained outside the challenge dungeon had been tailor-made for an archer.

He discounted the boxes given in the challenge dungeon as those clearly were made for an alchemist. Which once more made perfect sense as he had just done a dungeon themed around alchemy.

Of course, that didn't mean one could only find useful items. In a lockbox, perhaps, but there were other ways to obtain them. Such as killing other survivors. Jake still had a rare sword in his spatial storage that he was a bit salty about being unable to use.

It didn't mean one got the best item for that moment either. Right now, Jake wanted a quiver or a dagger more than anything else, but he had gotten a ring. A ring that suited him very nicely, but not as good as any of those.

Oh well, looters can't be choosers, he joked to himself as he put the ring on his finger, as he felt the warm rush of stats increasing.

The next few hours were spent exploring and looking for that sweet loot.

He did get into a couple of fights here and there, but most of them were settled smoothly and quickly.

His new skill Splitting Arrow turned out to be extremely useful during actual combat. It allowed Jake to practically do the damage of several arrows with only a single shot.

The skill had no wind-up time, and he just had to shoot an arrow precisely the same way he usually did. The only difference was that the arrow would split into several as it was in flight, often taking his opponents by surprise as one attack suddenly turned into several.

Right now, he could easily split it into five arrows. He could do more, but the stamina cost rose significantly with every new arrow added to the split. If splitting the arrow into two required 5 stamina, three required 10, while four required 20, then 35, and so on and so forth.

One thing he did find disappointing, but not surprising, was that his poison wasn't split when he used the skill. It wasn't all bad, though, as even when the arrow split apart into several, one arrow remained the 'true' one.

Whenever he fired a poisoned arrow, it would split, and the other arrows did retain the original's appearance. This meant that they would still have the poison on them if one looked at them, but it didn't actually contain any of the poisonous qualities.

The one 'true' arrow did retain the poison in all its glory and effect. This meant that it worked as a very useful feint where Jake fired several arrows with only one of them being the truly deadly one.

Another way to identify the original arrow was because it was the one that didn't disappear a few minutes after firing. The clones from the split would remain for a few minutes until turning into energy and dispersing into the atmosphere once more.

It had to be said that the conjured arrows from his quiver did the same if left outside the quiver for too long. It did take them a few hours, however, making it barely comparable.

And speaking of the quiver, he was quite excited about the most recent piece of loot he had found.

[Tutorial equipment upgrade token (Uncommon)] – Upgrade any common-rarity starting item from the tutorial to uncommon-rarity.

And the token didn't come alone. Jake couldn't hold himself back from making a goofy smile as he looked at the haul in his spatial storage.

It turns out that the unexplored inner area combined with his quite overpowered Sphere of Perception made for quite the combo.