

## Hunter 98

Chapter 98: -Valley of Tusks

As he jumped up the cliff and began running the final stretch to the dungeon, he checked through his full status.

Status

Name: Jake Thayne

Race: [Human (E) – lvl 58]

Class: [Ambitious Hunter – lvl 65]

Profession: [Prodigious Alchemist of the Malefic Viper – lvl 51]

Health Points (HP): 5429/5460

Mana Points (MP): 5111/5320

Stamina: 3629/3820

Stats

Strength: 403

Agility: 534

Endurance: 382

Vitality: 546

Toughness: 390

Wisdom: 532

Intelligence: 260

Perception: 1053

Willpower: 326

Free points: 0

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

Class Skills: [Basic One-Handed Weapons (Inferior)], [Advanced Stealth (Common)], [Advanced Archery (Common)], [Hunter's Sight (Uncommon)], [Basic Twin Fang Style (Uncommon)], [Basic Shadow Vault of Umbra (Uncommon)], [Splitting Arrow (Uncommon)] [Big Game Hunter (Rare)], [Infused Powershot (Rare)], [Mark of the Ambitious Hunter (Rare)], [Descending Dark Fang (Rare)], [Moment of the Primal Hunter (Legendary)]

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)], [Scales of the Malefic Viper (Ancient)]

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 status was starting to get rather large. He could still remember when it barely contained anything and even had a few N/A's in there. His stats had all grown a lot, especially his perception that was truly at a ridiculous level by now.

He really hoped to get a skill to make better use of the high perception at level 70. His Mark already did so as well as his Moment of the Primal Hunter, but that was about it. Of course, the stat did still help passively, but most of his skills did scale with agility first and strength second.

But that was for when he reached level 70.

Rushing up the mountainous path, he soon found himself at another tunnel leading into the volcano-like mountain. He ran through it quickly and found himself within.

The layout of this one was relatively simple. It was all made of stone with pillars of rock everywhere. Overall he saw nothing of note but the entrance to the dungeon.

On the far most side of the area was the dungeon door, and he didn't waste any time as he rushed to it, placed his hand, and accepted the prompt. His vision went black for a few seconds before he regained sight.

You have entered the dungeon: Valley of Tusks

Objective: Defeat the Horde Leader

He found himself in a deep valley made of only rock and soil. Curved jagged spikes poked out from all sides of the cliffside around him, making it all seem somewhat intimidating.

It was perhaps more accurate to call where he currently was a gorge rather than a valley. It was only twenty or so meters across, after all, with vertical cliffs to each side. They extended upwards farther than his eyes could see, with the spikes only multiplying the further one got up.

However, the first thing he noticed when he entered the dungeon was not how it looked, but how it felt. After the sewer dungeon, he had begun to focus on the mana in the air far more, and the mana in this dungeon also felt... different.

It somehow felt more solid. Not dense, just solid, like it had weight to it. If Jake had to take a guess, he would say it had to be that a lot of mana in the area carried an affinity. Perhaps earth, rock, soil, or something like that.

Interestingly enough, it didn't seem to have any adverse effect on his mana regenerations; it had increased ever so slightly if nothing else. He couldn't tell if it was due to his incompatibility with the mana outside or his compatibility with the mana inside, though. And with the timer ticking down, he didn't have time to sit down and meditate on his environment.

He had yet to spot any enemies, but he saw the path curved slightly ahead, obstructing his vision. The left side was blocked off, leaving only the right direction open. The dungeon appeared relatively linear, which was totally fine with Jake. Most certainly better than another damn maze, especially with his limited time.

Jumping down from the small cave on the side of the gorge he had entered from; his sphere instantly picked up a barrier of mana forming behind him, blocking off the entrance.

He looked up and saw a shimmering wall of mana with yellow and brown colors. This was the first time he had experienced the entrance being blocked off right after ent-

\*CRASH\*

An explosion of stone and rubble erupted from the left side of the gorge as Jake whipped his head around to see what was happening.

Through the dust at the path he thought blocked off emerged tens of huge hulking figures - thick skin and two huge tusks, with far too much muscle, running on all fours. Jake didn't need to use his skill to identify them at all. Boars.

But that wasn't the issue. The issue was the fact that they were all charging straight at him in a small narrow gorge.

Well, fuck, he thought as he turned tail and ran as fast as he could. Fighting dozens of the hulking monstrosities at once didn't seem like the wisest course of action.

Luckily for him, he outpaced the beasts. Unluckily they had other means of attack than trampling. The gorge's rocky walls seemed to come alive as spikes of rock erupted from them, firing straight towards the lone running human.

Jake managed to barely dodge as he felt more and more head towards him. Soon it wasn't just massive pillars, but small shards of rock, pebbles, and even a freaking boulder tossed at him.

While he managed to avoid most of it, he did get hit by many smaller attacks. To his pleasant surprise, none of the shards managed to draw blood as the combined defense of his cloak and armor blocked most of the damage. It still hurt like hell, though.

The damn gorge seemed to continue endlessly as he kept running and dodging for several minutes. It did curve slightly, but all that did was to make any end always out of sight.

He was starting to get impatient as he took out his bow and attempted to retaliate. He didn't even manage to nock an arrow before he was forced to jump out of the way, making him quickly shelve that idea again.

Hundreds if not thousands of attacks battered him from behind as he kept running. It improved as he got further and further away, and the larger attacks no longer reached him. While pebbles and shards of rock still annoyed him, they were bearable.

Finally, having a bit of leeway, he got the chance to assess the horde of boars following him properly. And a horde it was. He estimated at least 60 boars in the stampede, all large and bulky, each and every one of them easily the size of a van.

Steeltusk Boars. Jake had encountered them before, but never in this number and never at this level. His Identify only confirmed what he already knew.

[Steeltusk Boar – lvl 79]

The level was higher than he had expected. They were nearly at the Ratman Swarm Controller's level, and if he had to estimate their strength, he believed them all to be roughly equal to the Alpha Badgers, which is to say that a direct fight against a damn army wouldn't end that well for him.

This wasn't to say he couldn't take potshots with the increased distance. With a leap forward, he used Shadow Vault and increased the distance between himself and the horde further, as well as outrunning any projectiles currently aimed at him.

With a bit of room, he took out his bow once more and, in a spinning motion, fired a Splitting Arrow behind him. He wanted to use Infused Powershot but using it while moving was inadvisable. His goal was to sow chaos among the beasts rather than actually cause them worthwhile damage, so Splitting Arrow was better at that anyway.

The arrow split into ten as it traveled, hitting the beasts in the front. The arrows' speed, coupled with the boars' own charge, resulted in them not mounting any defense. Four of the porky-boys in front were hit and squealed in pain and anger.

One of them tripped due to the arrow hitting its leg, making it stumble slightly. While it would hardly matter usually, the charging boars behind made it a massive problem for the beast. The slight slowdown made the one behind it bump into it, and soon a boar traffic jam resulted in several of the beasts smashing into and tumbling over each other.

Jake took the opportunity to once more Shadow Vault and shoot yet another Splitting Arrow behind him. He had also poisoned the arrows with a bit of his blood, but he honestly didn't expect it to do much damage. However, it slowed down the entire horde enough for Jake to get all the way out of their attack-range.

Being free of attacks, he kept running and firing arrows until he could only hear and not see the stampede behind him. He had hoped that they would trample each other to death, but it appeared they were simply too bulky to do so effectively. After the first few shots, they had also started to defend themselves a bit, making his attacks even less effective.

A few minutes later, he finally saw an end to the ridiculously long gorge. Keeping up his sprint, he made it out as he saw the entire area opening up before him. A vast valley appeared before him, nearly utterly flat with nothing of interest in sight. The only thing was huge pillars of stone littering the entire area.

With his Hunter's Sight, he could easily see all the way to the other side of the valley. The entire thing was circular and was formed like a massive hole in the ground. The walls were practically vertical, just like the gorge had been. He couldn't even see how far up they extended.

Not a single living thing could be seen in the entire valley. Something that would very soon change as the stampede of boars got louder and louder.

Rushing into the valley, he quickly started considering his options and looking around; there was only one way in and out... it was like a damn arena. The only geographical features he could make use of was the pillars of stone littering the area.

They almost served as trees in a forest. And a forest was great for ambushing. Jake didn't hesitate as he made his way to one of the closest pillars to the gorge and quickly rushed behind it. Up close, they appeared even bigger, towering upwards and being easily 10 meters in diameter and several hundred meters in height.

They were made up of stones stacked on top of each other- tightly balanced stone formations that represented both opportunities as well as danger.

He started climbing one of them but stopped after getting only fifteen meters up as the first boar came into sight as it came out of the gorge. Pushing mana into his cloak, he made sure it covered his entire body as the cloak started turning into the same color as the stones on the pillar.

Completely unmoving, he simply observed as the beasts exited the gorge. With his newfound height advantage, he could see the entire horde. He had estimated there to be around 60, but now he could clearly see how wrong he had been. There had to be closer to a hundred of the damn things... if not more than a hundred.

However, what caught his eye more than the numbers was the hulking monstrosity that led the rear of the horde.

It was several times larger than any of the other beasts, towering over them. If the other boars were compared to vans, then this would be a huge truck. Massive muscles covered its entire body, and a single golden tusk exited one side of its mouth, giving off strong mana.

Jake already knew it before identifying the beast, but it was indeed what he believed it to be.

[Horde Leader - ??]

From where he was hiding, he could feel its aura. It was strong. Strong, but not unmanageable. He had feared that the Horde Leader would be D-grade, but he was now sure that it wasn't. It was close, very close, but not quite there yet.

Before he could face the leader, he would have to get rid of the horde. Fortune smiled upon him as he saw what the boars did the moment they entered the valley.

They all spread out as some kept rampaging onwards, while others slowed down right away. Almost as if in agreement, they all seemed to forget the hunter they were chasing only a minute or so earlier. Even the one still having an arrow sticking out of its snout apparently didn't mind.

Jake soon found out where they were going. They all headed towards different pillars and... started eating them. The boars munched on the stones as if they were the tastiest stuff around, while the hunter hanging up on one of them was momentarily dumbstruck.

What made him even more flummoxed was the boar eating... 10 meters right below him. He was currently standing on top of one of the rocks protruding from the pillar, camouflaged, looking down at the damn thing munching away.

He had already surmised that these boars had earth or stone manipulation or something like that. The one he had faced outside in the forest also had those capabilities. He was a bit surprised at not coming across a single boar in the inner area, but he hadn't thought much of it, honestly.

They quite obviously didn't have a vision that allowed them to look upwards or any kind of ability to properly sense enemies. Jake wasn't even adequately hidden where he stood. Not a single one of the dumb pigs noticed him, though.

Looking around, he saw that there weren't any other boars within thirty or so meters of the pillar he was currently on. The Horde Leader was already far off in the distance, devouring one of the more gigantic pillars.

Jake decided to take a bit of a risk as he took out his bow. He kept close watch of the still eating beast below him as he began preparing his poisoned arrows. He still had a few bottles of his best Necrotic Poison left, but he was starting to run out. It should be enough for the rest of the tutorial, though.

Soaking all the arrows, he redeposited the now empty bottle as he nocked one of the arrows. He had feared that the boar would feel it when he began channeling Infused Powershot as the Lucenti Stags had, but it didn't appear to notice a thing as he felt the mana build up in the bow and the stamina in his upper body.

Once more, having reached a new pinnacle of attacking power with the new bow, he released the fully charged shot straight down the less than 15 meters separating him and the Steeltusk Boar.

An explosion of energy rocking the entire pillar made the boar twitch slightly just before the arrow hit it. It penetrated straight through its spine as it bore a barrel-sized hole through the large beast, its heart in the path of the attack. The damage from the blow coupled with the poison more than enough to ensure the beast would soon be dead.

As the arrow hit the ground below the boar, it exploded, sending rocks everywhere, shaking the pillar and the earth.

And then... all hell broke loose.