

NEW EDEN: LIVE TO PLAY, PLAY TO LIVE

Chapter 3 Choosing A Path, Part 2

He could feel the ambient temperature rising as he got closer. As soon as he entered the building, he was assaulted by a heat wave strong enough to make any person weak to their knees.

He received another pop-up from the system, prompting him to return to a more favorable climate soon, or risk overheating and losing HP.

Astaroth quickly walked up to the counter after seeing that. It would be a shame to die in the village forge before he even did anything.

On the counter was a small bell and hammer, which he used to ring the blacksmith in. After a short while, the back curtains leading to the heart of the forge opened up, letting through a burly man wearing a leather apron.

"Aye, what can ay do fer ya, lad?" The blacksmith asked.

"The mage has sent me to fetch his new kettle. Item he requested a few days prior, I believe." Astaroth added, trying to look offended.

"Aye, ay got it 'er." The blacksmith replied, crouching under the counter.

He then smacked the kettle on the counter, loud enough to startle Astaroth.

"Tell the mage ay don' deliver my orders. If he's not happeh, he can look fer 'nother blacksmith, I reckon." The blacksmith said, before bursting into laughter.

"Leave the moneh on the counter an' scram, wee lad. Ay got werk te do." He said, walking back across the curtains behind him.

Astaroth did not need him to repeat himself. He had already received the debuff overheating and was losing HP by the second already.

So he threw the small pouch of coin on the counter, took the kettle, and scrambled, as the blacksmith asked.

He almost ran back to the mage's house as he wanted nothing more than to be over with this errand quest. The sooner that was done, the quicker he had access to his first class.

As he reached the porch of the mage's house, he received the prompt about not having permission to go into the house. So he knocked.

Knock Knock

"Who is it?" The old mage's voice sounded from inside.

"It's Astaroth, sir. I got your kettle from the blacksmith." Astaroth quickly answered.

As he said that, the door once again unlocked and opened on its own. Astaroth walked inside at a quick pace, treading carefully.

As he made it to the now empty table, he saw a kettle holder on it. So he hung the Kettle on it and turned to face the mage.

"Here, sir. Your kettle." He said, with a small bow.

"Ahh, yes. Thank you, young man." The old mage said.

Ding!

Quest complete

Attributing rewards: +5 reputation with the old mage. Mage skill tree unlocked. First skill acquired by default. Learning first skill. First skill learned. You now possess the skill 'produce basic element' (Fire, Earth, Water, Wind).

Astaroth's eyes sparkled as he saw this. It was short-lived happiness, as a surge of pain grew from inside his head.

"ARGH!!" He yelled as he collapsed to the floor.

"What's happening!?" He screamed, in pain.

"Stop yelling, you wuss. You are generating your mana lobe. It hurts a bit, but bear with it. The pain is worth it." The mage said, watching Astaroth suffer on the floor with an almost sadistic smile.

It took a few minutes for the mana lobe to finish producing. Minutes during which the pain levels went from 'stab to the brain' to 'Searing pike shoved through the brain' and back to normal.

After this agonizing experience, Astaroth was mad that no one had warned him. A notification then appeared in front of his eyes.

Ding!

Mana Lobe generated. 'Mana Lobe lvl 1' acquired.

"A heads up would have been nice, old man." Astaroth grumbled.

"Ahahaha! Where is the fun in that!?" The mage laughed.

"Now quickly, make me some tea." He added, pointing to the kettle.

Astaroth looked around, trying to figure out where to get water.

"Do I need to go fetch water, sir?" He asked.

"What do you mean, fetch water? You're going to make water, right here, right now." The mage annoyingly said.

"You got the spells, now get to it!" He barked.

"..." Astaroth looked at the mage incredulously.

"Aren't you going to teach me how first?" He asked, a dumbfounded look on his face.

"Listen here, young man. Do I look like a magic ATM to you? If you can't do this basic magic stuff, you ain't getting my mentorship. Now get to it! I'm thirsty!" The mage said, angrily.

Astaroth grumbled inwardly.

'I should have gone swordsman' He thought.

He then tried out his new spell, starting with water. He tried and tried to create water to fill the kettle up.

Much to his dismay, he didn't even manage a single drop. The game system was not even giving him tips or anything. After a while, the mage finally intervened.

"Think, young one. What do you want to do?" He asked.

"I want to fill the kettle with water. But I can't do it." Astaroth answered.

"No but or ifs, young man. Visualize it in your head. Visualize the kettle full of water." He said, pointing his head.

Astaroth went back to trying. This time, he closed his eyes and imagined the kettle full of water in his head.

After a few seconds of willing this vision to be true, he felt a cooling sensation coming from his head, going outwards. He opened his eyes and saw that his mana pool had drained a little and that water was forming inside the kettle.

It barely filled to half capacity, but he had made it. Astaroth smiled toothily.

He restarted the process, but this time, he kept his eyes open. It took him a little longer, but he repeated the process. The kettle was now full enough to make tea.

"Finally! You did the first step. Now heat it!" The mage exclaimed from the side.

"Yes, sir!" Astaroth answered, happy about his progress.

He repeated the progress with fire this time. He focused deeply on the small tinder under the kettle and visualized it burning. After a few seconds of concentration, the tinder lit up.

The flame was burning, albeit weakly.

"That's not hot enough, Young Astaroth. Get that flame hotter!" The mage hollered.

Concentrate as he could, Astaroth could not get the fire burning any hotter. After a while, the mage gave him a small tip.

"What makes fire burn?" The mage asked him.

"Oxygen." Astaroth replied with certainty.

"Then give that fire oxygen and stop daydreaming!" The mage said.

Astaroth took a few seconds to understand what the mage meant. When he finally caught on, he realized he could make wind blow on the flame with create wind.

He concentrated again and willed wind into the flame. Sadly, his lack of control generated too strong a wind for the small flame to bear and it blew it out.

"Fuck!" Astaroth barked.

"Don't cuss! Start again!" The mage admonished him.

"Yes, sir!" Astaroth replied resolutely.

He went back to concentrating and generated a flame in barely a few seconds. His control was getting better, but the flame was still too weak.

He kept his concentration up and willed a gentle breeze to blow on the flame. After a few tries and tweaks, he finally generated an ever-so-soft breeze that fed the fire with enough oxygen to burn stronger.

He had to keep the wind blowing to keep the flame strong, therefore; he kept his mind to the task until the kettle boiled and whistled.

Clap Clap Clap

The mage started clapping his hands to the side. He was smiling widely.

"Congratulations! You have become a fledgling mage." The old mage said.

Ding!

You have unlocked the passive skill 'Magic Control 1'

Your control over the mana currents around you and in your body has refined after much practice. Keep it up and you might become the strongest mage someday!

'What the...' Thought Astaroth.

He was thrilled about his results. 'My first step to becoming the strongest is done' He said inwardly.

"Now, young Astaroth, not that I dislike your company, but these old bones like solitude. So if you don't require further guidance, for now, I would appreciate it if you left." The old mage said with a smile.

"On your way out, the shelf on your left has orbs in it. Those are magic catalysts. Pass your hand over them while projecting mana, and pick the one that makes your hand tingle the most. That will mean it resonates with your mana attributes the most. It's a gift for passing my first test." He added.

Astaroth thanked the mage and bowed before heading over to the shelf with orbs on it. All of them had different colors to them.

He did as instructed and after passing over all of them; he picked the one that tingled him the most. It was a white orb with a blue swirl on it. As soon as he picked it up, it melted in his hand and fused with it.

A small tattoo of the same color as the orb appeared on his forearm right after. Astaroth guessed it was normal and said nothing about it. The process was painless, after all. He left right after.

The old man drank his tea in peace, now that Astaroth had gone. He went to see what orb his new pupil had picked. He soon furrowed his brows and grumbled.

"Was that the orb that resonated with him the most? Hmm. Interesting!" The old man said, a look of interest appearing on his face.