

The Fall 265

Chapter 265: Ladder Rewards

The huge black walls that delimited the hunting grounds had shrunk at a rapid pace, swallowing hundreds of mountains by the second. In almost no time the darkness was upon him, and Zac only managed to take a last glance at the Eastern Trigram Sect before everything turned black.

[Congratulations on receiving the third position on the Hunter Ladder. Awards distributed.]

The unfeeling voice of the System suddenly echoed in his ears as an enormous surge of energy entered his body.

[Congratulations on receiving the first position on the Gatherer Ladder. Limited Titles Unlocked. Awards distributed.]

[Congratulations on receiving the first position on the aggregated Ladder. Awarded +3 levels and Title Permanence.]

The gatherer announcement wasn't a surprise to Zac, but the hunter ladder was a welcome surprise. The mad dash at the end had proven successful, and he had beat out Vasidas for the third position, which meant he gained another 2 bonus levels from the hunt. But most interesting was the final prompt, a hidden reward of the hunt.

He had hoped that there would be something like this, but he hadn't been sure. While he didn't manage to get the highest position on the Hunter ladder, his average result was the best of all participants.

Inevitability was only on the 4th spot of the Gatherer ladder, getting surpassed by himself, Thea, and Beruv Ylvas. He was a bit surprised that Ylvas managed to beat out the Dominator, but he guessed he got the help of his army to push him past the Zhix at the end.

Harbinger, the second Dominator, got the 5th position and Starlight, the Ishiate powerhouse, got the 6th. Thomas Fischer had managed to get himself back to the 10th position, while Billy remained at 8th. Neither Billy nor Thea managed to get into the top ten on the hunter ladder, unfortunately, but both were in the top 100. The days of captivity had unfortunately robbed Thea of her opportunity.

Zac guessed that Thomas had used the same tactic as the Medhin Emperor, but he was surprised that he had enough pull to get people to donate their wealth to him. Perhaps it was just a temporary loan though, like he had done with Thea.

However, he was a bit confused by the last reward. The bonus levels weren't very confusing, just what did Title Permanence Mean? The Gatherer prompt also mentioned something about Limited Titles, which might be connected to the permanence. Zac opened the screen to see the results.

Name

Zachary Atwood

Level

Class

[F-Rare] Hatchetman

Race

[E] Human

Alignment

[Earth] Port Atwood - Lord

Titles

Born for Carnage, Ultimate Reaper, Luck of the Draw, Giantsbane, Disciple of David, Overpowered, Slayer of Leviathans, Adventurer, Demon Slayer I, Full of Class, Rarified Being, Trailblazer, Child of Dao, The Big 500, Planetary Aegis, One Against Many, Butcher, Progenitor Noblesse, Duplicity Core, Apex Hunter, Heaven's Chosen, Scion of Dao, Omnidextrous, Eastern Trigram Hunt - 1st

Limited Titles

-

Dao

Seed of Heaviness - High, Seed of Trees - High, Seed of Sharpness - Middle, Seed of Hardness - Middle, Seed of Sanctuary - Early

Core

[F] Duplicity

Strength

533 [Increase: 60%. Efficiency: 121%]

Dexterity

268 [Increase: 45%. Efficiency: 121%]

Endurance

698 [Increase: 71%. Efficiency: 121%]

Vitality

338 [Increase: 61%. Efficiency: 121%]

Intelligence

119 [Increase: 45%. Efficiency: 121%]

Wisdom

132 [Increase: 45%. Efficiency: 121%]

Luck

120 [Increase: 65%. Efficiency: 121%]

Free Points

24

Nexus Coins

[F] 273 280 383

Zac couldn't stop smiling when he saw that his attributes had taken another huge leap, part from his eight bonus levels, and part from his new title. He was also surprised to see that he had gained another row in his status screen, the Limited Titles that were mentioned earlier. However, there was nothing there, and there was no explanation on how Limited Titles differed from normal ones.

He tried focusing on the new row, but no matter what command he tried he couldn't gain any additional information from the empty field. He guessed he would have to ask someone back in Port Atwood about it. Instead, he chose to check out his new title.

[Eastern Trigram Hunt - 1st: First Position in Eastern Trigram Hunt. NOTE: Title Permanence Awarded. Reward: All Stats +10, All stats +5%]

It was a pretty huge bonus, though the 10 flat points weren't as exciting any longer after he'd learned about the attribute gain of E-Grade. But the bonus Luck it gave was extremely valuable, and the other attributes would surely help him during his upcoming trials. He wanted to check out a few more things, but he sensed he was getting moved again by the System.

His time inside the blackness was even shorter compared to when the event started, and just ten seconds later he stood in his courtyard. He took a deep breath as tranquility entered his heart for the first time in a while. He hadn't realized it, but ever since his clash with Inevitability there had been a slight dread in the back of his mind, akin to a fear that the boogeyman would suddenly show up.

He had survived however, and he was pretty much safe now on his island. He also knew he would have to change his plans to make his teleporter public. He couldn't risk letting those monsters teleport here. He would only dare to do such a thing when the dominator threat was dealt with.

Before that however, there were so many things to do. He quickly looked around for his mountain of treasure, and he was elated to see that the amazing Cosmic Sack from the hunt was still attached to his belt.

But he frowned a few seconds later when he noticed a problem. He had taken out a random weapon from the sack to make sure it still worked, but when he tried to put it back nothing happened. A few tests later showed that the sack only allowed withdrawals now.

Sighing in disappointment, Zac realized that he couldn't use the sack permanently. He still wasn't in any hurry to empty it out though. He would have to call Calrin and a couple of his best appraisers over to help him go through it first.

"You're back," a voice suddenly said from the side, and Zac looked over to see Ogras standing there.

“Shit, what happened to you?” Zac said with some surprise when he saw a large scar that went from right below his left horn down to his cheek.

“We’ve got a pretty exciting Mystic Realm on our hands,” Ogras explained with a smile.

“Mystic Realm?” Zac repeated. “The infiltrators are dealt with?”

“It cost me most of my savings but they’re dead. There were actually a lot of them,” Ogras said with a grunt.

“How did you do it?” Zac curiously asked.

“Ordered and set up a large array that covers the whole island. We can use it in the future to find anyone with an odd origin, like invaders or other aliens. But more importantly, how was the haul? We ready to do the inheritances?” Ogras said as his eyes started to glisten with greed.

“The returns were way above what I expected, honestly. But we can’t do the inheritance just yet,” Zac answered with a smile.

“Why not?” Ogras retorted, not being able to hide some of his impatience.

Zac snickered in response, and the next second a pile of the beautiful marble tiles appeared and covered the courtyard.

“Brazla has hounded me to improve his surroundings since the start. I think it’s best we do that before we do the Inheritance. I wouldn’t be surprised if he would mess things up for us otherwise,” Zac explained.

Ogras’ eyes widened in understanding, and he nodded thoughtfully before he threw a scathing glance at the opulent towers rising above the tree line.

“Yeah, that’s probably for the best. Gotta keep that lunatic happy,” Ogras nodded.

“By the way, what is Title Permanence?” Zac asked, changing the subject.

“Title Permanence? No idea,” Ogras said with a frown. “Where did you hear that?”

“I got it as a bonus reward from the hunt,” Zac said and proceeded to explain the two temporary ladders in the hunt and their respective rewards.

“I think I understand now,” Ogras said with a thoughtful nod. “Title Permanence might be the best reward you got from that trial.”

“What do you mean?” Zac asked with some curiosity.

“I’ve already explained that there are a bunch of Mystic Realms out in the multiverse that provide titles,” Ogras started, and Zac nodded in agreement. “However, most of those places only provide Limited Titles.”

“Limited Titles?” Zac asked with confusion.

He had a vague recollection of Alyn mentioning it, but that was during the month when she tried to cram a lifetime’s worth of knowledge into his head while he mined Nexus Crystals.

"You can only have three Limited Titles at a time. If you get a new one you will have to discard one of the old ones or skip on getting the new one. They are separate from the normal titles," Ogras explained.

"What, really?" Zac asked with some disappointment.

"You should be happy it's like that. Just imagine if some wealthy assholes from the supreme clans spent a few hundred years traveling from Mystic Realm to Mystic Realm, getting thousands of titles? They would become monsters," Ogras snorted.

"Titles are a bonus from The Ruthless Heavens, but there is a limit to how much it can give," Ogras said. "You can't have the attributes of a C-Grade old monster while at F-Grade."

"Fair enough, I guess," Zac said with a shrug. "What's this got to do with title permanence?"

"The hunt doesn't sound like something that should give permanent titles," Ogras said. "I think the Title Permanence reward given to you is The Ruthless Heavens turning your Limited Title into a normal Title. That way it does not take up one of your slots. Is it together with your other titles?"

"It is," Zac nodded after a second.

The face of Ogras started to scrounge up in a familiar way, and Zac felt a tirade was incoming, but a thought suddenly struck Zac.

"Do the Towers of Eternity give Limited Titles as well?" Zac asked.

"No, it's one of the rare opportunities that gives real Titles. That's why it's so popular. Apart from the Tower, you can almost only find places giving Permanent Titles by serendipity, like finding a rare treasure," Ogras explained. "That your hunt awarded title permanence is likely a one-time thing."

Zac nodded in understanding. There were a lot of things Zac wanted to ask the demon about the current situation of Port Atwood, and he was also curious about the Mystic Realm. However, there was one thing that trumped every other matter in importance, and it couldn't wait.

"More importantly, I think we might be in deep shit," Zac said with a somber expression.

Ogras' eyes hardened, looking at Zac with a frown.

"What's going on?"

From there Zac recounted the parts of the hunts containing the battle with Salvation, the appearance of Inevitability, and what he'd learned from Beruv Ylvas. He finally added his own conclusions and guesswork what he thought was going on.

Ogras had an unprecedentedly serious face after having heard what Zac said.

"We need to have a meeting, immediately. We should hold it at the Towers of Myriad Dao so that Spirit can provide input as well. I'll gather the council," Ogras responded.

Zac completely agreed, so in just twenty minutes people started to gather in front of the doorways leading into the Repository. Zac was already there, and he smiled when he saw his sister running toward him. Kenzie threw herself in his arms, hugging him tightly.

"I'm glad you're okay. Lyla made the hunt seem like a real hell," she said with red-rimmed eyes.

"It's good to see you," Zac said with a warm smile before his brow rose in some surprise when he realized what Kenzie said. "Lyla is actually okay?"

"Yes, but she returned after only 6 days. She said she got a token she could crush to return back home," Kenzie nodded. "What happened to you? Did you find anything cool?"

"Let's talk inside," Zac smiled as he looked around at the others.

Abby floated not far away, and the council was all present apart from a few who likely were managing the other islands. Calrin was also there, his eyes glued to Zac's Cosmos Sack. Zac had also asked Ogras to bring Julia, and she stood some distance from the others looking a bit unsure of what to do.

Zac felt that the intelligence he'd gathered during the hunt was just too important to keep to himself, so he had already decided to brief Julia and then send her back as soon as possible. Since it looked like everyone else was present Zac led the way inside the towers.