

## Hunter 70

### Chapter 70: Excelling

Jacob felt a bit of excitement for the first time in quite a while reading his notifications. He had barely opened any of the system menus for weeks, and when he did, he only did so to either check the tutorial panel or his stamina. But now things had changed, as he had perhaps finally found a path for himself in this new world.

With the blessing, a title apparently also came. The only other title Jacob had besides the one they all started with. He had honestly kind of forgotten the existence of titles before that moment.

[Holder of a Primordial's Greater Blessing] – Obtain the Greater blessing of a Primordial. In the vast multiverse, many gods exist, many pantheons rule, but the Primordial are few. To be blessed by a Primordial personally is a rarity, so bear it with pride. Grants the skill: [Lighthouse of the Holy Mother (Epic)]. +5 all stats, +5% to wisdom, willpower, and vitality.

Another massive gain and another stat-increasing effect. They were even the same stats Jacob got a lot of from his class. As for the skill it granted, he wasn't too sure.

[Lighthouse of the Holy Mother (Epic)] – A beacon amidst a sea of confusion. A light for all to follow in order to find safe shore once more. Allows you to take in emotions from those around you more easily, understanding their most profound inner desires. Passively makes you appear more trustworthy to those who have faith in you. The effect of Lighthouse of the Holy Mother is based on wisdom and willpower, respectively.

It sounded downright creepy - the perfect superweapon of any stalker. But from the perspective of a leader, it was invaluable. Morale and happy employees were the cornerstone of a highly efficient company, especially one focused on knowledge rather than physical labor.

Being able to convince others easier was also very helpful. It just rubbed Jacob the wrong way to imagine him quite literally mind-manipulating others into it. At least the skill appeared only to reinforce the trust others already had in him...

After the meeting, he had naturally also gotten the level... as well as a whole bunch of lost skills.

\*' DING!' Class: [Augur of Hope] has reached level 25 - Stat points allocated, +8 free points\*

\*Skill lost\*: [Strike (Common)]

\*Skill lost\*: Basic One-Handed Weapon (Inferior)

\*Skill Lost\*: Basic Two-Handed weapon (Inferior)

\*Skill Lost\*: Basic Sword & Shield (Inferior)

\*Skill Lost\*: Basic Throwing Weapons (Inferior)

\*Skill Lost\*: Balanced Approach (Common)

\*Skill Lost\*: Basic Blocking (Inferior)

He had lost all of his skills but two. One called Amplify Voice, which did exactly what it sounds like. The other one was Motivating Presence, his only uncommon-skill before the events that had just transpired. It was a skill that reduced stamina expenditure for all allies around him.

But of course, he had also gained several skills. four to be exact - the first one a mana-affinity skill, something he had heard about before.

\*Skill Gained\*: [Light Magic Affinity (Uncommon)] – The element of light is an affinity of two faces. The light can shine upon allies, bringing them comfort and strength, but also burn your enemies, along with a myriad of mystical techniques. Allows the user to turn their mana into the light-affinity. May you walk where darkness never reaches.

This skill was relatively simple, except for the fact that it was uncommon-rarity. Jacob had heard that most affinity skills were of inferior-rarity, meaning Jacob had skipped a tier when getting it. When he tapped into his mind, he could vaguely feel small wisps of knowledge on how to use the light element. However, as he had no idea how to use mana and had no skills to use the affinity with, it didn't do much currently. At most, he could make himself glow...

The next skill was also a bit weird but had a fascinating effect.

\*Skill Gained\*: [Shepherd of the Lost (Epic)] – The shepherd who leads the lost is the one who forges the path of all those he guides. Allows the user to more easily influence the Records and thus future paths of

others. Enables your teaching to grant a very minor amount of class and profession-experience. Effect based on wisdom and willpower.

He had no clue what all that influencing Records thing was about. No, what he cared about was the second to last part. Grant experience. He could help others gain levels without having to go through the horrors of fighting. The next skill was equally as cryptic in many ways.

**\*Skill Gained\*** [Divination of the Augur (Epic)] – Fate is everchanging, but some can begin to understand the flow. Allows the Augur of Hope to peer into the rivers of fate and destiny to interpret the omens found within. The time between each available divination is based on the willpower and wisdom of the Augur.

Was this skill some kind of fortune-telling? Prediction of the future? He had a feeling it was far more complicated than that. And the knowledge that came with the skill didn't help him much either. It just allowed him to know how to start divining, and he knew that it was a rather lengthy process.

The final skill... was just downright weird and non-descriptive.

**\*Skill Gained\*:** [One More Light (Legendary)] – When the lights flicker, your will remains. In the sky of a million stars, when one's time runs out, One More Light remains. The Augur of Hope cares when the light goes out, even when a moment is all that we are. So his light shall remain alit to further guide the lost and the fallen. The lights that have flickered out. Hope is not so easily slain.

... it was a legendary skill. A tier Jacob had never even heard of before. He remembered Richard boasting about getting an epic-skill, making others green with envy. But now he had obtained a legendary skill... one he couldn't even understand himself.

The description was just so unbelievably vague. Whenever one gained a skill, one would generally get the basic knowledge of how to use it too. It was like that with all his other skills. But with this... he came up blank. It seemed to do nothing, and he had no idea how to activate it. Was the skill passive, maybe? But if so... what are its effects?

Jacob had no answer to that question. Even if he couldn't figure out, he had a feeling he would know what it was for in time.

He felt like he had been reborn. Like he had finally found a purpose, a path forward. One could live with the system without fighting. He could become someone leading people just like he had before. He could guide and help others.

Perhaps he had finally found a new area where he could excel once more.

Another person who excelled elsewhere was a man repeatedly stabbing a massive beast in the side as it tried to wrestle him off. But the man didn't let up but kept holding on as his hands grasping unto the beast gave off a faint green glow.

The beast was already wounded all over, arrows sticking out of it everywhere, and a huge hole that had left one of its claws hanging limp. The blood was oozing out of every wound, and the sword was most certainly not helping with the situation.

Finally, the beast stopped moving, as its attacker received a notification.

\*You have slain [Alpha Venomfang Badger – lvl 77] – Bonus experience earned for killing an enemy above your level. 114000 TP earned\*

\*' DING!' Class: [Ambitious Hunter] has reached level 44 - Stat points allocated, +4 free points\*

\*' DING!' Race: [Human (E)] has reached level 46 - Stat points allocated, +5 free points\*

Jake let go as he fell backward onto his back, a smile hanging on his lips. Not caring at all about the blood he had landed in.

More than half a day had been spent in this cavern since he entered. All the five Alpha's were finally dead, with only the Den Mother remaining.

He had gone through the cycle of preparing for battle, fighting a big-ass badger, doing alchemy, and meditating before rinsing and repeating. The common-rarity hemotoxic poison was still underway, but he was getting close. Really close. He had even managed to get another level under his belt with all the alchemy done.

In total, he had gotten four levels in his class, nearly getting one per Alpha. The second to last was the only one that hadn't awarded one. He didn't know if it was natural to get that many levels or if it was his Mark of the Ambitious Hunter showing its worth.

And oh, that Mark was great. Before, he sometimes had issues when he ran away if the beast briefly exited his sphere, but now he could feel where it was anyway, showing great synergy with his bloodline. The increased damage was also more than noticeable.

It didn't make his blade cut more, or his arrows dig deeper as he had expected. Instead, the effect was more peculiar. Whenever he hit a beast, dealing damage to it, what felt like a wave or maybe a small wisp of energy drifting out and consumed just a bit of health from the target. It was subtle but noticeable over a long fight.

And to make it all better, it even worked with his poisons. He could clearly see it being amplified, just straight-up allowing the toxins to drain more lifeforce than before. He had yet to try it properly with a potent dose of necrotic poison, but he could imagine the effects being very noteworthy.

In other words, the skill dealt damage directly to health points.

The badger he had killed the easiest was the second to last, coincidentally also the only one that didn't award him a level. His Infused Powershot had made all the fights a lot easier, allowing him to land an excellent blow to begin the battle with.

He had managed to hit it from the side and penetrate through the ear canal and into the beast's brain. The damage released from the Mark was insane, looking like a wave of energy washing over the creature. He said 'looking', but he was the only one who could notice the effect from what Jake could deduce.

Applying the mark to a target was also easier than he had feared. The skill said it 'covertly' applied it, and luckily that had turned out to be very much true. None of the badgers had shown the slightest reaction when he used the skill on them, merely continuing their daily lives of loafing about.

In the entire dungeon, only two living beings remained - the Den Mother and himself. He didn't know if he could defeat the beast. He had a feeling he maybe could, even without making the new poison. But he had already made the plan, so he decided to just stick with it.

Besides, he needed another period of restoration. He had rushed the fight with the final badger quite a bit, not bothering to fully reconjure all his arrows, which was why he had to face it in melee for a bit. An endeavor that had only ruined his clothing... again, again.

It had to be said that Jake looked like the poorest homeless person around. The other survivors had banded together, meaning they had tailors in their midst. Jake, on the other hand, had to make do with his own measly skills.

His cloak could be restored, but under that cloak... yeah. His chest was bare and had been so for the last many days. He had many clothes from within the Challenge Dungeon but had decided to stop wasting the shirts by now. Nearly all of them had been ripped apart, and as they were just regular clothes, he had no way to fix them.

He still wore pants, but even they were tattered and holed all over. He only switched them out when it was absolutely necessary, and even now, they were more shorts than pants.

And speaking of his chest... he had to admit that he looked good. Jake had always had a rather lithe figure, having to spend a lot of time to stay in shape for his archery. The habits of regular exercise and healthy eating had luckily stuck with him after the accident that stopped his pursuit of going pro.

His current body had gone through changes since entering the tutorial. All the belly fat was gone, his muscles light and flexible. The evolutions had even resulted in his height increasing by a few centimeters. He had been of a rather average size before, while now he could be considered a bit above average.



His face and hair had remained the same. His brown hair had perhaps grown a little, but it was hard to tell. The glint in his eye was a bit sharper than before, and perhaps his features had become a bit rougher on average. But it was hard telling if it was due to the system or all the hardships he had gone through.

Of course, his journey wasn't over yet. There was, for example, a giant badger to kill.

He decided to retreat to the cave entrance just in case the Den Mother unexpectedly made a move. He doubted it would, but better safe than sorry.

Taking out his ingredients, he got concocting. Purified water, infused blood, aged poisonous moss, Bloodthorn Stalk juices, and a shitload of mana later, and he was good to go.

His progress had been slow and steady over the last day. He had concocted many common-rarity necrotic poisons before and was no longer a rookie in the craft. In fact, he would say making that poison was easier than the inferior-rarity stamina potion.

The only part that still vexed him was the merging process of the two opposing elements for the Hemotoxin. They rejected each other, but he had started to find ways to slowly make them meld into one another and not explosively clash, spraying the concoction all over. After having it explode in his face far too many times, that is.

Which was also the reason why he wasn't wearing his cloak at the moment. His skin had better resistance to poison than his clothing, after all.

The beginning part of the process went as expected. The water, moss, and blood mixed well together, and soon the first part was finished. Adding the Stalk juices, however, Jake had started switching up the approach. Instead of adding it all at once, he would slowly drip it into the mix.

As the first drop hit, it started sizzling as Jake wasted no time forcing it to merge with the rest of the mix. It struggled at first, but slowly it started getting integrated. The concoction's nature started slowly changing as it got affected by the energy within the stalk.

One could compare it to the effect of a vaccine. Of course, the body would naturally reject what was injected into the body, attempting to crush it and push it out. If one increased the vaccine dose significantly, all one would achieve was to make the person sick. But with a small dosage, the body could get used to it, which was just like he was doing now.

The rest of the brew could slowly absorb a small amount of the Bloodthorn juices, and with Jake's careful guidance, not cause any adverse effects. This allowed Jake to soon put in another drop into the mix, and then another, and then another.

Soon more than half of the required liquid was in the mix, and it still remained stable. The last few drops not even showing any unstable reactions but merely integrating on its own.

With a bit of courage, he decided to put in the rest of the liquid all at once. The poison's purpose was ultimately for the Bloodthorn Stalk juices' hemotoxic properties to overpower the concoction and make it take on its effect. A bit of instability was, in other words, required for it to succeed.

Something, that to Jake's great relief, finally succeeded when he saw the mixture turn entirely red as well as the system notifications appearing.

\*You have successfully crafted [Hemotoxic Poison (Common)] – A new kind of creation has been made.  
Bonus experience earned\*

\*' DING!' Profession: [Prodigious Alchemist of the Malefic Viper] has reached level 49 - Stat points allocated, +5 free points\*