

Chapter 233: Third Wave

Event: Necromoon

Third wave:

A horde masses near Valaryth's rift.

Defend your territory.

Reward:

300 Sun points

When three rivals chosen by the System fought together, it was almost impossible to resist them without overwhelming force. The horde of the corrupted lacked such power.

A fireball struck a cluster of undead, turning them into torches before they crumbled to ash beneath their feet. Farther away, a massive Tier 2 creature that must have been a bear in its previous life was decapitated by a shadow blade. In the sky, projectiles of all kinds—feathers, pointed bones, rocks, quills and crimson orbs—collided, their trajectories altered, striking the ranks of the corrupted rather than the rivals. Misfortune hit the undead twice over, as they seemed to gather where the most destructive attacks rained down.

Without even communicating, the three Champions cooperated seamlessly. Partly due to their high vivacity and natural talent, and partly thanks to Esmée, they worked in concert to devastate the horde. Each knew their role, and none got in the way of the others.

Draped in blinding flames, Priam levitated high in the sky, drawing the attention of the corrupted. He was the most capable of defending himself, and the few enemies that reached him perished in Pyro's supernatural flames. None could approach within ten meters.

Behind him, right at the edge of the cenote, Esmée orchestrated the battlefield, writing furiously in her grimoire. She had abandoned her quill, using her Domain to apply magical ink directly to pages that turned on their own. Thanks to her, the horde's movements were clumsy, most of the necro soldiers stumbling as their leaders' attention was constantly diverted. The princess micromanaged the battlefield single-handedly.

True to her role, the assassin was invisible. Only the regular executions of powerful monsters confirmed her presence. Jasmine leaped from shadow to shadow, sweeping the battlefield for new targets. Out of the corner of his eye, Priam even spotted a few long-distance attacks; the young woman conjured shadow daggers before hurling them at unsuspecting foes.

Lvl Up: [Revelation Resilience] lvl 40

MEM +3

META (Affinity) +3

META (Authority) +3

Seeing the peculiar shape of the projectiles, Priam raised an eyebrow. Why was Jasmine sending daggers instead of just darts or blades? After all, she didn't need the handles to throw them, just her Shadow Concept to propel them. *Is it because of her Dagger Mastery?*

He could have used their connection to ask her, but Priam knew the best lessons were the ones you figured out yourself. Asking for help would slow his own progress when he reached Jasmine's level.

As a quill from a necro hedgehog intercepted a necro bird attacking him, Priam willed his flames to take the shape of a spear. The Pyro Concept condensed before shooting towards a necro Tier 1 over three hundred meters away.

Lvl Up: [Spear Throw] lvl 30
DEXT +3

Like a missile, the attack left a trail of flames in its wake before hitting its target a second later. The incandescent weapon pierced the creature's head precisely—an impossible feat for a fireball. The spear's shape was better suited for long-distance strikes, but more importantly, Spear Mastery and **[Spear Throw]** corrected his initial aim.

Creating two more spears, Priam launched them as far as he could. His fireballs started to destabilize after three hundred meters, but the spears maintained their shape up to seven hundred meters before exploding in a bright burst. *My willpower is consumed more slowly*, he noted.

When he launched a fireball, Priam infused it with his willpower. This resource condensed the Pyro Concept, ensuring the projectile's coherence. It forced the flames to maintain their shape until impact. Without it, a fireball would become unstable upon leaving the Domain—the connection between Priam and the attack severed—and explode instantly.

It was different for an ice spear, but flames, being a gas, lacked inherent shape and relied on Priam's willpower to keep one.

To create fireballs capable of traveling such distances, Priam would have to infuse them with a massive amount of willpower—a waste. Fire spears required fewer resources, and this discovery was potentially revolutionary. Mentally, he asked his add-on for a report.

[Projectile Speed Comparison:

Fireball: 158 m/s, precision: 10 cm at 100 m, willpower loss in flight: 18%/100 m

Pyro Spear: 320 m/s, precision: 4 cm at 100 m, willpower loss in flight: 7%/100 m

Beyond 50% willpower loss, the projectile's structure begins to collapse, leading to energy instability and premature explosion.

Conclusions:

- *The bonus from **[Spear Throw]** is carried with any type of spear.*
- *Spear Mastery increases the efficiency of willpower expenditure/structure resilience.*
- *A spear shape is superior in terms of aerodynamics.*

Recommendation: change the spear shape to optimize aerodynamics and reduce willpower loss.]

Wasting no time, Priam altered the shape of his projectiles and, following his scientific spirit, began a series of tests. Hundreds of munitions were fired, analyzed, and compared to increase his knowledge of ballistics.

Lvl Up: [Spear Throw] lvl 31
DEXT +3

Progress was swift: Spear Mastery helped by enhancing his natural talent for wielding the weapon and instinctively guiding him to the best shapes. Priam first revised the spearheads to be more streamlined, losing less energy due to air friction. Some physical calculations complemented the tests, and he decided to adopt multiple shapes depending on the situation.

At subsonic speed, the spearheads now resembled teardrops. This elliptical shape was effective for minimizing drag, allowing air to flow smoothly around the projectile. He had added a thin shaft at the back to maintain a spear form—necessary for activating **[Spear Throw]** and Spear Mastery.

Lvl Up: [Physics - Forces] lvl 2
VIVA +3

"Oh, it's been a while..." This skill was one of the first he acquired at the beginning of each Tutorial. He just needed to recall his classes and do some calculations to obtain these skills, boost his vivacity, and gain an edge over others. Priam sighed and activated **[Focus]** to push the memory aside.

Creating a dozen flaming spears, he aimed at enemies within five hundred meters. Lighting up the sky, the teardrop-shaped projectiles streaked forward before exploding on contact, causing mini-earthquakes. The new form reduced willpower loss from seven to five percent per hundred meters. The optimization was recognized by the System.

Lvl Up: [Spear Throw] lvl 32
DEXT +3

Priam frowned as he studied the scattered remains of the corpses. The teardrop shape was optimized for throwing a spear far, but the rounded nose of the ellipse didn't allow for good penetration. A spear exploding on contact was effective for bombarding weak enemies, not for taking out a boss.

Lvl Up: [Physics - Forces] lvl 3
VIVA +3

Priam sent another volley of spears and noticed another problem. The teardrop spear had little substance at the rear, causing the back to wobble when fired. This added inaccuracy became critical at a certain distance.

After a third and fourth volley, Priam concluded that the teardrop shape was good at short range and low speed. *Useful for creating an air-to-ground barrage, terrible for sniping a distant enemy.*

He needed other shapes.

Instead of starting from scratch, Priam drew inspiration from pre-Tutorial ballistics research. The military had created different shapes for different functions, and there was no need to reinvent the wheel.

He began by modeling hand-sized spears and shaped their tips like sniper bullets. To maintain a straight trajectory, he applied a spin—following the same principle used to stabilize a spinning top.

Their small size allowed Priam to create a hundred bullet-spears, and he began to fire. Within moments, he employed a stream of thought to make the ammunition and another to aim and shoot.

A few seconds later, Priam's laughter echoed across the battlefield. With his vivacity and Spear Mastery talent, he could churn out a hundred spears per second. He felt like a veritable machine gun, raining down thousands upon thousands on slow, weak undead.

Sun points accumulated as Priam adjusted some parameters. Temporarily abandoning Pyro, he focused on his Fire Concept to create ultra-economical ammunition. It seemed he could single-handedly defeat the horde.

However, no option was miraculous. A Tier 2 tougher than the others took two thousand bullets before falling, which sobered Priam. This economical use of willpower proved effective for direct impact damage but inconvenient in other scenarios.

Lvl Up: [Spear Throw] lvl 33

DEXT +3

Lvl Up: [Physics - Forces] lvl 4

VIVA +3

A distant mass of undead caught his attention, and Priam decided to eliminate them with an explosive AoE spear.

First, he copied the shape of a shell from memory. Tests were disappointing until he thought of removing the projectile's rotation. The gyroscopic effect increased pressure on the spear's structure, causing mid-flight explosions. Scientists had likely been aware of it for over a century, but despite his physics knowledge, Priam didn't know everything. However, with his high vivacity, Spear Mastery, and add-on, he could rediscover these truths quickly.

Lvl Up: [Physics - Forces] lvl 5

VIVA +3

The shell-spear streaked through the sky before crashing down like a meteor where the corrupted gathered. The explosion shook the battlefield, igniting a terrible blaze. Priam

nodded at the result. The attack required a large amount of flames—and thus willpower, a finite resource—but it was perfect for wiping out large groups of weak enemies.

Lvl Up: [Spear Throw] lvl 34
DEXT +3

Priam used his new attack until he spotted a boss near the forest. The Tier 2 Viscount observed the battle, occasionally hurling crimson orbs where Jasmine moved. The assassin wasn't in real danger, but a bit of bad luck could lead to disaster. *Not on my watch.*

The creature was massive and several kilometers away. To bring it down, he needed a special projectile. Could he succeed without using **[Kinetic Control]**?

There was only one way to find out. Priam closed his eyes and recalled his classes, his internet research, movies he'd seen, and books he'd read before settling on a kinetic energy penetrator-shaped spear. This tank ammunition was specialized for long-distance attacks and could penetrate vehicle armor.

Priam willed his flames into a long profile to reduce drag, then shaped a conical, sharp tip. Small feathers at the back of the shaft ensured a straight trajectory, and Priam instilled his willpower to solidify the flames. He looked at his target again and added his Spear Mastery into the spearhead.

Activating **[Homo Elysian Predation]**, Priam fired.

The small spear broke the sound barrier, covering two kilometers in four seconds before hitting the boss dead center. With its dormant instinct, the necro Tier 2 didn't even try to defend itself and perished as the projectile exploded inside its body.

Lvl Up: [Spear Throw] lvl 35
DEXT +3

Priam's fourth spear shape was such a success he was momentarily shocked by the result. He had just one-shot a Tier 2!

Of course, the creature was just a Viscount and had not resisted. On his side, the Champion had used Pyro, Spear Mastery, **[Spear Throw]**, and a perfectly suited projectile. Nonetheless, the result was astonishing. In a few months, could he assassinate Tier 3s without a problem?

This posed a more serious problem: if his progression was this fast, then stagnating was a deadly trap. Only a few weeks had passed since the Reunion, yet Priam knew he could massacre the version of himself that had just passed a quadruple Tribulation. *I could even face a hundred of them...*

It wasn't just due to the increase in his attributes, but primarily because of his new abilities. As a Pyro user, as a Mist Sage, and as a Spear Master, he had multiplied his firepower. *Combined with my resistances, my former self wouldn't stand a chance...*

The battle raged on beneath him, and Priam refocused. He still had Sun points to earn. Given the seemingly endless tide of the corrupted, he decided to conserve his mental endurance. This third wave wasn't about defeating a boss but enduring an endless onslaught.

The tests resumed, and Priam began modifying the spears' dimensions and composition. It was time to create hybrids with his ice.

Lvl Up: [Revelation Resilience] lvl 41

MEM +3

META (Affinity) +3

META (Authority) +3

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The forest of silk cocoons that had burned to ashes two weeks ago was now a wasteland. Tens of thousands of undead roamed it, stumbling over the craters that riddled the area. An explosion erupted nearby, kicking up a cloud of gray dust, and Esmée had to cover her face. The air was unbreathable.

Ignoring a severe headache, the princess manipulated the battlefield. When enemies were as numerous as blades of grass in a meadow, her powers shone. It was both exhilarating and grueling.

Every action of the necro soldiers and her rivals had to be detected, analyzed, and considered. These actions triggered a cascade of consequences that Esmée had to anticipate and manipulate.

That was where chaos manifested. Firing an attack caused the shooter to recoil. One backward step could topple him and trigger a domino effect. The launched projectile could collide with other airborne projectiles, altering their trajectories or momentarily obscuring an enemy's view. An unexpected gust of wind could deflect it, and in some cases, a poor weapon could even injure the shooter.

These and countless other variables were what Esmée had to account for. When she sowed chaos, she wrote the future as she pleased. But this Concept was, by definition, elusive, and a single detail could change everything. A quill she had placed on the trajectory of an attack meant for her collided with one of Priam's spears. The second projectile hurtled toward Esmée, and she had to trip an undead in front of her to tank it.

There are so many weak participants that I can fix most of my mistakes...

Every moment, Esmée altered probabilities, forced friendly fire among the corrupted ranks, diverted a boss's attention from Jasmine, or hindered an enemy's escape from one of Priam's spears.

Only the System knew the full extent of her influence on the battle, and she was justly rewarded for it.

While focused on the battle, she couldn't help but admire her rivals. The First—*Priam*, she corrected herself mentally—rained cataclysm after cataclysm down upon the horde. His fireballs had transformed into spears of all shapes and sizes. The attacks ignited blazes everywhere, ravaging corrupted who stood too close together.

Even the most distant necro soldiers weren't spared. In the smoke-covered sky, the trails of bright flames proved that his wrath fell upon the entire horde. He was as effective as Esmée, though more direct. He shared this trait with the Assassin.

Esmée's attention shifted to Jasmine. The young woman was a shadow. Even with her powers, the princess struggled to spot her—and she was sure the Assassin wasn't even trying to hide her position from her allies. *If I had that kind of power, my childhood would have been very different...*

Esmée crushed the useless thought and refocused on her rival. The word was well-chosen: the princess felt more competitive with the Assassin than with Priam. The young man was impressive in many ways, but he was different from them.

A few minutes earlier, Esmée had met Jasmine for the first time and had felt like she was seeing a reflection of herself. The Assassin's eyes were judgmental and focused on the nearest escape. Jasmine had suffered in her childhood—just like her.

Esmée had decided to take control of her life and break free from her chains. In a way, Jasmine had already succeeded. Yet, it only took one glance for the Princess to know that the Assassin also dreamed of the day she would topple her tormentors.

Of all the rivals, the two young women were the most alike.

These similarities sparked their competitive spirit. Esmée had always known she was superior to her half-sisters, but her pride prevented her from being hypocritical: she wasn't sure she was stronger than Jasmine. This feeling drove her to surpass herself, to prove she was the best!

Suddenly, Jasmine changed direction and charged a Tier 2 Earl. Esmée's eyes widened. The creature was a giant centipede as long as ten tree trunks lined up. Even though it was still weakened—the Necromoon had only recently dominated the skies—the creature was powerful enough to make a Tier 3 take it seriously.

Glancing at Priam, the princess saw him create an ice spear with an incandescent core and hurl it toward the horizon. He had no intention of intervening.

The necro Earl detected Jasmine and opened its mouth. A cloud as black as despair emerged, turning hundreds of corrupted into black ash.

When Esmée spotted Jasmine again, she was behind the centipede. Its shadow began to rise, enveloping the young woman like armor. The abomination seemed surprised to face its double and had no time to dodge a submission hold. The ground trembled as the two giants began grappling, coiled around each other.

Esmée hesitated to intervene before reconsidering. In Jasmine's place, she would have refused any help.

Turning her gaze back to the battlefield, Esmée gritted her teeth. Her rival might be capable of facing a boss, but the princess could devastate an ocean of undead.

We'll see who has the most Sun points at the end!

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Status:

PHYSICAL:

Strength 707

Constitution 1 105

Agility 614

Vitality 1 040

Perception 760

MENTAL:

Vivacity (D) 566 (+14)

Dexterity 640 (+18)

Memory 794 (+7)

Willpower 1 134

Charisma 661

META:

Meta-affinity 764 (+8)

Meta-focus 405

Meta-endurance 608

Meta-perception 342

Meta-chance 274

Meta-authority 195 (+6)

Potential: 13 495 (+20)

Tier 0

Sun points: 894 811 (+212 747)

[He Who Eludes Death] charge: PRIMED

[Tribulation]: Five Tribulations pending.

Future Tribulations delayed until:

Time: 157 days 8 hours 17 minutes 47 seconds.

Next thresholds: 12 attributes > 600 / 6 attributes > 900 / 1 attribute > 1 200