

CHAPTER 132: A SHORT REST

Raiko knelt, directing Chompers. The mimic spit out heaps of rubble, stacking them roughly into a crescent wall. The Ninja hefted the mimic on top of it, his many paws scurrying to get over the lip.

The hasty work wasn't quiet, but there was so much noise earlier from all the weapons and magic that it hardly compared.

The result was something of a fortification, but no ceiling and only one way out. It was better than resting out in the open, exposed on all sides. If anything came at them, either from above or the doorway, they'd notice.

Unless something snuck around the sides, but that's what the step was for, so one of their group could keep watch.

Sam settled down onto a pile of rubble with his back to the caved-in section of the undercroft and, since he needed to rest anyway to recover his HP, he decided to spend his bonus points.

He was far from the only person wounded, but he seemed to be the most severe. Worse, the Void wounds didn't show any sign of healing at any speed, unlike the rest of his wounds.

I'll have to soldier on, he thought, I don't want to be the one to slow us down. The survivors might not have much time remaining. Every hour we spend resting is another that they might not have.

Komachi curled up and kept close, purring to comfort the both of them. Sam took off his gauntlet and pet her soothingly.

Chompers trotted over and huddled up against Sam's side, panting. He didn't seem worried, but it was hard to tell, being a mimic and all.

“Everything is going into Vigor,” Raiko muttered.

“Like hell it is,” Sam told her, then realized that she probably wasn’t talking to him. “Sorry, thought you meant *my* bonus points.”

She arched a brow curiously, not appearing to take offense. “What would you rather I... Oh, I see.”

His HP had ballooned once again. It seemed like whenever his Legend increased, his HP and MP both shot up. While it didn’t seem to move when his Path went up, unless one of the Talent increases caused his Vigor to gain an extra point.

And he was beginning to suspect that it didn’t rise when he gained a Job level either, but it was hard to tell since he always gained Vigor with each level.

But every time, without fail, his HP and MP increased with every Legend level, far more than a couple of points in Vigor and Mind could ever account for.

I’m close to another major milestone, he thought, looking at his new max HP of 2,819. *I have enough points to push it to 3,000... but that would mean my MP would be even further behind.*

There was no telling if the Escha variants of his Void Arts would be different. He could feel that they would change in a fundamental way, but not so much that they were entirely different. The core functionality would remain, but the whole thing was odd.

A new part of his Path had opened up, and while he understood what it did *on paper* as it were, he struggled with understanding how it worked in practice. Almost as if he had been told something while half asleep and only remembered parts of it.

Sam chalked it up to having something to do with getting to Copper, or even opening up another avenue of his Path.

Putting 8 points into Vigor wasn't enough to hit 3,000, causing Sam to grumble in annoyance. It was always hard to tell just how much HP or MP he would get from his stats, so he always had to toss a couple of points in to see how close he was without going over.

It was like playing *The Price is Right* with stats and no prizes.

Another 2 points finally brought his HP up to 3,017. A total of 10 points spent and 17 remaining had him wondering if maybe he should put them into one of the stats his Path clearly favored.

As it was, Arcane and Insight now gained 2 Talents per level as opposed to a single point for Strength and Vigor. Then again, he also gained a Control Talent per level, and his Control was hilariously low compared to anything else, including his other magical stats.

It was the lowest stat he had overall at just 28 points. Far above what it used to be, but nothing to write home about.

Sam felt that affinities had a bigger role to play in being able to manage and manipulate his own mana. The stat was valuable, but it seemed like it was far more valuable if you didn't have the affinity.

Considering what Matt told him a while back, that affinities were exceedingly rare, he felt comfortable enough to leave it where it was right now.

Besides, with all the level ups, he was now under the one-third rule he had made and ultimately decided to throw away in favor of one-half HP as MP. Putting him even further from that goal.

I wonder if I'll ever be able to do it, he thought to himself.

Especially when every Job level gives me a heap of Vigor and no Mind. I'd have to spend every single bonus point on Mind and I still wouldn't be able to do it.

For every 2 bonus points Swordsman gave, it provided 6 Vigor points. Without further augmentation, his MP—or at least his Mind—would always be at *most* a third of his Vigor.

Fuck it. Sam used the remaining points on Mind, finally bringing it up to 1,012. A *teeny tiny* bit above a third of his HP.

It would have to do.

Yes, a voice said in the back of his mind that liked to complain, *but you're forgetting all of the equipment that you have. A cape that gives you 10% more MP, and a ring that gives you 5%. You really have even less MP than you thought.*

Sam ignored this on the grounds that it was a stupid intrusive thought that required him to take off some of the best pieces of equipment he currently had.

Though it would have been *really nice* if the manatuned cloak had come with him to fight the Void Scion. He could have used it.

Looking at his Status, Sam was immensely pleased at his HP and MP maximums. Although he was much less impressed with his *current* HP and MP.

Getting an entire rarity level in his Void mana affinity was a thing of beauty. It was now his highest affinity, as it should be.

He finally felt like he was starting to break out of the Common tier of strength.

[Status]

Name: Samuel Hunter

Race: Human

Legend: [Voidknight (Lv.15 - Unranked)]

Job: [Swordsman (Lv.24 - Copper)]

Path: [Void (Lv.22 - Copper)]

Profession: [N/A (Lv.0 - Unranked)]

Health(HP): [988/3,017]

Mana(MP): [47/1,012]

Attunements

[Void Mana] (F-Class Apocalypse Gate) (★★★★ Legendary V)

Affinities

[Fire Mana] (F-Class) (★ Common I)

[Metal Mana] (F-Class) (★ Common II)

[Void Mana] (F-Class) (★☆ Uncommon)

Physical Stats

Strength(STR): 207 (+22)

Dexterity(DEX): 81 (+8)

Agility(AGI): 94 (+3)

Vigor(VIG): 192 (+18)

Awareness(AWR): 38 (+18)

Magical Stats

Arcane(ARC): 42

Control(CTL): 28

Resonance(RSN): 32

Mind(MND): 80

Insight(INS): 56 (+17)

Was there another tier of Legendary rarity beyond tier V, or was he on the cusp of something more?

Sam was excited to find out.

Most of his abilities and skills were F-Class. He was beginning to understand that each of the Classes were a very wide band of power and moving from one to the other was a *monumental* increase in power, not to mention difficult to do.

Sam petted Komachi and tried to keep himself from frowning. He had taken *a lot* of damage, and it was slowly healing, but far slower than it should have.

Resting helped to recover HP faster than just idling about between one fight and the next, but the survivors had to be outnumbered and in dire need of help, right?

Sam couldn't imagine a bunch of professors holding out against their own defenses, much less the [Ridewords] that infested the undercroft.

And there was still the question of what killed those poor people up above in the storeroom. They looked like they were taken completely by surprise.

None of them were at the doors or trying to get out.

They had almost all fallen where they had been walking or sitting.

Sam looked up as Kai settled down nearby.

“We need supplies next time we venture beyond our Skyshard,” Kai spoke up.

“Even if we think the place is friendly,” Matt added.

“Yes, I’d like to be better prepared,” Raiko agreed. “However, we’ve done the best we could with what we have. Limited time, and limited resources. Ever since I recovered, I’ve been catching up on one thing or another.”

“This was supposed to be a *haven*,” Lenal whispered miserably. Kai squeezed her shoulder, and the elf seemed to find some comfort in it.

“There might yet be survivors,” Raiko tried to reassure her. “Don’t give up hope. But no matter what happens, you’re still here, Lenal. We’ll protect you.”

She nodded slowly, but glanced guiltily at Sam. Maybe she thought that he had nearly died protecting her and blamed herself.

That was sort of how it played out, but the Ranking up had nothing to do with trying to save somebody else.

That was all his Path’s doing.

“Professions aren’t meant for battle. There’s—” Sam began to say before he broke into a fit of coughing. Suppressing it, he gulped down some water offered by Raiko.

Lenal hugged her bony knees to her chest, looking down. “I... I have a Job. But it’s weak. Just First Order Mage. I lost my wand, so I can’t even cast anything.”

That surprised everyone.

“Woah,” Matt looked up. “Why don’t you take this, then? I don’t need it anymore.”

The elf took the old, beat-up wand gingerly. Her hands trembled. Silvery tears traced clean tracks down her dirty cheeks.

Komachi went over to the elf and comforted Lenal in her own cat way, brushing against her and purring.

Komachi even made a little thumbs up. Lenal returned a trembling smile.

Some food and water were passed around, mostly just vegetables, nothing too filling or even as nice as those roasted [Marrowgems] had been.

It was certainly better than nothing, though, and far tastier than those nasty rations had been.

“Something for camping, even in the middle of a Dungeon,” Kai continued, trying to come up with ideas. Sam was too tired to pitch in. “Rations, additional ways to recover health and mana. Light sources—”

“If we all have some variant of Dark Vision, it’s not as needed as you think,” Raiko said. “Has Shaman offered an ability, skill or even a spell that manages that?”

“You have Dark Vision?” Kai asked slowly, rubbing his stubble. “Is it the same as normal sight?”

“I.. I’m not sure what it is, but roughly that, yes.”

“There’s no color,” Matt explained, sifting through his Inventory. His face lit up when he found some of those poisonous spuds that the mandys had grown more of. “Mostly grey when there’s no light at all, and it’s more limited than you’d think.” He took a ravenous bite of one. “Still,” he said around a mouthful of poisonous food, “it’s way better than nothing.”

Lenal turned the wand over and over in her hands. “Thank you, Matt,” she whispered.

“No sweat. I used to be a Mage too.”

“Really? What kind?”

“Water, pretty lame, and ironically, I couldn’t use any water spells to cure my poison. I would have died if not for Sam and Raiko. Me and Kai both.”

“They seem to do that quite often,” Lenal said, staring at the wand. “I would have said it must be a thing of Incarnates, but I now believe it is merely who they are. Some people are simply heroes.”

“Woah now,” Sam said. “I don’t think you can be considered a hero if you come across somebody dying and refuse to walk away while whistling. Not being a terrible human being doesn’t mean you’re a hero, it just means you’re not an *asshole*.”

“On the other hand,” Matt said, wiping some foaming poison from his mouth with the back of his hand, “you can be an asshole *and* a hero at the same time.”

Multiple people grimaced at what Matt was eating.

“Oh, am I bothering you with my *poison eating*? Would you rather I go find—never mind.”

“Don’t,” Raiko warned him.

Fire blossomed on the end of Lenal’s wand, lighting up her awe-inspired features.

Sam looked a bit closer. Were the dancing shadows playing tricks or was there an unsettling gleam in her eyes?

Please don’t be a pyromaniac.