

~ Day 45 ~

-Status!-

| Status | | | | | |
|-------------|--------------------|------------|----|----------------------------|----|
| Information | | Attributes | | Traits, Titles, and Skills | |
| -Name- | "???" | STR | 15 | Skills | 23 |
| -Race- | Azde (Blood Fiend) | VIT | 40 | Traits | 7 |
| -Sex- | Male | AGI | 72 | Titles | 3 |
| -Rank- | E | DEX | 25 | Skillpoints | 24 |
| -Level- | 34/35 | INT | 25 | Resistances | |
| Health | 161/161 | CHR | 8 | Physical Resistance | 15 |
| Stamina | 85/85 | WILL | 32 | Magical Resistance | 13 |
| Mana | 43/43 | MAG | 48 | Mental Resistance | 12 |

Usually, I would've been filled with glee at the prospect that my next evolution was just around the corner, but my current circumstances caused me some worry about the consequences that I might incur in doing so. I had already taken a risk and lied to the Mistress that I had already evolved twice.

She had no real use for me with me already having evolved twice, only now that I have shown my physical combat capabilities should begin to enter her eyes, which unfortunately also meant her attention. But I suspected that if I simply died she would dissect me and inspect the core, so that was probably why she almost condemned me to death by uncaringly threw me to die in the Mauling as fodder.

But I had originally wondered why she hadn't just already cut me open and taken my core, but there was probably a lot I didn't know about cores and magic that hindered her in doing so.

First of all, I already knew that meddling with cores that you have low compatibility towards was not that great of an idea, or at least for a crimson core unless you actually wanted to turn your body into a desiccated husk that is. Also, the fact that my core is something that has already 'assimilated' with me, I'm not sure that it would even be possible to refurbish it and pass it along to another host.

It might just as well have become completely fused with my body, making it impossible to fuse with another. But other than that, I lied about having only evolved twice because it would be wholly unwise to divulge something as outrageous as **Limit Breaker** to that insane woman.

While she had mentioned the possibility of evolving three times, it was apparently more like something that would only happen in legends, and me suddenly evolving breaking her beliefs like that definitely wouldn't be the wisest of choices.

It would most likely bring a world of suspicion, attention, and wariness down upon me; something I definitely didn't want. I could also bet on me becoming stronger than her after evolving and making my escape, but that would probably be an even dumber choice, seeing as I have yet to even see her power rank or abilities.

Although I was only a level ten Azde when I had fought with Gurok, I had almost been slain by essentially a lowly servant of hers with only the help of her magic, and now that I mention magic, I'm also without any magic of my own since I have yet to make any headway in breaking down her seal on my core.

Just how strong would that monster of a woman be? Would I even stand a chance?

Mind kept going over various options and solutions to the problem as it had done for the last handful of days. I could try and cooperate with her, telling her about **Limit Breaker** and how I could help her attain greater heights, but I saw no way in hell that would turn out for the better.

From what I had gathered from meeting her, and hearing gossip and rumors about her, I had found out that she was an uncompromising and power-hungry maniac that took any insidious means to further her authority and power.

Would she ever allow me to become stronger than her? Would she even allow me to become shared, when she would undoubtedly would find out about Bob, Mia, and the tribe? If my hunch proved anywhere near reality, then she would rather slay and annihilate any that knew of my existence and keep me all for herself due to the prospects of reaching even greater glory and power.

I had never expected to be enslaved for this long, so evolving before I had somehow escaped hadn't even occurred as a possibility to me. It would mean shedding the disguise of weakness and insignificance that I had delicately put on over the time I've been enslaved might bring a calamity down on my head.

I had even tried to mask the true strength and skill that I've developed from the life and death battles to the best of my ability, though, it was still quite challenging when an all-consuming bloodthirsty was tearing down my mental defenses, but I managed. My growth rate was of course out of this world, so after continuously leveling and increasing my skills I had become a lot stronger than my competition over the many fights in the Arena.

I would've loved to intentionally lose some of the fights, not drawing attention to me and my rapid rate of growth, but that simply wasn't a possibility with all the fights have been life and death battles; only one allowed to leave the duel alive. I also couldn't decline from challenging the champion candidate seats, as it was either choose a seat and fight or be executed. So I essentially, I was running out of time...

I couldn't help but sigh at the futility of it all. For each day I spent in this world, everything seemed to want to restrain and kill me, desperately trying to halt my path to power. I also was a bit miffed about my progression speed as of late. My rate of growth had taken a major hit even though it was still a lot faster than any other monster. It wasn't necessarily because of the lack of freedom and strong targets, as there had been more than enough as of late, but because of the EXP threshold for each concurrent level continued to increase unceasingly.

I had calculated that just the last level from 33 to 34 had taken about 15000 EXP alone, and the threshold was still rising. Although my speed of growth was still mind-boggling compared to any other creature I knew of, this showed a deep inclination towards how much harder it would be in the later levels after my next evolution.

Although the slowed progression rate and the possible consequences of evolving gave me pause, I couldn't help but feel a pang of excitement at the prospects of entering my next evolution. This was due to the fact that I would be stepping into the 'fourth tier' if I evolved once more. No, this wasn't like the 'power ranks' but a different power structure of sorts.

These tiers are something I've recently become aware of by inquiring and eavesdropping. These tiers are by no means as accurate as the power ranks are in terms of specific power, but they give a general idea of where a certain monster stood in their potential and capabilities. Tiers were demarcated by the maximum levels of a monster's current evolution and the 1st tier starts at a maximum level of 10. Creatures that have a lower maximum level than ten are simply called 'untiered' such as when I only had a maximum level of 1/3 when I first came to this world.

Anyways, the tiers are, 1st-tier: 1/10, 2nd-tier: 1/20, 3rd-tier: 1/35, 4th-tier: 1/50. This would mean that I was put in the third tier currently. So a goblin is a 1st-tier monster, hobs are 2nd-tier, orcs 3rd-tier, and ogres 4th-tier as examples. But one of the reasons I was excited for the 4th-tier was that it usually meant a huge spike in power compared to the last tiers.

All the warlords in Maldrak were all tier-4 monsters, with the exception of one, Lord Medhin. This was due to him being a magic wielder, so he could easily contend with the other warlords with the pure might of his magic alone, allowing him to skip tiers. But the most exciting reason for reaching the 4th-tier was due to the effect it had on magic wielders.

From what I heard, the 4th-tier was where the magic potential was truly unlocked. Supposedly, I hadn't even taken a step on the path of magic yet with how little I had accomplished compared to magic wielders at the 4th-tier. I wasn't entirely sure what it would entail for my magical capabilities, but I was itching to find out.

What I wasn't itching to find out, however, was how advanced the Mistress was. This essentially also meant that the Mistress was a magic wielder at the 4th-tier, and who knows how long she has been that, and even how far along she is. There was barely any doubt in my mind that the Mistress was a lot more powerful compared to the other warlords, only having the rules of the city to impose her from completely just annihilating her competition.

Another probable deterrent to her visions of power and conquest was most likely due to the city's king, Maldrak. Yes, his name was the same as the city. Whoever ruled over the city

apparently had to adopt the moniker of 'Maldrak'. From what I had heard, he was an extremely powerful monster, although I've yet to see him, or actually any of the warlords other than the Mistress for that matter.

None of the warlords, or the king, had yet to show up and watch any of the matches. But that would soon change as they apparently only appeared once the champions fought. And seeing that there was only one fight for candidacy left for me before having to fight for the champion title, I would soon be thrown against even stronger monsters like Morgath...