

~ Day 66 ~

I read the prompt that invaded my vision with mixed emotions, but the soft caress of Mia's body pressed against mine was more than enough to alleviate them. It was no big surprise that **A Conqueror's Undying Will** had evolved after experiencing the encounter with... whatever that thing was, but what the hell did permanence mean?

Before I pulled the trait's description up, I realized something very odd. If this cosmic being truly had been that powerful and beyond the scope of my mortal comprehension, then did it really 'accidentally' forget what would happen when a mortal laid eyes upon its form? Or was it just some bad excuse to allow my mind and will to be refined even further?

(Sigh)

I couldn't dwell on it. While thankful that I seemingly had the support of such a being, I really didn't want a part in any cosmic schemes way beyond my pay-grade.

-A Sovereign's Undying Will!-

Trait

-A Sovereign's Undying Will-

A will born from defiance and the hunger to conquer. Refined through hardships, unwavering in the face of adversity, and undying against whoever wish to snuff it out. Reconstituted in the image of a celestial being, the will has achieved permanence and is eternal, inextinguishable, imperishable to anything terrestrial or adhering to the mortal coil.

The description was gaudy if nothing else. But unsurprisingly so, as no doubt, the things that my will had gone through the span of a very short time was truly was extraordinary for a single inconsequential individual like me. Like the other times my will had evolved, I felt a noticeable increase in the power and potency of my will and presence, however, I knew that wasn't what really had been improved with each evolution.

It wasn't power, but endurance. My will wasn't some heaven shaking tool I could use to decimate or overpower grossly more powerful individuals than myself as the Undaunted did, but instead, my will had become unshakeable. While entities like the Glade Guardian without a doubt could completely suppress my aura with its own, it had no hopes of actually harming me or snuffing it out anymore.

The flame that was my will manifested has become as inextinguishable as the sun for any mortal beings, and it even shocked me as I looked inwards to observe it. Radiating off it in waves, the feeling of something eternal and inexorable was almost suffocating. Withdrawing my senses, I shook my head self-deprecatingly.

I was very happy with the improvement, but the unnerving sensations I had felt during the encounter with the cosmic being still had my mind shell-shocked. Combing my hands through the silver-hair of Mia who had already fallen asleep in my embrace again, I allowed myself to relax. Her cute buttoned nose that twitched as she softly snored with the tender smile on her lips as her hair was stroked was a sight to behold; mending both soul and mind.

Moving on, I broached the next subject of the prompt. **Touch of Ya'naeth**. Undoubtedly, it was the cosmic monster, thing, or whatever. But what exactly was this being, Ya'naeth? It wouldn't be too much of a stretch to guess that it was one of those beings mentioned in the vision that The Paragon of Eldritch had me witness. But I really didn't have much more to go on after that.

Pulling up the trait description, it wasn't surprising there was no information available.

-Touch of Ya'naeth!-

<u>Trait</u>
-Touch of Ya'naeth-
< ??? >

The only things that clued me towards its usages were the odd energies escaping the fluorescent green ball inside my body and Ya'naeth's words. Now that I wasn't in the spirit realm, I could easily see that this ball of energy had no tangible presence in this world, however, it was still clearly visible under the inspection of my aura.

He said I would either find a use for it, or it could end up saving me at some point. However, I wasn't ready to throw myself in mortal peril to find out, so I could only leave it be. Next on the agenda was the actual reason for me being in the spirit realm. **The Paragon of Eldritch.**

There wasn't much information other than just that the effectiveness of both **Vitality** and **Magic Power** having been increased. Pulling up my status, I checked for any changes.

-Status!-

Status					
Information		Attributes		Traits, Titles, and Skills	
-Name-	"Xavier Tal'chor"	STR	28	Skills	25
-Race-	Strigoi (Blood Fiend)	VIT	122	Traits	8
-Sex-	Male	AGI	94	Titles	4
-Rank-	D	DEX	33	Skill Points	13
-Level-	8/50	INT	33	Resistances	
Health	1052/1052	CHR	35	Physical Resistance	24
Stamina	305/305	WILL	38 ⇒ 52	Magical Resistance	26
Mana	311/311	MAG	102	Mental Resistance	20 ⇒ 32

I could immediately see the changes having been brought by my evolved will, like the crazy resistance increase, but I was a bit disappointed when I didn't see any increases in my **Vitality** or **Magic Power**. But that only lasted a few seconds until I realized what had really happened. It didn't increase the base values by ten and five percent, but instead just increased how effective each stat point was.

This was easily seen by the generous bump to my health pool. With each point being worth more combined with how each successive point became more valuable, it was a massive boost to those two stats. However, I was a bit confused with the increases were 10% for **Vitality** and 5% for **Magic Power**. Why not equal?

After some thinking, I came to the conclusion that combination paths, while utilizing more than one attribute, still leaned towards one certain attribute. Like a main attribute and a secondary one. In this case, my main attribute was **Vitaliy** and coming after that was **Magic Power**.

While these increases in attribute efficiency were more than beneficial, I knew that was the least of the **Advancement Path** I've picked would bring me. The line about 'Path thresholds' told me that there was more in store for me. Since it said (1/3), it was reasonable to believe that it was referring to certain attribute thresholds such as the first one I reached when I hit a hundred in both **Vitaliy** and **Magic Power**.

Would reaching the next threshold give better efficiency increases, or maybe other things? It was also a question of what was considered the second threshold; two-hundred points? five-hundred? a thousand? I could only find out by growing in either power or knowledge.

Lastly, I had gained a new title.

-Paragon!-

<u>Title</u>
-Paragon-
The title held by a Paragon of a path.

This title kind of seemed like the title I had for being a **Sanctioned Lord** and a **Promethean Candidate**. It didn't provide any clear indications that it improved any of my abilities or strengths where titles like **Ruthless Assassin** or **Big Game Hunter** did, however, if it followed the trend, it would seem that it held some great importance or meaning.

What a paragon meant in this context, I couldn't be completely sure. It was just another thing I had to add to the ceaselessly growing pile of questions that I had about this world and its seemingly endless machinations.

I was about to get up, done with taking stock of the recent happenings, but then I remembered I had a bunch of skill points just laying around. Thirteen to be exact. Originally, I wanted to spend them on those long-awaited magic-related skills, however, I was gated behind the skill-list's cap.

Not only did I fear that I would possibly lose out on certain skills if I didn't make some space, but I was also itching to see what other marvels this **Synergize** skill could cook up. Over recent time, where I've gotten to go over my current barings, I've theory-crafted a lot of different possible skill fusions. Some had confusing compatibility with each other, but most didn't have any. However, with a repertoire of twenty-five skills to choose and combine as I wanted, there were quite a lot of combinations.

But during my little spree of seeing whatever could possibly work, and what couldn't, I stumbled upon a problem. While the exact level of the skills chosen didn't seem to have any impact on compatibility, only a slight effect on the price of the fusion, I didn't know what would happen when used **Synergize** on two skills of the same tier, but with different levels.

Would it all reset back to level one? Or would it find some middle ground? If not, I could be wasting quite a bit of valuable time by accidentally fusing one of my important skills and losing all its levels. One good example of this was with **Appraisal** and **Blood Profiling**, the two original skills I wanted to fuse.

Blood Profiling had long become a useless skill for me, and I quickly hit the maximum level on the tier-one skill. It had a very good compatibility rate with **Appraisal** at 97%, and it only cost a meager two skill points to fuse. However, **Appraisal** was currently a tier-three skill at level eleven.

If I were to fuse the skills, would it harm all the effort and time I put into **Appraisal**?

As such, I believed that I had to test it out before I risked such an important skill. And it wasn't like I could buy the skill back from the skill shop as I've already checked with both **Lesser Enhanced Exoskeleton/Skin** and **Lesser Enhanced Organs**, neither being up for purchase again after I fused their advanced versions.

The guinea pig skills I wanted to use for the test were **Greater Smell** and **Thermal Sight**. Both less than desirable skills that really didn't bring much to the table anymore. They were

both at the second-tier, and while **Greater Smell** was maxed out at ten, **Thermal Sight** had only reached level six.

Since it wasn't all that of a great loss if it turned out bad, I believed these suited my purposes quite well. In fact, they actually had a very good compatibility rate of 93% which surprised me. While it was approaching a pricey fusion cost, I trusted that it was worth checking out, so I decided to fuse them.

[Synergize]
[Compatibility rate - 93%]
[Cost - 5 skill points]
[Want to fuse?]
[Yes/No]

-Yes!-

[Synergize]
[Skills - **Greater Smell** and **Thermal Sight** have been fused into **Lesser Ambrosial Senses!**]
[Skill - **Ambrosial Senses** has been added to the skill list!]

The sudden vertigo that hit me as I read the prompt wasn't something I had been anticipating, but while the changes weren't too pronounced, it was still disorientating. After getting myself back to together, I stopped wasting time and pulled up the skill's description.

<u>Skill list</u>		
Name	Tier	LVL
-Lesser Ambrosial Senses- NEW	2	7/10

Your physical senses are attuned to the scent and sight of living beings.

The skill's description was more or less like what I was experiencing now. Before I had been able to see the heat presence of anything, not exactly like the thermal sight I knew from back home on earth worked, but instead being like an odor or traces of temperature that I could see with the naked eye. But that had now somehow combined with my sense of smell to very vividly distinguish anything living that was in the vicinity.

It was very hard to explain, but even without my aura sense, I could now distinguish the many hundreds of greenskins outside. Although it was nowhere near as precise as my aura sense, the sudden influx of information overflowed my unprepared mind. However, the actual effect of the skill wasn't really what I was concerned about, although it was pleasant to know they weren't a bad match, it was the result of my little test that really had my attention peaked.

To my delight, it seemed that **Synergize** in this regard worked like how I hoped it did. Instead of just fully resetting the skill's level, the accumulated experience between both skills had seemed to find a middle ground. Stroking Mia's head, I marveled at my new skill's effects.

Although with my enhanced smell sense even before the fusion, I knew that Mia smelled amazing. But with changes, she seemed almost divine to my senses. The pure vivacity and vitality she exuded combined with the potent mana within her core, it was almost like I could visibly see her life force, her essence. Deftly extracting myself from her lithe body, I donned some clothes and walked towards the door.

It was about time we set off.