

~ Day 81 ~

[LVL: 60 - Human "Lily Zephyrous" has been afflicted with the **Blood Plague!**]

Smiling as the voracious woman drank my blood, I closed the wound leaking my potent essence seeing as Lily had already gotten more than enough to infuse her with the highest quality of the **Blood Plague**.

She was obviously going to protest, but as her eyes glazed over, it was clear that she had suddenly gotten a prompt. But that fact actually rather confused me as no human before who has drunk my blood before had ever gotten a notification.

Was it different because of the circumstances? I wondered curiously, however, now wasn't the time to ask such questions. Lily was clearly invigorated by my potent and vigorous blood, but she needed some time to collect her personality before anything else. For a woman like her, divulging her past like that wasn't anything easy.

"Go rest," I said gently. "We'll speak tomorrow."

Not saying a word, she just nodded.

Turning to leave, she stopped and gave me a teary-eyed gaze right before jumping off the building's roof.

"Thank you." She whispered, disappearing from sight.

Laying down with my feet dangling off the edge of the roof, I stared into the beautiful azure sky dotted with the occasional fluffy white cloud.

Although I won't deny that I enjoy all the fighting and bloodshed, this is nice too.

"Tranquility and hardship, you won't be able to appreciate either without the other," I muttered to myself, content with where my life was going.

I still had an endless journey ahead of me, but for now, it was just perfect.

Getting down from the building, I made my way to the large tent that Mia and I had been using whenever camp was erected on our journey.

I was getting rather tired seeing as I had barely slept in the last two days, not also mentioning the fighting.

However, the moment I entered the tent, I suddenly discovered that maybe... I wasn't *all* that tired really...

Laying under the beast furs of our bedding, a naked Mia slept, her body only somewhat covered which just made the scene all that much more enticing.

Noticing the slight peeking of a closed eye, it was more than obvious whether this 'unfortunate' scene was intentional or not.

"Little nymph..." I muttered gaily as I began removing my pants.

Standing in an open and studded field adjacent to the settlement currently under repair and construction, I stood in front of a motley gathering of all the strongest individuals of my tribe. Mia, Bob, Rena, Grul, and so-on. I even had Darkan and Lily also gathered here, although he seemed rather confused as to why.

I couldn't say that Lily was an exact member of the tribe yet since I hadn't yet broached the subject with her, and also considering the fact that she was a human, not a monster.

But whether or not Lily was part of the tribe, it really didn't matter. Most just saw her as a slave of the master, however, that didn't mean that they looked down on her at all, in fact, being the master's personal slave was an even higher status than merely being a tribe member. So in their eyes, Lily was not one to cross; and that wasn't even considering her immense power.

Shaking my wandering thoughts from my head, I called out to everybody.

"I know you're confused why I called you all here, but worry not, I just wish to see your progress so far. So let's see how you all have improved during our arduous journey," I said to the suddenly brightening faces of everybody.

Pulling up their statuses with **Appraisal**, I started with Mia.

-Appraisal!-

Appraisal - Mia Tal'chor					
Information		Attributes		Traits. Titles. and Skills	
-Name-	"Mia Tal'chor"	STR	18	Skills	12
-Race-	Drow	VIT	30	Traits	7
-Sex-	Female	AGI	32	Titles	1
-Rank-	E	DEX	22	Resistances	
-Level-	28/35	INT	31		
Health	192/192	CHR	48	Physical Resistance	9

Stamina	68/68	WILL	15	Magical Resistance	16
Mana	36/36	MAG	65	Mental Resistance	5

I was immensely happy to see her rapid improvement, but even more so at the fact that she was quickly approaching her next evolution. But just as I was about to praise her for her hard work, I realized one startling difference in her status from the last time I had appraised it.

Her name...

"Uhhhh, Mia?" I asked, befuddlement clearly tinging my voice.

"Yes, Master?" She replied chipperly.

"Have you noticed that your name has changed?"

"Yes." She said, beaming happily although I now looked wholly non-plussed.

"But why haven't you told or mentioned it before?" I asked.

"Oh," She muttered, now confused. "I... thought you knew?"

"Huh... no, I didn't," I replied simply. "Do you know what it means?"

"No, not really..." She said hesitantly. "It was just there a few days before you returned, but through our mental connection, I could feel it was from you. To me... it feels like a symbol of bond - our family."

Now extremely curious, I shot a glance towards Lily who was staring listlessly off into the distance, clearly not having listened at all as she was caught up in her own thoughts.

"Lily?" I probed a bit worriedly since I thought she would've already been back to her old self from what happened yesterday. "You okay?"

Snapping out of her daze as my voice broke through to her, she returned an uncharacteristically cheerful smile back at me.

"What?" She said, somewhat frazzled. "Sorry, I think I was daydreaming..."

"No - no, it's okay," I said calmly. "I just wanted to ask if you knew anything about monster names and surnames."

"Surnames?" She muttered curiously. "I know a bit about monsters and how they get their names, however, I don't believe I've ever heard of a monster having a surname..."

Trailing off, her eyes widened. "Wait... do you have one?"

Not seeing any reason to hide this as Lily had already dipped her feet too deep in my relations to ever back out again, I nodded. "Indeed, I have; and surprisingly enough, so does Mia."

Curiosity flaring in her azure-blue eyes, Lily approached us.

"Well, surnames actually hold tangible power since the system recognizes families and bloodlines by it." She explained. "It's one of the things we're taught in Mordria that proves that humans are of the enlightened races whereas wild monsters typically don't even have a name to begin with."

"Really?" I muttered, pondering the implications of me having one.

Remembering back to when I originally got the name, the prompt said what I got wasn't just a 'name' but a **true** name'. *However, what did that even mean?*

Although I couldn't figure that out, it must have something to do with the fact that I as a monster have a surname, whereas none of the other monsters I've encountered so far doesn't have any.

But seeing as Mia had also gained my surname, it could only be because she's my wife - my bonded.

*Would that then mean that my future lineage would go by the name of 'Tal'chor'? Could that be what a **true** name' meant?* I pondered.

Curios, I did something I hadn't done for a long time; I asked the system.

-System, what does a **True Name** mean?-

[You lack the prerequisites for this knowlegde]

Grumbling to myself, I could only put it aside for now. The reason for me dropping the matter being that I needed more information about this world to figure out such things.

So, moving on, I pulled up Bob's status.

-Appraisal!-

Appraisal - Bob		
Information	Attributes	Traits. Titles. and Skills

-Name-	"Bob"	STR	53	Skills	10
-Race-	Draugr	VIT	62	Traits	5
-Sex-	Male	AGI	23	Titles	1
-Rank-	E+	DEX	27	Resistances	
-Level-	20/35	INT	12		
Health	268/268	CHR	6	Physical Resistance	14
Stamina	181/181	WILL	18	Magical Resistance	7
Mana	0/0	MAG	5	Mental Resistance	6
Sanguine Champion					

It was also good to see Bob shaping up to become quite the destructive force, and I told him so, awarding me with his characteristic goofy smile of elation. He is, and most likely will always be, a sucker for praise.

Moving on, we had Rena and Grul.

-Appraisal!-

Appraisal - Rena					
Information		Attributes		Traits. Titles. and Skills	
-Name-	"Rena"	STR	52	Skills	???
-Race-	Blood Orc	VIT	66	Traits	???
-Sex-	Female	AGI	42	Titles	???
-Rank-	D-	DEX	30	Resistances	
-Level-	5/50	INT	18		
Health	405/405	CHR	12	Physical Resistance	12
Stamina	208/208	WILL	19	Magical Resistance	6
Mana	0/0	MAG	9	Mental Resistance	5

Sanguine Warleader

Appraisal - Grul					
Information		Attributes		Traits, Titles, and Skills	
-Name-	"Grul"	STR	65	Skills	???
-Race-	Blood Orc	VIT	69	Traits	???
-Sex-	Male	AGI	36	Titles	???
-Rank-	D-	DEX	25	Resistances	
-Level-	4/50	INT	15		
Health	430/430	CHR	8	Physical Resistance	12
Stamina	240/240	WILL	19	Magical Resistance	6
Mana	0/0	MAG	9	Mental Resistance	5
Sanguine Warleader					

Because it hadn't been that long since they had evolved and that it was much harder to level as a 4th-tiered monster, it wasn't surprising that they had only acquired four or five levels. However, it was still clear that **Limit Breaker** was still working magic for them as even those meager gains were astronomical when considering the time frame.

Together with Bob, I had put them in the vanguard ever since having met with those Great Orc clan chiefs and embarked on our journey to this basin paradise. So it was safe to say that they had racked up a considerable amount of EXP by literally carving a path of slaughter through the wildlife all the way here.

That reminded me, I never did get to take the twins and all the other important figures of my tribe out to hunt and grow stronger. Making a mental note, I promised myself that it was something that I needed to get done soon.

With the twins done, I got to appraise the various other figures here and now felt like I finally had a good grasp on the tribe's overall strength.

However, I wasn't satisfied with just knowing that. Individual strength was another matter entirely from just numeric values, so that could only be witnessed first hand.

Grinning at the many faces looking curiously at me, I prepared for what came next.

It was time to see what the strength ranking of everybody was.