

Chapter 428 Routine Training?

Ilea didn't feel as benevolent about the Halian and Blade lurkers of the twelfth layer, slaughtering every last one of them she encountered.

Neither felt much like an animal to her, purely monsters. The Halian used illusions to lure her towards them. Distorted friends and memories they pried from the surface of her mind or simply something Ilea formed herself. She doubted the creatures could get much from her now that her Mind Resistance was in the third tier.

She didn't feel a mind magic presence from them as soon as she found her first enemy, confirming her second theory. No illusion resistance showed up sadly but the powerful corrosive substance from their bellies was enough to satisfy her.

The Blade Lurkers weren't interested in food, ignoring the chunks she threw their way and instead cutting into her armor.

Ilea killed them quickly.

The Fae helped her locate more of the Halian, making the layer much less annoying to traverse than before. She decided to fly through it as well, increasing her speed considerably compared to her previous walking.

She was quite a bit more aggressive this time around, trusting in her skills and newfound power as well as knowing the enemies and their abilities. The Blade Lurkers hadn't posed much of a threat before and the Halian were quickly taken care of thanks to her new increased mana pool.

A couple charged up uses of Absolute Destruction made them realize in record time that what they swallowed wasn't exactly lunch.

'ding' 'You have defeated [Halian – lvl 620]

...

'ding' 'You have defeated [Corrupted Halian – lvl 603]

'ding' 'You have defeated [Blade Lurker – lvl 522]

...

'ding' 'You have defeated [Blade Lurker – lvl 583]

'ding' 'The Azarinth Sentinel has reached lvl 346 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'Kin of Ash has reached lvl 346 – Five stat points awarded'

'ding' 'Absolute Destruction reaches 3rd lvl 22'

'ding' 'Blink reaches 3rd lvl 17'

'ding' 'Sentinel Sphere reaches 3rd lvl 9'

'ding' 'Sentinel Core reaches 3rd lvl 21'

'ding' 'Sentinel Huntress reaches 3rd lvl 2'
'ding' 'Azarinth Perception reaches 3rd lvl 6'
'ding' 'Azarinth Reversal reaches 3rd lvl 17'
'ding' 'True Ash creation reaches 3rd lvl 22'
'ding' 'Heart of Cinder reaches 3rd lvl 14'
'ding' 'Heart of Cinder reaches 3rd lvl 15'
'ding' 'Storm of Cinders reaches 3rd lvl 16'
'ding' 'Avatar of Ash reaches 3rd lvl 17'
'ding' 'Avatar of Ash reaches 3rd lvl 18'
'ding' 'Keeper of Ash reaches 3rd lvl 20'

'ding' 'Identify reaches lvl 11'
'ding' 'Monster Hunter reaches lvl 17'
'ding' 'Veteran reaches 2nd lvl 12'
'ding' 'Corrosion Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 16'
...
'ding' 'Corrosion Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 20'

Ilea sat down near the exit to the eleventh layer with a meal and a happy Fae. Both had enjoyed a rather extensive display of violence, corrosion and blood.

She had cleaned herself and was eating a meal, having lost track of time. She was somewhat sure it had been less than ten hours at least. Somewhat.

None of the creatures had responded to her new mind magic trick and her Monster Hunter skill had only enraged them more.

Ilea spent five stat points each into Dexterity and Intelligence. *Might as well get it up to my Strength standards. Now that Intelligence is the main damage dealer I might as well get some more speed and flexibility.*

Wisdom would become a priority again but the bonus from Meditation was so good she decided to shelve it for the time being, likely getting more practical use out of some other stats.

She checked if Corrosion Resistance was eligible for a third tier level up.

- Corrosion Resistance

You have literally bathed in acid, have chosen to slather yourself in corrosive substances instead of trying to avoid them. It is quite frankly, concerning. Your body has melted and regenerated so many times it might even be second nature by now. Should you wish to advance your Corrosion Resistance to the third tier, you may do so.

You're right, it is second nature, she thought and decided not to advance this one either. For now at least.

I have nine points though... Veteran, Monster Hunter as well as a bunch of others are way more interesting though.

Ilea didn't feel like hunting down any of the Stone Cyclops, instead finding a couple Spirits of Winter to continue her resistance training.

They obliged, the Fae surprisingly staying close to her as it seemed to work on its shield.

She wondered if it was benefiting as well, sitting down and enjoying the breeze. Her body froze up constantly, her Ice Resistance deactivated as well as her armor down to allow the lower leveled creatures to get in what they could.

The mysterious presence she had encountered the last time didn't show up and she soon reached the end of the second tier for her Ice Resistance.

'ding' 'Ice Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 11'

...

'ding' 'Ice Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 20'

'ding' 'Space Magic Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 2'

...

'ding' 'Space Magic Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 4'

There sadly was no option to get it to the third tier and her search for the presence proved futile.

She gave up after a couple sweeps of the layer, her enhanced eyes, Sentinel Huntress, the Fae as well as all her perception abilities unable to determine a being besides the Spirits, a bunch of rabbits and the Cyclopes.

I'll find something, she thought and instead focused on another potential third tier skill.

'ding' 'Poison Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 20'

- Poison Resistance

Perhaps it is only natural, for humans to eat and drink things that damage their bodies. When it is alcohol and chili for some, you choose the deadliest poisons carefully crafted and measured by top assassins and predators. Poisons that should kill you twice over. You do you.

"Nice," she murmured to herself, sitting near the exit to the tenth layer. "Poison resistance to the third tier, what do you think?"

The Fae was forming snow angels, pausing to give her a mental thumbs up.

'ding' 'Poison Resistance reaches 3rd lvl 1'

Poison Resistance – 3rd lvl 1

You are a target of assassins or not very good at distinguishing berries. Surviving either of those you have developed a general resistance to poisons.

2nd stage: Either you need better guards or you need to stop eating everything you see.

Experience has granted you an ability to sense poison. Additionally its spread throughout your body is slower, reducing its effects.

3rd stage: Your favorite drink and seasoning for every food, you revel in that which destroys you. No more. You may neutralize the effects of many poisons on touch, in a mug of ale, your body, or someone else's with the help of mana intrusion abilities, should you choose to do so.

Ilea tested it immediately, trying to neutralize the poison in one of the little flasks.

She knew instinctively that it failed, feeling that the poison was too strong for her current ability.
Great.

It was an ancient dungeon and she assumed most commonly used poisons were less potent. *Plus I know it's going to be quite effective for leveling.*

"It's pretty cool. I can neutralize poisons now," she said absentmindedly.

Great

Congratulations

"You sound sarcastic. Are you bored?" she asked.

The Fae sat up and looked at her before it nodded weakly.

The eleventh layer hadn't been very interesting admittedly.

Ilea smirked and jumped the creature, grabbing it before they rolled through the snow. "Well..." she started. "I've got something quite interesting for you in the layer ahead."

The corpses were still at the bottom of the tenth layer, much of the stone burnt up by the creature that inhabited these parts.

Excited

"Can you feel it?" she asked and cupped her mouth with both hands.

"Oy! Birdie!" Monster Hunter activated and sent the challenge reverberating out through the cliffs.

The lightning Elemental appeared near instantly, floating proud with outstretched wings. It looked at her with near white eyes but didn't attack immediately.

Ilea watched in amazement as the creature bowed to them.

"What?" she asked before a bolt of lightning zapped her.

Friend?, she sent to the being.

The Fae tapped her cheek as it shook its head.

It pointed at itself.

Friendly

"Ah, so it's friendly to you but not to me?" she asked.

The Fae nodded.

"Perfect, then watch and enjoy," she said with a smile and plucked the Fae from her shoulder, setting it in midair where it floated.

She turned to the Elemental and pointed at herself.

Lightning!

The being remained silent and looked at the Fae for a moment before it bowed.

Violence! The Fae exclaimed as more birds appeared, flying to join the main body.

“Alright, let’s see w-” Ilea started before she was blasted into the wall behind her.

A faint giggle came from the Fae as her body reformed, her armor regenerating.

Not one for talking, she thought and spread her wings, joining the Elemental in flight as she circled around it, dodging and weaving through the bolts and arcs of lightning magic.

Ilea found it much easier to avoid the attacks, her third tier wings doing the majority of the work, aided by her newly upgraded Eyes of Ash and all her other skills and defensive upgrades.

It only took a couple seconds to realize that the Elemental had been holding back. Massively.

Area spells and powerful surges that ripped through stone joined the already numerous arcs and bolts. It stayed at her tail, challenging her both in her flight abilities, dodging and defense.

Ilea used everything she had but didn’t fight back. The creature was already willing to kill her, she knew as much. The training was perfect but if she hit the Elemental, the benefit reluctantly given to her thanks to her Faen friend would vaporize instantly.

The longer they fought, the more this turned out to be the right decision. Despite the lack of four marks, Ilea questioned if the Trakorov could have won against this creature.

The Sand Elemental would prove difficult with its changing form but even having experienced that, she found the attacks of the Young Lightning Elemental to be close as deadly. The frequency of attacks was the main difference however, unending spells wearing down her mana, ash and regeneration even with all her newfound upgrades.

The two fell into a dance like trance as they flew through the layer, lighting exploding wherever they went.

Ilea caught glimpses of Fae from time to time, floating or teleporting behind as it twirled in joy, not adding its space magic to the mix. For once, she agreed that more damage wouldn’t be for the best.

Ten minutes or an hour, Ilea had no idea how much time had passed. She twirled in the air when a series of attacks forced her to blink, finding a beam of blue arcing lightning slamming into her torso when she appeared.

She was pushed back and slammed into a cliff side, rolling sideways before another arc slammed into her and then a third.

Ilea blinked again, appearing on the ground as she slid to a stop, her torso gone except for most of her bones, regenerating near instantly as the Fae appeared close by, followed by the Lightning Elemental.

Break? She asked, breathing hard as her mana regenerated at nearly forty six per second.

The Elemental floated casually, occasionally moving its wings as it kept its eyes on her.

Ilea breathed out and summoned a meal.

Impressive

Powerful

She sent the impressions to both of the creatures.

The Elemental didn't react.

Impressed, the Fae sent and pointed at the bird, sending a giggle into her mind a moment later.

A small bolt of lightning hit the ground near the Fae as the bird looked at it.

Danger? Ilea asked the Fae.

It waved her off and floated around.

"Don't attack the little guy," she said to the bird as she ate. Ilea was pretty sure she couldn't win against this one but she could deal some damage and if there was something a proud unchallenged Elemental was sure to dislike, it was taking damage. Or pain, if it could feel such a thing.

Ilea felt a little weird eating her food, basically having them wait for her weird human activity to end. She rummaged through her necklace and found something that might be of interest to them.

Her last mana crystal from the demon realm appeared in her hand before she held it out to the Fae.

The creature appeared and made the crystal float.

Gift?

Rare

"Sure, if you can do anything with it," she said and smiled.

The Fae twirled and split the crystal in two, sending a half towards the Elemental.

Ilea watched with interest as the massive creature landed and picked at the crystal like a normal sparrow would. She couldn't help but snicker, masking it with a fake cough when the Elemental glanced up at her with its immeasurable power brimming in its eyes.

She checked her progress while she ate.

'ding' 'Azarinth Awakening reaches 3rd lvl 24'

'ding' 'Blink reaches 3rd lvl 18'

'ding' 'Sentinel Sphere reaches 3rd lvl 10'

'ding' 'Azarinth Perception reaches 3rd lvl 7'

'ding' 'Armor of Ash reaches 3rd lvl 26'

'ding' 'Aspect of Ash reaches 3rd lvl 23'

'ding' 'Ashen Wings reaches 3rd lvl 8'

'ding' 'Ashen Wings reaches 3rd lvl 9'

'ding' 'Eyes of Ash reaches 3rd lvl 3'

'ding' 'Monster Hunter reaches lvl 18'

'ding' 'Veteran reaches 2nd lvl 13'

'ding' 'Lightning Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 15'

'ding' 'Lightning Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 16'

Insane what fighting an Elemental can do, she smiled. The comparatively low number of resistance levels was due to the skill being active during the whole battle. She had even tried to avoid the spells, many of them still finding their target.

The Elemental was getting impatient, having finished its meal. It was floating again, eyes facing her way.

Barely four minutes, she thought as she crouched. *Enough I guess.*

Commence, she sent. Ilea was pretty sure the creature didn't speak Elos or English. What she sent through these messages was the pure meaning, the concept of the word. In her mind it was the word *Commence* but she had no clue what the bird actually received. The same principle applied to the Fae.

It understood, continuing its attacks as it had before.

This time, Ilea floated in place, taking it all in as she continuously regenerated her body. She still kept her resistance and armor active, as she would have been reduced to nothing otherwise.

The bird didn't seem to mind, sending more and more deadly spells slamming into her body. The returned mana from both Sentinel Core and her Lightning Resistance wasn't sufficient to keep up completely with the constant third tier healing required to stay alive.

I'm sure it understands...

Boring, the Fae sent her and giggled into her mind.

She was pretty sure it meant the Elemental and not itself as it had never complained to her so far.

Ilea rolled her eyes and blinked away, starting to fly around again. The monster was deadly as it was, no reason to piss it off in addition to that.

I'll definitely be back for you, she thought. Ilea was happy about the progress and training as well as the somewhat safe cooperation but at the same time she was a little annoyed that she couldn't even fight a young Elemental toe to toe.

High level problems, she thought with a sigh and blinked away from an exploding area of lightning.

They continued for another two rounds before she finally got her resistance to level twenty.

'ding' 'Sentinel Reconstruction reaches 3rd lvl 26'

'ding' 'Blink reaches 3rd lvl 19'

'ding' 'Azarinth Perception reaches 3rd lvl 8'

'ding' 'Ashen Wings reaches 3rd lvl 10'

'ding' 'Eyes of Ash reaches 3rd lvl 4'

'ding' 'Veteran reaches 2nd lvl 14'

'ding' 'Lightning Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 17'

...

'ding' 'Lightning Resistance reaches 2nd lvl 20'

Ilea was sure that battling the Elemental was enough to get the skill to the third tier but still checked quickly.

- Lightning Resistance

Your need to electrocute yourself makes one think you should have probably chosen to become an electrician instead of going studying. Trades are a good option in today's economy after all. Well, here lightning works a little different and while it is certainly admirable that you try to challenge Elementals, you might want to give it another couple centuries. However you have more than proven your capability to advance Lightning Resistance to the third tier.

Hmm, might have actually been a good option. While there weren't massive student loans involved, the lack of income certainly would have been annoying, she thought, reminded of her life back on Earth. Simply the mention of a couple centuries was ridiculous compared to that.

I'll give it a couple years before I wipe the floor with this over sized light bulb.

She decided to level this one, knowing a couple beings next to the Elemental against whom it might be useful.

'ding' 'Lightning Resistance reaches 3rd lvl 1'

Lightning Resistance – 3rd lvl 1

Either in a storm or fighting a ferocious beast blessed by lightning you have resisted. This skill will help further with your endeavors.

2nd stage: You are so familiar with Lightning that your body can transform a fraction of the energy into Mana and Stamina.

3rd stage: The spread of lightning within your body is slowed down significantly and with sufficient practice, you may redirect a part of the power out once more.

“Interesting...,”

Lightning? she sent to the creature and felt the spell approach and spread through her, much slower this time, burning through as she healed against it.

It merely slowed it down but to Ilea the difference was like night and day. Third tier healing wasn't necessary anymore against the spell that had chunked her health down significantly before. The damage itself was similar of course but instead of a near instant hit, it came in the span of a little over half a second.

Doesn't really make a difference if it continues to hit me until I'm just a bunch of charged up fairy lights. Against enemies less ridiculous than the Elemental... fucking nice.