Chapter 12

Two days later I was less excited about alchemy. I had 7 failed attempts in substituting ingredients. The cave at least was looking pretty good. I had passed level 13 on the excavate skill and gotten a base increasing it from 3 cubic meters to 4.6! That was over a threefold volume increase! The other option had been cool that I didn’t select. It actually allowed me to make the excavated material appear nearby but I already had summon stone. Leo had visited with Cael and dropped off the tarp I had ordered, how big was his dimensional space? Unfortunately analyze skill only worked on objects and not people so I couldn’t find Leo’s level. When I told Leo of my problem he said the ingredients needed to synergize in the final step when I added my Aether to the potion. He didn’t understand it completely and said I should talk to Silia. So the next day after draining my Aether with excavate, clearing the dungeon I went to see her.

Silia was happy to see me and the grandmotherly figure abnomished me for not visiting more option. I apologized then told her of my problems with trying to alter the alchemy recipes. She listened then went into a very detailed explanation of ingredient synergy which I understood a little because of my alchemy skill. She had been on this planet for over twenty years and only had 7 alchemy recipes that worked with local ingredients, granted alchemy was mostly a hobby for her. The best way to get a new recipe was to get it from a planet’s dungeon. That way you knew the ingredients were local. I asked her about her other recipes she hadn’t shared with me. Three required level 23 in alchemy and the other two were cure illness and an aphrodisiac, it increased libido and fertility, mostly used on farm animals she said winking her eyes at me. She said the best thing I could do was keep experimenting, most lower tier potions had 2-4 ingredients and water. This planet had been occupied for over ten thousand years so recipes would be bought in the library in Sand Bastion or from a scroll salesman. She suggested I look there when I visited. I also remembered about the aether water and gave her some of the Aether water but Leo was already bringing her a regular supply. I visited a few of the farmers I had helped, catching up, cast a few summon stone spells here and there to help and went back to my bat cave at dusk and was attacked.

A massive bat specimen, probably unhappy I had evicted his friends, dive bombed me when I entered the cave. Fortunately my danger sense was active but I had my shield forward thinking it was a cat. The attack knocked me down and I got my arm up as the bat bit into it. I struggled for a bit getting my handgun out and three shots later it was dead. So I wasn’t sure why I emptied the entire charge into it. My arm was bleeding and I checked my status before drinking a minor health potion. Danger sense was quiet so I wasn’t worried at the moment.

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| **POOLS** | **Total** | **Regen/Min** |
| **Health** | 534/620 | 1.14 |
| **Stamina** | 409/430 | 1.22 |
| **Aether** | 1801/1896 | 4.89 |
| **Psion** | 148 | 0.31 |

Even with my light armor space suit the bat had done a number on me. I drank a potion, cast heal and clean clothes to restore the suit a few times. I went to my tent and lay down exhausted mentally from the short combat. I needed more health and better protection. This was a ‘safe’ world and a frigging bat almost killed me. I decided to distract myself with alchemy, the cave was ready for the ship and I wasn’t in a rush to head back outside the tent. Ok lets try combinations with four ingredients like Silia said. On my seventh attempt I got a success!

*Lessor Health Potion*

*Effect: Instantly heals 304 health, removes bleeding effects, heals 4 health per second for 10 seconds*

*Cooldown: 40 seconds*

*Shelf Life: 160 days*

*Ingredients: Leaf of White Lilly, Yellow Potato Root, Black and Gold Truffle, Sap of Silver Oak, Lessor Aether Water*

*Volume: 129 ml, white opaque with silver specks*

*Notes: Brewed by Oliver, this lessor health potion has an earthy after taste*

Damn that was a great result. 330 instant heal! I also got a message from the system.

*You are the first to utilize these ingredients into a new potion. 5000 experience, +5 intellect, +5 Aether, +1 Alchemy Skill; Title: Alchemist I give +10% to potion effectiveness (create 7 unique potions to reach Alchemist II)*

*You have reached level 7. You can now select a class specialization.*

It took me reading it twice to digest it. I brought out the SYSTEM pad to look up the alchemist title. Apparently it was a title that was hard to get on most worlds since most ingredient combinations would have been tried or a recipe generated by a dungeon. My recipe had a very rare ingredient in the black and gold truffle. I had found it by chance while digging up another plants roots and only had enough to make 4 more potions. The SYSTEM suggested those pursuing the title should try a virgin world with previously unused ingredients. Well it was a good title to have equipped when doing alchemy. With the title active and using the special skill enhancement potions I made four more lessor health potions for my personal use. They went into my time temporal space so they wouldn’t lose their efficacy.

*4 x Lessor Health Potion, instantly heals 340 health, removes bleeding effect, heals 5 health per second for 10 seconds*

I burned some Aether in the cave casting excavate before settling down on the bed in the tent to work on my new level up.

Both bonus stat points went into intellect. Then I reviewed my possible specializations.

I had a list of more than 60. From what I learned from the group and Cael specializations were made available by having a certain combination of skills at level 7. I had 16 such skills. The path I wanted was listed there.

*Space ‘Transit’ Mage (requires Spellcraft 7, Teleport Magic 7, Time Magic 7, Space Magic 7, Force Magic 7)*

I looked at some of my other options: Spell Blade, Stone Mage, Alchemist, Temporal Mage, Botanist, Earth Mage. I didn’t dwell on it too long. Leo had set me up for this path and I selected space transit mage.

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| Mage Class, Space ‘Transit’ Mage Specialization |
| **Benefits** |
| *+50% Aether Channeling* |
| *+3 Aether even levels* |
| *+2 Channeling, +1 Intellect odd levels* |
| *Can Learn 1 spell per 5 Intellect* |
| *Gain 2 Spell Points per level* |
| *Gain 2 Stat points per level* |
| *Can learn 14 skills plus 1 per 5 levels* |
| *Gain 2 Skill points per level* |
| *+100 Aether Pool per level* |
| *Start with 2 Free Magic Skills (does not count toward total)* |
| *Spellcraft (Channeling)* |
| *Magic Sphere of Choice (Aether)* |
| *Starts with one free spell of choice from chosen magic sphere* |
| *(does not count toward total spells)* |
| *Can designate 2 primary skills, one must be Teleport Magic* |
| *Can designate 3 secondary skills* |
| *+1 new cantrip spell at prime levels* |

I went back and compared the mage class with the specialization to identify the differences. My channeling bonus had increased from 20% to 50%. I was now getting more bonus stats every level. Unfortunately the bonus just started being applied at level 7 and wasn’t retroactive to the prior 6 levels. The +100 aether per level was new and added 700 to my pool! And I gained a new primary skill slot and secondary skill slot! The primary was locked on teleport magic but I was ok with that. For the other secondary skill I selected Force Magic. The upgrade wasn’t earth shattering but it was definitely a boost. I feel asleep looking over my sheets.

In the morning while I was expanding the cavern Cael showed up with Red and Vlad. Moving day was tomorrow and Cael wanted to run the new dungeon with us today. It was a 20 mile ride and the guys were not looking forward to it after just spending three hours on their bikes getting here. My bike was akin to a motorcycle with a big seat while theirs were small bicycle seats and could only reach 30 kph, about a third as fast as mine. I handed out some skill enhancement and health potions to the guys and Cael was super happy. Vlad and Red said I was a great friend. While we were traveling I got Red to practice his psionics on me. He shredded me. He had a stun, illusion and blind attack. Getting through my defenses was somewhat easy for him now. I was just happy to finally be able to level some psionic skills.

The dungeon was just a hole in an earth mound covered by vegetation. I pulled my sword and entered with the guys. The dungeon was easy. It was a maze with long hallways with traps and large square rooms with monsters. Cael did a great job spotting traps. If I had come by myself I could just use my flight spell. During the dungeon trek I only used my sword and haste spell outperforming Vlad for a few brief moments, the highlight of my dungeon trek. My share of the loot was 79 copper coins and a scroll that could either teach the skill Intimidation or give +1 to the skill if you already had it. It required an open skill slot so it was useless. I also got to carry the monster parts loot for the entire group.

We drank some beers and then headed back to the farm. I then headed to the ship with Leo to move the ship. While Leo was getting the ship ready I decided to go through the ashes of the orcs. I found two toe rings.

*Braided Gold Toe Ring, +3 Navigation Skill, +10 Intellect*

*Steel Toe Ring, +12 Speed, +15 Agility, +3 Stamina*

I deactivated my duster and put on the steel toe ring and activated it as it shored up some of my stat weaknesses. It was curious how many artifacts I had that increased the navigation skill. I guessed the ships navigator had not been overly proficient. I went to the ship and asked Leo about the navigation skill. Leo said it was a hard skill to raise navigation and failure could put a ship inside a sun, planet or debris. Leo tapped the wall of my ship, he explained I had a mass exchange system in the Aether matrix. It basically exchanged with the space I was warping to. Generally the exchange was minimal in open space but if it was a planet it could greatly increase the mass and Aether cost for the spell. If the Aether wasn’t available to pay the cost the space mage would have backlash. Also you couldn’t warp into another ships matrix so you would automatically get the backlash. Most space stations had similar magitech to prevent ships from warping inside them. Leo said a navigator would be up to 3 kilometers off target on any warp over a lightyear. The navigator really needed a skill 43 and over for great accuracy.

Leo cast his cloak over the ship. He said his personal Aether pool could hold it for 20 minutes. He flew the ship over to the bat cave in under 10 minutes using a vid screen that was still active. He flipped the ship to remove my stone shell and the artificial gravity made it so we didn’t notice.

In the cave the ship was backed in and the bow was over 10 meters from the mouth. We both got out and walked around the ship. The underside of the bow was definitely crunched. A lot of sensors were missing, sheared off. Leo said I should purchase new ones instead of trying to locate them near the crash site as I had thought to do. Leo stayed for a while and hovered the ship while a summoned 6 even spaced stone cradles to put the ship in. This ship had no landing gear and was not designed to fly in atmosphere so I would be regulated to the ship movement spell in atmosphere. I had Leo help me with the tarp to cover the entrance to the cave. I summoned stone to anchor it. Leo cast a spell to change the color of the tarp to match the surrounding rock. It was a tier 10 air and order spell so I couldn’t learn it. Mass Illusion was the spell and it would last 45 days. If needed he would return to recast it. Leo left me to it.