

## Chapter 90: The blood of your enemies shall water your Heart

Promesse landed in his hand, and Priam turned to the male mantis.

### **[Identification]**

*[Blade Legion Locust - Tribulation touched] - A Tribulation-touched Blade Legion Locust. The fusion of a multitude of Blade hydra locusts. Extremely fast and merciless, its sole aim is to kill you.*

*[Tribulation Hunter - Unique - Epic] - A locust possessing a concept fragment - Vengeance.*

*The final phase of vengeance has begun. Its power grows as its destruction approaches. To be eliminated as soon as possible.*

*Warning: His desire for vengeance transcends death.*

*Weakness: only vengeance keeps him alive.*

*Time remaining: 0h 29 min 48 seconds.*

*It won't split anymore.* Without missing a beat, Priam focused on **[Spear Strike]**. Splitting the air, the spear penetrated the frozen insect's head. As the female mantis rapidly approached, Priam frowned. **[Kinetic Control]** was still absorbing kinetic energy, proof that the mantis was still trying to move. Destroying its brain wasn't quelling its desire for vengeance.

*I have to attack the concept or destroy its entire body...*

His skill set did not allow Priam to destroy the mantis. All that remained was to target the concept. To do this, Priam had two options: use another concept or a Supremacy. Gathering his Domain, Priam mentally detected a burning flame inside the monster. The image of the vengeance concept.

Gathering his will, Priam dominated the flame with his sphere of authority. Once the fire had subsided, he materialized his own concept inside the monster. His mist surrounded the frozen flame and began to suffocate it.

"SCREEEEEEEEEE!"

A high-pitched noise arose, a sign of the second mantis' anger. Pressed by time, Priam enveloped the flame in his mist and pulled. The blaze didn't move a muscle. A Tribulation concept couldn't be stolen.

An explosion resounded in the dome. The real boss had just hit the ground. Howling with anger, it dashed toward Priam. He kept his eyes closed. It was time to end it all. The System had long tested his patience, but it was over.

"I'm going to win," he declared. His willpower contracted once more, and two skills were awakened.

*Lvl up: [Tribulation Hunter - Unique] lvl 2*

*META (Chance) +9*

*Lvl up: [Consequence Resistance] lvl 9*

CHAR +3  
META (Chance) +6

The flame trembled, secured by a chain of mist, and began to move. Unknowingly, Priam had achieved the impossible. Gradually leaving the mantis' body, the fire metaphorically approached Priam. [Mirror of the Soul] opened, ready to accept the offering.

It was the moment the second boss chose to arrive. The mist informed Priam of the boss's position, speed and characteristics. Fifty tons of angry mantis were rushing to meet Priam. The clash promised to be as violent as an accident between two trucks at full speed on the freeway.

Priam didn't deign to turn around. His kinetic energy reserves were filled almost to the brim, having absorbed the kinetic energy of the ice spear, freezing it in the process. *Wanting to confront me with brute force? Dumb idea.*

**[Focus]**. Dividing his attention, Priam positioned Promesse behind him, then let go. **[Kinetic Control]**. The spear remained frozen in the air. His bound weapon was connected to his kinetic reserves. Trying to make it move was tantamount to depleting his resources. In other words, transferring one joule of energy to the hoplite spear would not make it move, but would cause Priam's reserves to lose one joule of kinetic energy.

With part of his mind still drawing the fragment of vengeance to him, Priam waited for the mantis to attack. The latter didn't delay.

One of the creature's raptorial legs slammed into his spear with cataclysmic force. Priam gritted his teeth as he felt Promesse twitch slightly and his meridians protest. **[Kinetic Control]** had failed to absorb the full blow. Reforged and tempered by the flames of a Phoenix, his weapon had nevertheless managed to block the rest of the impact without breaking.

Angered, Priam turned around and touched the second mantis with his free hand. Instantly, he realized it would not be possible to absorb the kinetic energy of both monsters simultaneously. His meridians would melt first, and **[Kinetic Control]** wasn't high level enough. *For the time being.*

Deciding to avenge his spear, Priam wasted no time.

With a deliberately disdainful hand movement, he slapped the mantis's leg. **[Kinetic Control]**. Priam sacrificed a third of his kinetic energy. The next instant, the world shook.

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Guandi was watching the fight from a window in the Colosseum. The Lord of New Earth was currently immobilizing a Viscount-level monster.

Behind him, the equivalent of a high-level Viscount was rushing towards its prey. A fifty-ton insect - hard to imagine a worse abomination - shook the square with every step. Preternaturally fast, the mantis reached Priam Azura and brought down one of its front legs. Guandi braced himself for the shock that never came.



The mantis seemed to be getting angry, and Priam winced. He'd thrown it into an empty neighborhood, but the monster was too powerful. Any attack on its part risked causing collateral damage. The death toll was heavy enough as it was. *I'll check on the wyvern later.*

Spear in hand, Priam began to run. Behind him, a piece of the iceberg - his spear - broke away, collapsing before the Colosseum. The ground shook beneath his feet as Priam concentrated on the mantis boss.

Leaping onto the roof of a building, Priam used his movement skills to slalom between the chimneys. Five seconds later, he took off. Three strides brought him to the edge of a building and he didn't stop. The void beneath his feet was soon replaced by the mantis' body.

Promesse severed one of the creature's raptorial legs, and Priam landed on its head. Taking advantage of the monster's wounds and difficulties, Priam quickly looked for a weak point in its exoskeleton. *There!* He raised his spear high and brought it down. Penetrating the fissure with ease, the weapon turned the insect's brain to mush. Instantly, his mist seeped into the creature, invoked at Promesse's tip.

Priam closed his eyes, spotting the flame of vengeance. Or rather, the blazing inferno. The Tribulation seemed to hate him with an intensity that made him physically recoil. His instincts kicked in, and Priam swallowed. He remembered his skill's warning.

*Warning: His desire for vengeance transcends death.*

Sensing a possible nasty surprise, Priam reconnected to the boss's conceptual space. His mist wrapped around the flame, and he tried to draw it to him. The rebel fire gained in intensity, dissipating his mist. **[Tribulation Hunter - Unique]** trembled, trying to overcome the difficulty - without success.

Priam then decided to connect to his Potential. Opening the gates, divine inspiration invaded him, and he tried again. The flame stood firm.

*POT -5*

Continuing to summon his mist, Priam tried to draw the concept's fragment. Unfortunately, its intensity only increased.

*POT -20*

Gritting his teeth, Priam unclenched **[Moon Mist]**. Increasing the amount of mist could only help.

*POT -30*

Time passed, and despite his efforts, the inferno continued to dissipate its mist. Worse, vengeance was gaining momentum, fighting successfully against the object of its hatred.

In the distance, a gigantic crack appeared in the ice spear. Inspired by his Potential, Priam had an insane idea. Withdrawing Promesse from the mantis corpse, he aimed for the ice spear. His ice.

**[Spear Throw]**. Without looking at the result of his throw, Priam plunged his arm into the mantis' wound. With his fingertips, he summoned **[Moon Mist]** again. Two seconds later, Promesse hit the ice spear. His proxy was in place.

Completely opening up to his Potential, Priam regained control over his ice and dispersed it. Or rather, Promesse sucked it up. The giant spear that had dominated the dome for the last twenty hours disappeared in seconds. Passing through the link between Priam and his bound weapon, the ice materialized at Priam's fingertips. The boss's body exploded.

*POT -40*

An iceberg had appeared in the mantis's conceptual space. The heat of vengeance evaporated the solid water. An immense quantity of mist now surrounded the glowing inferno. Priam pulled with all his will. Aided by his mist, his action finally had an effect. The raging fire advanced towards [Mirror of the Soul].

*Lvl up: [Tribulation Hunter - Unique] lvl 3  
META (Chance) +9*

*POT -60*

Priam continued to pull as pain appeared in the corner of his consciousness. His instincts were stirring, but the Earl had a goal. **[Focus]**.

*POT -100*

Finally, the fragment of concept vengeance disappeared, sucked up by [Mirror of the Soul]. A notification sounded.

***Tribulation: The Locust Plague is vanquished!**  
Complete your other Tribulations to earn your score and rewards.*

*Lvl Up: [Focus] lvl 23,24,25  
PERC +3  
VIVA +3  
DEXT +3*

*Finally.* Relaxing **[Focus]**, Priam winced. An abominable headache was ripping through his skull. It was as if part of his soul had been amputated. Holding his head with one hand, he turned around.

Two hundred meters away, on the roof of a half-destroyed hotel, the wyvern was watching him. Its appearance had changed again. Almost twenty-five meters long, its solar color was

now streaked with a metallic red. Somehow, the semi-dragon had ingested a fragment of concept metal and other things... [Mirror of the Soul] vibrated.

The wyvern's eyes looked at him with an air of Tribulation-forced hatred but also of... familiarity. Suddenly, Priam's eyes widened. *Promesse!*

"You... you devoured my spear?" he stammered. For several days, the weapon had become a companion for him. An instinct was developing inside, the premise of consciousness. Quite naturally, Priam expected to spend the rest of his life accompanied by his spear. Promesse would become his faithful companion, helping him to slay gods and dragons alike.

Yet Pride's Shadow had devoured it, incorporating the Phoenix bloodline into the pitiful draconic excuse that lay before him.

[Mirror of the Soul] opened, and a vengeance spark ignited Priam's anger. A promise betrayed deserved that he avenges it.

Priam roared as his blood boiled.

Using Micro to draw on his reserves, Priam grabbed the severed raptorial leg of the deceased mantis and lifted it. The titanic mass left the ground as Priam's knuckles cracked. Turning on himself, he gained speed. Two turns, three turns... The wyvern roared back.

Priam released his makeshift weapon, not forgetting to incorporate a tenth of his kinetic reserves. His meridians burned once more, sabotaging the work of **[Healing Meridians]**. Priam didn't care. He wanted blood.

The wyvern tried to fly away, and Priam rode the mist twice in succession. Landing on the monster's back, he used **[Kinetic Control]** to immobilize the beast. The mantis's raptorial leg sank into the wyvern's chest, splattering the hotel with liters of blood. The wyvern screamed in pain.

Priam began to climb up the beast's spine. He needed to get close to the monster's head. He yearned to hurt it. The boss took to the air, the sun's rays already beginning to heal his wound. Gaining altitude, the creature roared as it felt the human continue to climb it. Deciding to get rid of the insect, it performed an aerobatic maneuver.

A slow roll to the right almost sent Priam staggering. Finding a hold between two scales, he clung on as he saw the ground coming closer. The wyvern suddenly stalled, and Priam knew he was in for a hard landing. The rest proved him right.

Vengeance and Micro increased his strength, allowing him to pass his hands between two scales. Taking advantage of his grip, he tore off a scale with his bare hands, bursting into wild laughter. The wyvern's red flesh throbbed. Vengeance altered his state of mind while increasing his physical strength tenfold. His body was falling apart, but Priam didn't care.

Closing his hand to mimic the tip of a spear, Priam continued to laugh as he brought his arm down into the bloody hole he'd just created. **[Spear Strike]**. His arm tore through the wyvern's tough flesh, drawing a scream from the monster.

Priam rummaged around inside the boss until he found a vertebra. Tightening his grip around it, he glanced underneath. Just in time, as the buildings were less than a meter away. The wyvern, belly to the sky, was preparing to scrape its back against the buildings. Priam latched onto the vertebra, causing another roar of pain. He summoned his Domain and programmed an automatic repulse.

**BOOM!**

The world shook with the violence of the shock. Shock waves ran through the wyvern, transmitting themselves to Priam. His arm clutching the giant lizard's spine threatened to snap. His meridians were bursting one after the other. His Domain was consuming his will and reserves to push the stone away from the buildings. Priam's vision was a kaleidoscope of colors. Ground, building, tree, house, fountain, ground, ground, ground.

The wyvern finally stopped, and Prim released his grip. His body was ruined. Some torn muscles refused to obey his commands, and his right arm was fractured in multiple places. One of the wyvern's scales had bitten deep into his leg, causing extensive hemorrhaging. Most of his meridians were useless.

**Lvl Up: [Erosion Resistance] lvl 25**  
**META (END) +3**

The wyvern turned, leaving Priam on the ground. Groaning, he struggled to his feet. The blood from his internal hemorrhaging threatened to choke him. A violent cough enabled him to spit vital liquid onto the ground.

The wyvern seemed to be in pretty bad shape too. One of its wings had been torn off and almost all the scales on its back were gone. Its gaze met Priam's and it groaned. The Tribulation was forcing it to fight a member of its family.

A sneer twisted the warrior's features.

"You dare? YOU DARE REGRET?!"

Conceptual vengeance had taken hold of him, and his anger fueled this flame. But vengeance had to be total.

[Mirror of the Soul] opened again, releasing the whole vengeance fragment. Priam's soul burst into flames. The furnace made him lose his mind, and Micro activated. Priam's last muscles activated, propelling him towards the boss.

The wyvern's body and eyes turned black and its scruples disappeared. Pride's Shadow was in control.

Boosted by **[Kinetic Control]**, Priam's body crashed into the mass of the wyvern. His hands turned a blazing red, different from the color of blood. Fists clenched, he began to pummel the wyvern's torso.

Roaring in anger, the boss attacked. Its right forepaw slammed into Priam before stopping dead in its tracks. **[Kinetic Control]** used the last meridians to protect him. Meanwhile, Priam's hands deformed the chest defense. Suddenly, he grabbed one of the scales and ripped it off. The wyvern screamed.

Gathering his breath, the ambient light flickered before heading for its throat. Priam continued to tear away the monster's scales. When its flesh was exposed, he had time to see its torso palpitate. The heart was right underneath.

The world lit up.

Briefly, all the dome's inhabitants closed their eyes. Only the most powerful human weapons were capable of unleashing an attack of such luminous intensity. The wyvern's breath was a light attack more terrifying than a megajoule laser.

A second later, the light shook, flickered, and then went out.

Priam, straddling the beast's skull, stared at his right arm in amazement. Using Vengeance and Micro freely, he had delivered a titanic punch to the boss. Micro had ripped through his muscles, from his shoulders to his forearms. Worse, the bones of his hand had embedded themselves in the wyvern's head.

*Lvl Up: **[Star Iron Body]** lvl 13  
CONST +3*

His phalanges were now implanted in the wyvern, and his hand was unrecognizable. Priam burst out laughing. If his death meant his opponent's, then his vengeance would be complete!

Stunned half to death, the wyvern was wobbling. Leaping to the ground, Priam used the ulna and radius - two forearm bones - to dig into the wyvern's flesh. His instinct was to reach the beast's heart. Smiling, Priam continued his butcher's work, feasting on his pain. He could have silenced it with Micro, but the pain increased his vengeful desire.

Finally, after digging into the wyvern, he reached its heart. Palpitating, the giant organ seemed to be calling to him.

**[Identification]**

*[Wyvern Heart - Tribulation touched] - A heart with a titanic amount of aether and vitality.*

**[Tribulation Hunter - Unique - Epic]**

*Detection of concept fragments:*

- Sun (Bronze)
- Shadow (Bronze)

*Detection of bloodlines:*



- Phoenix <1%
- Draconic <1%

Priam smiled as he brought his face closer. Opening his mouth wide, he took a bite. Naturally, his empty heart awoke.

*[Double Heart - Silver] detects an affinity.*

*Choose an affinity.*

*[Sun]*

*[Shadow]*

*[Phoenix]*

*[Draconic]*

**EVERYTHING!**

*Request denied. Insufficient potential to absorb several affinities.*

*Choose an affinity.*

Priam howled in rage.

\*

*Status: (Average value for a Homo sapiens male before integration: PHY 10 / MEN 10 / META 0)*

**PHYSICAL:**

*Strength 173*

*Constitution 347 (+4)*

*Agility 228*

*Vitality 339*

*Perception 426 (+4)*

**MENTAL:**

*Vivacity 201 (+3)*

*Dexterity 289 (+3)*

*Memory 50*

*Willpower 380*

*Charisma 219 (+3)*

**META:**

*Meta-affinity 216*

*Meta-focus 155*

*Meta-endurance 119 (+9)*

*Meta-perception 71*

*Meta-chance 165 (+15)*

*Potential: 1004 (-232)*

*Tier 0*

*[He Who Eludes Death] charge: PRIMED.*

*[Tribulation]: A **Tribulation** is coming.*

*Time: ???*

*Delayed.*