Chapter 24

Next stop was going to be Sand Bastion. Lydia sat in front, Carl drove and me and Celeste tested the bed. The increase in Carl’s speed from 480 kph to 600 kph was very noticeable. He even remarked on it.

I planned to sell the two health pool fortifier potions and get everything on Meranda’s list. I decided to change my disguise. I added the self illusion spell from a scroll I had been saving in my storage.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Self Illusion** | **1** |
| Magic Sphere | Air (tier 1) |
| Mana Cost | 100 + 10 aether/ minute |
| Range | Self |
| Effect | Changes appearance of face and clothes |
| Casting Time | 30 seconds |
| Duration | Sustained |
| Leveling Effect | Increases detail of illusion |
| Alters your appearance using illusion magic |

I changed my appearance to an old Morgan Freeman.

Since Carl looked different I could just leave Celeste and Lydia in Carl while I did business in town. We stopped by and ran the Dread Trent dungeon before heading to town. I got a shadow cloak and some junk loot to sell.

In Sand Bastion Carl drew attention. There were only about 50 hover vehicles in the entire city so any new one was noticed. Carl kept the windows dark and drove to an expensive goods shop I had not visited before.

Inside there were two middle aged owners. I started talking with them for a bit before bringing out one of the health fortifier potions. I told them I found it in a dungeon and was looking to sell it. They started by offering 50,000 credits I replied with 150,000. The back and forth brought us to 95,000 credits. I then brought out the second potion and got them to give me the same price. Apparently it was quite a valuable potion, more health more survivability. The city had 50 Ballen dungeon harvestor squads of 6 people each. The top 5 squads were quite rich and they had a number of people who would pay 100,000 to 120,000 for one of these potions. I didn’t really care much about the squads but I let them talk on. I learned the dungeon had a respawn rate of 6 hours and 25 levels. The top five teams worked levels 21-25. The remaining squads worked the rest of the levels. The squads also served as elite security in town in addition to about 1000 navy personnel and 500 civilian police force. The Ballen Empire typically had two corvettes stationed in orbit and six SPCs. I learned SPCs were corvette sized craft but didn’t have any FTL capability. They had a small space station in orbit as well. This entire system basically served as a training ground for naval graduates. I thanked them for the conversation and left.

I made three stops getting everything on Merandas list. I had 78,676 Ballen credits left. Celeste kept me updated on who was following Carl and me. I decided to swing by the quest giver and see if he had a new quest. He turned me down before since I had the notebook quest before. It was worth the trip.

*Quest: Kill the Centaur Maiden Overseer, Reward: 6,000 experience, 1 skill point*

Checking I found the dungeon on the pad in the mountain range where the bat cave was, about 200 km away. I accepted the quest.

My last stop in Sand Bastion was the scroll shop. Both Celeste and Lydia had two open skill slots. They gave me a wish list. Celeste wanted Water Magic, Nature Magic, Chaos Magic or Weapons Master. Lydia wanted Tracking, Gambling, Diplomacy or Etiquette to help with information gathering. In the shop I asked about those scrolls. Weapons master was a dual stat skill that gave the user familiarity with all weapons, they did not have it. Chaos magic was very rare as well and they didn’t have it. They had nature magic and water magic and both were pricy but I added them to the buy pile. I could teach Celeste create water but had not nature magic. I got the tier 1 scroll for growth. It helped a single plant grow quickly but needed the soil to have the available nutrients. They had all the scrolls Lydia wanted so I added all four to my pile. I looked in their potion recipe book for something that might strike my fancy. Stoneskin sounded good, it added armor to the skin for a duration, reducing physical damage by 20% for 30 minutes. Stamina recovery was also good as it could minimize our recovery time between battles, 200 stamina over 60 seconds. I added both to my pile and checked out. 56,000 credits was my total.

I got in Carl and we took off. I told Carl to head the aether pool dungeon. Celeste learned her new skills and spell, the scrolls crumbling. Lydia chose to learn tracking and gambling. Gambling, I learned, was an interesting skill. You could select either charisma or intellect as its associated stat. Lydia chose charisma.

When we arrived at the aether dungeon we found it was sealed. It was still evolving. We returned to the bat cave. Everyone was there and not happy. Apparently Andrew’s new group confronted them when they exited the other dungeon. Vlad’s team was outnumbered 8 to 6 and two of their number were the orc teens. They retreated letting Andrew have the dungeon. At first I was a little angry, then worried. Did they know about the bat cave or the aether pool dungeon as well? Vlad didn’t know. Ok we would pull back to the cave. When the aether pool dungeon reopened they could run that dungeon. No more town trips for now. Cael would do his best to cover all tracks to the farm and aether pool. Vlad said if all of us teamed up we could probably take them. I thought about it then told him it was too risky. I even put off the idea of traveling to the quest dungeon wanting to keep everyone together.

Everyone spent the entire next day everyone helped on the ship. I started practicing my ship movement spell and focused on leveling my metal magic skill.

In the evening Cael, Celeste, Lydia and me travelled to the Aether Dungeon. It was still sealed. We returned and spent the entire next day doing the same. In the evening we checked again on the aether pool dungeon. Still sealed. I decided if it was sealed tomorrow we would try the Centaur Maiden Dungeon. We needed to keep gathering funds and couldn’t isolate ourselves forever.

I was antsy the entire day. And was disappointed to find the dungeon still sealed. The centaur dungeon was only 20 minutes away with Carl but we could spend hours inside. Back at the bat cave I decided to take Celeste, Lydia and Vlad.

The entrance was actually a fancy looking cave at the summit of a mountain. We entered to find the first level was your typical dungeon atmosphere, rough rock walls with rooms connected by hallways. There were beetles, mantises and termites. All were the size of dogs and in groups of 4 to 9. This dungeon always had one stronger monster in each group as well. Fortunately there were no traps other than the termites coming out of the walls. We moved slow room to room. We encountered a mini-boss, a termite queen with 35 termite guards. The guards had aether shields but Celeste’s Lingtning Storm spell did major damage and Lydia kept the queen occupied while me and Vlad practiced our swordmanship. The loot was 9 silver coins, a 400 point aether crystal and aether infused copper ore.

We found the boss on the first floor. A 3 meter tall mantis. It was a melee boss that moved very fast. Vlad engaged it on the defensive while we attacked at range. It was pretty durable and Vlad got hit twice in the two minutes it took us. The loot was 28 silver coins, a 500 point aether crystal and two pieces of infused copper ore. We advanced to the next level.

It was the same set up as the first level but we were fighting lizards and swarms of fist sized mosquitos. Damn it. I needed an area of effect spell. Having 20 swarming mosquitos was a pain. I ended up putting on my helm. The lizards were large but not overly difficult. There were 3 mini bosses, all lizards with different elemental attacks. The loot was just a 100 point aether crystal and a piece of aether infused aether ore. The boss was an elephant sized lizard. It had all three elemental attacks but went down after 30 seconds. Loot was a 500 point aether crystal and a *bronze hammer, +5 weaponsmith skill*.

We moved to the third level. It was just a large cavern with a mushroom forest. The monsters were monkeys who hid in the gills of the mushrooms and attacked with rocks that were actually iron ore. There was a giant monkey boss of course. Dozens of monkeys appeared during the fight to assist. Fortunately the rocks did minimal damage. The boss loot was 5 gold coins, a 600 point aether crystal and a *white mask, +20 speed, +5 Dodge Skill, Charm: Merge*. The merge skill made the mask form fit to the face. Lydia took the mask and equipped it. She gave me back the lightning bow.

The fourth level was a massive lake with floating wooden paths throughout. At intervals a large octopus’ tentacles would attack. It was anticlimactic as they were not very strong and easily killed. Celeste always had a high ability to notice them coming. The boss was more impressive. This octopus had freeze, poison, fire and sonic attacks with its arms. We all took some damage from the ranged attacks but won after seven minutes. The loot was 15 gold coins and a single 1000 point aether crystal. We returned to the entrance to comm the base and make sure all was ok as we had been in the dungeon 6 hours. Meranda responded all was good. We camped outside the dungeon and rested. We checked every hour to figure out the dungeons respawn time. It was 12 hours.

We cleared the first 4 floors again getting two interesting items. *Black Cat mask, +10 agility, +10 speed, +5 acrobatics skill* and *Redsteel Throwing Knife, +8 Charisma, +4 Luck, Combat Action: Nerve Damage*. The nerve damage slowed the victim’s speed by 33% for 5 minutes on successful application. Lydia took the mask and Celeste the throwing knife. The fifth level was a forest but the trees were massive. The monsters were centaurs the wielded spears and had magic. They had ice magic and nature magic. We fought against, ice spikes, entangling vines and small wood golems. It was a slog and we reguraly took damage. The boss was a female centaur with a dozen guards. Two of the guards were healers. The boss centaur acted like a general pulling her subordinates out of the battle to get healed and hampering our efforts to eliminate the healers. We were never in danger but the battle took almost half an hour. I was happy to have completed my quest and the loot was good as well. We got 35 gold coins, two 1000 point aether crystals and *Navy Blue Belt, +15 Intellect, +15 Aether, +5 Command Skill, Spell: Shield Allies, cooldown 8 hours*. The shield allies spell reduced damage to all allies in 20 meters by 30% for 30 seconds. The Command skill was a skill similar to my leadership skill giving minor bonuses to allies in a range of effect. Vlad got the belt.

Having the dungeon cleared we returned to the bat cave. Vlad was a great story teller and relayed our dungeon crawl. I spent some time in my room with Celeste. After a few hours I hoped into Carl with Celeste to check on the Aether Dungeon. Luna insisted she join us.

I was expecting it to be closed again but instead found a crystalline arch over the pool. Stairs clearly led down under the water’s surface. The dungeon was open! I commed the cave letting them know and Vlad, Cael, and Lydia were on their way. The frogs and dragonflies were also in groups of 3 to 5 now. And there were larger specimens mixed in. Celeste was given the scanner to use for the quest and we began. We easily walked through. The monsters had new characteristics, speed, longer attack, camouflage, minor poison, and summon help. There were still just two mini bosses but they had a half dozen support monsters. The each dropped a single 100 point aether crystal. The two magic items were a *red tee shirt, +250 health pool* and *black leather gloves +5 agility, +3 pickpocket skill*. Vlad and Red got the items while I took the crystals. The main boss was the same but called reinforcements. The loot was a 400 point Aether crystal and *yellow dress jacket, +8 charisma, +5 agility, +3 dancing skill, Charm: Infatuate*. The infatuate gave +10% positive affect with social interactions.

We descended the stairs to the next level. It was a large beach, an ocean to the left and cliff to the right. The path was obviously straight down the beach. Of course we tried to climb the cliff. And failed. The ocean looked to go forever. We travelled down the beach and found the monsters were crabs. Very large crabs the size of a car. Then had high defense with the shell, even against Aether weapons. Tier 5 damage spells also did moderate damage. Apparently the shells had some magic resistance. Physical attacks did moderate damage. We were powerful enough that it didn’t matter. Their weak point was they had slow attacks with claws. We made our way down the beach. There were some elite crabs with red shells that gave fire damage backlash on melee attacks. Even though it was tedious it was enjoyable. After killing 24 crabs we reached the boss. The boss was as large as a bus. The crab had four claws so had many attacks and superior defense. It took us twenty minutes to take it down. The loot was 20 silver coins, a 500 point Aether crystal, and *pewter mug, Charm: summon divine ale, cooldown 4 hours*. The ale gave +20 strength, +20 constitution, +20 stamina, -10 intellect, -10 channeling. It was definitely a warriors item and didn’t need to be bound. Celeste and Vlad wanted it. Celeste won rock, paper, scissors. Vlad planned to run the dungeon as many times as was necessary to get the mug for himself. We descended to the 3rd level.

The level was a large plain with scattered goblin villages. Each village had 30-40 goblins. The goblins were well organized and fought together. Each village was challenging. We took a little damage but healed up after. The final village was a fort. It had over a 100 goblins and an ogre overlord. The ogre overlord wore shields on each arm and wielded maces in each had. Vlad lost over half his health before the ogre fell. The reward was 100 silver coins, a 800 point Aether crystal and *two handed* *black mace, +15 strength, +15 stamina, 10% chance to stun for 5 seconds*. The item went into my storage to sell later. We rested for a little while before heading to the 4th level.

It was a forest with flowering trees. The monsters were magic casting fairies and sprites. The had tier 5 attack spells. There were groups on 2 to 4. We mowed them down. The boss was a beautiful fairy queen who was human sized. She fast cast spells and focused on the weaker members but we won and healed up. The loot was a 1000 point Aether crystal, 12 gold coins and *leather vest, +30 aether, +5 air magic skill, +5 nature magic, +5 water magic*. The vest went to Celeste. We entered the stairs to get to the 5th level.

It was a rocky path up a mountain. The trail had rock trolls in twos and threes. It was a long hike with the battles taking over six hours turning into snowy ground. At the summit was a temple. The temple had yetis inside. Unlike normal yetis they wore clothes and wielded weapons. They were crazy good warriors and two could over power Vlad. Fortunately we never encountered more than 3 and had 6 members in our party. The boss had a shaman for support who cast buffs and heals. We went high tech and pounded the bosses with Aether weapons. The loot was very good, 50 gold coins, a 3000 point Aether crystal and *boots, +25 stamina, +25 speed, Spell: Lightning Strike, cooldown 4 hours*. Lightning strike was a tier 10 spell that did massive lightning damage on a melee strike. Both me and Vlad wanted the boots. I ended passing on them letting Vlad have them.

And with that we were done with the dungeon. We were cautious and it took 17 hours. We were exhausted and went back to the bat cave. We ate, rested and talked. It was decided a team of three could clear the first 3 levels safely. Vlad, Red, Luna and Lydia would clear the first 3 levels tomorrow and find out the dungeon respawn time. Me, Celeste and Meranda would head to see Albus. During the trip Meranda learned of the ores and asked for all the Aether infused ore we had gathered. Apparently Aether ore was used in the runes on ships. It could be melted and recycled but the inventory I had would greatly help her. And we should get more if possible. The centaur dungeon wasn’t far with Carl so it was feasible.

The next morning we left. I spent the trip organizing my inventory. I had a bunch of trash items from the minor monsters. I told Meranda she would get 10,000 SYSTEM credits to buy items. I had planned to review my sheets but just spent time talking with Meranda about the ship repairs.

Albus was happy to see us. I handed over the scanner stone and he left to examine the data.

*Quest Completed: Log all the monster types in the dungeon that utilized the Dungeon Core Experience Orb, Reward: 10,000 experience, +5 stat points*

My free stat points went into speed bringing it to 20. Since I had been doing a lot of melee combat I had found my speed was terrible. I knew I couldn’t be great at everything but free stat points did patch a weakness. I had an internal goal of getting all primary stats to 30 evetually. Leo returned excited and gave us another quest.

*Quest: Bring the contents of a secret chest to Leo. Reward: 5000 experience, all items of the chest after Leo examines them*

My first thought is that it was going to be much too difficult then Leo handed us a seeker stone. It could only be used once but got warmer the closer it got to a secret chest. Once activated it remained active for just 2 hours. So we needed a dungeon where we knew one was available. The Centaur Maiden dungeon. Meranda had already been working with Guy buying SYSTEM items. I went to him and sold all the junk. 59,587 credits, the Aether dungeon was very profitable. I passed 10,000 credits to Meranda and looked for myself, I wanted an AOE spell. I found a rupture space spell. It was a tier 10 space and force spell. My force magic was level 23, my space magic was level 15, 8 levels short of tier 10. I bought it and would activate it when I could. Maybe I would use skill points. Celeste spent 7500 credits on items while I was searching spells. I talked to Guy for a bit and he got me to buy a booster upgrade for Carl. It pushed Carl’s speed up to 900 kph but burned a lot of Aether crystal, tripling energy consumption. I had less than 8,000 credits left. Meranda took another two hours to finish and took the rest of my credits as well. It was her first time at a SYSTEM terminal station and she bought a lot of tools and diagnostic equipment.

As we raced back to the bat cave I was in the backseat bed with Celeste. Meranda was in the front with the privacy screen between us. I opened my sheets.

First I looked at a summary of my magic items.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | ***Worn Equipment, Magic Slots: 6 (+1 at level 20)*** |
| 1 | *Sapphire Inlaid Platinum Anklet, +3000 Aether Pool, +20 Channeling, +5 Replenish Aether Core Spell* |
| 2 | *Gold Ring with Sapphire, +5 Teleport Magic Skill, +10 Aether, +15 Channeling* |
| 3 | *Satinsteel Cutlass, +5 long blades skill, +20 strength, +10 agility, heal self once a day* |
| 4 | *void ring, space mage ring +1 aether/lvl, +1 channeling/lvl, +25 aether pool/lvl* |
| 5 | *Prismatic Toe Ring, +5 Charisma, +5 Luck, Greater Shapechange Self, 4 hour cooldown, heals 1000 health on transforming* |
| 6 | *Silver Chain Collar, +50 Aether, +25% Aether Recovery* |

The gold ring with sapphire was my weakest item. I had the *White Steel Dagger, +20 Aether, +20 Channeling, Siphon Aether Combat Ability*. I decided to leave my magic items as they were.

My skills had made some progress. Spirit magic reached level 7 and long blades reached level 23, both awaited boon selection.

For spirit magic I could reduce spirit spells cost by 18% Aether or the strengthen spirit which gave me 50% bonus to all healing on myself. I choose the improved healing to myself. For long blades skill I got a free combat action slot with a tier 10 ability, Sword Constellation. It had 13 forms each with a varying amount of defense, offense, speed and damage. I selected it because it had a lot of utility.

Celeste distracted me before I could get into my spell upgrades.

When we got back to the base Meranda got work immediately with her new tools. I needed to goto Sand Bastion to turn in the quest and planned to swing by the Dread Trent Dungeon. Celeste, Lydia and Luna would accompany me. I synthesized thirty meals and we left.

We set for the dungeon first. On the way i upgraded my spells.

My excavate spell had hit level 17, tier 8, and I reduced its Aether cost from 327 to 280. My other option was decreasing the casting time. Y ship movement hit level 7, tier 5, giving two upgrades. I increased acceleration to 9 ms from 6 ms with the first then to 14 ms with the second. The spell was getting close to useful. Using both Aether cores I could now get the ship into an orbit. Meranda had said we could install another matrix that would negate a planets gravity but she didn’t have the runic patterns for it so I was still spending a lot of the spell Aether just overcoming the planets gravity. My advanced heal other had two effect upgrades increasing the base health healed from 300 to 500. With other bonuses the spell now healed 560 health. I increased the damage of my wind blades spell by 20%. I was tempted to add a sixth blade but decided to go with the damage increase instead. My self illusion spell had reached level 5 and had 3 upgrades. I selected an instant cast option, reduced the sustain requirement from 10 aether a minute to 7 and added 3 pre fab appearances. This last option gave me the ability to save 3 previous illusions. That was the last spell.

I spent the remaining time working on my metal magic. It was at level 6 and 1 more level would get me the repair hull spell. We coasted through the dungeon. I added another Shadow Cloak to my collection. We then went into Sand Bastion on foot in disguise to turn in the quest.

*Quest Completed: Kill the Centaur Maiden Overseer, Reward: 6,000 experience, 1 skill point*

I now had 21 skill points. My supplemental Aether core skill was close to level 23 so I planned to push it there when we started our trip back to the Centaur dungeon. Just as expected we were offered a new quest.

*Quest: Destroy the Ashera Alter in the Desolate Wastes Dungeon, Reward: 25,000 experience, 1 potion, 5 free stat points, 1 skill point*

It was a big reward. We were given a vial that we were told to pour over the alter. The SYSTEM pad said Ashera was a god of the dark elves. I didn’t know there were other gods in this world. The dungeon was almost on the other side of the planet. I was not sure I wanted to be that far away for so long and the experience meant it was probably extremely challenging. I accepted but had no plans to complete it unless circumstances allowed it.

We left the city on foot and were followed by six people. I called Carl to pick us up and we zoomed off before an encounter with the thugs occurred.

I noticed two hover bikes tried to follow us and commed Mindy. I asked her how things were and what the local news was. The gang war had subsided and some gangs had merged. A third party had been supplying one gang with better vehicles and weapons. I asked about hover bikes and yes 8 hover bikes recently appeared in the city, bought at the SYSTEM terminal. I asked about Ophelia. She was frustrated, as apparently she was not getting her shuttle pilot’s certification from her instructor and could only be a co-pilot at the moment. I thanked her for the time and commed Ophelia. I used Carl’s system to keep the comms clear as we were going out of range of my personal com unit soon.

Ophelia spent 20 minutes venting before asking about me. I told her I was planning to get off planet soon. I didn’t reveal my ship but said I had secured transport and if she was interested I could get her a seat as well. She thought about it then said maybe, when was I leaving? Where did I plan to go? I gave her vague responses about the nearest system. I told her to head back to farm and comm me from there if she was interested in the next week. If I didn’t respond she should comm Vlad. I disconnected.

I had Carl go max speed to the Centaur dungeon. I then opened my sheets and moved my Supplemental Aether Core skill to 23.

Boon Selection for Supplemental Aether Core, Level 23, Tier 10

* Improved Aether Shard Creation - create an Aether crystal equal to your Aether pool, cooldown 24 hours
* Improved Aether Tolerance - +3 to Aether tolerance
* Improved Aether Secondary Core – upgrade from 50 to 250 Aether per level

Now that is what im talking about! My current Aether pool was 8390 minus the 3000 I used for the pocket space. The 3rd option would give me 4600 more Aether! I had the Aether shard getting ¼ return so the first option was a valid choice as well. Out in the universe all SYSTEM created high powered items required Aether crystals. Creating Aether crystals was pretty painful though. After 20 minutes of deliberation I choose option 3. My Aether pool shot up to almost 13,000. I knew the reason this skill leveled so quickly was due to fighting with a full Aether pool. Combat made skills raise quickly and this skill only grew when the Aether pool was full, it was a loop hole I had found shortly after getting the skill. I wanted to dump all my skill points into the skill but restrained myself. Maybe I would add any future free skill points I gained from quests. Level 43 was the next boon and it seemed so close.

I was pretty confident my 3 companions and I could clear the dungeon. The plan was to clear the levels then activate the stone to find the secret chest. We massacred beetles, mantises, termites, lizards, mosquito swarms, monkies, octopus and centaurs. We unleashed big spells and used Aether weapons to get it clear as quick as possible to avoid the respawn. We didn’t attack the final boss and used the stone. It led us back to the fourth on the floating wooden paths. In a corner of the vast water expanse the stone was warmest. We had to dive. Me, Luna and Celeste went in and down.

I dropped light stones and down we went. It was over 150 meters deep and there was a mini-boss. A 12 armed octopus that was bigger the floor boss. I moved easily but Celeste and Luna struggled avoiding attacks in the water. I was a messy combat with Celeste losing ¼ of her health and her battle armor taking modest damage. Luna lost about half her health but regenerated quickly. The secret chest was on the sandy floor and we got *a trident, +12 strength, +12 agility, Combat Action: True Strike* from the octupus. True Strike gave +150% chance to hit on next attack with the trident but cost 100 stamina. It went to the sale pile. I took the entire chest to the surface. We all left the dungeon, got into Carl, and headed to see Albus.

The chest was big and took up a seat. I was in front with Celeste while Luna used her security skill to check for traps and open it. It took her 30 minutes before it opened. It had a firebomb trap, ok so next time we disarm it not inside Carl. Carl voiced the same thought I had.

The loot was very good.

*Summon Companion Scroll, Tier 5*

*300 gold coins, 2000 point aether crystal*

*Golden Scroll Mercantile Skill*

*Plates of Preparedness, +15% buff for 8 hours, 7 day cooldown*

The plates were 8 large dinner plates. Meals served on these plates gave +15% buff to all stats for 8 hours, with a 7 day cooldown. The tier 5 scroll was worth 700 points for companions. Lydia wanted it but I held off. Celeste thought it best to add another companion when I got another available slot. When we got to Albus’ place we found a ship on the ice. Shit. It was a large shuttle and two guys were standing guard in Ballen uniforms.

They were on guard when we drove up and I had the front cannon on standby. I got out and talked with the two soldiers. They had a team down the shaft and I had to wait for an officer to come up. I talked with the officer and told them I excavated the ice the SYSTEM terminal. These dungeon terminals were extremely rare. Albus had confirmed my story after the officer checked. He went into the shuttle to talk with the higher ups.

After an hour he came back and the news wasn’t terrible. The Ballen Empire was occupying this site but I would have unlimited access. They had six teams coming on a shuttle to get quests from Albus. With this terminal the planetary dungeons would evolve quicker and be more valuable as quests were completed. The Ballen Empire would even allow non-empire teams in to speed up the process. The officer let me drive down.

There were six Ballen soldiers and two civilian scientists inside. When Albus was free I brought him the loot from the secret chest. He scanned it descretly since I asked him to do so.

*Quest Completed: Bring the contents of a secret chest to Albus. Reward: 5000 experience, all items of the chest after Leo examines them*

I asked Albus to avoid giving any quests to the Centaur and Aether pool dungeons for three months. That way we could monopolize the dungeons for loot. He said since I was the one who got this terminal going he would do me the favor. I overheard the scientist talking to the other one, apparently they had requested 30 shuttles with crews and 60 new dungeon harvester teams to be assigned to this planet. I talked with the scientists for a bit. Apparently they expected the quests from Albus to raise the level of dungeons on the planet.

was a 500 point aether crystal and a *bronze hammer, +5 weaponsmith skill*.

We moved to the third level. It was just a large cavern with a mushroom forest. The monsters were monkeys who hid in the gills of the mushrooms and attacked with rocks that were actually iron ore. There was a giant monkey boss of course. Dozens of monkeys appeared during the fight to assist. Fortunately the rocks did minimal damage. The boss loot was 5 gold coins, a 600 point aether crystal and a *white mask, +20 speed, +5 Dodge Skill, Charm: Merge*. The merge skill made the mask form fit to the face. Lydia took the mask and equipped it. She gave me back the lightning bow.

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