

Chapter 176 Enhancement

Sitting on the bed with Captain Aida sleeping, I slipped into my mind space. I looked at my banner and was ready to promote my first ability to lower tier three. I sorted out the abilities that were already upper tier two.

Abyssal Eyes	Upper	Tier 2	400 life essence
Abyssal Strength	Upper	Tier 2	400 life essence
Abyssal Speed	Upper	Tier 2	400 life essence
Abyssal Endurance	Upper	Tier 2	400 life essence
Incubus Wings	Upper	Tier 2	400 life essence
Melodic Voice	Upper	Tier 2	400 life essence
Aphrodisiac Saliva	Upper	Tier 2	400 life essence
Seductive Gaze	Upper	Tier 2	400 life essence
Mask Aether Core	Upper	Tier 2	400 life essence

No bad choice was on the list, but I needed to think combat-oriented. Should I not consider the physical traits if I were wearing one of the Eladrin's power armor suits? After staring at the list for a few long moments, Nashima walked into the central room. "Is everyone else in the library?" I asked her.

"They are working hard there, yes. We caught your impressive performance with Captain Aida. Trying to choose an ability to invest in?" She asked, looking at the banner with me.

Since Nashima was not part of my subconscious like the other constructs, her advice should be independent. "What would you choose?"

"There is only one choice if you continue raising the Eladrin. The aphrodisiac saliva. Captain Aida was strong and clearly resisted it. A stronger saliva would make the process easier. If you were not going to stick your cock in every hole on the ship, then abyssal quickness makes the most sense." Nashima patted me on the shoulder and left me to make my decision. By her language and mannerisms, I think Pandora was rubbing off on her.

I choose aphrodisiac saliva. The banner changed, and my life essence cap rose from 400 to 404.

Aphrodisiac Saliva	Lower	Tier 3	800 life essence
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It looked like the cost would continue to double every rank up. Without my tax to Andromeda, my life essence harvest was greatly improved, but the cost was rising fast. It would be long before I could raise any ability to upper tier three. Still, the power spike when going from upper tier 2 to lower tier 3 was considerable. I moved out of the dreamscape and looked down on the

elf woman I had ravaged for hours. I contemplated waking her but decided against it and returned to my barracks to check on the others.

I was only mildly surprised to find a Marine in a corridor to escort me back to the room with the others. I was not yet considered completely trustworthy. Entering the room, I was surprised to find Rincewind playing the Eladrin pool with Bedelia, Aurora, and Sharn. Everyone looked expectantly at me for an update.

“I have secured one of the power armored suits for now. I will have to wait for Eshanya to see if I can get more. Can I get next?” I indicated the table.

“Rincewind cheats,” Aurora said in good humor. She left the table and fell on one of the sofas in the room, giving up playing.

The immortal mage laughed, “Aurora has excellent control over her aether, but her grasp of fundamental physics needs some work.” Rincewind smirked and made an amazing shot, getting two balls with a single hit and winning the game. Aurora threw up her hands from her seated position like a shot was expected.

Rincewind started to set up the table for another game, “I wish I had a few of these tables at my academy on Earth. They really are excellent tools for teaching control. How is your own control progressing, Caleb?”

“I got next,” was all I said, pulling out the aether restriction device Rincewind had made me. We played five games while everyone else watched. I lost every game, but the games were competitive—unless the mage was letting me win. I removed the collar for the sixth game, and on my first shot, the cue ball shot across the room and hit the wall, leaving a dent.

Bedelia laughed, and Rincewind smirked, “You have come a remarkable way, Caleb, but you still need some practice.”

I sat down next to Aurora and agreed with her, “You were right, he cheats.” It was all in jest, and Rincewind faked being hurt by my statement.

The barracks door opened, and I thought they came to investigate the noise, but Captain Aida was in the battle kit as she entered. They had turned off shipwide announcements to our barracks room, so I thought it must be an emergency. Her black armor hugged her curves, which I now knew intimately well.

“Admiral Eshanya wants to see you now.” Her tone was neutral and unemotive. I followed the Marine out into the corridor and took long strides to keep up with her purposeful strides.

“Is something wrong?” I asked as I followed behind Aida.

“No,” her clipped response was forceful and ended any attempt at further conversation. We did not head for the bridge and instead ended up in the middle of the ship. The room we entered was

an obvious medical facility that would put Star Trek to shame. Eshanya and three other Eladrin watched a video in front of a screen. The video looked like glowing bodies having sex. I recognized the bodies as looking like what I saw with my own abyssal sight. It was me on top of Aida from a few hours earlier. I realized they were trying to map the aether flows of what I did to enhance Aida's core. Aida realized what was on the screen and did not shy away from watching. I could smell her familiar arousal building, even with her suit.

Eshanya turned to face me, "What you did shouldn't be possible. Especially since Captain Aida's core is mature and over three hundred years old."

"You look great for three hundred," I told Captain Aida, ignoring Eshanya. It was clear I had hooked her with my efforts. She was still not the oldest woman I had had sex with. The Druid Danila was even older.

Eshanya said, getting my attention, "We will require some of your saliva for analysis."

"No," I said, sitting at an exam table that lit up and projected a three-dimensional image of my internals above me. I was relaxed and realized I had all the cards here. Eshanya couldn't force me to raise her people.

Eshanya clearly liked these kinds of games. "Andromeda did say you were special," she approached me, considering her next words. "Okay, incubus, you proved you can increase the cores of the Eladrin. I didn't think it was possible for such a substantial increase."

"So you will honor your end of the deal and give me one of your power armor suits for each Eladrin I raise?" I asked her directly, thinking there might be some trick.

"Yes, it would be best to do everyone at once," Eshanya said.

"No, one for one. I do one of yours, and you fit a suit for one of mine," I said firmly, thinking there might be some deception in there.

Eshanya laughed mirthfully, "No trust? I was actually suggesting we fit your entire group first. But we can do it your way."

"I also want a full medical exam for everyone with your equipment here and a prosthetic for the old orc male," I continued to bargain.

"Prosthetic? Do you want a cyborg? We could do that or just regrow the missing hand," Eshanya said with a smirk. She was poking fun at me for how little I knew about advanced medical technology from the higher layers.

"Replace the hand then," I said, ignoring my embarrassment at my poor negotiation skills. "As soon as we get the power armor for everyone, we will be heading into the transit to rescue the Cartwrights."

“The human couple? Why do you care?” Eshanya asked, considering me. She had dropped all her teasing and positioning for power over me. She was really curious.

“I am friends with their daughter and promised her I would find her parents. Now that I am so close, I have to try,” I said truthfully.

“An incubus hero,” she said like it was a joke and an oxymoron. I didn’t laugh. She sighed, “Fine, I can tell you are going to ask for my help but don’t want to ask for my help. Five extra enhancements to my crew, and I will help and bring,” she thought for a moment, “Fifty Marines. But I am assuming your life essence harvest has been good, so this is helping you as much as it helps me.”

“Captain Aida, handle the details. Get all of them fitted for the suits now and manufacture them one at a time after he successfully raises the core of the crew. Medicus Maedicae Pyrus, record the sessions. I will review them later.” Eshanya walked out of the room, not giving me a chance to object to her making me a porn star. It was not like my mother would ever see it; it was for science. Maybe I could get a copy for my records as well.

Captain Aida motioned for me to follow her. She walked at a much more sedate pace in the corridor. “Thank you,” was all she said as we walked.

I just smirked and asked for my vanity, “Was it as good for you as it was for me?” I had to confirm my superpower of saying stupid things after sex was intact. After all, Captain Aida was passed out for most of it.

We walked all the way back without a response to my playful question. Two Marines still flanked the door. Just before she opened the door, she said, “You were good.” Her expression had not changed, but it stroked my ego some.

We entered the room together, and it was clear my group had been worried as relief flooded Bedelia’s face. Captain Aida didn’t wait, and she pointed at the old orc and said, “You, come with me.”

I rolled my eyes as she tried to sound like he was in trouble. I calmed Sharn down, “They are going to replace Raguk’s hand and size him for the Eladrin armor. Everyone will be sized for the armor.” Sharn looked the most excited of the group. She had the heart of a warrior, and she had probably fantasized about encasing that heart in impenetrable armor.

Captain Aida interrupted, scanning the occupants, and pointed at the smallest in the room, “The child would outgrow the armor in weeks. You should wait till she matures.”

An indignant Ghorza objected to being called immature. I calmed things by making a decision, “No suit for Ghorza, then. Size up the human mage.” Rincewind eyebrow arched in surprise. Seeing this was inter-group politics, Captain Aida guided the old orc out.

Rincewind asked, “So, are you willing to share what we can expect from the Succubus Queen?” He left it open for me to answer. “And I appreciate the offer of armor,” he paused. “I accept.”

“She is going to help us rescue the Cartwrights, but I will have to help on the ship for a while. I am hoping we can enter the transit in less than a month,” I told the group. I didn’t know how long it would take me to complete my obligations. Captain Aida had taken a lot out of me, but I still thought I could do two Eladrin a day if I really tried.

Bedelia was the most excited of the group, “We are going after the Cartwrights! That is great news.” I just nodded but still felt like I was whoring myself out and hopeful the returns would be worth it.

Over the next few hours, everyone except the young Ghorza was escorted out to be measured for the power suits. I was the last one to be escorted by Captain Aida. As we walked, she said, “The old orc is in the tank and will be back in two days.”

“Can he survive the higher layers?” I asked for her opinion.

“No, you are better leaving him behind. The twins as well,” she said honestly.

We arrived at room a tank filled with gel. The process was relatively simple. I stripped and emerged myself in the gel. The computer would force my body through certain motions and tailor a suit specifically to me based on my body, strength, and mobility.

The gel was cold and felt invasive. It forced its way into my ass, and I yipped in surprise. Everyone else had been through this, and they didn’t warn me. “Why is there a cold pack of gel snaking its way into my ass?” I asked the scientists.

“The suit has waste processing. It will map your lower intestinal tract,” he said, brushing me off as he worked the machines. I think Aida was hiding a smirk at my discomfort. Well, if we ever had another encounter, I would so her what it was like to have something unexpectedly shoved up her ass.

Exiting the tank, Captain Aida brought me to another room with a terminal. “Admiral Eshanya wants you to select your targets. She has prepared a list of one hundred crew. You need to select sixteen. I counted in my head to be sure. Rincewind, Bedelia, and Aurora made three. The orcs were Ganon, Sharn, Glasha, Raguk, Rogan, Kurdan, and Cagan. That was ten. The eleventh would be Brin, then. The extra five were for assistance in the rescue of the Cartwrights.

“What about the Rincewind’s daughter, Kristiel?” I asked.

Captain Aida arched an eyebrow in surprise, “She has already tried to escape twice. I don’t think giving Eshanya would gift her a suit.”

“She is gifting me the suit,” I countered.

She talked into her suit for a few minutes before nodding at me, “We will create her a suit, but she will not be allowed to wear it on the *Shadow Fall*. You will be responsible for any damage she does.”

I nodded and thought about angelic, Sofiel. It was actually good that she was trapped so she couldn’t orchestrate the Pryamids on Mercanious. I decided not to pursue freeing her at the moment. Maybe something would come up.

The screen in front of me flared, and it felt like the worst dating app in the world. One hundred and seven contestants for seventeen spots. The bios had their core strength and age. At least all the contestants were female Eladrin. I didn’t like that Captain Aida sat down right next to me.

“Any suggestions?” I asked her, not really being serious.

“Focus on the Marines,” she said seriously. “They will make the biggest impact, and I can get them assigned to the assault team to rescue the humans.”

That strangely made sense. The speakers blared. “Captain Aida, do not influence the incubus.” Eshanya must have been watching, also curious about who I would select.

Seeing a huge range of ages and knowing Eilina was not considered an adult despite being much older than me, I asked, “What is the age of sexual maturity for Eladrin,” I asked Aida.

Eshanya’s voice answered over the speakers, “It does not matter. The methodology you use is not affected by chronological age.” I didn’t want to argue because I appreciated her given me the choice. I just hoped my selections were willing.

Captain Aida had shut down, knowing the Admiral was watching. Maybe this was some psychological evaluation by her ship’s crew? I was not going to overthink this, though. It took me a few minutes to get the data in charts, and then I started sorting.

I stayed away from everyone over five hundred years old. Looks didn’t matter much as there was no unattractive Eladrin in the group. I tried to select as many Marines as possible, and my list quickly filled out. I avoided the five names on the list under one hundred years of age. My final list was based on core strength, profession, and age. The younger the aether core, the more luck I should have.

#	Core Strength	Profession	Age
1	1.12	Marine	102
2	1.23	Marine	120
3	1.23	Marine	101
4	1.24	Marine	116
5	1.29	Marine	129
6	1.33	Marine	276
7	1.33	Marine	125
8	1.35	Marine	139

9	1.36	Marine	122
10	1.37	Scientist	206
11	1.38	Administration	459
12	1.41	Educator	320
13	1.49	Marine	344
14	1.51	Medicus Medicae	389
15	1.53	Educator	328
16	1.54	Engineer	206
17	1.54	Scientist	194

With the list finalized, I was escorted to another room. Two Eladrin males were here, and my power-armored suit was ready. “You can leave us,” Captain Aida ordered. “I will show him how to wear the suit and the basic functions.” The two suit mechanics nodded and left us in the room.

Captain Aida started, “Remove all your clothes. I don’t know why you chose to be fitted in your human form; your incubus form is more impressive.” I had chosen my adult Caleb’s body.

“Maybe I could get a second suit for my incubus form?” I asked cheekily.

“You would only need to add one more name to the list,” Captain Aida said like I was an idiot.

“Okay, do that. You can select someone for me.” Her eyes were surprised, but she nodded.

She focused on teaching me about the suit. “The boots contain your aetheric cells. They can be charged from your own aether or from an aether port. You need to regulate the flow if you charge them yourself otherwise they could overheat and explode.”

I slipped on the black boots first. They immediately felt warm and comfortable. It was odd standing there in just boots. Aida was enjoying the sight, but I think she preferred my incubus body.

“The nanoweaves will attach on their own. Just hold the lower part of the suit near the power source,” She advised, handing them to me. It was heavier than I expected, maybe eighty pounds.

As they approached the boots, they connected like magnets, and the suit rippled and flowed up my body, hugging me tight. “It is reactive armor. It will harden when you are struck and shunt energy attacks into the ground. The shielding operates off your battery capacity. As I told you, it is very effective armor and should stop anything on the 23rd layer.”

I went through some ranges of motions, and it felt like a warm blanket was embracing me. Captain Aida continued, “You only have basic gloves. They will connect to your suit and can be keyed to your HUD and weapons.”

The gloves slipped on easily and connected. My suit was almost complete. “Now the HUD,” she handed me a thick ring that could be pulled apart and snapped around my neck. She spent

the next hour showing me how to activate and integrate the simple AI that controlled the nanotech fibers on the suit. When she thought I would kill myself, she showed me the emergency removal of the power suit by demonstrating with hers.

I repeated it, and we were both standing naked. Aida didn't wait and moved in and locked her lips to mine, clearly sucking and seeking my saliva. I had upgraded that little ability and was curious to see how she would like it...